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Na okładce: John William Waterhouse, *Pandora*, 1896

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It is our pleasure to present the second volume of Journal of Gender and Power to you, with hope that it will arouse your interest. Not accidentally can the *Pandora* painting by John William Waterhouse be found on the cover of the journal. The categories of knowledge, cultural gender and power are leitmotivs running through the whole painting and determining its significance. Let us take a closer look at the painting.

Night. A black wood. A beautiful woman with a calm expression is kneeling at the foot of the stone plinth. A grand beautiful golden box is standing in front of her. The glow of the box is illuminating her face and the alabastrine skin of her naked arms. On the right there is a flowing stream, an often-encountered symbol of the evanescence of life. The woman is no one else but mythological Pandora. In subsequent interpretations and rewritings of the myth, the box given to her as a dowry would transform from a simple clay vessel into a box which is presented as a fine piece of craftsmanship by Waterhouse. This box looks nothing like the clay bottle described by Hesiod. Pandora is opening the box in the thick wood which appears to be dense with meanings. The wood is a symbol of concentrated and unforeseeable difficulties and it is a recurring topos in fairy tales. However, there is nothing disturbing about the wood in the painting. The stream flowing next to Pandora and blue lights coming from the distance are showing that the bright day is nearby and that regular life is going on. Pandora has not lost her way. Just a few steps away, the wood ends. She can be seen at the moment of opening the lid of the box. The time has stopped and nothing augurs the approaching misfortune. However, those who are familiar with the myth know that all the evils of the world are about to escape. Pandora, similarly to biblical Eve, symbolizes the betrayal of one's will and trespassing against the ban which results in the end of calm and happiness. Mythological Pandora is the first woman created by Zeus out of earth and fire.

She was sent to the world full of harmony and homogeneity which was populated solely by men. Nevertheless, the Pandora myth can be also interpreted in a different way, especially in the context of the painting by Waterhouse. His Pandora seems to be opening a box full of knowledge, prompted by curiosity. This knowledge is tantamount to different discourses which introduce anxiety and chaos into the one-sided and ordered world. The world based on simple and binary schemes. Even though this knowledge brings anxiety and is frequently unwanted, it allows for showing diversity and complexity of reality while not necessary facilitating its understanding. Pandora's box symbolizes knowledge. It can be the knowledge about 'a woman', but also about 'a man' which is not always uttered by a female voice in the discourse of femininity. Pandora is also a symbol of unconstrained woman's power.

The beautiful Pandora is led by emotions—curiosity and desire—but at the same time she acts very logically: she makes a choice, opens the box which was given to her as a dowry. Is it possible to imagine someone who would not open it? This curiosity is dangerous but life-giving in nature—it gives rise to comprehension and transgression (what is more, if Pandora had not opened the box, then who would remember her a thousand years later?). The content of the box would always change according to the wishes of the authors of the myth's subsequent versions. However, anxieties and hope have always remained on the bottom of the box. The opening of the box is an act of losing control over what will happen, while the locked box used to give a feeling of stability and safety.

Several decades ago, American feminists started to claim that history had been written by men, about men and for men. As a result, they believed that the English word 'history' is nothing more but 'his story'. Thus, they put forward an idea of writing history by women, about women and for women—her-story.

This might be the case with the myth about Pandora which so far could have been rewritten and reinterpreted by men. But how about reading it differently?

The opening of the box can symbolize new breakthroughs in science and social life, which initially might appear to be disastrous and appear to question the social order in a destructive way. However, such breakthroughs via numerous transgressions and (re)interpretations can give rise to different emancipating discourses of knowledge and power. Who knows, maybe after opening the box one of the thoughts born out of it

led to the idea that even though femininity and masculinity are always inherently biological, they can give rise to a number of social constructs. Cultural gender, which is still considered by many as a plague and misfortune, for others opens the door to freedom, equal rights and empowerment. What seemed to be a disorder or even a misfortune from the perspective of old stereotypes is transforming into its opposite, namely, into the ability of defining a woman and a man and the ability of expressing the freedom to creating one's biography. Undoubtedly, this interpretation of the Pandora myth is much closer to the intention of the authors. In the gender discourse we are often presented with the knowledge which is difficult, ambiguous and prone to multiple interpretations. This knowledge is inextricably connected with power, especially the power of understanding. Thus, the curiosity of researchers who frequently open the proverbial 'Pandora's box' leads to pluralism of discourses and to transgression. The knowledge offered in the myth about Pandora and Pandora herself are contradictory, ambiguous and incoherent. We need to bear in mind that Pandora literally means 'the all-gifted' or 'the all-giving'. She was endowed with beauty and sensuality by Venus, and with the gift of intelligence, eloquence and the power of seduction with words by Mercury. Enjoy the reading and do not hesitate to publish your articles in the next volume.

Agnieszka Gromkowska-Melosik
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ARTICLES

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National crisis and the challenge of education[*]

ABSTRACT. The main objective of this article is showing that in USA is a crisis of meaning and values—one that leads to a debasement of human relationships, accelerating materialism and greed, and misplaced fixation on celebrity and glamour. In this context there is a compelling need to articulate a new bottom line for education—one that offers a different vision for educating our children that directly and cogently speaks to human purpose and meaning in the world that that they will inherit. In this article I try to describe that new vision of education—the pedagogy of peace.

KEYWORDS: crisis of education, pedagogy of peace, education in the United States

There is much talk today in the United States about a crisis of education. Yet what is pointed to as the cause of this crisis is confusing at best, and misleading at worst. There is, for example, the argument that our economy is in trouble because of poor education. Of course this seems preposterous when compared to the role of the banks in our current economic crisis. Irresponsibility and short-term considerations, lack of governmental regulation, and a culture of greed seem to be much more salient than education might be to this situation. Despite talk of demands for sophisticated skills and more educated workers, predictions are for an economy that will continue to employ high numbers of low and semi-skilled workers. Jobs that used to be done by high school graduates are now increasingly filled by those with college degrees. Elsewhere there is much talk about an educational crisis that is the result of kids performing poorly in comparison with students from other countries This has resulted in the calamity of an education system more and more enthralled to a culture of testing which has sapped imagination, creativity,

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curiosity and critical intelligence from our classrooms. The crisis of accountability has become the springboard for rigid and mechanical forms of control over the teaching process in our schools.

Yet in all of this talk of crisis there is little that speaks to the profound moral and spiritual responsibility that is carried—or should be carried, by education. Beyond the usual focus of schooling (grades, test results, graduation rates etc.) is surely something of far greater significance. Education has the capability and the obligation, I believe, of speaking to the very issue of what it means to be human; of how we as human beings live and relate to one another; and how we relate to, and care for, the natural world that we share with all life forms. Today these issues rise to the very top of what is important to our very survival as a species. For us, and even more for our children, what needs to concern us is the very quality of human life on our planet. And central to this is the continuing problem of violent conflict and violent behavior among human beings.

In a letter of invitation written to the contributors of a recent book I wrote that its purpose was to help articulate a new vision and purpose—and begin to set an alternative direction—for our children's education at a time when, as I believe, there is an increasing delegitimation of the prevailing assumptions and orthodoxies that have shaped our public life over the past few years. There was, in addition, a deep hunger for the articulation of what Michael Lerner (2006) has called, a *new bottom line* for education—one that focuses on our children's lives as human beings who will assume the ethical, political and social responsibilities of our shared national and global communities.

I do not think I am being overly optimistic to believe that we are now witnessing the implosion of the neo-conservative 'revolution' in the United States. All signs point to our being in a transitional period in which the assumptions that have governed political life in recent years are in grave crisis. At the core of these assumptions has been the belief that the United States had a free and unopposed hand to make and reorganize the world according to the interests and inclinations of our governing elites. We can now see quite clearly that this arrogance of power has hit a resistant wall. The world cannot be re-made through our military muscle and economic power quite as easily as some may have wished. The lies and deceit that have brought us to this catastrophic moment have been laid bare. The belief that this country could act unilaterally on the world stage without much broader international support

has produced unparalleled anger and distrust towards the U.S. Many now see that terrorism is only one of a number of serious threats that confront us; global warming, lethal epidemics, poverty, violence and war, nuclear proliferation, racism, gender oppression and ethnic hatred. All are part of the increasingly pressing agenda for action in the world. And the severity and complexity of human problems will demand from us, and especially our children, inclinations, dispositions, and knowledge quite different from those which have shaped, and continue to shape, our social identities and ideological outlooks, moral preferences and attitudinal priorities. *This is a time of crisis, but also of renewed possibility—one that offers us the opportunity to radically reconsider what is the meaning of education for a generation that will bear the brunt of grappling with these extraordinary challenges and dangers.* What will it mean to be an educated human being in the 21st century compelled to confront and address so much that threatens the very basis of a decent and hopeful human existence?

The unraveling of this consensus is likely to bring in its train many questions about our public policy priorities. Already there is a growing populist resentment towards the increasing concentration of wealth in the US. There is increasing disillusionment with the effects of free trade agreements on the lives and economic security of working and middle class Americans which includes the anxiety felt by many towards the influx of migrants from these free trade areas. For many Americans there is an inability to meet the basics of a decent existence through the absence of affordable health care or dependable retirement income. Hurricane Katrina exposed us to the harsh realities of poverty and racism that continue to disfigure American life. Catastrophic weather patterns have ignited concerns about humanly influenced climate change. Continuing war is resulting in increasing disillusionment with government's failure to respond to our dependence on oil and the development of alternative energy sources. At the same time a right wing authoritarian Christianity has led the nation down a path of intolerance, discrimination and religious chauvinism. Its constricted moral rage has been blind to questions of poverty, social injustice and environmental degradation. Meanwhile there is an increasingly pervasive sense that there is a crisis of meaning and values in America—one that leads to a debasement of human relationships, accelerating materialism and greed, and misplaced fixation on celebrity and glamour. *In this context there is a compelling need to articulate a new bottom line for education—one that*

offers a different vision for educating our children that directly and cogently speaks to human purpose and meaning in the world that that they will inherit.

The no child left behind debacle

Of course any such attempt will need to start with the failures of recent national education reforms with their deleterious effect on schools in the United States. These have been well documented by researchers and include the failure to significantly reduce the racial achievement gap; the penalizing of immigrant children and special needs students; increased drop-out rates; the narrowing of the curriculum and the shallow reductionist form of learning; the increased stress and anxiety among students resulting from the obsessive focus on standardized tests; the diversion of public funds to private tutoring sources and for-profit schools; the de-skilling of teachers work and the delegitimation of the teaching profession. All of this points to a bankruptcy of public policy in education. And as the failures and unpopularity of these reforms gather steam there are increasing calls to tether education even more closely to the human capital demands of big business, as well to intensify the measurements of accountability in public schools (and in higher education). Little is heard in the public discourse about education's responsibility to nurturing the knowledge, attitudes and dispositions of a democratic polity. Short shrift is given to the value of developing the imagination and creative aptitudes of the young. There is little attention afforded to the capacity of education to enhance the ability of young people to critically interrogate popular media or the sources of public information. Intellectual and creative activity as a joyful human act, not simply a vehicle for instrumental advantage, comes to be regarded as frivolous waste. And it is taken as axiomatic that the moral context of the classroom and school is one that emphasizes individual achievement, competitive advantage, and willingness to subordinate authentic interests and passions to the compulsive quest for college and career success. It is fully understandable that parents are concerned about the capacity of their children to achieve basic literacy and numeracy. These skills are, after all, fundamental to the ability to negotiate the modern world. Yet the emphasis on these to the exclusion of all else produces a sadly limited form of education devoid of any larger human vision—one that speaks to the quest for lives of meaning and purpose. Sep-

arated from the latter and focusing only on the transmission of skills and technical competencies the classroom quickly becomes a site of boredom, stifled curiosity, and joyless learning.

Yet, as I have suggested above, the growing political crisis holds out the possibility of change and hope. The Republican Party has exhausted its armory of chauvinistic aggression and its agenda of hateful moralism and demonization. The Democrats have failed, so far, to articulate a courageous path of political, ethical and social renewal for our national community. This is a moment of uncertainty but also opportunity to re-shape the public language of education. There is the opportunity to participate in the articulation of a shared vision of what it should mean to educate a new generation who will have to contend with increasingly perilous social circumstances, but also extraordinary possibilities for transforming our world into one that is social just, compassionate and environmentally responsible. In many ways, as my long time colleague and collaborator David Purpel (2004) has argued, there are no educational problems, only social issues that get played out on the terrain of education. The magnitude of the human and ecological crisis we confront demands more than the often arcane and ego-inflating exegesis of academic discourse. Can we really doubt that our situation today calls for a language and vision that is bold, courageous and resonant to the fears, concerns and hopes of the broad majority of human beings.

Education and the crisis of democracy

In my own writings (see for example Shapiro, 2006) I have tried to describe the contours of such a vision and the educational agenda that can be drawn from it. There is surely little doubt that we face a deep crisis of meaningful citizenship in this country. And in this regard education has abdicated its responsibilities. Indeed schooling contributes in important ways to the evisceration of civic culture and the erosion of identities that are capable of seriously enacting democratic citizenship. Meaningful citizenship—what Stuart Ewan (1988) refers to as a 'democracy of expression' is more and more replaced by what he calls a 'democracy of consumption'. For many people—young people especially, choice, power, and freedom are increasingly reduced to ones capacity to buy. The marketplace defines 'democratic' action more than the polling booth or public engagement and advocacy. The credit card defines one's eligibility as

a citizen. That critical aspect of democracy—the capacity to exert power over one's circumstances is reduced to the ability to shop from the ever-expanding, dizzying array of available products. Advertisers have appropriated the language of democratic life so that change, innovation, renewal, and the energy of public life are concentrated and distilled into the excitement of fashion, automobile ownership, the latest upgrade in the technology of communication, or the promise of optimal experiences offered through travel, drink or sex. The question of how much fulfillment or meaning is ultimately available from this culture of consumption and its preoccupation with glamour, fame, and money, is certainly something we must return to below. What is clear is how far this focus is from Ewan's democracy of expression. If democracy is about a shared search for better society then consuming is all about what *I have acquired or experienced*. If democracy is about improving our common wellbeing then consumption relentlessly offers the prospect of 'getting an edge' and being one-up on our neighbor in looks, acquisitions, opportunities, and style. A possessive and competitive individualism is at its motivational core. In sharp contrast to this a democracy of expression concerns the capacity to name and articulate the circumstances that enable or limit a full and satisfying human existence, not just for oneself but for all of us who are members of our shared polity.

Yet it is a rarity when schooling offers students the opportunity to develop that capacity for expression that enhances democratic life and citizenship. School for most students is primarily about the process of domestication and conformity as they learn the grammar and syntax of test-taking skills and become adept at the search for the single correct answer on the test sheet. Creative thought, critical questioning, the articulation of ideas and insights about students' lives and concerns have little place in the classrooms of most young people. The suffocating regimes of educational reforms squeeze out any possibility of educating young people so that they develop genuine curiosity about their world, a passion to pursue and understand life's purpose, and the will to challenge accepted truths and conventions. Most of all schools now develop accountants of test scores and grade point averages, and adept manipulators of college resumes through the accumulation of curricular and extra-curricular experiences. Little here can contribute to a mind that is alert and awake to the challenges we face as a human community, and is imbued with the desire to question deeply and boldly those social, moral and epistemological assumptions and categories that shape our dangerously divisive, wasteful, and materialistic world. After Abu Ghraib and the abuses of Guantanamo

and elsewhere we must be concerned again with the propensity towards an unthinking conformity—a readiness to do or say whatever is deemed necessary in order to oblige those in authority. As we know so well the path towards what Hannah Arendt called so aptly the 'banality of evil' starts in school with the message about doing what one is told to do without question or reflection. When success in school comes to mean rote memorization, the search for the single right answer, and intellectual conformity or timidity, then we have created the conditions in which human beings learn that it is right to abdicate their capacity for moral autonomy and 'wide-awake' thoughtfulness and decision making.

The shrinking ability to see knowledge as having any transformative power other than as the crass instrument of individual advantage is also the consequence of the world of spin that engulfs political and corporate life in the United States. This is a point well made by Bernard Cooperman (2007) for whom our culture is one that induces cynical, disbelieving attitudes towards any claims about truth or judgment. Whether it is about the deleterious effects of tobacco or the crisis around climate change someone can always be found (backed up of course by powerful vested interests) to refute whatever claims are made. People are taught, first and foremost, to see themselves as consumers who choose sides as a matter of temporary and shifting taste or convenience. Intellectual conviction and ethical commitment are replaced by cant, spin and short-term interests. And this, says Cooperman, is reflected in our classrooms where students have lost the ability to think critically about the world because they do not believe in knowledge itself. These difficulties however should, of course, only strengthen our conviction as to the need to understand education's crucial role in revitalizing a democratic culture. In the face of the extraordinary and intensifying power of elites—corporate, political, military, to structure the language and set the limits of public debate in this country, any significant new educational vision must be one that includes the prospect of a critically reflective, boldly questioning, and imaginatively creative citizenry.

Education and the struggle for community

The crisis of democratic citizenship is also the crisis of community. The withering of what Cornel West (2004) refers to as *parrhesia*—the capacity for bold and courageous thinking, is also the erosion of social

cohesion and communal interdependence. And in each case schools are an important (though certainly not the sole) factor in this decline. School is after all that place where children first learn the 'culture of separated desks'. It is the place where they are first formally introduced to a world-view in which life's rewards—material and symbolic, are seen as the product of an endless struggle with one's neighbors. The mentality of the bell-curve instructs them that scarcity of affirmation, recognition and reward is part of the very DNA of human existence. It is a social impera-tive, they learn, to acquire those skills, manners, dispositions and knowledge that give them an advantage over the next individual. What-ever is said about friendship, sharing and caring in our schools and classrooms, the real effect of the curriculum is to teach the centrality of competition and individualism in our social relations. In this world, chil-dren learn, not everyone can be someone; some of us are inevitably des-tined for failure and invisibility. To be 'somebody' rest on the capacity to classify another as being 'no-body'. It is a lesson relentlessly emphasized through schools' constant attention to the markers of success and fail-ure, validation and rejection. It is a message that deeply penetrates stu-dents' understanding of human existence. The world is a predatory place. The fear of failure hangs over all of us and with it a distrust and suspicion towards those who appear to have acquired something more than we have. It is a world in which envy, dissatisfaction, and an inces-sant drive towards invidious comparison permeate our lives. From the gold stars of kindergarten to the status hierarchy of college selection schooling is an insistent socialization into the world of hierarchy, status and human separation. We are, through this process, driven apart not together; led to see ourselves as working against one another rather than acting cooperatively; and primed for an aggressive egoism rather than an open-hearted generosity.

Those who would argue that the root emotion of our competitively-driven, aggressively self-oriented culture is fear make a convincing ar-gument. There is the anxiety that what we have must constantly be pro-tected from those who jealously desire to take it from us, resent our hard won gains, or wish to diminish our success in some way. Such pervasive *resentiment* produces what Barbara Ehrenreich (1990) refers to as the constant 'fear of falling'; the sense that in a ferociously competitive world someone is always just behind you on the ladder waiting (hoping) you will slip. The encircling arms of young children as they protect their assignment from the eyes of other children so aptly embodies the world

view of a fearful and suspicious individualism. Their answers dare not be shared with other children for that would diminish their special claim to success and recognition. For those whose arms and hands are used to hide what they know is an inadequate response, the body language manifests the shame and vulnerability of failure in that painful world in which worth is always contingent on success and achievement.

In this landscape of painful human fragmentation and separation the hunger for connection, genuine friendship, closeness and camaraderie find expression—but often in ways that still bear the marks of a hostile and fearful environment. Our preoccupation with the flag and the military speaks to a desperate desire for some unifying focus of a shared community. Sadly such a focus invariably becomes a fetish that carries the insistence on patriotic conformity. It comes quickly to stand for that nationalistic sense of togetherness which leaves little room for dissent. It is a community in which the price of membership is an unquestioning allegiance to governmental authority or the belief in the perennial rightness of one's cause. Not surprisingly such patriotic belonging is underpinned by triumphalism and an uncritical celebration of always being on the right side of history. This sense of connection with others is marked too by a Manichean view of the world in which the ties that bind us to some, situate others as our inveterate enemies. We are locked into a constant struggle between ourselves-the forces of light, and others who represent the side of evil. It is hardly surprising that this kind of patriotism seems always to find, or construct, a threatening force in the world which we are required to oppose with a uniformity of ideological and political support. The construction of community here is rooted in a zero-sum world of enemies; connection among us is predicated by our hostility towards, and fear of, those who appear to threaten our way of life. It is easy to see how young people are socialized into this kind of world-view. The school pep rally and varsity athletics rivalry inculcate a frenzied support for one's own team. Pride and loyalty towards one's 'own' side come together with a demonizing of the opposition. The celebration of our shared identity is always one side of a coin whose other face is fierce competition and the will to superiority or dominance. The poison of a community constructed through invidious comparison with others who are viewed as inferior, immoral or bent on our destruction has very deep roots in our culture. We do not have to look far to see a politics built around the contrast between those of 'us' who inhabit the normal, safe and hygienic world of heterosexuality and those who appear to threaten

its acceptance. Our world is riven by religious claims as to who speaks with the one and only true voice of God and those who are heretical pretenders. Migrants from other countries seeking a better life for themselves and their families are made to appear as a dangerous threat to the national culture and language. Modernity with its drive towards unceasing change, dislocation and uncertainty produces a world of extraordinary alienation and anxiety. Unprecedented movements of people across borders, disruption of settled ways of life through the cultural 'invasion' of TV, movies, and the internet, and economic upheavals caused by rapid technological innovation and global movements of capital and finance all add to the transitoriness and flux of everyday life. It can hardly be surprising that such conditions are a catalyst for attempts to forge stable identities around what Zygmunt Bauman (1997) calls 'neo-tribalism'. Such identities are often ones that are turned in on themselves—absolutist in their thinking, resistant to any outside influences, and rigidly hierarchical (usually aggressively patriarchal). These communities of resistance to the destabilizing effects of modernity and globalized capitalism provide a sense of connection and meaning in an atomized and disrupted world.

Fierce assertion of communal identity reflects also a spiritual and physical resistance by those whose ethnicity, gender, religious traditions, and national identity have been degraded, repressed and submerged. These allegiances are formed from the pain and humiliation dealt to oppressed groups. Such communities are both political and therapeutic attempting to assuage the wounds of humiliation, invisibility and marginality while demanding redress to the social injustices they have had to constantly endure. Such communities frequently demand schools of their own where the pride of heritage and identity can be transmitted to a younger generation. We see this in schools that emphasize an Afrocentric curriculum, Jewish day schools, schools for Indian and other indigenous groups, in Muslim schools, the gender specific education of women, and in some kinds of Christian schools. There is an understandable wish among communities whose history has been one of exclusion and oppression to provide for their young an education that reverses the pattern of marginality, humiliation and invisibility. Such educational goals are integral to a vision of a culturally diverse democracy. Yet there is a tension here that should not be ignored between democracy's promise of the affirmation of plural cultural, ethnic, and religious communities, and the need to ensure a *universal* human ethic and a global civic culture.

The enormous challenge in the 21st century is to allow and facilitate the genuine recognition and flourishing of all those communities that have hitherto been made invisible by the exercise of hegemonic cultures and, at the same time, to ensure that fierce allegiance within these communities does not preclude a sense of wider human connection and interdependence. *It is I believe the task of education to both facilitate the former while also encouraging the latter.* This means that education has a double role around the issue of community. Schools need to provide the space in which particularistic identities can be nurtured. They need also to build and encourage communities of a much wider span in which a universal human ethic and consciousness flourishes. It is surely necessary to assert as never before the connectedness of the human species (and of course the interdependence on earth of all life). We face as a human community threats to our very existence as a species from pollution, climate change, water shortages, nuclear armaments, the spread of disease across national borders, and violence that makes no distinction between combatants and innocent civilians. Education will have to be a part of a process that asserts and supports identities that are a complex weave of the particular and the universal, the local and the global, the partial and the whole. We know enough now about the meaning of identity to understand the importance of rootedness and place to human wellbeing. But we also are increasingly aware of the malignant and dangerous consequences to others when such identity refuses to acknowledge the bonds that connect all of our species as social, ethical, and spiritual beings. Citizenship education today must be one that is concerned with our plural identities *and* the social cohesion stemming from our common concerns and needs as human beings (Maalouf, 2000).

Schooling and global justice

Of course it is impossible to address the pressing question of community in our lives if we do not acknowledge its inseparability from issues of social justice. Community is after all that mode of being in which each of us is visible and recognized within the circle of human presence. Each of us takes our place within this circle as a presence of inestimable value, equally empowered and responsible for what is collectively undertaken, and fully supported and secure in the care of ones neighbors. The evidence points to a deep hunger for community among human

beings yet the practices and reality of our daily lives constantly contradicts its possibility. We are in school and elsewhere constantly subjected to a process that creates a world of winners and losers—a hierarchy of worth and recognition in which, as John Holt once noted, a few learn to get what they like, and many learn to like what they get. School is, in the words of educational historian Joel Spring, first and foremost a 'sorting machine' that socializes the young into a world of inequality. The primary and most insidious lesson of education is the legitimacy of unequal treatment and differential human value. School is nothing if it is not a vehicle for the transmission of hierarchical distinctions of respect, worth, ability and economic expectations. It is the seeding ground for a society in which we accept astonishing inequalities in the circumstances of our lives—access to health care, decent housing, availability of food, opportunities for rest and recreation, security of employment, dignity and respect in the community and on the job. Of course such hierarchical ordering stands in sharp contrast to our vision and desire for a community that is something more than the clichés of a Hallmark card. The classroom itself, as we have already noted, is a place in which the ethic of mutual caring and support is undone by the relentless process of competitive-individualism in which students learn and are urged 'to get ahead' of one another. And talk of a national community is mocked by the extraordinary differences in children's lives consequent upon differences of race, wealth and gender. All talk of 'no child left behind' is pure obfuscation in a society where social and economic inequalities bear down heavily on children's lives hopelessly blighting the possibilities for success or achievement among so many. And talk of a shared national interest is much of the time a cover for glaring and increasing inequalities in the lives of citizens. Hurricane Katrina provided a window onto the horrifying world of racial and class discrimination in the United States where the lives of thousands of poor and working class citizens were subjected to a callous disregard by their government at an hour of overwhelming need.

In the wider world the new global economic order has been a prescription for increasing inequalities in the shape of people's lives. Nearly 3 billion people on the planet live on less than two dollars a day; 850 million people go hungry and, according to UN estimates, 20–30,000 children die every day of starvation or preventable diseases related to malnutrition. More and more power accrues to gigantic transnational businesses that undermine any notion of a democratic polity where or-

dinary people have a real say about the kind of world in which they live. Talk of community when such extraordinary disparities exist in the distribution of wealth and in the exercise of power becomes emptied of any real meaning. In a world in which elites have such a disproportionate capacity to influence our culture, economic well being, social policy around matter like education and health care, and how we deal with our environment, the general interest of the many is supplanted by the greed and self-aggrandizement of the few. When community is understood as one of shared social and economic concerns, mutual human respect, and the pursuit of our common wellbeing then the present course of national and international development belies any such vision. Our nation and our world are suffused with the images of environmental toxicity and degradation that fall hardest on the poorest among us. The security of working people is undercut by the callous and indiscriminate search for more profits. The underdeveloped places of our planet are ruthlessly plundered and exploited by those with political and military power. Millions die from the lack of medicines withheld because of the greed of the drug industry. And thousands of young women are the exploited commodities of sexual 'tourism.' An education that is to nurture the sense of human connectedness within both our nation and within the larger global human family is an imperative of our time. It is the only alternative to a world of increasing and unnecessary suffering, more cataclysmic war and violence, and lives not blighted by a dehumanized existence in which people are treated as throwaway and expendable items of little enduring value.

To educate towards the now pressing vision of human community cannot be separated from the need to move human consciousness away from the impulse to sort, select, and rank, and to find and to legitimate winners and losers. In our schools this will be no easy task since education is almost unimaginable today when it not about such a process. Yet we need to be reminded that, despite the power and influence of such ideas, other ethical, political and spiritual visions persist. These visions speak to the continuing possibility of a world in which all are affirmed in their worth, respect and autonomy; in which all deserve to live with decency and security; and in which meaning is found through the sharing of our earthly resources. Such a vision must surely infuse what Raymond Williams once referred to as the long revolution that we are called upon to make both in our schools and throughout our social institutions.

Towards a pedagogy of peace

All of this rests on the belief in a universal human ethic. It is an ethic rooted in the concept of the infinite value and preciousness of each and every human life. Its first imperative is to refuse violence against others. We cannot separate a vision of education centered on the quest for democracy, community and social justice from the need for an education that negates the violence that pervades our culture. The third great responsibility of education today is to cultivate a culture of peace. But in the end this goal cannot be separated from the need to cultivate the bonds of universal human community and a culture of democracy. The first challenge of educating for peace is overcoming the dualistic and Manichean thinking that shapes so much of human consciousness in our world. At every turn we learn to understand our world as one constructed from rigid and binary categories; black vs. white, male vs. female, gay vs. straight, disabled vs. able, native vs. alien, Europe vs. Africa, our country vs. their's, and so on. We learn to view all things through a prism that separates and opposes one side from another. And to this separation we add the qualities that give 'our' side its supposed superiority. This is a way of constructing reality that ensures not just a world of immoveable divisions but one in which we come to see our attributes, allegiances, and preferences as the stuff that makes us better than, more deserving, more enlightened or even genetically superior to all others. This polarized, us/them world is the recipe of inevitable and certain prejudice and hatred. Fear and anger corrode all relationships. Resentment of mistreatment and the ache of dehumanization fill the lives of those distinguished by their supposed failings and pathologies. And fear of the encroachment of the other shapes the psychology and politics of those who hold themselves as superior. If we don't act with force to restrain and contain the other, it is held, we might succumb to their influence. In this view security comes through the domination and suppression of others.

Educating for peace works within what appears to be a paradoxical world view. It asserts on the one hand the ancient spiritual wisdom that all human life is of inestimable value. In this view all people have unconditional or infinite worth. It asserts that all our distinctions and separations obfuscate the fundamental oneness of existence and the endless recycling and regeneration of our common origins within the elemental stardust of the universe. From this perspective education means to em-

phasize the precious value and meaning of all life. It shifts our focus from the qualities that separate us, and polarizes us, to those that connect us and speak to our similarities. Security in this view depends not on our capacity to dominate or exclude, but on our willingness to show generosity and open-heartedness towards others. Our well-being, as Michael Lerner suggests, depends on the well-being of everyone on our planet.

While educating for peace requires that we see the essential humanity of all people it also requires that we fully recognize the way in which our lives have been conditioned and shaped through the particularity of our language, history, gender, culture and class. What has the experience of living meant for this person and those who share that particular experience? It has been said that one's enemy is someone whose story you have not heard. Peace education certainly demands the possibility of dialogue in which one's life can be shared with others. It means cultivating a hermeneutical approach to 'truth' in which the emphasis is less on whose view is right than on simply hearing what it means to grow up and deal with a particular set of circumstances. A process that emphasizes sympathetic listening rather than the impulse to quick judgment. It means to struggle with one's own immediate assumptions and prejudices in order to truly hear the challenges and obstacles in the life of the other. Such dialogue breaks down or deconstructs—the simplistic and damaging binary view of identities. In its place emerges a more complex and fluid understanding of one's neighbor. Someone who is different in some respects from oneself yet so similar in others; a person whose being is not solely defined through a single characteristic of religion, race, nationality, disability, etc. And a person who is not fully formed and complete but someone whose life is evolving and changing.

Of course the sharing and naming of experience can only be a part of what it means to educate for peace. There must also be exploration of the culture of violence—the social conditions that predispose us towards the harming of others on the macro scale we now witness. We have to look at what Zygmunt Bauman has termed *adiaphorization*—the tendency, so pronounced in our world, to become desensitized to the pain and humiliation of others. We have to look here at the way violence becomes entertainment; the way wars are depicted through the mass media as video games; and the overall consequence of the barrage of violent images and themes on our sensibilities as human beings. We have to consider how poverty and unemployment sap human beings of hope for a better future and open the door to a nihilistic rage. Or the way

domination—cultural, economic and political, humiliates and dehumanizes people and can become a catalyst for suicidal revenge. And we must recognize the way that so much of the violence in the world is overwhelmingly perpetrated by men. Here we have to consider the way masculinity is constructed around the axis of power and dominance. Vulnerability, dependence and the desire for nurturance are regarded as signs of human weakness (read femininity) that evoke hostility and disgust and are an incitement to violent suppression whether in oneself or in others.

Without this kind of critical social reflection we run the risk of approaching the issue of violence as simply a manifestation of individual or even collective pathology. The mass murders in our schools are approached only as a matter of psychopathology requiring more efficient mental health systems. Suicidal bombings by Muslims are disconnected from the history of colonialism, the trauma of Palestine, or current western domination of much of the Arab world. Rape and brutality directed against women, or homophobic violence, are not seen within the context of aggressive and authoritarian forms of male identity. And war is somehow disconnected from the multibillion dollar economic interests that enthusiastically encourage militaristic resolutions of social conflicts.

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A fuller and more radical expression of democracy, a culture of peace that teaches us to practice non-violent means of resolving human conflicts, and relationships between people that celebrate and affirm the bonds of community and interdependence among us are some of the great challenges before us in this century. Their failure to be seriously addressed confronts us with threats to the very possibility of a desirable human future. And all these challenges will require efforts and interventions in a multiplicity of ways within both our individual lives and across the landscapes of our public institutions. There can be no doubt of the extraordinary importance of education to making these changes. Education is after all that sphere where reason, reflection, imagination, and the capacity to act with thoughtfulness and creativity is stirred and nurtured. Yet it is clear that this far from where the present discourse of education has taken us. Schools have become instruments of conformity and passivity. They are enthralled to the language of management and controlled outcomes, measured by their usefulness to the state as the

means to supply trained workers, and for parents schools mirror all of the fears and uncertainties of an unsafe and rapidly changing world. For the latter, education can, perhaps, provide their kids with an edge, or at least the minimum set of skills and aptitudes that will enable them to survive in an increasingly competitive society. Yet even within a culture so dominated by fear there is still hope. Out of the frozen ground we see shoots of possibility. There are moments of recognition by parents and citizens that our children's education should be a joyful, creative and thought-provoking experience, not the dull grind of endless tests. Teachers are becoming more vocal about their frustrations as to the lack of opportunities for dialogue, critical reflection and meaningful learning in the classroom. Members of the community are voicing their concerns that schooling seems to provide little that prepares young people for active and thoughtful participation as citizens of a democracy. Among students there is increasing criticism of the drill and test variety of education with its resulting boredom and alienation. More students are demanding a curriculum that is relevant to their lives and to what is happening in the world. Still it might be that in the end the awesome and terrifying events that now confront us as a species will provide the powerful catalyst for change in how we view the task of education. More and more we see that the fate of the earth itself is now in the balance. We will have to confront the fundamental challenges to the way we have constructed our social world or face the dangerous consequences of inaction. We will need to teach our children to think deeply and critically about the costs of a consumer culture and how human wants are manipulated into an endless desire for more with all of its devastating consequences for our resources and the flow of pollutants into our environment. We will need to teach our children to think in ways that are holistic—understanding that human life and nature do not stand opposed to each other but are seamlessly connected in an interdependent web. We must be stewards not violators of our natural world. We will need to teach so that our children see themselves not as isolated and self-contained beings, but members of an interdependent community with common needs and shared responsibilities. And we will need to emphasize that a sense of social justice must be present in all of our human actions so that the privileged lives of some do not depend on a callous disregard for the lives or fate of others.

In this time of great danger and also extraordinary possibility educators are called towards a prophetic role. They must insist that in the

conditions that now confront us the present educational agenda only reinforces and even compounds our problems. To educate today must instead be an act that helps transform human consciousness and conscience. The vision that animates our work as educators must be rooted in the ancient quest for *Tikkun Olam*—the effort to repair and heal our world as a place of generous and loving community, in which there is a just sharing of rewards and obligations, where human differences are mediated by respect and recognition, a world of ecological sanity and responsibility, and where there is the widest diffusion of opportunities for human beings to participate in shaping the world they live in. No matter how far-fetched or unrealistic such a vision may appear to be in relation to the present concerns of schooling, this is no time for timidity. The immense dangers and the extraordinary suffering within which we are now engulfed, demands from us a bold, daring and imaginative kind of thinking. Anything less is an irresponsible negation of our obligations to coming generations.

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Education towards difference and inclusion. Two types of discourses —to positive pedagogy*

ABSTRACT. The main goal of this article is description of two educational discourses pertaining to differences, their acceptance and eradication or alleviation. The first is the special needs pedagogy, which has seen a dispute between the enthusiasts of institutional and social integration of the disabled with people, communities and institutions dominated by those within a given norm. The second is characteristic of the critical pedagogy and sociology—concerns people and social groups who are culturally and socially excluded and marginalised, both overtly and covertly.

KEYWORDS: inclusion, special needs pedagogy, critical pedagogy, positive pedagogy

Inclusion is a category that stands in opposition to exclusion, marginalization and segregation with regard to people who diverge from the health, cultural, social norms or not fulfilling normative expectations or institutional and social ideals (schools included).

Educational discourses pertaining to differences, their acceptance and eradication or alleviation can be divided into two trends (cf. Slee, 2009). One of them—the special needs pedagogy—has seen a dispute between the enthusiasts of institutional and social integration of the disabled with people, communities and institutions dominated by those within a given norm. The second trend embraces specialist care of people with different kinds of disabilities, health deficiencies or life threats.

The second discourse—characteristic of the critical pedagogy and sociology—concerns people and social groups who are culturally and socially excluded and marginalised, both overtly and covertly. These

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practices are socially justified, for example, in cases of social selections in education. They can also be felt as unjust and likened to the unavailability of resources ensuring decent standard and quality of life.

Despite the fact that processes of social exclusion experienced by people of low cultural and social capitals operate in a spectrum of domains, the high social cost of exclusion, tendency to be reiterated cross-generationally, and the fact that they have been well-researched, there is a need for a stronger discourse of educational inclusion of marginalised groups. Globally, as well as more locally—in Poland—the main types of special needs pedagogies are medical, psychiatric, guardianship, charity, pastoral, humanistic, and emancipatory.

Critical pedagogy, sociology and anthropology along with critical social philosophy provide reliable and in-depth diagnoses of social inequities within educational settings. Moreover, they are a case for positive pedagogy programmes and systematically broaden the catalogue of groups likely to be marginalised, including the social MAJORITY, i.e. women (cf. Chmura-Rutkowska et al., 2013; Gromkowska-Melosik, 2011). Polish social pedagogy, initiated by Helena Radlińska and recently creatively reread by Lech Witkowski, has had an extensive tradition in this respect. Tomasz Szkudlarek school of philosophical and anthropological pedagogy has had a special impact on the critical pedagogy.

Within this paradigm, for instance, Basil Bernstein demands that every person is granted the possibility of exercising their rights to a full development, building positive social relations, and political participation. He does that on grounds of widely known research into the reproduction of cultural differences determined by the environment of primary socialisation and enculturation. Here, education (also called "pedagogy") is understood as a lifelong developmental effort of an individual to learn from all possible sources and to build their identity.

A similarly broad structural and functional programme of preventing social inequity in accessing culture and decent life has been proposed by a Swedish sociologist, Goran Therborn (2006). According to him there are three types of unjust differences in the social standing of individuals. These are: vital (concerning health and life), existential (concerning freedom, respect, relations, outlook, and identity), and resources (concerning income, wealth, standard and quality of life). Within mechanisms of creating inequality, such as distancing, exclusion, hierarchisation, and exploitation, he has distinguished causative entities and factors from the systemic dynamisms and functions. Therborn has pointed to

types of equality mechanism, such as (1) catching-up (early recognition of communities at threat, compensatory capacitation, affirmative action, field-evening, counselling and encouragement institutions, actions boosting the autonomy of the excluded), (2) inclusion (entitlement, facilitating migration, demanding and the fight for observing human rights), (3) resources redistribution (taxes, politics and social care).

Systemic application of strategies and resources aiming at reducing acute and unjust differences, however, is neither common nor easy to accept in contemporary democratic states. Indeed, democracy is funded on two pillars: freedom and equality which are in constant and inevitable conflict (John Rawls).

Emphasising freedom (over equality) leads to justifying any differences and treating them as natural. Their reconciliation is possible as part of voluntary help and acts of mercy. This takes place within the neoliberal system, within which education undergoes the rules of the free market, as a systemic rule of self-regulation. In a weaker form, the dominance of freedom results in elitism and entrusting the enlightened upper classes with leading the nation towards prosperity. Here, in the republican reality, unequal access is simply petrified, along with difficult access to the high quality of education.

Emphasising equality (over freedom) in liberal systems leads to making rights and structural access equal. This also concerns all levels of education, roles, and occupations, irrespective of the social and ethnic background, gender or race. This, however, does not entail systemic interventions in the case of exercising the right to equal chances in advancing one's social status or escaping the reproduction of poverty and exclusion.

According to J. Rawls, fully-fledged democracy—in fact, social democracy—strongly emphasising the rule of social equality, causes systemic interventions with the view of preventing unjust differences right at the outset, on one's way towards prosperous adulthood and compensating for social and cultural exclusion.

Backing-up J. Rawls' arguments are comparative studies coming from the field of social medicine (carried out globally by Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett, 2010). In their recent book, under the telling title *The spirit level. Why greater equality makes societies stronger*, the authors have shown that the greater the differences in income levels and living standards, the greater are the number of the poorly educated with restricted access to culture. Moreover, these differences correlate with

poor social relations (saturated with mistrust, and hostility), higher numbers of mentally ill and addicted to drugs, higher level of obesity, more pregnancies among teenagers, higher crime levels and imprisoned people, and poorer social mobility within one society.

In contemporary Poland, John Rawls' or Richard Wilkinson's and Kate Pickett's arguments are not only not obvious but might bring about associations with the negative experiences of the alleged communism, abandoning socially and educationally beneficial structural solutions from the Polish People's Republic.

If we have a careful look at the typology of the contemporary democracy as seen by John Rawls, or at experiences of professor Nicholas Caritat—a protagonist of a book by Steven Lukes (2003)—a tourist travelling through democratic countries after he escaped an authoritarian state, we can quite easily state that Poland has been attempting to incorporate all these characteristics at once for the last quarter of century (along with demons of the authoritarian past and the long compromised catchphrases of national closure and xenophobic distancing from anything different). As a country we have been drifting quite long on this astonishing convergence of political systems. We may arrive at the same conclusion having read the review of the contemporary types of democracy and the education systems functioning within them, carried out by Aharon Aviram in his book titled *Navigating through the storm. Reinventing education for postmodern democracies* (Aviram, 2010).

Nobody and nothing can free us—educators—from seeing educational institutions as obliged to provide everybody—irrespective of their non-normativity—with key competences of access to the symbolic culture, which is fundamental to ensuring prosperous life, respect for oneself, good social relations and taking part in political decisions.

Exclusion, often within education and through education, concerns a spectrum of developmental possibilities, partial developmental disabilities, access to good social relations, achieving higher social and professional standing, access to culture and in political decisions and citizen activity.

From this perspective, inclusion seems to be a moral imperative, a political rule, good quality of public discourse, transparent evaluation criteria, open-mindedness with regard to differences and types of orientation, equal treatment of all non-normativity, removing barriers, negative reaction to hate speech, xenophobia and marking non-normativity, creating the possibility and institution of another chance, constructive

opposition to depriving people of specialist care and leaving weak and helpless people to their own devices. At the same time, however, inclusion cannot be synonymous with annexation, appropriation, granting supposed autonomy, depriving one of independence; also, it cannot mean accepting attempts of social domination of the marginalised groups.

Should education for inclusion mean—as Bernstein wants—supporting each individual towards their full developmental possibility, and one of the meanings of 'inclusion' is 'integrity' (see European union convergence policy), making development consistent also concerns intrapsychic areas.

Ken Wilber's model of integral human mind (Wilber, 2006) functioning and the development of awareness levels helps us to understand that one individual can find themselves at different levels of development related to thinking, intuition, emotions, needs, values, and motivation. Furthermore, people also differ with respect to the scope and activity level of the four quarters of mind (related to corporeality and ego, social relations, culture and environment).

Moreover, people of different awareness levels coexist next to one another: starting with archaic (focused on survival), magical (focused on loyalty towards a tribe under the protection of gods), through traditional awareness (fighting for a territory and religion) modern awareness (preferred nowadays competition for success), finishing with postmodern awareness (community-based and focused on tolerating differences), and integrating, global, transcentendental awareness types.

Within the domain of education, one cannot ignore the need to balance these intrapsychic structures and the need to establish good relations between people of different awareness levels. There is also a need for integrated attitudes that also concern divergent stances towards past and future. Some applications of this amazing conception by Wilber can be noticed in Poland (e.g. Kielar, 2012; Kielar & Kop, 2012; Przyborowska, 2013; Błajet, 2012).

Since the idea of 'convergence policy' has been mentioned, we need to take the question of cross-cultural open-mindedness and mobility on board. Polish borders remain open and Poles are said to be remarkably mobile and present globally, especially in the Western European countries. How are they prepared for these migrations? What is the quality of education that they receive? What do they learn amid foreigners and from them? On their return, what are the behaviour patterns, lifestyles, acquired habitus they come back with? How do we, Poles, receive for-

eigners? What kind of education do we offer them and what do they learn from us? What are our relations with our neighbours? Do we know them and, if yes, to what degree do we understand them? Can we cooperate with them and discover distinctness of historical memory? Can we build dialogue despite differences?

The other type of critical pedagogical discourse of inclusion is the pedagogy of caring to introduce students to rules and competences of full, prosperous life (as could be seen in the works of Bernstein, 2000, and Therborn, 2006). Here, invaluable is the research and publications which reconstruct and revitalise complex pedagogical systems from the past (e.g. Andrukowicz, 2006; Szulakiewicz, 2011; Witkowski, 2013), but also successful bold educational experiments (e.g. Garbula, 2010; Urlińska, 2007), touch upon the issue of sense, self-fulfilment and joy of life (e.g. Michalski, 2011; Murawska, 2008; Wajsprych, 2011; Żywczok, 2011). These important research themes are taken up and developed too rarely.

Fortunately, within the positive pedagogy the pedagogy of talent and creativity, encouraging activation and social inclusion of talented and creative people, but also the development of individual's specific skills within regular state-funded schools fares well (e.g. Krasoń, 2005; Limont, 2005; Szmidt & Modrzejewska-Świgulska, 2013). An emerging, and already visible trend, is the anthropological pedagogy (e.g. Cervinkova & Gołębniak, 2013).

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The Polish Pedagogical Association was established over 32 years ago thanks to the massive opposition to and rejection of the previous political system. The Association headquarters was located in Gdańsk. It was set up with the hope of enabling unconstrained discussions on the best educational solutions in the independent, democratic Poland among educators ignoring institutional and generational divisions. Hence one can witness our longstanding involvement in the analysis of reciprocal relations between the dynamics of political system change and possible educational changes. The substantial systemic changes that took place over the last quarter have not resulted in defining a clear trajectory to be pursued per se, including the transparent development of beneficial education on all levels. Perhaps, the trajectory of educational development can be built only on the bottom up basis and hence the emphasis on pedagogical research on positive educational visions and experiences. Naturally, including the ones concerning differences and inclusion.

The most recent book by Dariusz Kubinowski titled *Rozwój badań jakościowych w pedagogice polskiej na przełomie XX i XXI wieku* [*The development of qualitative research in Polish pedagogy at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries*] (Kubinowski, 2013) draws our attention to about 40 thousand successful research projects by educators involved in different types of humanist empirical investigations rejecting the positivist paradigm. Therefore we can look at the future of humanist pedagogy with cautious optimism as opposed to, for instance, psychology which seems to be trapped in the positivist paradigm. This is preferred by the 'corrupted science' (Krimsky, 2006), the competitive research funding system, where discovery and comprehension do not seem to matter; what matters, though, is counting… benefits.

It might be that POSITIVE HUMANIST PEDAGOGIES are our good perspective…

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The elusiveness of progressive masculinity: Gender differences in conceptualizations of nontraditional gender roles

ABSTRACT. Traditional masculinity has been thoroughly explored in psychological research, but its counterpart, progressive masculinity, has undergone relatively little scientific investigation. To determine whether this lack of attention to or understanding of progressive masculinity is mirrored more largely in mainstream culture, we examined how men and women conceptualize and experience gender roles in their everyday lives. Participants were randomly assigned to describe a time in which they had behaved either traditionally or progressively with regard to their gender. Over 80% of men and women in the traditional condition and women in the progressive condition provided condition-appropriate examples. However, men in the progressive condition only provided progressive examples 17% of the time, suggesting that many men may not have an understanding of progressive masculinity. Additional themes, implications, and directions for research on progressive masculinity are discussed.

KEYWORDS: masculinity, femininity, progressive, nontraditional, gender roles

Although psychological research on masculinity and femininity has been popular for decades, researchers have yet to explore a major piece of the gender ideology puzzle. Plenty of literature exists on both traditional and nontraditional notions of femininity, and ample research has been conducted on traditional forms of masculinity, but comparably little research exists on nontraditional, *progressive* notions of masculinity. Most masculinity research examines the effects of traditional masculine gender roles on men's mental health, with minimal examination of other forms of masculinity. As such, discussions of masculinity seem to bifurcate the masculinities into (a) traditional masculinity as defined in

contemporary culture, and (b) "other" forms of masculinity that in some ways deviate from traditional masculinity. In doing so, researchers have yet explicitly to label alternatives to traditional masculinity with which men who espouse nontraditional gender ideologies can identify.

The purpose of this exploratory study is to gather information about how men conceptualize progressive masculinity in their own lives, in order to promote a deeper understanding of gender and a clearer portrait of the many faces of masculinity. Because the lack of research on *progressive* masculinity stands in stark contrast to the abundant research on femininity and traditional masculinity, we begin by acknowledging the major themes from these literatures and then briefly review forms of masculinity other than traditional before presenting the construct of progressive masculinity.

Traditional femininity

Research on femininity and the study of women perhaps most clearly illuminate the lacuna in research on masculinity, as *both* traditional and progressive femininity have been the focus of extensive scientific investigation. Traditional feminine gender roles dictate that women should focus on relationships, be nice, physically attractive, thin, silent, nurturing of others, deferent to men, submissive, and domestic (Crawford & Unger, 2000; Gilbert & Scher, 1999; Mahalik, 2005). The development of psychological measures such as the Conformity to Feminine Norms Inventory (CFNI; Mahalik et al., 2003) and the Adolescent Femininity Ideology Scale (AFIS; Tolman & Porche, 2000) has propelled research on traditional femininity. Via these and other instruments, research has connected women's adherence to traditional feminine gender roles to psychological distress, such as eating disorders (Affleck, 1999; Mahalik et al., 2005) and body dissatisfaction (Cahill & Mussap, 2007; Tiggemann, 2006), as well as to inform various psychotherapies with women.

Nontraditional femininity

In addition to the plentiful research on traditional femininity, research on nontraditional forms of femininity also exists, perhaps because of the long-standing history and strength of the feminist move-

ment. Feminism, a form of nontraditional femininity, gives women the freedom to have careers, be single, childless, leaders, loud, reject traditional ideals of beauty (such as being thin and having long hair), and often explicitly reject traditional femininity. Researchers have created scales to measure feminist ideology, such as the Feminist Identity Scale (FIS; Rickard, 1987), the Feminist Identity Development Scale (FIDS; Bargad & Hyde, 1991), and the Liberal Feminist Attitude and Ideology Scale (LFAIS; Morgan, 1996). Research has connected the espousal of feminist principles to better mental health, such as lower levels of disordered eating (Sabik & Tylka, 2006). This type of research, in turn, has helped inform feminist psychotherapies, making the exploration of nontraditional femininity important in women's mental health care. Collectively, research on traditional and nontraditional femininity and women's mental health has helped scientists and clinicians understand the unique experiences of women and how the espousal of various femininities affects women's lives.

Traditional masculinity

In comparison to psychological research on traditional femininity, research on traditional masculinity is perhaps equally abundant. Traditional masculine gender roles indicate that men should avoid feminine behavior, strive for success and achievement, show no weakness, and seek adventure, even if violence is a necessary part of that adventure (David & Brannon, 1976; Levant & Richmond, 2007; Mahalik, 2003). Many psychological measures have been created and used to examine the effects of traditional masculine gender roles on men's mental health. These include the Brannon Masculinity Scale (BMS; Brannon & Juni, 1984), the Conformity to Masculine Norms Inventory (CMNI; Mahalik et al., 2003), the Gender Role Conflict Scale (GRCS; O'Neil et al., 1986), and the Male Role Norms Inventory (Levant & Fischer, 1998). Since the creation of these measures, men's adherence to traditional masculinity has been linked to anxiety, depression, homophobia, low self-esteem, marital issues, poor physical health, restricted emotionality, and substance abuse (O'Neil, 2008).

By contrast, psychological research on nontraditional masculinity is rare. This omission is evident in recent reviews of masculinity research. For example, neither Levant and Richmond's (2007) review of psycho-

logical research on masculine ideologies nor Wong, Steinfeldt, Speight, and Hickman's content analysis of *Psychology of Men and Masculinity* (2010) explicitly discusses nontraditional versions of masculinity, which is reflective of the lack of primary research on nontraditional masculinity in the psychological literature. However, several masculinities scholars *have* identified "other" forms of masculinity than traditional masculinity, and a brief review of which is provided below.

Other forms of masculinity

In response to the literature's heavy focus on the negative aspects of traditional masculinity, Kiselica, Englar-Carlson, Horne, and Fisher (2008) introduced the construct of *positive masculinity*, which highlights male strengths and the positive aspects of traditional masculinity, such as how traditional masculine gender roles can benefit men. Kiselica and Englar-Carlson (2010) discussed a formal framework emphasizing male strengths as the starting point for psychotherapy with boys and men. Similarly, Good and Hammer (2010) empirically examined the connections between positive psychology and traditional masculine gender roles and found that men who conformed to the traditional masculine gender role of risk-taking reported higher levels of personal courage and physical endurance. A related topic was also discussed by Davies, Shen-Miller, and Isaco (2010), who presented *possible masculinity*, which they defined as "an aspirational and future-oriented goal for men's identities and behaviors based on (a) what men want to be in the future, (b) what men require to meet their developmental needs, and (c) what we, as a community, need from men to foster community safety and health" (Davies, Shen-Miller & Isaco, 2010, p. 348). Although exploring positive and possible masculinity is vital to developing a comprehensive understanding of how traditional masculine gender roles affect individual's lives, both forms of masculinity remain based on traditional masculine norms.

A number of authors have also addressed men's reactions to *hegemonic masculinity* (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Pompper, 2010). For example, Wetherell and Edley (1999) discussed how men position themselves in relation to hegemonic masculinity. These authors conducted a series of interviews in which they asked men whether they classified themselves as "masculine men" and discovered the following three

themes: (a) men aligned themselves with conventional masculine ideals, (b) men separated themselves from conventional ideals, which they viewed as stereotypical, and saw themselves as normal or ordinary in comparison, and (c) men resisted hegemonic masculinity and saw themselves as unconventional. The authors, however, did not discuss nontraditional masculinity or other masculinities. This is another example of how the literature has continued to explore traditional forms of masculinity or even at times the rejection of it without providing a clear direction for men to move. Similarly, Allen (2007) explored *romantic masculinity* in relation to hegemonic masculinity, but found that romantic masculinity substantiated hegemonic masculinity, as men's romantic identities were grounded in active male sexuality and passive female sexuality.

Also, some authors have discussed forms of nontraditional masculinity that are specific to racial/ethnic groups. For example, Hammond and Mattis (2005) asked African American men what manhood meant to them and found themes in their responses that were mostly traditional, such as being a provider, but also some that were nontraditional, such as being able to express one's emotions freely. Focusing instead on Latinos, Arciniega and colleagues (2008) introduced the concept of *caballerismo*, an extension of the word *caballero* (a Spanish gentleman) as the positive nontraditional counterpart to the traditional *machismo*, in their discussion of Latino masculine ideologies, even developing the Traditional Machismo and Caballerismo Scale (TMCS; Arciniega et al., 2008). Research like this on nontraditional masculinity specific to racial/ethnic groups is critical to understanding various forms of masculinity, but it may have limitations in generalizing to other racial/ethnic groups.

From this brief review, one can conclude that researchers have begun to discuss forms of masculinity other than traditional masculinity, but are still in the infancy of forging clear or widely accepted terms to describe alternatives to traditional masculinity. We therefore now introduce the concept of *progressive masculinity* into the empirical literature. Though a comprehensive or final definition of progressive masculinity may be beyond the scope of this article, we offer the following working definition because one has not yet been offered: a form of masculinity emphasizing movement away from traditional male gender roles that are detrimental, restrictive, and oppressing of women, and instead toward volitional and egalitarian behaviors, values, and beliefs. Progressive masculinity is different from positive masculinity in that progres-

sive masculinity refers to aspects of nontraditional masculinity emphasizing gender-role freedom and principles of gender equality, whereas positive masculinity refers to the positive aspects and strengths of traditional masculinity.

The current study is a preliminary attempt to explore the nature of progressive masculinity. In order to determine whether the lack of attention to or understanding of progressive masculinity in the research literature is mirrored more largely within mainstream culture, this study examined how women and men conceptualize and experience traditional and progressive notions of gender in their everyday lives. Male and female participants were randomly assigned to describe a time in which they had behaved either progressively or traditionally with regard to their gender. This methodology allowed a comparison of progressive masculinity to the most closely related concepts: traditional masculinity, progressive femininity, and traditional femininity.

This study explores two research questions. *Research Question* 1 asks how participants will respond when asked to recount a time in their lives when they acted *progressively* with regard to their gender. *Research Question 2* asks how participants will respond when asked to recount a time in their lives when they acted *traditionally* with regard to their gender.

Method

Participants

Participants were enrolled in introductory psychology courses at a large, southeastern, public university in the United States (n = 324), and participation satisfied a course requirement. Participants' ages ranged from 18 to 50 years (M = 18.63, SD = 2.02). In this sample, 28.2% of participants identified as male and 71.8% as female. Of these participants, 65.9% identified as first year students, 19.2% as second year students, 9% as third year students, 4.6% as fourth year students, 0.3% as fifth year students, and 0.9% as sixth year students. Of these participants, 15.8% identified as Hispanic or Latino/a, and 84.2% as Not Hispanic or Latino/a. In addition, 73.1% of participants identified as White or European American, 12.1% as Black or African American, 9.3% as Asian, 0.3% as American Indian or Alaska Native, 0.6% as Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and 4.6% as multi-racial.

Procedure

A description of the study was posted on the university's survey website used to inform students in introductory psychology courses about course requirement opportunities. Participants accessed the survey via an electronic link if they wished to participate for course credit. After accessing the survey website, participants viewed an informed-consent page and provided electronic voluntary consent to participate in the study. Participants then completed a short demographic form on which they indicated their age, school status, sex, and racial/ethnic identity.

Participants were randomly assigned to one of two instructions, stratified by gender. Participants in the "real" condition were asked to reflect on a situation in which they felt as though they were "real" men or women, and participants in the "progressive" condition were asked to reflect on a situation in which they felt as though they were "progressive" men or women. All participants were asked to write briefly about the experience and reflect upon their own experience in order to ensure that they reported a direct, personal memory of an actual experience. Participants were not supplied with definitions of the terms "real" or "progressive" because doing so would have influenced their notions of what the terms meant, which was the primary construct under scrutiny in the study. This manipulation permitted an examination of how women and men conceptualized traditional and progressive notions of gender in their own lives. Participants then answered the following questions in order to allow an examination of the contextual influences on participants' descriptions of their "real" or "progressive" gender-related behaviors: "How meaningful was this event for you?" "How common do you think this type of experience is for other men/women?" "How many males were present at the time of this event?" "What was your relationship to them?" "How many females were present at the time of this event?" and "What was your relationship to them?"

As part of a larger study not addressed in this article, male participants then completed the Conformity to Masculine Norms Inventory (CMNI; Mahalik et al., 2003) and the Gender Role Conflict Scale (GRCS; O'Neil et al., 1986), and female participants then completed the Conformity to Feminine Norms Inventory (CFNI; Mahalik et al., 2005).

Data analysis

In order to determine whether participants were able to give appropriate examples from their lives according to the instructional condition to which they had been randomly assigned, participants' responses were coded as "Progressive" if their response to the prompt contained exclusively progressive or nontraditional notions of their gender, "Traditional" if their response contained exclusively real or traditional notions of their gender, "Progressive and Traditional" if their response contained both progressive/nontraditional and real/traditional notions of their gender, or "None" if their response contained neither progressive/nontraditional nor real/traditional notions of their gender. The study's first and second authors served as the judges and were of different genders, ages, and professional backgrounds. They coded the data independently and were blind to participant condition, though for appropriate coding, they had to know the sex of participants.

When coding male participants' responses as progressive, both raters were looking for responses that were nontraditional and/or were focused on gender equality and rejecting of restrictive notions of masculinity. In the coding scheme, progressive masculinity was identified by responses that did not conform to the items in O'Neil's GRCS (1986) and Mahalik's CMNI (2003) measures. For example, GRCS Item 7 is "Affection with other men makes me tense," so any participant response that discussed expressing physical or emotional affection for another other man (like kissing/hugging/telling a man you love him) and feeling good about it was considered progressive. Responses were coded as traditional that focused on the oppression of women (i.e. were sexist) or included traditional notions of masculinity as described in O'Neil's GRCS and Mahalik's CMNI.

When coding female participants' responses as progressive, both raters were looking for responses that were nontraditional and/or were focused on gender equality and rejecting of restrictive notions of femininity. In the coding scheme, progressive femininity was identified by responses that did not conform to the items in Mahalik's CFNI (2005). For example, CFNI Item 11 is "Having a romantic relationship is essential in life," so any participant response that discussed self-reliance or not needing a relationship partner to feel complete was considered progressive. Responses were coded as traditional that focused on the oppression of women (i.e. were sexist) or included traditional notions of femininity as described in Mahalik's CFNI.

The fact that the judges did not know whether participants were instructed to report a "progressive" or "real" gender experience eliminated an important source of confirmatory bias, as did the independence of their ratings. Initially, discrepancies between judges occurred in 50 of 324 cases (15%). Subsequent conversations between the judges resolved these 50 discrepancies successfully in every case. Twenty-one of 50 cases (42%) produced agreement with the original judgment of the first author, 17 of 50 (34%) resolved in agreement with the original judgment of the second author, and 12 of 50 (24%) resolved with both agreeing to a completely different analysis. In no cases did the judges fail to reach agreement.

Results

Research Question 1 asked how participants would respond when asked to recount a time in their lives when they had acted *progressively* with regard to their gender. Most of the male participants in the "progressive" instruction condition responded to the progressive prompt by recounting an experience that reflected *traditional* notions of masculinity. Only 17% of the male participants in the "progressive" condition provided responses that reflected progressive notions of masculinity, free of any references to traditional masculine gender roles (Figure 1). Instead, the majority (43%) of male participants responded to the "progressive" instruction by recounting a time in which they had acted *traditionally*.
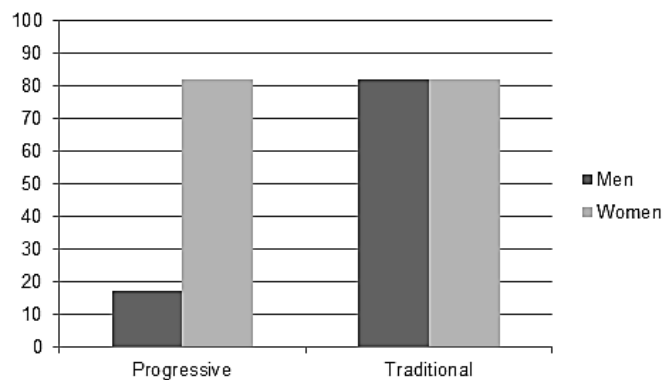
Figure 1: Percent of participants who provided a condition-appropriate response

For instance, a participant in the "progressive" condition responded to the prompt by recounting the following experience:

> I was building a table in a group of three, in which I was happened to be grouped with two other females. For some reason, I felt as if my group members did not have the skills required to build a table out of plain woods and screws. [T]herefore, I took charge, and explained to them [how] to go about and finish the job.

This participant's response is not only aligned with traditional masculine gender roles, as he portrays himself as dominant and in control of the situation, but it is also sexist since he "felt" his female group members "did not have the skills required" to complete the task. Another male participant responded to the "progressive" instruction with a similar experience:

> In high school, I was on the lacrosse team. We were in a tie game with approximately thirty seconds left. One of my teammates checked the ball loose and pushed up the field. I was on attack and he gave me the pass. I beat the goalie one-on-one as time expired to win the game. As my team rushed the field and tackled me to the ground, it felt good knowing my teammate had the confidence in me to finish the game.

This experience also reflects traditional masculinity, as the participant depicts himself as the hero in a physical sport, in which his team beats another team.

Although the majority of male participants' responses to the "progressive" instruction contained references to traditional masculinity, some male participants were able to recount experiences which reflected progressive notions of masculinity. For example, one participant recounted the following experience:

> Everyone picked on this one obnoxious kid in high school. He was so obnoxious in fact, that he had hardly any friends, and was shunned the instant he tried to join in in anything. So I would go out of my way to tell people to shut up when talking bad about him, and would support him if people were being mean to him.

This response reflects a progressive notion of masculinity because the participant is acting in a supportive and caring way, and standing up against bullying. Another male participant similarly took a progressive approach by helping and nurturing a friend emotionally through a breakup:

A friend of mine recently broke up with her boyfriend and was having a tough time. She had noticed that he was hanging around another girl, who was a friend of hers, very frequently and was heartbroken when she found out that they had begun. I noticed how hard this was for her and was there to offer advice and answer any and all questions she had about what to do or say around her ex-boyfriend and more importantly her friend. We ended talking a lot and any time she was confused or frustrated, I was there to help. We have become very good friends because of this.

In comparison to male participants, 82.5% of female participants assigned to the "progressive" instruction condition recounted an experience that reflected a progressive notion of femininity, free of any references to traditional femininity. The results of a χ^2 analysis revealed this effect of participants' gender on whether they were able to respond appropriately to the "progressive" condition as statistically significant, χ^2 (1, n = 324) = 51.94, p < .001 (Figure 1). An example of a female participant's response in the "progressive" condition recounted the following experience:

I told my family I plan on having a successful career before getting married, so I do not have to rely on some man financially.

In this example, the participant values financial independence from men and having her own professional career. Another female participant similarly provided an example involving the rejection of the traditional role of needing a relationship to feel complete or mature:

I don't have to look back far. As of today I consider myself a "progressive" woman. I am single by choice. I am often flattered by various men but opt not to get involved in a relationship. This makes me progressive because I am being independent and making my own rules about this thing called femininity. I have reached a new level of maturation in my womanhood. At the club, I am no longer concerned about getting the most attention from the guys.

Research Question 2 asked how participants would respond when asked to recount a time in their lives when they had acted *traditionally* with regard to their gender. *Both* men and women exposed to the "real" instruction were able to recount experiences that reflected traditional gender roles 82% of the time (Figure 1). For example, a male participant exposed to the "real" man instruction condition recounted the following experience:

> One time in which I felt as though I was a real man was when I got into a fight with a classmate. Up until the fight, we were actually really good friends. In the fight I punched him twice and blocked his attempt at a punch, and I felt as though I had proved myself in some way because I was always skinny for my age. At that moment, I knew that people would realize that I was not one to be messed with.

This response contains references to control, dominance, and violence, all of which are traditional masculine gender roles. Another male participant recounted a similar experience involving both playing football and physical aggression:

> I won a physical fight when a bunch of my friends and this new kid I didn't know were playing football. The new guy pushed me when I asked to play, and I pushed him back. When he came at me again I hit him...again and again and again until he started bleeding. He went home crying.

On the other hand, a female participant in the "real" woman condition recounted the following experience:

> I felt like a woman when I started living with my boyfriend this past summer, making breakfast for him every morning. I felt like a typical domestic housewife that knew she was responsible for caring for her spouse. I would wake up 20 minutes earlier than him, get ready for the day and start making breakfast while he got ready for class. By the time he was ready, I had breakfast set on the table, his keys on the counter and his backpack by the door. Many women would believe this task to be unnecessary, but I felt great knowing that I made his morning a little better than it normally would be. While he made the bed, I washed the dishes and waited for him by the door. At that moment, I felt like my gender was more apparent than ever. I had done every 'feminine' chore possible for him to make his life easier, and fortunately it was very much appreciated.

This response references domesticity, nurturance, and deference to men, all of which are traditional feminine gender roles. Another woman in the traditional condition recounted the following experience involving the traditional female gender role of cooking:

> I do enjoy cooking and baking for special people in my life, which does make me feel like a woman. Preparing a holiday meal others can enjoy is satisfying and using recipes from my grandmother and mother is also a great feeling because it is as though you are keeping the family unit together, which is also a womanly duty to me.

Exploratory analyses

In addition to answering the original research questions, participants' responses yielded some additional themes which emerged as a result of *post-hoc* exploratory analyses attempting further to explore men's and women's gender-role experiences. For example, 31% of female participants responded to the "real" woman prompt by recounting an experience in which the presence of secondary sex characteristics, such as menstruation or breast development, made them feel as if they were "real" women. For example, a female participant in the "real" woman condition recounted the following experience:

> I felt like I became a "real" woman when I got my first menstrual period. I feel as though this makes you a woman because only women experience this cycle. It is the one thing that distinguishes you from a male and it shows that you are maturing into a woman.

Similarly, another participant wrote:

> I would say an experience that made my gender more apparent to me personally was when I went bra shopping for the first time. Up until that point, I had only felt like a girl. After I went bra shopping, I realized that I was growing up into a young woman.

However, *none* of the male participants referenced secondary sex characteristics in response to the "real" man prompt.

Another trend that emerged from participants' responses was reference to competition. Male participants frequently (41%) referenced competition and when they did, *exclusively* referenced competition with other males. On the other hand, 58% of female participants referenced competition, of which 91% was with males and 7% was with females. For example, a female participant in the "progressive" condition referenced competition with other males in the following response:

> One experience I can recall vividly in which I felt empowered as a woman was during an intense game of Halo 2. Although a male dominated activity, I was able to beat all the other boys in the video game. At that moment, I knew that I had dismantled a very common stereotype.

The results of a χ^2 analysis revealed a significant association between participant gender and whether or not participants referenced competition in response to the prompt χ^2 (1, *n* = 324) = 4.94, *p* = .026.

Discussion

In this study, gender differences emerged from the qualitative analyses of participants' responses to gender-role instructions. Many male participants did not respond to the "progressive" man instruction in a way that reflected progressive notions of masculinity, some female participants responded to the "real" woman instruction by reporting the development of secondary sex characteristics, and more than half of all female participants exposed to the "progressive" woman instruction referenced competition with males.

These findings suggested several important differences between men's and women's understandings of progressive and traditional gender roles. Men in the progressive masculinity condition were largely unable to recount experiences in their lives that made them feel as though they were "progressive" men. Conversely, women *were* able to respond appropriately to the "progressive" instruction, suggesting they may have had existing definitions or guidelines of what it means to be a progressive woman when they began responding to the prompt. The gender differences in participants' abilities to respond accurately to the prompt may be explained in part by the lack of working definitions of progressive masculinity in mainstream society.

Men are commonly exposed to traditional notions of masculinity, such as the requirement to be tough or unemotional, but may rarely be exposed to progressive notions, such as the ability to be emotional or nurturing. Conversely, women receive exposure to both traditional and nontraditional forms of femininity in modern culture, such as the plausibility of being either a homemaker or a career-woman. This is not to say that women who do not conform to traditional notions of femininity do not experience marginalization or discrimination in the United States, because sexism is still prevalent. Additionally, the presence of two different feminine ideologies can create a double-bind for women, in which some women feel the need to act both progressively and traditionally in order to gain social acceptance. However, the feminist movement may provide a sense of support for women who espouse a nontraditional femininity, as feminism actively promotes progressive femininity. Though there has been acknowledgement in the literature of a male-identity development process (O'Neil & Egan, 1992) and even of a collective male identity (Wade & Gelso, 1998), comparable support to what feminism provides for women

is lacking for men, though a progressive masculinity movement may help fill the gap.

Differences in society's support for various definitions of masculinity and femininity may stem from the differences in the histories of the feminist movement and the men and masculinity movement. Feminist theory and action has gained momentum since the beginning of the women's suffrage movement in the mid-1840s (Freedman, 2007), whereas the men and masculinity movement did not gain momentum until the mid-1970s (Levant, 1996). Likewise, scholars have been studying the feminist movement and thinking about progressive notions of femininity far longer, as well. For example, psychological research on feminism has been popular since the 1970s. Journals, such as *Psychology of Women Quarterly* and *Feminism and Psychology,* have been publishing articles specifically focused on women's mental health and issues for more than 35 years. Division 35 of the American Psychological Association, the Society for Psychology of Women, was established in 1975 (Division 35, 2010). Conversely, psychological research on men and masculinity has only been popular since the early 1990s (Whorley & Addis, 2006). Journals devoted to men and masculinity research, such as *Men and Masculinities* and the *Psychology of Men and Masculinity*, have only existed since the late 1990s (Smiler, 2004). Division 51 of the American Psychological Association, the Society for the Psychological Study of Men and Masculinity, was founded in 1995 and gained permanent status in 1997 (Division 51, 2010). Although more research is being conducted on men's gender roles, the relative novelty of this type of research, coupled with the fact that thus far it has focused mostly on traditional masculinity, may have resulted in only limited awareness of progressive masculinity within mainstream culture. These facts may account for why few male participants in this study were able to recall examples of when they had enacted progressive masculinity.

Another interesting difference in participants' responses to gender-role instructions was the presence of references to secondary sex characteristics in response to the "real" woman instruction but not to the "real" man instruction. Many female participants wrote that they had felt like a "real" woman the day they had bought their first bras, in response to their breast development, or the day they had begun menstruation. However, none of the male participants described corresponding biological changes, such as the growth of muscles, or facial or chest hair, in their responses.

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This finding may be explained in several ways. First, mothers and other significant female role models often celebrate young women's pubertal development, such as by making a big deal about purchasing a first training bra, and therefore make puberty salient. A part of the traditional feminine gender role is to nurture and care for children (Crawford & Unger, 2000; Gilbert & Scher, 1999; Mahalik et al., 2005), so perhaps women who are guiding young girls through puberty offer more support for menstruation and breast development than men who are guiding young men through puberty. Women may celebrate signs of puberty in daughters in a way that they do not do for sons, or which sons might not welcome from their mothers. Likewise, fathers and other men also may be less likely to celebrate young men's pubertal development, perhaps because discussing emotions and being nurturing are not part of traditional masculine gender roles. Over time, greater articulation and acceptance of progressive masculinity may result in a wider array of acceptable responses by fathers to their sons who are undergoing puberty. Young men may also receive less attention for puberty milestones, such as facial hair growth and voice deepening because these changes occur slowly over time, whereas menstruation has a definite beginning. A perhaps comparable experience for men with a definite beginning is semenarche (Frankel, 2002; Stein & Reiser, 1994), though there has been little research on whether men feel this to be a marker of puberty or of masculinity. Additionally, there may be unique pressure on men to "prove" masculinity through traditional behaviors, whereas women may be perceived as feminine in part by virtue of their physical appearance.

A second potential explanation for gender differences in describing the development of secondary sex characteristics is that American culture places greater importance and value on female bodies than on male bodies. According to sexual objectification theory, society sexually objectifies women as objects of sexual gratification, with little regard for their personality (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). Having a reproductively mature female body may create vulnerability to sexual objectification (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). It is important to note that only women participants responding to the "real" (traditional) instruction referenced secondary sex characteristics, which suggests that these bodily changes were not associated with female participants' conceptualization of progressive femininity. Female participants may have been aware of increased attention to their post-pubertal female bodies before they had begun puberty, and therefore may have been waiting to develop breasts

and begin menstruating before they had allowed themselves to identify as "real" women. Lee (1994), in her qualitative study of women's narratives about their bodies, similarly discussed menarche as a major component of body politics whereby girls' identity development as maturing women during menarche overlaps with them being socialized to see their bodies as sexual objects.

The last major trend in participants' free responses to the gender-role instructions was the mention of competition. Almost half of the male participants referenced competition (regardless of instruction condition), but they only referenced competition with other males. This finding is consistent with traditional notions of masculinity, as dominance, the need for success, and winning are all intimately linked to both competition and traditional masculine gender roles (e.g. Mahalik et al., 2003; Messner, 2002; O'Neil, 2008). The more surprising finding was that over 90% of female participants who referenced competition did so with regard to competing with men. Additionally, female participants only referenced competition with men in response to *progressive* gender-role instructions. This finding suggests that some women defined progressive femininity at least in part as adherence to traditional *masculinity*, perhaps as a rejection of or a well-known alternative to traditional feminine gender roles. Some women may feel the need to gain power over men or to claim traditionally all-male spaces and activities in order to identify as progressive women. Though women rarely referenced female-female competition, the traditionality or progressiveness of those types of responses depends on the context. For example, competing with other mothers at a school bake sale to have the best cupcakes could be considered traditional, but competing with other female business executives at a company to yield the most company profits could be considered progressive.

Limitations and future research

Despite the insights generated by participants' identification of personal examples conforming to traditional and progressive notions of gender in this study, it does have several limitations, and as a result, directions for future research. One limitation was the use of the terms "progressive" and "real," as opposed to "progressive" and "traditional," in priming participants to describe their gendered experiences. Howev-

er, the analyses confirmed that both male and female participants in the "real" condition understood that "real" meant "traditional," and participants of both genders were able to recount situations in their lives in which they had felt as though they had been "real" men or women. Male participants may not have had a deep understanding of progressive masculinity, as relatively few were able to provide examples from their own lives of it. On the other hand, perhaps men *understood* the term, but had few life examples in which they had truly acted progressively. Or, a social desirability bias may have affected participants' responses (which was not assessed for in this study). Some men may have recalled examples when they had behaved progressively, but felt uncomfortable reporting those memories for fear of a lack of acceptance of those behaviors by others. Future research should tease apart the source of the difference in women's and men's understanding and reporting of progressive notions of their own gender, in addition to using the terms "traditional" and "progressive," perhaps in part by controlling for social desirability.

Another sampling-related potential limitation of this study is the exclusive use of collegians. The vast majority of participants were between 18 and 22 years old (only three individuals identified as older than 22). The youthful nature of the sample raises the question of whether experiences of these young adults are representative of people of all ages. Older individuals may have more career experiences, child-rearing experiences, and romantic relationships upon which to draw when responding to the instruction. This greater experience base, in turn, may affect their levels of gender-role conformity. In addition, themes that emerged from the data, such as competition created via playing sports and academic achievement, may not be mirrored in experiences of older adults. If a more inclusive sample had been recruited with regard to participants' ages, different themes may have emerged at different age strata in the analyses. This concern mirrors one expressed by O'Neil, Good, and Holmes (1995), found that men at different ages and life stages showed different patterns in gender role conflict. However, these authors reported no evidence to suggest a simple overall increase or decrease in men's gender role conflict across the lifespan.

Another methodological limitation to this study involved that fact that though the judges coded the data independently and were blind to participant condition, they both knew the study's research questions, as well as the gender of participants because of the need for appropriate

coding. This study did not have any *a priori* hypotheses, so hypotheses could not have influenced coding, but nonetheless a stronger methodology could have involved the use of judges who were blind to the study's research questions in addition to being blind to participant condition. However, it would not have been possible to blind judges to participant gender because the responses themselves contained gender cues.

Though this article provided a working definition of progressive masculinity, the term still needs to be refined, as well as further operationalized through the creation of scales that measure individuals' espousal of and adherence to progressive masculinity. Further refining, researching, and thereby promoting the adoption of progressive masculinity may help men reconstruct their masculinity in more adaptable and effective ways. These could include improving their receptiveness to psychotherapy, their mental health, and the health of their personal relationships. The construct must also be further distinguished from and compared to other forms of masculinity, such as Kiselica and Englar-Carlson's (2010) and Hammer and Good's (2010) concept of positive aspects of traditional masculinity.

Further refining the literature's understanding of progressive masculinity could also occur through research that examines men's experiences with progressive masculinity. In the current study, male participants' responses to the "progressive" instruction suggest that an understanding of progressive masculinity may not be pervasive in mainstream culture. Future research should take a more inductive approach, comparing the current definition to those of community samples of participants. This could involve in-depth and exclusive examinations of progressive themes that emerge and do not emerge in the men's personal accounts of their own behaviors, values, and identities, and what contexts influence those constructs to align with progressive masculinity. For example, men may be more likely to espouse progressive beliefs when in the presence of other progressive men or women, a finding that could have concrete implications for interventions to increase progressiveness. Additionally, because the term "progressive" may mean something different to men and women, further comparisons between men's and women's conceptualizations of the construct could prove fruitful.

Though the research literature has explored many aspects of traditional masculinity, perhaps one of the next frontiers in the study of men and masculinity involves forging new alternatives toward which men who shun traditional, restrictive, and at times sexist gender roles can

move. Progressive masculinity, though shown in this study to be as of yet misunderstood in mainstream culture and perhaps even in the scientific literature, may hold promise for an expansion of what many men see as their only choices for masculinity.

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Black heroes and heroines in cinema. Representations of Afro-American identities in the "Blaxploitation" movies

ABSTRACT. The cinematic genre of Blaxploitation is a significant example of how the popular culture influences certain identity patterns. In this case the this relation is being examined on the issue of contemporary Afro-American identities. This paper attempts to answer the question of the mechanism of identity construction in the context of new media, and cinema in particular. Thus the Blaxploitation movies are being regarded here as a phenomenon which is in large extent typical for other identity constructions in the context of a global cultural change occurring in the last decades in the West.

KEYWORDS: Blaxploitation, cinema, Afro-American identities, popular culture, blackness

The cultural constructions of identity

When we speak of modern (or postmodern) day identities, we usually include in our views the image of a cluster; a complex construction made by our life experience, knowledge, or socio-cultural factors. It's building a consistent whole out of bits of various content, not necessarily logical in their particular character, but usually coherent enough to the people who share them. It is a specific construction of needs, desires, and means to achieve them through agency in a socio-cultural context we currently live in. The constructive approach towards building the self is therefore the most popular among identity theories. According to the most of them, the process of constructing one's identity is a slow, but steady ongoing mechanism of acceptance and rejection in relation to selected elements of the socio-cultural *milieu*. However, this phenomenon of identities emerging from the processes of social, economic or political emancipation in the 1960's has been made by a steady and constant flow of certain elements, which did not fit quite well into norms and values of Western societies in terms of high culture, elitarism or

bourgeoisie morality. However, the widespread acceptance of those elements through proliferation of a new cultural standard had contributed to the legitimization of pop-culture as the basis for identity building. These new pop-cultural identities are hybrid in their nature and dynamic in their social placement. They attract nowadays attention from many scholars and become an object of study within various disciplines. Simultaneously they strive for the creating a new scientific approach, which would be able to grasp the quickly changing object and deliver a satisfying answer to the question on the nature of contemporary Western societies and culture, as well the place of the self in interpersonal relations structuring the social system. Such a new approach is often associated with the Anglo-Saxon tradition of cultural studies represented by Stuart Hall, or John Fiske, but on the other hand cultural studies became with the passing years also a fashionable excuse for a lack of confidence in traditional research methods in the study of culture. Nevertheless, constructivism of cultural studies remains today as a one of the most significant approaches towards the problem of modern identities, especially in the context of the influence of new media and cinema on the way we see ourselves.

Social constructivism in identity theory tackles in the first place the process of identity building. The manifestations of identities are being presented mostly as an emanation of this process or a specific post-processing of the identity image in the laboratory of sociology and other humanities. Putting identity into practice (and the inclusion of the social praxis theory in general) was for a long period of time of secondary importance to major figures in the study of self identification, like Henri Tajfel, the father of the social identity approach. His theory of identity has been focused on the cognitive aspect of identity construction—the emergence of a specific inner space through relations with other members of our own group and other groups. For Tajfel, as well for John Turner, identity was a constantly changing mirror of the social reality surrounding the self. Their approach limited however identity to an object of manipulation from the side of outer factors, i.e. society. Both scholars were convinced of the importance of this social determinism. Individuals were put into a framework of institutions, norms, values at the same time stripped from their agency and role in creating what makes society work.

Of course the picture of identity presented here is a strict constructive one, although it is by some taken for granted. Its limitations lie upon

the assumption, or more upon a reduction to the imaginary sphere, which is being often detached from the reality surrounding the original phenomena and shifting towards the ideological field. The strict constructivists approach is therefore a reduction to a certain image of identity, neglecting the aspect of relations of self with other subjects. Some critiques of the constructivists approach say that, culture is being treated here as something, which is falls into the debate on the opposition of the natural and cultural order, immediately taking the position on the side of culture pushing outside the debate what is belonging to biology. On the other hand the arguments of non-constructivists also tend to push the discussion onto the field of modernity/post-modernity issue and simultaneously reject the importance of the symbolic turn, which became visible on a global scale few decades back. These, and other similar polemics on socio-cultural dynamics of today seem to dominate the current debates. What becomes important in the condition of contemporary reality is the fact, that both mentioned approaches take the phenomenon of modern identities as their object of study in the context of the crisis of traditional self-identification patterns delivered by the society and culture.

Afro-Americans and the critical trajectories of modernity

It's quite clear today, that the debate on the cultural crisis of modernity and cultural critique emerged from that discourse started to spread across the Western hemisphere in the 1950's. It was a time of a new confrontation after World War II. This time it was a clash not between nations, but the old generation perceived by the youth as an embodiment of conservatism, false morality or various ideologies, which were reproduced by the existing order to maintain the socio-political *status quo* of the ruling class. Mostly in the United States and Western Europe, the postulates of the Frankfurt School of sociology pointed out directly the existence of a significant gap between was is now and what was back then, in the times of grand ideas and philosophical narratives. Theodor Adorno's and Max Horkhiemer's *Dialectics of Enlightenment* had a deep impact on the minds of young people in academic campuses from Berkeley to Columbia. The significance of the critical approach, which emerged among scholars and intellectuals had on the other had less influence on

what was happening on the streets of American metropolis. Social and political unrest, like the Chicago riots in 1968 after the assassination of Martin Luther King or the events in the south part of the country regarding the actions against racial segregation, had shown that the time was right for a deep makeover of America's portrait as the land of the free. The conflict between generations thus became also a conflict of the traditional view on culture, with its emphasis on elite and high culture, and the counter-cultural movements which literally exploded in the 1960's. This phenomenon was especially visible in the transgressions related to American culture and society. United States became thus the center of these processes, and major American cities like New York or San Francisco were perceived by many as a specific *axis mundi* of the new world to come. In the 1960's America was on the edge of a cultural and social revolution. Everyone was supposed to be made a part of these revolutionary movements and some of American radical organizations, like for example the leftist urban guerilla *The Weather Underground*, had brought literally the war in Vietnam back home into American living rooms, streets and cities. American society was in turmoil and no one could turn back the clock again. Nevertheless the social aspect of this shift (in a structural sense) was not changing in the same speed as the cultural one. American society was reluctant in accepting the ideas postulated by youth subcultures, human rights activists, liberal intellectuals or organizations fighting for the rights of various minorities. In the last case, the mentioned reluctance was most of all related to the black Americans. On the other hand, the Afro-American movement gained the strongest influence among all movements of social discontent in that time and gave the process of change the needed momentum.

Afro-American culture was for a long period of time bound by deeply rooted views of the alleged inferiority of the Black Man. Blackness was not just skin color, but also a state of both—culture and nature. The racial discourse in America had its ties not only to racism understood as an ideology and social praxis, but also to the scientific discourse in the social sciences. The works of famous American scholars, like for example Franz Boas, were focused on delivering the answer to the role of race in the determination of all other aspects being. Boas was in this context a pioneer when it comes to the reconsideration of race more as a concept applied by people to a certain pattern of human behavior and the way people look, then a objectified determinant of intellectual competences. Boasian anthropology contributed to a clear breakthrough in the

field of study of race, presenting to a wider audience how troublesome is the data used by many to ground their own hypotheses on the lesser intellectual potential of Blacks. In his works, Boas had applied a new approach towards race and culture. This new academic lenses focused on the critique of racial formalism and racism as an ideology present in public life. As George Stocking states, Boas was faced this matter with a strong opposition, both in academic circles as dangerous instigator of change and as a German-Jewish immigrant in the still forming American society of the early 20th century (see: Stocking, 1982). However, his commitment to the dismantling the existing racial prejudice and racism based on pseudoscientific basis of physical anthropology is still regarded as one of the most important turning points in the American racial discourse.

Certainly Boas's contribution had a strong impact on the intellectual debates within the academia, but when it comes to a broader effect it had little significance in effective changing the social system. American society was (and in some extent still is) based on racial differences, or more precisely on taking race into account when it comes to drawing a line of inner differentiation within the American society. Racial prejudice and racism itself is still, as the recent events show, a part of the American contemporary social, cultural, legal, political and sometimes even economic debates. A good example of this presence is the case of a Harvard University professor Henry Louis Gates Jr., a famous Afro-American theorist of race and a specialist in American culture and literature. In 2009 he was arrested in his own home by a white Boston police officer, who didn't believed that Gates could own such an expensive house in a wealthy neighborhood of Boston and had to be a burglar, who had just entered the premises to commit a crime. The whole public debate regarding the Gates case, involving the president Barrack Obama, had contributed in the last years to a new interest in race as an important problem in the contemporary American society, who's foundations lie upon the idea of equality and appreciation of the category of difference.

Cinema as crucial instrument
in the identity's toolbox

We have to face therefore the question, if the political achievements of the 1950's and the 1960's did change the American society in the way Martin Luther King had dreamt of? Or is still contemporary America

bound by its own struggle with race? The answer to this question may lay upon a certain aspect of the American pop-culture, specifically its cinematographic part. American cinema was always in some sense an instrument for measuring the social tendencies in this country. By looking at its most popular currents and the history of its genres we are able to reconstruct various socio-cultural contexts surrounding the transitions the American society had undergone throughout the 20th century. Popular culture, and cinema in particular, may be treated here as a specific reflection of what is important in the public discourse, although this mirror of the American society is not always accurate. It is more an emphasized image of the complex map of paths and ways Americans deal with social, political and cultural issues in terms of film fiction, literature or comics. Serious political topics and problems making the basis for popular movies are often taken in a non serious manner, through comedy and laughter, outside the elite and high culture esthetics, through kitschy images appealing to the viewer more than highbrow intellectual debates.

As race and racism became such an issue cinema responded without any hesitation to this pop-cultural call to arms. Afro-Americans were one of the most significant groups contributing in the 1960's to the cinematic revolution. Actually, they were the first minority group in the USA, which had gained widespread attention in the public sphere thanks to their influence of the new media, i.e. cinema and television. New media technology, which proliferated after 1945, had established also a new way of seeing things, including the picture of the rapidly changing American society. The film industry and Hollywood responded quickly with movies focusing on the younger generation and its problems with movies like Nicholas Ray's "Rebel Without a Cause". As a conclusion the real problem was, that these pictures were dealing with issues appealing to white young people living in a wealthy and quiet suburbia of major American cities. Movies, made under the control of big production studios, were perceived by many Afro-Americans as a prolonged arm of the white middle class. The plots and characters portrayed in this kind of Disney like cinema hardly tackled the problems important for the black community. These were two worlds which could not be brought together by any means; and when accidentally they did, the relations between them were based on old worldviews, fears and stereotypes from both sides alike.

The cinematic image of Afro-Americans and it's dynamics

The traditional image of people of color was for a long period of time set in a tradition of the uneducated and often silly black maid; just like the character of Mammy played by Hattie MacDaniel in *Gone with the wind* (1939). Mammy was a cliché figure for many representations of blackness in early American cinema. It represented the Afro-Americans, as well the exotic "other" in more general terms (Sims, 2006, p. 31). She was an universal and symbolic persona of the black women and men working in many American households on one hand, and on the other she personified the superiority of white culture and its ability to tame the savage instincts of those, who didn't belong to the white upper class owning the film industry. This situation was characteristic to American cinema until the half of the 20th century. In the 1950's black actors appearing in these mainstream movies were given usually supporting roles of minor significance. Nevertheless, cinema changed as the American society had undergone slow, but steady transition into the age of the conflict in Indochina and student's revolts. People like for example Harry Belafonte and Sidney Poitier, were certainly new to the white audience, and movies like *Carmen Jones* (1954) in which the Bizet's Carmen was placed in the context of the American South and all actors were black, were a small step in the right direction. Also the portrait of the blacks in this movie had witnessed a radical makeover, possibly shocking to some through its extensive sensuality. The new generation of movie makers, which came into the spotlight in the 1960's, had shifted the interest of the American film industry more towards the voices of the yesterday's marginalized and exploited. Thus Afro-Americans were put in the middle of the cinematographic discourse in the decade of the Denis Hopper's *Easy Rider* (1969) and Arthur Penn's *Bonnie and Clyde* (1967). Movies made by them were a manifesto of the black voice in political, social and cultural terms.

Social and institutional contestation, cultural rebellion and civic disobedience was new to many followers of Timothy Leary and readers of Jack Keruac's *On the Road*, but very much familiar to most Afro-Americans. The ideas of the black emancipation movement were in the 1960's ranging from methods of peaceful disobedience (for example through so called "sit ins" in public sphere and occupation of certain institutions), through religious awaking (the Nation of Islam), to militant

urban guerilla (like the Black Panthers organization). These various forms of agency had one thing in common. The situation of Afro-Americans had to change immediately and the actions of black activists, like Malcom X an others, were supposed to gain support of the whole black community in the United States, as well attract supporters among democratic and liberal whites. The identities shared by Afro-Americans in that time were also undergoing important changes. Their self-identification started to leave the image of former slaves, or low skilled farm and car factory workers in Mississippi and Detroit, and moved onto the field of political activism, education and economic success. This wide spread change in the way black Americans had looked at their own place in the American society was common by the end of 1960's. The next decade belonged to the Afro-American voice in American cinema, and this voice was to be heard not just in big cities ghettos, but also in the white suburbia. By the year 1970 being "Black" became not just a sign of ethnic marginalization and the need for emancipation, but it also became fashionable. From now on, a certain feeling of coolness has been attached to Afro-American culture, and cinema has adopted it through its language of images. More and more movies were dealing with the phenomena of a new Afro-American identity. The best example of how cinematic experience had dealt with this issue is being provided by the genre of so called "Blaxploitation" movies.

The popularity of "Blaxploitation" cinema in the 1970's is truly remarkable, when we take into account the fact, that through most of the time of it's presence it always was and still is related to Afro-American identities. On one hand the source of this popularity may lay in the historical context of the wider transgression of American identity in general. On the other hand, the "Blaxploitation" genre is very much alive even today because of its specific convention how to make movies. Most of the "Blaxploitation" movies were made outside Hollywood, or outside its system of large studios and production firms. They almost never had a big budget, or expensive special effects. This movie making "from below" is significant in understanding how this genre affected the American cinema in the 1980's and 1990's; sometimes even reaching back explicit to the "Blaxploitation" tradition, like in the case of Quentin Tarantino's *Jackie Brown* (1997). Movies, like famous *Shaft* (1971) by Gordon Parks had set a strict code for this kind of cinema in relation to the methods used, the way how the plot is being narrated, how the characters are being presented and who they are, or what types of sub-genres

it uses. "Blaxploitation" cinema used such conventions like film noir and classic crime movies, westerns, action and martial arts movies, horror, comedy and historical drama; sometimes mixing all of them into a new language how the story is being told on the screen. The unconventionality of the approach of Afro-American movie makers and the commercial success of their pictures has challenged in the same extent the mainstream film industry and the social and political status quo.

Blaxploitation genre as a representation of black identities

The 1970's were the *belle époque* of "Blaxploitation" style in film and culture. At the same time this genre included (in the films made according to its unique structure) all the trashy facets of this decade, among others over-exposed esthetics of pop-art, camp in fashion, disco music, and glitter. It had put all of these elements into social and political terms of resistance and rejection of culture dominated by whites with its esthetic evaluation of what is art and what is kitsch. The opposition between blackness and whiteness visible in these movies is simultaneously a line drawn between the underclass people of color and middle or upper class elites. It's not surprising, that a large number of characters portrayed in "Blaxploitation" movies is shown as underdogs fighting their way, often in a violent manner, up the social structure. Gangsters and shady entrepreneurs, pimps, drug dealers and petty criminals are populating the screen in films like *Super Fly* (1972), *Black Ceasar* (1972), *Hit Man* (1972) or *Sweet Sweetback's Baadasssss Song* (1971). Moral doubts regarding their appearance and the violent and criminal way of living are being diminished by the goal they all attempt to achieve—to win the struggle for the pride of Black Man and the greater good of the local Afro-American community. The evil and the wicked are in most cases the whites—corrupt police officers and politicians or conservative businessmen with racist views. The monochrome morality had to be clear and the dominance of whites was supposed to be overthrown by street justice.

What was unjust was the social system Afro-Americans lived in, therefore the identification with the local community had built a strong intersubjective grid of relations not just on the screen but as well in real life. The black gangster was never really bad or evil. When he used vio-

lence it was never directed towards his own people. He was simply using the very same methods like the white oppressors in the past, symbolized by the people in charge of institutions responsible for pushing Afro-Americans beyond the morally accepted framework and into ghettos. Drug dealers portrayed in *Super Fly* were men of success, admired by some for their money and hated by many for the same reason. They desperately reached for the American Dream like many others before them, but within the social context and resources blacks were given by white majority. Even today, a popular rationalization of criminal acts committed by black Americans is being led by the argument, that drugs consumption and trafficking or crimes related to use of firearms are a consequence and a tool for ruling Afro-Americans by white elites who do not want them to become influential in traditionally white domains.

In the "Blaxploitation" movies even black police detectives and private eyes had a violent method of fulfilling their duties. When it comes to guns, fists and martial art techniques, Shaft (played by Richard Roundtree) or Foxy Brown (played by Pam Grier) knew how to use them well beyond the expectations of their counterparts. A good example of an Afro-American character of that kind was Jim Kelly, who played an important ally in fighting evil along the side of Bruce Lee in the famous kung-fu movie *Enter the Dragon* (1973). Roundtree, Grier and Kelly had become recognizable through their appearance as protagonists with unusual physical skills. These super hero characteristics were almost comic wise and even transferred onto comic book heroes twenty years later, when the black Spider Man and Black Falcon appeared on the pages of Marvel books. Main characters of these films were usually dripping with masculinity, often in a very grotesque way. The sexual attraction was shown as a instrumentalized relation between men and women. Emotional engagement was an unnecessary obstacle in achieving one's goal and the hustler became a popular figure in the "Blaxploitation" genre. Unreal appearance of black protagonists in the movies was irrelevant. What was important, was the fact that at last black Americans could express their own identity and pride.

As the genre got its hero, it also had to present to the viewer the cause the hero is fighting for. Certainly the social and political postulates includes in the "Blaxploitation" cinema were mostly clear for the black audience. American history had to be rewritten with the same urgency as the present reality had to change, giving Afro-Americans the chance to live beyond their social, political, economic, and cultural marginalization.

Blackness became a specific kind of identity shared at the same time by the audience and the characters on the screen. No matter if they were contemporary figures, or purely fictional like in *Blackula* (1972) or *Blackenstein* (1973). The identification of Afro-Americans with the "Blaxploitation" heroes was in the 1970's in some extent a way of dealing with reality. The rejection of the social realm was at the same time contributing to the acceptance of a new political dimension of pop-culture and cinema. Although the simple reversion of roles in the giving and receiving of oppression, using racial prejudice and stereotypes was criticized also by some Afro-American organizations (like the *National Association for the Advancement of Colored People* and the *National Urban League*) the influence of the "Blaxploitation" genre cannot be overlooked when we reconsider the processes of transitions of Afro-American identities in the second half of the 20th century. Its esthetics and form may be very well traced in many contemporary cultural phenomena in America of today, sometimes hidden behind the curtain of pop-cultural eclectic style of postmodern cinema.

Gender, sex and identity
in the Blaxploiation cinema

At this point we may also ask ourselves how the "Blaxploitation" genre shaped the those identities in the context of gender. It is obvious that sex roles played a significant part in emerging of the blackness discourse in the context of visuality, especially in the cinematic sense. If we look at the issue of gender representation and blackness in the movies of the 1970's a clear archetype comes to our eyes—blackness is mostly male. Male characters are being presented as young, bold, and holding a certain amount of power over the women and whites. Females are subordinated to that power in several ways. In the first place we see an exaggerated sexual attraction, which is loosely being associated with political power. The male character, no matter good or evil, is standing against the socio-political status quo set by the white society. The hustler and the cop do not differ much in this manner. Women seem to love their rebellious entourage and often follow their path by taking their fate on bodies in their own hands. Even the persona of Foxy Brown uses similar embodied power to get what she wants. Sexuality is therefore being instrumentalized as a highly efficient mean to achieve political goals, i.e.

emancipation of Afro-Americans. As we follow this interpretation we also observe a certain dynamics of gender representation in the described cinematic genre.

The first "Blaxploitaition" movies portrayed men and women in a very exaggerated and grotesque way. However, we have to take into account the fact that so was the whole blaxploitation universe at that time. Comic-like personas were therefore a logical transformation of the surrounding reality put on the screen for the (not just black) masses. Gender was in that context also transformed into a hyper-real sexuality, an über masculinity/feminity if we may say so. In this light the polarization of gender in the blaxploitation movies seemed to have a certain goal—to raise specific self-awareness of the members of the black communities in the United States. The manipulation of gender representations in pop-culture became an act of self-identification. Blackness became associated with masculinity, vitality, sexuality and strength. Combining gender, race, politics and social order had therefore a deep impact on the movies themselves an in consequence on the audience's perception of what was going on the screen and beyond it. Black gender had to be articulated in a certain fashion in order to highlight the critical problems of subordinated groups living in a dominant white society.

As Stuart Hall states in his article "Cultural Identity and Diaspora", cinematic experience contributes vastly to the emerging of black identity (Hall, 1990). Hall puts his remarks in the context of post-colonial discourse on blackness, but he also summarizes the process of identity building itself through pop-culture. The British scholar assumes that identity is being constructed in two major ways. The first one, is being drawn from the idea of "one-ness", as Hall puts it. This classic post-colonial optics emphasizes the notion of an universal culture, which is being shared by everyone and hitherto creates a common identity pattern. This might be certainly ascribed to the idea of blackness in all of its complexity. Hall states in this matter that: "It is this identity which a Caribbean or black diaspora must discover, excavate, bring to light and express through cinematic representation" (Hall, 1990, p. 223).

On the other hand, identity is also being taken into account as an entity of a more complex nature. Hall describes that this approach towards identity "(...) recognizes that, as well as the many points of similarity, there are also critical points of deep and significant *difference* which constitute 'what we really are'; or rather—since history has intervened—'what we have become'." (Hall, 1990, p. 225). Identity is there-

fore an ongoing project, a dynamic reality being negotiated through different means, for example popular culture. The cinema of "Blaxploitation" reflects very well this second approach when we speak of representations of blackness. As a cinematic genre, it puts itself into a specific socio-political context and is being defined by the transgressions of that context in a historical sense. Cultural identities have their own past, present and certainly some of them a future. In the case of Afro-American identities represented in the "Blaxploitation" movies it is more than obvious of what past and present we are speaking.

The picture of America in the 1970's portrayed in the "Blaxploitation" movies contributed extensively to the conceptualization of Afro-American identity in terms of esthetics, social roles, dynamics of social change, gender, and the political discourse. The question of how this phenomenon is alive today remains as a part of a larger problem—the shaping of cultural identities through pop-cultural means. Traces of movies, fashion, music or comics related to the "Blaxploitation" genre might be still found in the pop-cultural sphere, despite the obvious transitions that occurred in the American society for the last three decades. However, the issue of Afro-American identities is today being still discussed on several levels—starting from strictly academic debates and ending with a wide social discussion in the United States. This might lead us to the question, how the problem of emancipation, inequality or racism is being resolved on the level of social structure and social relations. I do not intend to provide a satisfying answer to it, but I do hope that the arguments delivered in this text cast some light on the entanglement of popular culture and black identity through the lens of cinema. The impact of "Blaxploitation" movies on the perception of blackness and gender is in contemporary American society clearly visible. Definitely this fact raises further questions that should be considered when we speak not just of identity of Afro-Americans, but on cultural identity *per se*.

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Children's literature and the politics of gender[*]

ABSTRACT. The article discusses children's literature as a matter that can become highly politicized. While often viewed as apolitical, stories for children have always been subjected to hegemonic ideologies and mediated dominant norms. The analysis focuses on gender dimension of this normativity and shows that the attempts to create gender subversive stories for children have to face not only the conservative backlash but they also have to deal with wider cultural context and contemporary meanings of childhood. The last section of the article shows that no matter how gender balanced or stereotypical a story is, the interpretation lies with children themselves. Thus, researchers analyzing messages in children's stories always have to take into account young readers and their diverse ways of understanding.

KEYWORDS: children's literature, gender, gender subversion, innocence, sexuality

As any other form of art, children's literature is a product of its time; it reflects contemporary thought and general ideals, as well as specific ideals of scientific disciplines such as psychology or pedagogy. The plurality of lifestyles brings the plurality in the subjects of children's literature. And thus, the field of children's literature is marked by political and ideological conflicts that stir the society. Parents who read and tell stories to their children want to communicate to them a worldview to which they can commit. For some parents, it is enough if the stories correspond to the basic moral principles, but others can be sensitive to seeming details that do not correspond to the ideals they want to live to. This internal conflict with mainstream stories for children is experienced e.g. by vegetarians, who mind how matter of course it is for story characters to eat meat; by environmentalists, who need not agree with the exploitation of nature or adoration of the world of machines and means of transport that get anthropomorphized and equaled to humans

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(remember the films Cars or Plances); or by some religious groups (c.f. the Christian critique of Harry Potter for occult and Satanist features). Mainstream children's literature is criticized for reproducing hegemonic structures, raising children into modernist-capitalist subjects focused on performance and rewarded by consumption. Part of this critique concerns also the reproduction of social inequalities related to the categories of gender and ethnicity. This article aims to discuss the relations of children's literature to gender and politics.

Gender and children's stories

Childhood gets often connected to the world of fantasy and fairy tales. Fairy tales are stories with magical motives that show an idealized world in which good triumphs over evil and justice always wins. Frequently, social inequalities are overcome. The borders of class are transgressed (a villager marries a princess), there is a remarkable social mobility (a poor girl becomes queen) and wealth inequalities are balanced (a poor person can find a treasure, leaves turn into gold), or sometimes wealth turns against the wealthy (they end up imprisoned in treasure caves, or lack basic food, like salt, etc.). Other inequalities, however, remain unchanged, and gender inequalities are among these.

Since 1970s, gender analyses of children's literature have been pointing that the literature for children reflects gender structure of society and helps to reproduce it (e.g. Dixon, 1977; Gooden & Gooden, 2001; Jackson & Gee, 2005; Pace Nilsen, 1971; Weitzman et al., 1972; Zipes, 1986). In addition to the fact that male and female characters show stereotypical gender features, there is a significantly lower number of female characters and almost always their stories involve heterosexual plots, while stories of male characters can function without any relations to the opposite sex. Moreover, the author team McCabe, Fairchild, Grauerholz, Pescosolido a Tope, who analyzed almost 6000 titles of American production since the beginning of 20th century, have illustrated that the shift towards gender equality has been uneven, non-linear and closely tied to the level of feminist activism or anti-feminist backlash (2011).

As Judith Butler shows, gender and the ways in which we are recognized as men or women, stem from the (hetero)sexual framework of our culture (2003). Heterosexual relations represent certain fundamental grid that forms the structure of society. This is clearly obvious in children's tales where a heterosexual relationship between the hero and the heroine

is the drive motor of the story. These stories are not only heteronormative; they also present very narrow gender norms. That is to say, the heterosexual couples that inhabit fairy tales usually demonstrate indispensable normative traits: the male hero is valiant, inventive, and strong, while the female heroine has to be beautiful in the first place, and it is also considered appropriate when she is hard-working, kind, and humble—and when she is not, then she should reform herself and became like that. The male character is an active human subject, while the female character often finds herself in the role of an object that for example a king can donate to a prince for killing a dragon. Children's tales thus contribute to the fact that children who do not correspond to gender norms—e.g. those who are or will be attracted to same-sex persons—will see the culture they are born into as strange, and they can fell lonely and unwelcome. Children, who conform to heterosexual norms, only confirm that otherness is strange, dangerous and despicable. It is difficult to come up with educational programs promoting tolerance and diversity, when the environment children meet with both at school and outside of it, acts as a cultural monolith with a uniform image of the right life, not open to other variants.

Even if children's tales suffer from the under-representation of women, stereotypes about women as well as men, and heteronormativity, there is a production that strives to un-follow these literary patterns. From 19th century, we can see a specific category of books with a strong heroine defying the gender norms, such as *Anne of Green Gables* by Lucy Maud Montgomery, or *Pippi Longstocking* by Astrid Lindgren. Hopes and desires of many young girls have been set on these heroines and similar characters, as these girls have not been content with the ideal of a languid waiting princess.

Contemporary children's literature ofers also other types of heroines and heroes transgressing gender norms. It is populated by boys who want dolls (*Wiliam´s Doll* by Charlotte Zolotow, 1976) or who want to dance (*Oliver Button Is a Sissy* by Tomie de Paola, 1979), by transgender children (*10 000 Dresses by Marcuse Evert*, 2008), or same-sex couples (*King and King* by Linda de Haan, 2001). The authors of these books attempt at the subversion of dominant gender structures and/or try to reflect their own experience or the experience of children whom they know e.g. from stories of homoparental families (*Jura a Lama* by Markéta Pilátová, 2012; *And Tango Makes Three* by Peter Parnell and Justin Richardson, 2005). The literature that is created intentionally strives to subvert the gender orders; however, this literature is not only a contribution to larger offer by demand, but—as we will see later—it becomes the object of political disputes.

Children stories as a political matter

Children's literature is not an apolitical genre standing outside of the wider societal debate—which can be proved by disputes running for more than a hundred years. At the beginning of 20th century, a Swedish teacher was punished by a school board in Skanör for reading loud from the book *The Wonderful Adventures of Nils* (*Nils Holgerssons underbara resa genom Sverige / Nils Holgersson's wonderful journey across Sweden*). The author of this book was the later Nobel prize winner Selma Lagerlöf, who wrote this book on demand from the Swedish National Teachers Association. After they had ordered a geographic reader for public schools in 1902, Lagerlöf created a readable text that children liked. Not so much the church authorities that held power also in the school institution and that disapproved of some parts of the book, such as the chapter dealing with "how it happened that our Lord and Saint Peter created Småland" (Strömstedt, 2006). Some fifty years later, a stormy debate was started with the publication of another Swedish author's book— *Pippi Longstocking* by Astrid Lindgren. Her book became criticized for offering a bad example that children would follow. Pippi as a literary heroine is untidy, cheeky, and has no respect for social order that parents, educators and teachers have such a hard time to imprint into children. Lingren, however, is an author who has been criticized from many different camps. Besides the conservatives, she had struggled later, in 1970s and 1980s, with the critique by the neo-Marxists (Strömstedt, 2006).

Similar controversies are aroused by books that do not copy the long-term gender codes. And some cases show that these do not have to be programmatically feminist or activist literature. In Slovakia, a textbook called *Hups' Spelling-book* (2013) was published, in which the main character was a gender-less person Hups. Hups was neither a women, nor man, and this was seen by the conservative Catholic circles as a dangerous implant of gender ideology threatening the social order. Part of the critique involved the aversion ton a story of a little boy who is growing up fatherless, and later his mother marries their neighbor and he gets a new father. The Catholic Church perceived this story as undermining the traditional family, and based ont heir critique, the minister of education decided that the text must be removed from the spelling-book. Hups can (for the time being) stay.

Another tempestuous debate was inspired by the TV series Teletubbies intended for the youngest children, in which we find the character

Tinky Winky. In 1999, US pastor Jerry Falwell criticized this character, because he could see Tinky Winky as a gay role model—the character is violet (a color representing gay pride), has a triangle antenna (i.e. pride symbol) and moreover, carries a red bag that looks rather like a ladies bag. According to Falwell, "the role modelling the gay lifestyle is damaging to the moral lives of children." A similar debate sparkled in 2007 in Poland, where the Ombudsman for Children Ewa Sowińska demanded that the character is examined by psychologists of their office in an apprehension that Tinky Winky might endanger children's development by seeming promoting homosexuality. Already during the US debates over Tinky Winky, Kim Viselman from Itsy-Bitsy Entertainment that was in charge of the series distribution in the USA, said that Tinky Winky was neither gay, nor straight. Sexuality was not supposed to be represented, and still it was, coded by apparently non-sexual signifiers like a bag or violet color. It might not have been intended by the authors, yet the viewers (mainly those who were vigilant of the intruders against the gender system) found it in between the lines.

Tinky Winky's case reveals the anatomy of relation between gender and sexuality in Butler's meaning of the words. According to Butler, gender system is legitimized by heterosexual matrix, and only those individuals can be socially acceptable, whose sex-gender-desire triad is constant and stable (Butler 1990). In case Tinky Winky is a boy, who walks around equipped not with a gun, but with a magic hand-bag, this triad is disrupted and the defenders of gender order find it easier to put this sign in harmony with desire. It is much more esier than admit that a heterosexual man walks around with a hand-bag. This would have been a more dangerous threat to the gender order.

Homosexuality in children's tales is often rejected even by relatively tolerant public, and this is because it seems to visualize sexuality more than heterosexuality does. It can be assumed that Tinky Winky was regarded as a more sexualized character than a prince kissing a princess. For the very same reasons, stories of homoparental families can annoy some people.

The first title in which a homoparental family appears was *Jenny Lives with Eric and Martin* (1981 in Danish, 1983 in English) by a Danish author Susanne Bösche. The book composed of black-and-white photographs pictures the life of a five-year old Jenny, who lives with her dad and his boyfriend. Her mother lives not far away and often comes to visit. The book captures the everyday life of the family. Also homophobia is thematized, when a woman passing by expresses her contempt for

Jenny's family. When this book was published in Great Britain in 1983, it became one of the pretexts of the disputed Section 28 of the Local Government Act 1988, i.e. the regulation that prohibited promotion—mere mentioning—of homosexuality in education at schools or documents issued by local administration. This regulation was in force between 1988 and 2003, and it resulted in the fact that the book about little Jenny could not be displayed in any school library, and during educational process, homosexuality could not be mentioned.

A beautiful story about homoparental family is found in the book And Tango Makes Three (2005) by Peter Parnell and Justin Richardson. It portrays an actual event that happened in New York's Central Park ZOO, where two male Chinstrap penguins formed a couple. In vain they tried to hatch a chick on an egg-like rock, until one of the zookeepers gave them an egg discarded by another couple and Roy and Silo managed to hatch a penguin girl named Tango, who got admired by the whole of New York. This book, together with other children's books depicting homosexual characters or families (Daddy's Roommate, King & King, Heather has Two Mommies) made it to the list of the most challenged books of the American Library Association, which contains books that attracted most protests and attempts at censorship or complete ban.

Homosexuality in the children's stories is more considered to be sexuality than heterosexuality. Heterosexuality is a kind of blueprint that we do not even notice in children's tales; so that when mother and father appear in such a story, nobody thinks about them having a sexual life. When two mothers or two fathers appear, sexuality seems to be more present. That is why the children's stories that involve a homosexual couple or family seem to cause embarrassment at least, or aversion even in relatively open and tolerant people. In the contemporary Euro-American culture, childhood is constructed as innocent and helpless, calling for our protection. We love children, because we are captured by their vulnerability, fragility, innocence, sincerity and totally unspoiled nature. Children who are not like this are not considered childish at all. We love the idealization of childhood that is the embodiment of paradise on Earth.

Childhood as a paradise of innocence

In our culture that is built on the Jewish-Christian grounds, the concept of paradise excludes sexuality. When Adam and Eve tasted the fruit of the tree of knowledge, they became conscious of their nudity and

experienced shame—and lost paradise forever. In this Biblical narration, we can see the roots of our current debates over the impropriety of the connection of children and sexuality. That is to say, childhood serves as the projection of Jewish-Christian paradise, in which there is no place for the consciousness of one's sexuality.

Sexuality is related to sin and possible defilement, and that is why it has no place in the paradise. It is conceived as a very problematic field, in which one can easily slip to the darkness of perdition. In the past, it used to be the Church that would connect sexuality with sin. As Foucault shows, nowadays it is mainly science—medicine, psychology, and others—that set the boundaries of the right experience of sexuality and the transgression of these boundaries is defined as deviance calling for redress. Sexuality in our cultural context represents something that is always potentially unclear and dangerous, which is in an utter contrast with the representation of childhood. The connection of childhood and sexuality is taboo, and it seems that the sexual revolution that questioned many taboos has reinforced the one concerning sexuality and childhood. A gay or lesbian character in a children's story is problematic not only for conservative defenders of the "traditional" gender order, but also for all who find it unpleasant to open the topic of sexuality with children.

There is a point in the connection of sexuality and knowledge in the myth about Adam and Eve's expulsion from Eden. Part of the construction of childhood as naturally asexual involves the fact that a child does not practice sex, does not experience erotic desire, and has no consciousness of sex. And, as Foucault says, this is the reason why children should be denied sex, they should be forbidden to talk about it, and they should close their eyes and cover their ears, whenever they might give an appearance of knowing about it (Foucault, 1980).

In accordance with Foucault's concept that knowledge is power, children's ignorance in some areas constitutes a hierarchical order in which adult people (parents and teachers mainly) are the more powerful once, and they decide when the children get certain knowledge, and when they are prohibited or allowed to engage in sexual activities. The protection of children from information about sexuality at the same time means their control. Children are kept in ignorance, and this ignorance legitimizes the refusal to grant them access to power and their sub-ordinance to authority (Jackson, 1982). Thematizing sexuality in children's stories is not just a question of the conservative lobby, whether church-

related or political, but it is closely related to the effort at preserving other social categories and hierarchies. If we admit the sexual subjectivity of childhood and its right to information, it can lose its paradise-like innocence and purity, and cease to be childhood for us.

Defying the structure

On one hand, we can see that the subversion of the gender order and heteronormativity conflicts with the general norms and hierarchies. On the other hand, the books that attempt to transgress the boundaries and norms set, are often conforming to gender patterns or to the more general structures of repression. An excellent illustration of this is the analysis of Jane Sunderland and Mark McGlashan focused on children's literature about homoparental families (2012). They analyzed 25 picture books featuring two-mum and two-dad families, and focused on 'explicitness' of these couples about their sexuality, and they explored differences in the representation of the gay mums and the gay dads. Their analysis has shown that mums and dads were displayed differently. For example the dads were more frequently called by they first name and displayed physical contact with their partners, while the mums were more identified by ´relational identification´ (Mum, Mama, Mommy) and displayed less physical contact. Women and men in the analyzed books to some extent followed gendered stereotypes. Mums were more constructed than dads as co-parents, and dads were more frequently than the mums constructed as partners. Not even the literature about homoparental couples could defy the deeply rooted gender order.

A significant symbolic place in stories about gender-unconventional children belongs to the topic of bullying. Especially the stories about sensitive boys who may engage in girlish activities tend to repeat the same scheme—the main character is different, other than the majority, his environment despises him—or at least the male part of his community, he is being driven out of places, mocked, and people are angry at him; later on, he achieves something good or useful, and thus he gains the right to exist or even teh respect and friendship of others. Such a merit-based recognition can be found in the books *Oliver Button is a Sissy*, *10 000 Dresses*, *The Boy with Pink Hair*, etc. This scheme is, however, quite tricky. It does not present diversity as something which we all are part of and which is valuable in itself, but as something that puts a dif-

ferent individual against a homogeneous majority—and the only thing s/he can do to make it right is to be useful enough. When we read children stories like this, we remind them of the marginality of the other and the dominance of mainstream. One can remedy one's handicap by being a productive individual, who may be a little bit queer, but who has not resigned on the more general modernist-capitalist meaningfulness dwelling in merit.

Bronwyn Davies reminds that the feminist analysis of stories requires not just the identification of stereotypes, but besides focusing on the content, we also need to focus on metaphors, forms of relationships and models of power and desire that are created in the text (Davies, 2003, p. 47). The poststructuralist perspective laid the emphasis from the text on the reader. A fundamental question for the feminist reading of children's texts is how the child relates to the text, how s/he invests herself/himself in it, how s/he interprets and uses it. A text does not work in a linear, unequivocal way; its interpretation always is related to the way of reading, the experiences of readers, and to their relating to the text and context in which they read. It is not at all certain that gender-stereotypical stories will determine children to traditional gender structuring of their lives, while feminist stories will emancipate them from these traditional structures. It is not just a matter of what is happening in a story and who the characters are, but mainly of what children take from them. It often can be significant details that the adult do not even notice.

Similarly to Davies, I read the story of Paper Bag Princess by Robert Munsch (1980) with children of one Czech school. It narrates the story of a princess who had been kidnapped by a dragon and saved by a princess (Jarkovská, 2013). The fairy tale, however, does not end with a marriage, since the saved prince does not like that the princess is dirty and clothed in a paper bag. For some children (mainly those who were considered to be "good girls"), it was a story about a brave princess and a stupid prince who did not want the princess. For some (mainly boys), it was a story of a stupid prince, who got kidnapped by a dragon. For others (boys), it was a story of a dragon who demolished a kingdom (for one boy, the dragon was a mother who taught little dragons how to set a castle on fire), for other children it was a story of a burnt castle, and one girl, the class tomboy, tried to prevent me from reading the story. She did not want to accept that the dragon kidnapped the prince, and she started to protest at this moment and asked me to admit that the princess should

be kidnapped. When I refused, she found a different solution—she declared that it was a homosexual dragon. Similarly to Tinky Winky, a queer character became more acceptable as gay as an atypical heterosexual male.

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Birth of cyber-supermothers

ABSTRACT. The study aims to reveal and to describe a new type of mother—cyber-super-mother, which combines household duties with professional responsibilities by taking professional activity in the Internet. The study analyzes new model of maternity combining elements of traditional (motherhood as an instinct, conviction regarding personal care of a child, etc.) and modern model (postulate of self-fulfillment, blurring the boundaries between the private and the public sphere, gender equality, etc.).

KEYWORDS: Internet, maternity, cyber-reality

Preface

Inability to fulfill family and professional roles in a satisfactory range, causes constant stress in a schedule and emotional life of many modern women, which want to combine motherhood with a career. Despite the fact, that "modern wife or a partner is in a much better position than her grandmother or a great-grandmother" (Sikorska, 2009, p. 163) however, gender equality is still "an ideal pursued and desired by most of women" (Titkow, Duch-Krzystoszek & Budrowska, 2004, p. 15), and whose reality is an excessive burden on household and caring chores. Ulrich Beck and Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim find women as still entangled in the dilemma of choosing between self-fulfillment and altruism and empathy. Anna Giza-Poleszczuk writes that "we still have to deal with a situation in which people want a partnership in domestic duties, but somehow in fact 'can not' realize it; where women want to work and have children, but they have to bear the entire risk on their own" (Giza-Poleszczuk, 2009, p. 193). As Shrikhala Warrier observes "men are still regarded as the 'breadwinners', while the management of the household, domestic chores, and the physical care and psychological well-being of children are firmly identified as the wife-mother's responsibility" (Warrier, 1988, p. 108) According to the research of Margaret Fine-Davies,

Jeanne Fagnani, Dino Giovannini, Lis Hojgaard and Hilary Clarke "measures of well-being were all positively correlated in all cases, except that for fathers, satisfaction with their work was unrelated to their satisfaction with family life, whereas for mothers, it was highly correlated (…)" (Fine-Davies et al., 2004, p. 241). Does the motherhood need to have a negative impact on social and professional activities of women? Many scientific work describe in detail the heroic struggle of women of finding a harmony between family and work. "Employed mothers, irrespective of their ethnic affiliations, find themselves caught between two pressures: on the one hand is the perceived need for more than one income to support a home, and on the other, the pressing logistical problems of fulfilling work-role obligations as well as domestic responsibilities, including childcare" (Fine-Davies et al., 2004, p. 113).

Balance between these two spheres is even more elusive, if we take into account the evolving in the age of individualism, the idea that a child is now "economically worthless but emotionally priceless" (Slany & Kluzowa, 2004). If a child is an autotelic value for a parent, in the comparison to work-it will always be in a privileged position. This reasoning also goes hand in hand with the concept of "intensive motherhood" (Hays, 1998), which implies that the mother is not only a person that cares about the health of the child, but also a person providing comprehensive child development, a person responsible for the best possible start in independent life of a child.

Susan Douglas and Meredith Michaels analyzing media portrayals of mothers, identified a popular construction of the good mother symbol arising from postfeminist ideals and they called it "the new momism". The new momism consists of notions of intensive mothering, in which women with children are extremely competent stay-at-home moms, main caregivers, always smiling and understanding, and exhibit boundless, unflagging and total love and motherhood is the most important thing a woman can do (Powell, 2010, p. 38).

The combination of intensive motherhood, intensive work, poor care infrastructure and limitations resulting from rigid hours of work and other inconveniences of Polish labor market makes modern motherhood a real challenge, requiring organizational, financial, physical and emotional effort. As a result, we get high-quality children and mothers reduced to a role of robots focused on 'the project: Child'.

Due to such absorbing contemporary maternal role it is not surprising, that these women almost can not devote themselves to any sphere

of activity. According to Renata Hryciuk "on the one hand women's assignment to domestic sphere imposes them a role of a buffer absorbing the social costs of systemic change (see: Lister 2005), on the other hand, it disputes the validity of their claims and as a consequence, obstructs women's grass-roots initiatives" (Hryciuk & Korolczuk, 2012, p. 23).

In effect, there is lack of data on mothers' social activity. Perhaps the question should be raised, if such exists at all? Secondly, when it comes to economic activity—Poland has one of the lowest employment rate of women having children under 3 years of age. According to the report "Maternity vs. women's professional job" from 2006, three out of four women were planning to return to work after maternity leave, but only 23% had actually take an employment. Both the professional activity rate and the employment rate of women in the period of family establishing and developing remains below the level observed for men in all EU-27 countries (Bukowski, 2010). According to the Central Statistical Office, almost 16% of inactive women (1.34 million) does not work due to family obligations and duties related to running home. Significant is, that the largest age group among these women are women of reproductive age, i.e. 25–34 years (527 thousand). It is characteristic for female economic activity that 'women tend, on the whole, to enter and re-enter the labour force according to the stages in their family formation and their own life-cycle (Warrier, 1988, p. 109). Moreover, cultural pressure towards staying at home with children is also very strong. Basing on American research form Gallup Poll, most Americans still think that "in the ideal family situation one parent should stay home" (Carr, 2005). Of course it is mostly the female part of the family.

Cultural and structural stigma

The nature of the Polish labor market makes the situation of young mothers even harder. In particular, insufficient development of flexible forms and hours of work and the reluctance of employers to hire young mothers. Tax policy (including progressive taxation, family benefits, etc.) also affect demotivating to taking employment by mothers.

In Poland great impact on these processes had systemic transformation, which changed the conditions of participation in the labor market and social benefits system, and thus increased the difficulty of combining work and family responsibilities. As Titkow argues, the resultant

of: post-romantic concept of the myth of the Polish Mother, nationalist vision of social relations, dominating in Poland catholicism, neoliberal discourse of efficiency and individual responsibility; was critical in redefining the position of women since 1989. New job and development opportunities had opened up, while the real chance of making such activity reduced and displaced women form the labor market and the public sphere (Titkow, 2007, p. 16).

Eleonora Zielinska's study clearly testifies to the fact, that the state procedures undertaken in the transition period, although it focused on equal opportunities for women in employment, in fact "resulted in decrease of competitiveness of women in relation to men, and their greater susceptibility to the elimination from the labor market" (Zielińska, 2002, p. 56). Among the specified regulations were: prohibition of employment of women in severe or harmful work, the prohibition of work on the night shift and overtime, protection of long-term employment of women in pregnancy, maternity and parental leave, the extension of maternity leave and the introduction of shorter than men's retirement age. The result of these changes, as proven by Zielińska, is the highest unemployment rate of women in the age group under 25 years of age.

Additional factors pushing out women from the labor market include: small number of places in nurseries and kindergartens, social pressure concerning the need for personal care of the child, the difficulty of re-adaptation to the work environment and others.

Adopted in 2011, the so-called 'Nursery Bill', facilitating the establishment of nurseries as well as introducing a number of alternative forms of care, including baby clubs, daily caregiver paid by the municipality or a nanny, whose social insurance is covered by the state budget, was introduced in order to enable women combining family and professional responsibilities. Certainly mothers interested in institutional forms of care for their children, were in a much better position.

However, as Maria Wiśnicka and Łucja Krzyżanowska show in their research (Krzyżanowska & Wiśnicka, 2009, p. 135), mothers perceive caregivers, kindergartens and nurseries as a necessary evil. Not only this is an additional burden on the household budget, the number of places in public kindergartens and nurseries is limited, opening hours are not adapted to parents' working hours, these places are hotbeds of diseases, but also leaving a child in the care of a stranger is a huge stress and enormous psychological discomfort for a mother.

Opponents of the bill, among which are representatives of influential expert organizations such as ABC XXI Foundation—All of Poland Reads

to Kids and Polish Pediatric Society, as well as a national child and ado-
lescent psychiatry consultant, believe that institutionalized forms of care
are harmful to the psyche of a young child.

Convergent point of view of the above have women who agree with
fundamental postulate of mainstream philosophy of raising children
called attachment parenting, according to which the available and physi-
cally and emotionally present mother is the key to proper social and
emotional development of a child. Personal care of a child is the only
way for those women, who feel, that the fact of being a mother is a turn-
ing point in their life, that requires a reorganization of life's priorities in
favor of family and home. According to Bogusława Budrowska (2000),
and Anna Titkow (2007), most women perceives the role of a mother as
the basis of their identity. Is a conflict between family and professional
obligations a necessity for the majority of women, both in Poland and in
the world? If we take into account the fact, that "the dominant Euro-
American culture normative model of motherhood is a pattern of inten-
sive motherhood" (Urbańska, 2009, p. 6), and that "the current model of
adulthood for women is to combine family and professional responsibili-
ties" (Budrowska, 2000, p. 224) it is surprising, that the state has not
helped so far in any way women, who really want to defuse the conflict.

Recent regulations in this respect, i.e. the law regarding maternity
leave and additional leave on the terms of maternity leave and parental
leave, effective from 1 September 2013, extended the period of paid
childcare, reaching 52 weeks of the birth of one child and from 65 to 71
weeks in the case of multiple births, depending on the number of chil-
dren born at one birth. The Act meets the recommendation of the World
Health Organization concerning the excluded breastfeeding for the first
six months of life of a child and preferably as a primary or supplemen-
tary feeding, to completion first year of age.

Certainly many mothers, regardless of feeding method, appreciate
the gesture of the legislator in the form of paid maternity and parental
leave, which allows to an extended period of child care without having to
go to work. However, opponents of the bill accuse the government of
making populist decisions, that instead of improving the situation of
women in the labor market, worsen it dramatically, causing a one-year
break from professional career, a risk of serious regression of knowledge,
competencies and skills and thus even less competitiveness on the labor
market. Although this law gives woman the possibility of longer person-
al care of a child, in no way it is a response to one of the biggest prob-

lems of modern women—harmonious combining family and work responsibilities.

Dedication to the upbringing of a child while maintaining completely outside the labor market is not an option acceptable to many modern women. This is mainly due to financial reasons: young families can not make the living from only one salary. It is repeatedly emphasized by a number of studies, that economic need experienced by many families is the most influential factor propelling married women into the workforce. "While a distinction is often made between working out of financial necessity and the need to improve the family's standard of living, high inflation, the drop in real income, and rising male unemployment, as well as a perceived need to spread the family's risks, have led to a greater reliance in the wage-earning activities of the female members of the family" (Warrier, 1988, p. 106). But even those women, who are not forced to make this decision solely on financial grounds, feel social pressure in the form of "the order of independence and self-sufficiency of mothers and the conviction that the willingness to make sacrifices for the good of the family and sustaining children are parts of the design of good motherhood" (Titkow, 2003, p. 20). Moreover, many research show that employment of a mother has a great positive impact on herself, children and w family as a whole. Lois w. Hoffman and Lise M. Youngblade point out those positive effects of employed mothers on children's well-being: higher academic achievement, higher cognitive scores, greater career success, more nontraditional career choices and greater occupational commitment, more independence of a child in interaction with their peers, higher score on socioemotional adjustment measures, etc. (Hoffman & Youngblade, 1999, p. 5). They also list further advantages for women themselves: higher level of satisfaction form life in general, lower scores on psychosomatic symptoms, measures of depression, and various stress indicators, higher self-esteem, greater sense of control over their lives, etc. (Hoffman & Youngblade, 1999, p. 23).

Meanwhile, as emphasized by Irena Kotowska "in Europe it is needed to simultaneously increase the employment of women and increase their fertility" (Kotowska, 2009, p. 149). How to reconcile these two objectives, if they are both competing for the same goods: time and attention of a woman? Taking into account Polatnick's point of view that "when both jobs and home demand man hours, balancing or juggling is not sufficient" (Padavic & Reskin, 2002, p. 154), women themselves, have found the answer to that question.

The Internet revolution

Even in the 90's young mothers in Poland had a dilemma: stay at home and devote themselves to the care of a child and running a household, or try to combine these maternal and domestic responsibilities with work. Important circumstances which were taken into account when making these decisions, was whether the husband earns enough to provide for the whole family or is it also necessary for wife to earn some money, is there any relative who can take care of a child, is there any good nursery or kindergarten in the neighborhood, etc. The problem of women's professional plans was not an important factor, although probably for some highly educated professional women or artists, it mattered. A major role was played by traditional ideology emphasizing important role of maternal care, breastfeeding, a woman's duty to sacrifice for the good of a child.

The decision to 'stay at home' and dedication to bringing a child and taking care of house and family meant actual 'staying' in domestic sphere without the opportunity to participate in public life: work (besides a simple cottage industry), social activity, participation in culture (except for these forms which are possible to practice at home i.e. readership and television reception), or social life (except for phone calls or meetings at sandbox). In addition, the woman ceased to be self-contained unit, but then became a part of a wider structure, namely— the family.

Reducing the role of a woman to the private sphere, only related to the care of a child and home resulted in an increase in social inequalities. Financial dependence on a husband, the lack of access to alternative sources of self-esteem, the lack of external resources of authority subordinated women to men. Therefore "closing the women at home with children" placed them at risk of social exclusion.

Drawing on the research of Joan Peters, who examined dozen of families, sacrificial motherhood in which mother as a main caregiver forgets about her needs concerning her professional life, results in poorer parenting experience, weaker marriages and less balanced children (Peters, 1997), She poses a question, which puzzles me as well: why motherhood and work belong to such inconciliable realities?

The research conducted by Łucja Krzyżanowska and Maria Wiśnicka shows that 'the fundamental problem of mothers of young children and what they find most disturbing in everyday functioning is a sense of an

isolation from the 'world', detachment from the adults' affairs' (Krzyża-nowska & Wiśnicka, 2009, p. 116). This isolation is also a consequence of institutional barriers, of which the most important is the situation in the labor market, which is still based on the traditional system of work relying on the presence of workers in the office in rigid hours. As Irene Padavic and Barbara F. Reskin observes "many employers have not rethought the organization of work, that existed in the 1950s, when most workers had wives who attended to the home front full time" (Padavic & Reskin, 2002, p. 153).

Internet responds to the need of women, offering them a mobile and flexible workplace, tailored to their capabilities and availability. "The cyber-world opened perspectives and relationships not available previously" (Pertierra, 2007, p. 196), and become "a new possibility for being-in-the-world" (Pertierra, 2007, p. 198). Today, "thanks to globalization, the information revolution and modern technology, the work exceeded the traditional boundaries of time and place" (Kropiwnicki et al., 2008, p. 35).

Contemporary woman is one of the biggest beneficiaries of these technological and cultural changes. A woman can now not only self-fulfill as a housewife, but also can combine being a housewife, mother and a businesswoman. Such "bizneskwoki," as they say about themselves, women who have decided to sacrifice to bringing up a child with a simultaneous lack of resignation of career aspirations. Women running e-businesses, regardless of the form of it—a blog, a web site or online service—while being home, in the private sphere, they also go out to the public sphere.

Professional e-activity provides numerous features not only related to the provision of family income, and thus also an increase of the financial independence of women, but also meets the need for social interaction and socializing Furthermore, it is a source of social respect, it enables the utilization of the knowledge and professional skills, enables the development of passions and interests (if the blog theme or area of e-business coincides with the hobby, which is often the case) and it is an important form of modern reflexivity (Giddens, 2007, p. 54). Magdalena Sokołowska in Poland and Helena Znaniecka-Lopata in the United States had formulated the problem of "the unknown environment—a household" (Znaniecka-Lopata, 1973). Despite the fact, that these researchers, more than a half century ago analyzed the unpaid work of women at home and for family, their research problem is still relevant today in the context of cyber-mothers. It is significant, that Central Statistical Office's

report "Women in Poland" marginalizes systematically the phenomenon of women in the household. Meanwhile, blogs and e-businesses are becoming increasingly popular phenomenon, about which we know little. Simplicity of setting them up causes their rapid growth. According to the Gemius, there are 16 thousand of e-businesses in Poland (2012) and the value of the market—only in four years, from 2008 to 2012—more than doubled—from 11 to nearly 23 billion zl (Cichoń et al., 2013, p. 18).

There is similar situation with blogs. It is difficult to calculate how many of them there are in the world today. Service Blogpulse estimates this number at around 135 million. Polish blogosphere is estimated for about 3 million of blogs. In 2005–2010 in Poland the blogosphere doubled its reach among Internet users and the number of users increased three times. According to the PBI's data from 2010 (Garapich, 2011), almost 11 million Poles visited blogs (nearly 60% of Internet users). According to the CBOS'sdata from 2013 (Feliksiak, 2013), there is about a million bloggers in Poland, which means that every 20th Internet-user is the author of at least one blog. As Andrzej Garapich, the President of Polish Internet Research claims "the blogosphere has a greater range than *Polityka*, *Newsweek*, *W Sieci*, *Do rzeczy* and *Wprost* altogether. More people refer to them than to TVN 24, Polsat News and TVP Info, that is to media believed to be reliable. Despite this, the blogosphere remains on the sidelines interests of marketers, advertisers and researchers" (Baran & Miotk, 2013).

Parental blog is a new type of a blog, which concerns the subject of parenthood, raising children and/or actions resulting from the fact of being a parent. So far, nobody examined how many of them there are in the world. Some sites provide only aggregated statistics of established blogging platforms, without distinction on the subject of a blog. While estimating this number I decided to rely on the results of a Google Blogs Search by entering a search term 'blog parentingowy'. More than 16,000 results[1] retrieved in less than one second gives the approximate size of the phenomenon with which we are dealing.

Taking professional activity in virtual space has become a gate to another world for women, through the spread of the Internet on a large scale and low barriers of entry to the Internet business. Thanks to no need for official setting up a business and possession of a financial contribution in the early phases of a start-up, the availability of free tools for

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[1] Up to date on 15.04.2014.

creating websites, free business promotion channels in the network, such as social networking sites, forums, etc. we are witnessing a rapid increase of founded websites, often set up by amateurs who started to perceive the network as a source of earning. Also, women who are mothers have discovered in this option a chance to stay at home with a child, while not remaining outside the labor market. The virtual labor market as opposed to the traditional, real in addition to increased mobility, eliminates the problem of wage disparities between men and women, creating an ideal workplace for modern mothers: mobile, active and independent.

Birth of the cyber-supermother

Thanks to the rehabilitation of the social role of women in charge of the house, now perceived—not as it used to be—"a tormented housewife, but busy, although taking care of herself home manager" (Sikorska, 2009, p. 93). Women working professionally at home may now proudly proclaim to the world 'I take care of home'. According to data from the Central Statistical Office "although after 1990 the number of women, who chose taking care of the family instead of professional work gradually dropped" (Cywoniuk, 2008), since 2004, we can observe a gradual increase of this ratio, which in 2007 reached 1.5 million.

Although they deal with cleaning, cooking, ironing and other activities similar to ordinary housewives, unlike its predecessors they can reap socially sanctioned -or at least popularized in the media and public awareness—satisfaction of their tasks. New traditionalist abandoned climbing up the professional ladder for the sake of love, marriage and motherhood. Magazine 'Your Style', cited by Sikorska, describes the situation of 25-year-old architect design, which could be a representation of cyber-supermother's approach:

> Małgosia laughs that an artist became a housewife. Modern! With make-up, in a trendy blouse. I do not want to be the Polish Mother, who sacrifices everything. I know what's been played at the movies, what's going on in the architecture. I read about it when Mikołaj sleeps on my belly—she responds. In two years, the second child is born and then I catch up, complete the studies. Career can wait, but the first years of child's life pass forever. You can not miss them.

Model of intensive motherhood emerging from the image above is characteristic dominant pattern of motherhood in Euro-American culture. Intensive motherhood implies, that the ability to care of a child is biologically conditioned and belongs to a woman, as the one who should take care of a child for at least the first three years of child's life. This approach emphasizes the emotionally absorbing, intensive physically and costly financial education focused on a child and based on the authority of experts. This pattern implies, that a woman has the ability and willingness to give up work also as a source of income, due to the well-earning partner, who is able to provide for his family. In this pattern, the role of a mother refers only to the caring functions.

Mothers taking professional activity in the network on one hand fit into this model, recognizing their duty and the need for personal care of a child and submitting it over the existing professional work. However, on the other hand, these women do not entirely abandon their professional aspirations, but merely adapt them to the circumstances, and their maternal role reaches far beyond the caring functions. Availability almost the entire time of these women for the child does not preclude neither their professional activities fulfillment, nor social functions associated with making and maintaining social relationships, et al. Is the cyber-mother a new type of a supermother, skillfully combining fulfillment of family and professional obligations? If so, it would mean, that in the case we are dealing with a new model of motherhood, enabled technically thanks to the Internet and socially sanctioned by the culture of individualism. Model of a cyber—supermother would be then a hybrid of the traditional pattern (motherhood as instinct, belief in the need personal care of the child, etc.) and the model of the modern pattern (postulate of self-fulfillment, blurring the boundaries between the private and the public, gender equality in professional duties, etc.).

The occurrence of cyber-supermothers would not be possible if not the effects of the moral revolution and the activities of the feminist movement in the 60's and the 70's, that have influenced the expansion of freedom of choice of socially acceptable social roles, which "repertoire is more diverse than it was a few years ago" (Sikorska, 2009, p. 95). In contrast to the position of women in more than half a century ago "a wife or a partner may now-with incomparably greater freedom than ever before—choose between being a successful woman professional 'home manager', a childless woman or a mother of several children" (Sikorska, 2009, p. 159). As Sikorska writes "in Poland this process started practi-

cally since he transformation of the system, after 1989" (Sikorska, 2009, p. 322).

In addition, according to the research by Marta Olcoń-Kubicka "today being a mother is no longer the factor, which automatically excludes women from social activity" (Olcoń-Kubicka, 2009, p. 40). The woman is no longer forced "to sit at home with the baby" all day long and to lead almost the only conversations about the proverbial 'soup and feces' with neighboring mothers gathered at the sandbox. Nowadays, powerful entertainment industry waits for a mother, offering her a range of services in the form of clubs, cafes, cinemas, theaters, shops, educational and gymnastics activities and others.

In the era of individualism culture takes place a redefinition of the role of woman's partner. Modern man in the family is no longer a historical model of the "father-king' or the 'father-God" supremely and decisively governing in the family, whom is due respect and absolute obedience, but a model of aware of a role of a father man, both physically and emotionally involved in bringing up a child and supporting mentally (and still economically) his partner.

The child also changed its position in the family, thanks to i.a. new theories of education (e.g. by Janusz Korczak, Benjamin Spock and Hubert von Schoenbeck) accenting its sovereignty as an entity, individualism, far-reaching freedom to decide for themselves and imposing a symmetry in the parent-child relationship based on partnership.

Changing roles and positions of family members, have changed the family as a whole in the direction of the institution defined as an interactive process, so that the traditional distinction between the private sphere, the feminine and the public sphere, men loses crucial meaning in shaping the gender contract (Fuszara, 2002, p. 46). Today, the division of duties between a woman and a man relies less and less on the basis of membership of a particular sex, but more often it is based on the consensus of both partners. In recent years, support for the partnership model of the family, in which partners spend roughly the same amount of time on a career and equally occupy home and take care for children significantly increases[2] (44% in 2000 compared to 35% in 1994).

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[2] According to the Central Statistical Office (GUS – Główny Urząd Statystyczny) women devote three times more time than men on household duties. In the Time Budget Survey 2013 we find that 'household duties are the domain for 85% women and only 44% men'.

Therefore, the family becomes "a negotiation terrain" (Sikorska, 2009, p. 156), an area of contacting of completely separate personalities and it is referred to as a "democratic, partner, egalitarian, where basic principle is emotional and gender equality" (Sikorska, 2009, p. 151). Emphasizing the subjectivity and autonomy of the individual is very evident in both the female–male relationships (the right to self-fulfillment, development, affiliate division of responsibilities, etc.), as well as parent-child (promotion of partner model of upbringing, the conviction of the need to respect the opinion and the will of the children, etc.). Each member of the family is therefore entitled to have its own plans and goals and the right to pursue one's happiness. Individualism also means that each person and its activities, not a class or a background, is the basis for determining the place in the social structure.

Individualization, which is the background of contemporary phenomena and immersed in it motherhood, seem not to have too many features in common. While the emphasis in individualization is focused on isolated from the broader social context unit, motherhood emphasizes the importance of establishing and maintaining relationships with other people, in extreme perspectives, even sacrificing oneself, own plans and needs for others. Marta Olcoń-Kubicka argues after Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim that "parenting is not incompatible with the process of individualization, but on the contrary, it may be its primary dimension" (Olcoń-Kubicka, 2009, p. 40). The researcher justifies its position not only by changes within the family, which becomes as a personal biography a 'do-it-yourself' project, in which individuals, not social norms or cultural, decide on its course, but also by the process of fetishization of the child, which allows to experience states and feelings not available in other way, than in the parent-child relationship. In addition, self-fulfillment is one of the most important cultural values of individualism. Being a mother nowadays is seen as "an essential element of a woman's self-fulfillment" (Olcoń-Kubicka, 2009, p. 40).

Self-fulfillment defined as "not only retaining the appropriate balance between the utilitarian motive and selfless action, but also using of capital which is a value for its own" (Jacyno, 2007, p. 204) perfectly embodies in the cyber reality of blogging and running e-business. Women's blogs or e-businesses are mostly the result of their passions, interests—in a word—an essential part of their lifestyle while this kind of a situation, when "the work becomes the object of styling, and work style becomes part of the way of life" (Jacyno, 2007, p. 71) is one of the basic

parameters of individualization era. Cyberspace is also an ideal tool for "experiencing oneself in many different styles and ways of being" (Jacyno, 2007, p. 105), which processes underlie a full life. "Making oneself the object and instrument of activity, gives the individual the opportunity to select and create itself" (Jacyno, 2007, p. 179).

Analyzing American mommy bloggers Rebecca Powell observes, that in case of these women "motherhood expanded their subjectivities. It did not do away with them. (...) Subjectivities from before motherhood bleed over, infiltrate the present and make it habitable" (Powell, 2010, p. 46).

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Decoding multisyllabic words: Structural analysis in reading by groups

ABSTRACT. An age appropriate, research-based systematic program that teaches a flexible strategy for decoding multisyllabic words may be the foundation for increased reading abilities of middle school male and female students struggling with grade level text. To meet this need, the *REWARDS* reading program (Archer, Gleason & Vachon, 2000) was used with struggling 6th grade readers with learning disabilities (LD). The quasi-experimental research design used in this study is non-randomized control group (*n* = 20), pretest- posttest design. The Basic Reading Inventory along with DIBELS measure of reading fluency were the instruments used to calculate findings. In a five week period, students' decoding levels increased by 1.72 grade levels, instructional reading levels increased by 1.45 grade levels, while the reading fluency rates were increased by 28% at instructional reading levels and 17% at grade level. Decoding ability was highly correlated to reading comprehension with the relationship of .88.

KEYWORDS: decoding, multisyllabic words, reading by groups

Introduction

Reading difficulties

Reading is an integral aspect of life. Understanding what is read is crucial to academic success. This is especially true for students with learning disabilities (LD). It is not uncommon for this population of secondary school students to read significantly below grade level, making academic success challenging. Nagey and Anderson (1984) found that each year students in the middle grades read between 100,000 and 10,000,000 words, 10,000 of which are new, and a great majority are multisyllabic (Cunningham, 1998). A great reading disparity exists in individuals as is indicated by the number of words read yearly. If

reading deficits are not remediated, the disparity between the proficient and poor will continue to increase. This is known as the "Mathew Effect" in reading; it applies to students with LD as the example of "the poor get poorer" (Stanovich, 1986, p. 382).

The impact of this disparity on the self-esteem of poor readers affects their likelihood of completing high school while increasing the likelihood of these students exhibiting challenging behavior (Juel, 1996). Seventy-five percent of unemployed adults and 60% of prison inmates are illiterate (Orton Dyslexia Society, cited in Fuchs et al., 1991). Twenty-five percent of adults cannot read directions on a prescription, or decode a note sent home from school—they are functionally illiterate. Illiteracy figures are even more staggering for adults with LD with estimates as high as 73% (Riley, 1996). These statistics should inspire educators to find the most effective methods for promoting students' reading development.

Difficulties have emerged with the traditional approach to teaching decoding. Decoding strategies are usually confined to primary grades and limited to monosyllable words. Although most readers implicitly learn how to apply these strategies to longer words, students with LD often need explicit instruction (Carnine, Silbert & Kameenui, 1997). Older students have been taught strategies which are based on complicated syllabication rules or that prescribed rote learning of common phonogram patterns. Canny and Scheiner (1976) state that "neither instructional approach led to improved decoding performance" (p. 123). These syllabication rules, which emphasized consonant combinations and locations, placed little value on vowel sounds. The ability to divide words into dictionary syllables neither proved to be an indication of reading ability nor was reading ability even related to this skill. Canny and Schreiner (1976) suggest a more flexible approach for word division needed to be explored in the classroom.

Therefore, an age appropriate, research-based systematic program that teaches a flexible strategy for decoding multisyllabic words is the foundation for increased decoding, reading fluency and comprehension abilities of secondary school students struggling with grade level text (Archer, Gleason & Vachon, 2003). *Reading Excellence: Word Attack and Rate Development Strategies* or *REWARDS* is designed for this population (Archer, Vachon & Gleason, 2000). The purpose of this study is to determine if *REWARDS* is a valid means of increasing the decoding, reading fluency, and reading comprehension skills of 6th

grade boys and girls with LD. Another question was to determine the relationship between decoding skills and reading comprehension ability for the students in this study.

Reading research

The ultimate purpose of reading is comprehension (Stanovich, 1991) or understanding what has been read. In order to increase reading comprehension, fluency must be attained. Fluency is the ability to read with speed, accuracy, and expression. Accuracy and speed are increased by improved word recognition skills. Word recognition refers to linking the printed representation of a word with its meaning. Decoding is translating printed words into a representation similar to oral language, and thus decoding facilitates word recognition (Carnine, Silbert & Kameenui, 1997; Stanovich, 1991). Therefore, it becomes obvious that if students cannot read grade level materials because of decoding difficulty, they will be unable to read with fluency or comprehend much of what they read.

Decoding instruction research

Decoding has generally been taught through phonics. Phonics instruction is a means of teaching reading that stresses the acquisition of letter-sound correspondences and their use in reading and spelling (National Reading Panel [NRP], 2000). Phonics instruction is built upon the assumption that students are aware that spoken words are made from discrete speech sounds, or phonemes. Once this awareness is developed and students are able to manipulate sounds within words, the alphabetic principle is applied (Adams, 1999). The alphabetic principle states all phonemes in oral language have corresponding symbolic representations known as letters (Carnine, Silbert & Kameenui, 1997). Reading programs that are based on explicit direct instruction in the alphabetic principle have shown great advantages when working with at-risk children in preventing reading failure (Foorman et al., 1998).

The NRP's (2000) meta-analysis revealed five major categories of phonics instruction. Analogy phonics teaches students to compare unfamiliar words to words students already know. An example of phonics by analogy begins by recognizing that the rime or final segment of an unfa-

miliar word is similar to one that is familiar then by blending the known rime with the new word's onset or initial word portion. The analytic phonics method teaches students to analyze letter-sound relations in previously learned words. The purpose of this method is to avoid pronouncing sounds in isolation. Analytic phonics may be practiced by drawing a struggling student's attention to a vowel sound in a known word and then by applying it to a new, unknown word. Embedded phonics incorporates phonics instruction into text reading. This implicit method relies on incidental learning. Phonics is also taught through spelling lessons. This teaches students to segment words into phonemes and select letters for those phonemes (spelling phonetically). The final method is known as synthetic phonics instruction. This method is based on the idea that students should be taught explicitly to convert graphemes into phonemes and then blend the phonemes into recognizable words. The NRP found that synthetic phonics programs which emphasized direct instruction enhanced children's success in learning to read. Systematic synthetic phonics instruction is significantly more effective than other phonics instruction methods for students with learning disabilities and students who are low-achieving.

As students' word recognition skills increase, they are able to use patterns and analogy to decode—most decoding is performed by finding familiar patterns in words; the patterns are often morphemes—root words, suffixes, and prefixes (Cunningham & Cunningham, 2002). English is a morphologically connected language and it is estimated that for every word you know, you can quickly learn between six and seven other words sharing the same morpheme (Nagy & Anderson, 1984). The problem struggling readers possess is that the partitioned units within words they process are too small; poor readers pronounce unfamiliar words by individual sounds with occasional blends, and as the units of recognition are increased, reading changes to a more holistic process that leads to automaticity (Samuels, LaBerge & Bremer, 1978). Eye movement studies indicate that the human brain recognizes known patterns with words (Rayner & Pollatesk, 1989) and direct instruction of patterns within words may be the answer to the ever increasing multisyllabic word reading (Cunningham, 1998).

Structural Analysis teaches students to decode multisyllabic words through the recognition of root words, prefixes, and suffixes (Carnine, Silbert & Kameenui, 1997); thus, increasing the size of the units processed in multisyllabic words. It is a flexible strategy rather than a set of

fixed rules to memorize, and this strategy flexibility leads to a greater likelihood of generalization (Lenz & Hughes, 1990). Students' reading errors were reduced when they were instructed in a structural analysis based strategy (Lenz & Hughes, 1990). The promise of enhanced reading ability provided by such programs is great for students with learning disabilities in secondary schools who are unable to effectively read multisyllabic words, and therefore sacrifice their level of reading comprehension and limit academic success. One such program is entitled *REWARDS* (Archer, Vachon & Gleason, 2000). It is a short-term intervention that teaches struggling readers a flexible decoding strategy to read longer words which contain most of the meaning in text. *REWARDS* also focuses on fluency instruction.

Research validation of REWARDS

In recognition that 74% of students with reading disabilities in third grade continue to have significant reading challenges in ninth grade (Lyon, 1995), *REWARDS* provides systematic instruction in decoding. As Moats (2001) stated, secondary students need systematic instruction in age appropriate material in order to remediate reading discrepancies. *REWARDS* uses careful wording in its scripted delivery as to not offend the sensitivities of this population of adolescents. The importance of this characteristic is self-apparent to anyone who has worked with this population of students.

Phonics instruction

In order for phonics material to be effective, it must be systematic with direct-instruction (Swanson, 1999). *REWARDS* is intensive in its level of direct instruction. It carefully teaches the preskills to the decoding strategy before introducing it in total. Students are given direct instruction in diphthongs, referred to as "vowel combinations," and extensive review opportunities are provided. A review of vowel sounds is provided and common confusion is eliminated that results from naming vowel phonemes "short" and "long" because vowel sounds are the same length. Therefore, a vowel's two phonemes are referred to as the vowel's "sound" and "name." All vowels are then practiced in

"word parts" that are common portions of larger words students are likely to encounter during future reading.

Students with reading disabilities are more likely to mispronounce affixes and disregard large portions of letter information, and are four times more likely to omit syllables (Sheflebine & Callhoun, 1991). *REWARDS* provides direct instruction in common prefixes and suffixes. These are introduced in small number and reviewed daily. This critical component was proven essential because it provides students with alternative decodable chunks, or visual patterns, within multisyllabic words (Sheflebine, 1990). Cunningham (1998) found that by teaching 50 words with the most common affixes, it would give struggling readers access to over 800 other words. Explicit direct instruction in prefixes and suffixes may provide students access to thousands of words previously unreadable to them. Students are then given practice opportunities to identify these affixes in words and taught that not all words have "beginning" or "ending" word parts.

Oral activities which provide students the opportunity to blend syllables are provided. Syllables are first presented by the teacher at a slow pace and then by asking students "What word?" Opportunities are provided for students to find alternative pronunciations for mispronounced words. Sheflebine (1990) indicates the importance of finding alternative pronunciations until a match was found in their own lexicon. This corrective procedure is practiced daily with whole group choral response to eliminate isolating individual students who make miscues. Intermediate-age students with learning disabilities made significant gains on multiple measures of word recognition when a "part-by-part" decoding strategy was given for four weeks and involved students drawing loops under pronounced syllables (Archer, Vachon & Gleason, 2003). *REWARDS* expands on this strategy having students circle prefixes, then by circling suffixes, and by underlining vowel graphemes in the remaining section of the multisyllabic word. Students sound out the middle portion (knowing that for each vowel sound, there is one word part or syllable), then pronounce the parts in sequence, which finally leads to saying the word and accessing it from their lexicon making it a "real word." Without the ability to decode multisyllabic words, students will not read with adequate fluency and thus not gain access to the meaning of what is being read. Therefore, increasing reading fluency is a critical aspect of improving the decoding skills of older students with learning disabilities.

Reading fluency research

Someone who reads fluently gives little conscious attention to decoding (Meyer & Felton, 1999). Struggling readers give much of their finite cognitive resources to decoding, and thus often miss the meaning of what has been read (LaBerge & Samuels, 1974). Reading becomes a laborious task to be avoided; thus, struggling readers who are most in need of daily reading practice experience delays in the development of automaticity (Moats, 2001). They are more likely to perform preferred activities such as watching television rather than completing homework assignments, possibly due to experienced difficulties in reading fluency (Archer, Gleason & Vachon, 2003). Therefore, struggling readers require frequent structured fluency practice incorporated into their academic lives to decrease the Mathew Effect in reading and increase overall academic success.

Reading practice is generally recognized as an important contributor to fluency. Guided oral reading encourages students to read passages orally with systematic, explicit guidance and feedback from the teacher. Guided oral reading is a way for teachers to effectively model reading with proper rate, pronunciation, and prosody in small group settings as listening to good models of fluent reading, students learn how a reader's voice can help text make sense (Kuhn & Stahl, 2003). The NRP (2000) concluded that guided oral reading procedures that included guidance from teachers, peers, or parents had "a significant and positive impact" on word recognition, fluency and comprehension across a range of grade levels (p. 12).

Passage reading is incorporated into *REWARDS* as it provides the opportunity for fluency building. Guided reading practiced in isolation may fail to provide the needed reading practice for struggling secondary students. Thus, *REWARDS* advocates the use of choral reading in which students read the passage simultaneously with the teacher in unison as this insures greater participation, and allows for increased practice opportunities (Rasinski et al., 1994). The cloze method is also suggested: the teacher reads the passage aloud and pauses periodically, cuing students to respond chorally to the next word; this is a useful way to monitor student participation. Partner reading is also suggested as it allows students additional repeated readings with a peer. Fuchs et al. (2001) found that the use of partner reading significantly improved reading fluency scores on multiple measures for struggling readers.

Samuels (1979) concluded that some students were not building fluency when reading orally because they seldom had the opportunity to read any selection more than once. Effective repeated reading procedures contain two components: (1) they provide students with many opportunities to practice reading, and (2) they provide students with guidance in how fluent readers read insuring feedback to increase awareness and correction of their mistakes (Osborn & Lehr, 2003). This guidance and feedback can come from peers, parents or teachers (NRP, 2000). *REWARDS* advocates the use of repeated readings in passage reading sections to improve fluency. After the teacher models fluency through choral reading or the cloze method, the students are given a one minute individual practice. Next, the students separate and partner read, providing one another feedback on miscues. Pairs should include a relatively high and low reader. After several practice sessions, students exchange books and read for one minute, each in turn underlining any miscues of the other. This final reading is used to determine the Words Correct per Minute (WCM). Fluency scores are graphed providing students visual representations of progress.

Research summary

The ultimate purpose of reading instruction is to improve reading comprehension. If students have difficulty with decoding, these skill deficits need to be addressed to bridge the growing reading disparity. Decoding has been addressed through various methods, but to maximize effectiveness, initial phonics instruction should be systematic and synthetic. Once students word recognition skills are improved, phonics instruction based on analogy which provides direct instruction in morphemes is beneficial. Structural analysis teaches students to decode multisyllabic words through the recognition of root words, prefixes, and suffixes. *REWARDS* teaches a flexible strategy based on structural analysis to decode multisyllabic words and provides exercises designed to increase reading fluency. However, despite the fact that this program is based on research validated principles, there are no independent studies validating the outcomes of a 1.5 grade level increase as stated by the authors of *REWARDS* (Archer, Gleason & Vachon, 2003). Therefore, it is hypothesized that the *REWARDS* intervention will increase sixth grade students with learning disabilities decoding levels, which will lead to increased reading fluency, and overall gains in

reading levels of 1.5 grades. It is also predicted that there is a strong correlation between decoding and reading comprehension. The null hypothesis is that *REWARDS* will not lead to significant gains in decoding, reading fluency, or overall reading levels of 6th grade students with learning disabilities and that there is no significant relationship between decoding skill levels and reading comprehension.

Methodology

The middle school from which the student participants were selected was located in a lower middle-class neighborhood in the suburbs of Los Angeles, California. The student body was comprised of approximately 1,200 students with 83% Hispanic, 12% white non-Hispanic, 3% Asian, and 2% from various other racial and cultural backgrounds. The school was selected due to the investigator's access to its students enrolled in special education. Permission from the principal and parents of participating students was acquired to collect data from an intervention already in use. The purpose of the study was described to the administration and parents as the validation of a district-endorsed reading intervention taught by the researcher to students with special needs during the spring of 2004. Data would be collected on students who had participated in the intervention and would include decoding levels, reading fluency, and reading comprehension scores.

Participants

The convenience sample consisted of 22 6th grade students who were part of the researcher's caseload of special education students in a Resource Specialist Program (RSP) who had participated in the intervention. Of these students, 20 consent forms were obtained. The students qualified for Special Education Services under state and federal requirements and all had Individualized Education Plans (IEP) with objectives in the area of reading.

The participants' ethnic and racial backgrounds were representative of the school's overall population; 80% of the population was Hispanic, and 20% was White, non-Hispanic. The sample consisted of 11 boys and 9 girls—all of whom were designated with LD.

Research instruments

Two primary instruments were used in the data collection procedure. The first instrument used was the Basic Reading Inventory (BRI) (Johns, 2001). First, graded word lists were used to determine the students' decoding level. The decoding level was used to determine the initial reading comprehension passage; these passages provided contextual word identification measures as well as literal and inferential questions which aided in determining the reading comprehension GE. The students' independent, instructional, and frustration reading levels were then determined by factoring decoding ability with reading comprehension levels. Both the instructional decoding and word recognition levels were used in determining the overall decoding GE for each student. The statistical mean decoding GE was calculated from these two measures.

The second instrument used was the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) (Good & Kaminski, 2002). DIBELS are a set of standardized, individually administered measures for early literacy skills. Each measure has been thoroughly researched and demonstrated to be reliable and valid indicators of early literacy development. The Oral Reading Fluency subtests follow a curriculum-based assessment model in using 1-minute timings to determine reading rates or fluency; four subtests were read at the students' individual instructional reading levels as determined by the BRI. These passages were scored and values expressed in WCM. The statistical mean for reading fluency will be generated from the four readings for each student as this has been determined to be a valid method (Kamps et. al., 2003).

Data collection procedures

The pretest measures were given to both groups one week prior to the beginning of the intervention. The BRI was administered in order to calculate reading levels. Students' instructional reading levels were used to administer the DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency subtest. Four passages at the student's instructional reading level were used to generate a mean WCM. Also, four passages were administered at the students' grade level and mean WCM scores were calculated. The same assessment procedures were followed one week after the intervention and served as the posttest

Intervention

Procedures were followed as outlined in the teacher training for passage reading. This consisted of teacher modeled passage reading with fluency and accuracy. Next, students were matched in groups based on ability, one stronger reader paired with a less proficient reader. The stronger reader read first to provide an additional model, while the other partner provided oral corrections; each student read a passage one time with the other providing necessary feedback. The researcher listened briefly to each group to insure maximum participation. Students' workbooks were exchanged and partners timed the other for one minute. The timer was also responsible for underlining errors made by their partner while reading. These errors were subtracted from the total words read to generate total WCM. These were charted for students' visual feedback on reading fluency progress.

Results

Decoding

The pretest mean (M) decoding level of the control group was 5.05 GE and the intervention group pretest $M = 3.25$. The control group posttest $M = 5.13$ and the intervention group posttest $M = 5.05.$ The change in the mean between the tests for the control groups was 0.08 grade level. The change in the mean between tests for the intervention group was 1.8 grade levels. When the change in M of the control group was subtracted from the M change of the intervention group (to account for maturation), there was a net change of 1.72 grade levels.

Table 1

Mean Decoding Levels

$n = 10$	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Growth
Control Group	5.05	5.13	0.08
Intervention Group	3.25	5.05	1.8

Note. Units expressed in grade equivalency

Instructional reading levels

Results from the BRI mean instructional reading levels for both groups were determined. The control group pretest *M = 4.6* GE, and the intervention group pretest *M =* 3.4 GE. The posttest control group *M =* 4.9, while the posttest intervention group *M = 5.15.* The change between tests for the control group was 0.3 grade levels. The change between tests for the intervention group was 1.75 grade levels. The changes in between tests were subtracted to reach a total change among groups of 1.45 grade levels.

Table 2

Mean Instructional Reading Levels

n = 10	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Growth
Control Group	4.60	4.90	.3
Intervention Group	3.40	5.15	1.75

Note. Units expressed in grade equivalency

Reading fluency

The pretest reading fluency score for the control group at their instructional reading level was M = 78.08 WCM, and the intervention group was *M = 65.76* WCM. The control group's posttest score at their instructional reading level was *M = 91.45* WCM, while the score of intervention group was M = 84.15 WCM. Scores indicate increases of 13.37 WCM for the control group and 18.37 WCM for the intervention group at students' instructional reading levels.

The pretest reading fluency score for the control group at grade level was M = 85.16 WCM and 68.65 WCM for the intervention group. The posttest score for the control group was 86.45 WCM. The intervention group's fluency measure was M = 80.13 WCM. Posttest scores indicate increases of 1.29 WCM for the control and 11.48 WCM for the intervention group (please refer to Table 3 fort-test information.

Pearson r

The Pearson r was calculated to discover the relationship between decoding skill levels and reading comprehension ability. The entire sample of 20 students was used to generate the figure of .88; this indi-

cates that a strong relationship between decoding skill and reading comprehension ability exists within this study (please refer to Figure 1). The t-test for the Pearson r was referenced and the minimum level of .38 was necessary to reject the null hypothesis.
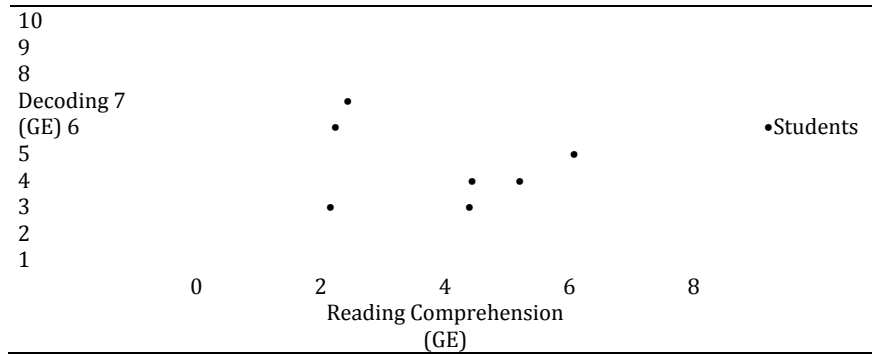
Figure 1. Pearson r Coefficient Correlation

Note. All scores reported in grade equivalency (GE). Pearson r = .88. n = 20

Discussion

The effects of the *REWARDS* intervention upon this sample of students were evident in the overall scores. Students showed significant gains in decoding and reading comprehension, with less significant growth in reading fluency. A strong correlation was demonstrated between decoding skills and reading comprehension.

Decoding

Systematic, structural analysis based programs have been proven successful in teaching decoding and phonics to older students. *REWARDS* emphasized both structured introductions and reviews of affixes and vowel sounds, provided practice for identification of these affixes within words, and gave students a flexible decoding strategy for multisyllabic words. Lessons provided constant exposure to new vocabulary as well as extensive review. Students appeared to be able to read longer words with more efficiency and confidence. In addition, students' multisyllabic word recognition and automaticity increased.

Students' decoding levels increased by 1.73 grade levels in a five-week period. The control group's gain of only 0.08 GE during this time demonstrate relatively expected gains for students not exposed to systematic phonics instruction. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected based upon the outcome of the posttest decoding portion of the BRI. *REWARDS* is a valid means of increasing sixth grade students with LD decoding skills.

Instructional reading levels

Despite modifications and accommodations, students with LD are often denied access to the core curriculum. Intuition alone informs one that if students are unable to decode text, they will have little success in understanding what has been read; research undoubtedly supports this cognition. With 80% of all words being multisyllabic and containing at least one affix, the likelihood of comprehending text for students experiencing decoding deficits decreases dramatically as student advance through school. Therefore, increasing struggling readers' reading comprehension is crucial to academic success.

The control group experienced gains of 0.3 GE in a five-week period. For students who lag behind non-disabled peers in reading comprehension, this type of gain is not enough. This vulnerable population will never compensate for the Mathew Effect. They will continue to fall further behind with each passing day. Instructional reading levels increased by 1.45 grade levels which indicate that *REWARDS* assisted the intervention group to achieve significant gains in understanding what they read. Their mean instructional reading level rose to 5.15 GE. Despite this significant gain, on average these students will have difficulty understanding 6th grade level text. Due to significant increases by the intervention group as compared to the control group over the same period of time, the null hypothesis was rejected as *REWARDS* is a valid means of increasing students reading comprehension.

Reading fluency

Reading fluency is a natural extension of decoding skill. Research supports the relationship between reading fluency and reading comprehension based upon the idea of limited cognitive resources; if one spends an

inordinate proportion of cognitive energy on decoding, there is little left for comprehension. Students' reading fluency scores at their instructional reading levels increased by 18.37 WCM and the control group increased by 13.37 WCM. T-test scores for both groups indicate that increases in reading fluency were not likely due to chance. The intervention group out-gained the control group on grade level passages as well. The intervention group increased by 11.48 WCM versus the control group's 1.29 WCM. The t-test score indicates that the gain demonstrated by the intervention group was significant, with the control group's insignificant gain likely due to chance. The reading fluency data for *REWARDS* supports the assumption that it is an effective intervention for increasing reading fluency scores for the population and thus the null hypothesis is rejected. Intervention group increased by 28% and the control group by 17% which seem significant, but students from both groups are still far below the grade level expectancies of between 125 and 150 WCM. On grade level passages, the intervention group's reading rate increased by 17% and the control group's by 2% Asindependent reading levels, students reading rates at grade level remain far behind grade level expectancies. The Connecticut Longitudinal Study at Adolescence (1999) rightfully titled "Persistence of Dyslexia," found that while decoding and comprehension scores may be improved in students with reading disabilities, reading fluency measures lag drastically behind, sometimes never improving. Students with LD continue to struggle reading fluently even after receiving training. They labor through difficult text and often develop compensatory skills, such as an over reliance on context clues, in order to comprehend what they read. These students remain in the drowning world of word-by-word readers flooded by an ever increasing reading demand never fully developing the academic life saving skill of prosody.

Decoding and reading comprehension

In conducting background research for this study, it became apparent that the relationship between reading fluency and reading comprehension was known, but the data for decoding and reading comprehension was not as readily accessible. The relationship between decoding and reading comprehension seems obvious, therefore studies that provide this correlation measure are intriguing to those facilitating academic success for struggling readers The Pearson r was calculated to generate such a finding.

The Pearson r was calculated to discover the relationship between decoding and reading comprehension. The entire sample of 20 students was used to generate the figure of .88; this indicates a very strong relationship between the two variables. Given that correlation does not indicate causation, it is safe to state (with a correlation of .88) that improving students' decoding skill levels will likely increase reading comprehension abilities.

Differences among groups

Due to sampling procedures, significant differences emerged in reading abilities among groups. There were differences between the instructional reading levels of each group from the onset. The control group was composed of significantly higher readers with *M* reading level 1.2 GE above the intervention group. Students in the control group read at a higher level and read with greater fluency. Such significant differences among groups make comparison tenuous.

Student outcomes

Student outcomes were possibly limited due to behavior challenges within the intervention group. Several students needed behavioral support throughout the intervention. The overarching dynamic of the intervention group was at times volatile. Outbursts were common, and classroom management strategies beyond those suggested by the authors were necessary. The intervention group required frequent motivational conversations regarding the impact improved reading abilities has on one's life. Students complained of being bored with the curriculum and its repetitive nature. This was the most challenging group the researcher had taken through *REWARDS* and stating that outcomes may be greater for other groups is reasonable.

Future research

Promising areas for future research emerged as a result of this study. Conducting this experiment using methodology incorporating probability sampling to obtain a greater sample size would enable greater generaliza-

tion. This would provide professionals in education greater confidence and surety in the findings. Changes in the self-perception of students have been observed as their reading skill improved. The qualitative gain in self-confidence and self-advocacy as a result of increased reading skill level may interest those in the field of Special Education. With the findings of the Connecticut Longitudinal Study (1999) as they relate to reading fluency, do structured reading fluency training programs offer students with LD long term reading skill improvement, or would they be more benefited by other types of reading interventions? These are three areas implicated for future research generated by this study.

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Women and philanthropy:
The U. S. experience that could be transferred into the Ukrainian context of higher education

ABSTRACT. An overview of women's philanthropy and analysis of examples of philanthropic support for educational institutions in the USA will be presented. Issues of gender charity will be discussed and suggestions for creating fundraising opportunities for universities will be outlined.

KEYWORDS: women's philanthropy, charity, volunteering, fundraising, higher education

> Exploring the significance and variety of women's philanthropic action in education is important because both philanthropy and education were among the earliest spaces where women, though still acting within culturally prescribed roles, found opportunities to participate in the public sphere.
>
> (Walton, 2005, p. 5).

Income diversification for universities is one of the significant issues on the agenda of contemporary higher education (HE) and research. American higher education system is internationally respected as a model of excellence for several of its unique characteristics, such as academic freedom, broad-based liberal education, professional MBA programs, and rigorous doctoral education. Another distinguishing feature of American HE is its professional and strategic approach to fundraising, which provides a critical source of income to universities in neoliberal times of decreasing government support to public universities, and increasing tuition costs and global competition in the knowledge economy. Philanthropy offers a unique opportunity, in these uncertain times of economic downturn, to ensure that the university's voice is heard.

Philanthropy and volunteering are deeply-rooted American traditions. The first thing to note about them is that, according to the 2012 World Giving Index (that shows how much people around the world have been able or willing to help their fellow man and woman, through the donation of money, volunteering of time, and proffering of help to those they do not know), the USA is in the list of the 20 countries (taking the 5th place) with the highest scores. It boasts a World Giving Index score of 57%. This means that on average half the population is taking part in at least one of the three behaviours—donating money (57%), volunteering time (42%) and helping a stranger (71%)—on a monthly basis (World Giving Index, 2012, p. 13). Furthermore, the United States of America belongs to the 10 most generous countries in terms of the actual number of people who donated money (World Giving Index, 2012, p. 20). Moreover, the United States of America was found to boast considerably more people volunteering their time than any other country. With 105 million volunteers, it is the only nation to exceed 100 million (World Giving Index, 2012, p. 24).
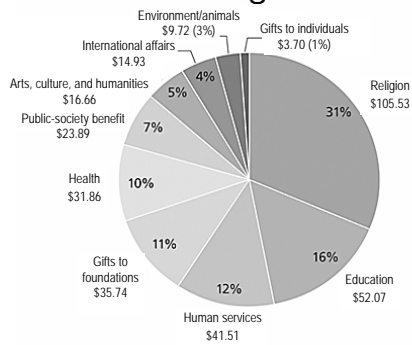
The second thing to note about charity in the USA concerns the most common recipients of donations. As the Figure 1 shows they are religious groups, education focused organizations and universities, organizations that feed and educate children, help the poor and the homeless, support health issues and scientific research in medical field, as well as those that deal with arts, culture, and environmental issues. American Association of Fundraising Counsel[1] (AAFRC) Trust for Philanthropy[2] estimated (Figure 2) that about 8% of sources of giving were from bequests, 20% of donations were from organizations, and 72% were given by individuals (Giving USA, 2014).

Nowadays charitable giving in the U.S. is not only attributed to a well-off layer of society. Americans who cannot donate money often give their time and share their skills by volunteering at public kitchens,

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[1] AAFRC has changed its name to the Giving Institute in March 6, 2006. Formed in 1935, the organization represents fundraising counsel and consulting firms around the world. The group was instrumental in the formation of the National Society of Fund Raisers, now AFP, in 1960. The new name also refers to the organization's annual publication, "Giving USA," which is published by the organization's foundation, the Giving USA Foundation. The AAFRC, now the Giving Institute, is one of the most respected institutions within the charitable sector. http://www.aafrc.org/.

[2] The AAFRC Trust for Philanthropy is a foundation to advance research, education, and public understanding of philanthropy that was founded in 1985 by the American Association of Fundraising Counsel.
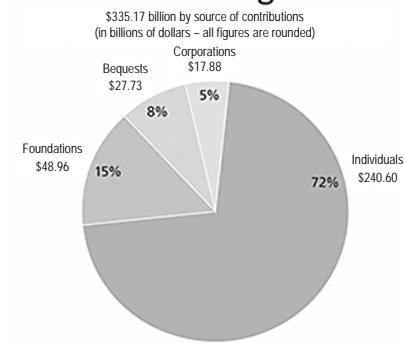
Uses of Giving in 2013

Environment/animals $9.72 (3%)
Gifts to individuals $3.70 (1%)
International affairs $14.93
Arts, culture, and humanities $16.66
Public-society benefit $23.89
Health $31.86
Gifts to foundations $35.74
Human services $41.51
Education $52.07
Religion $105.53

4%
5%
7%
10%
11%
12%
16%
31%

Notes: $335.17 billion by type of recipient organization
(in billions of dollars – all figures are rounded) [Source: Giving USA, 2014]

Figure 1. Source: Giving USA, 2014

Sources of Giving in 2013

$335.17 billion by source of contributions
(in billions of dollars – all figures are rounded)

Corporations $17.88
Bequests $27.73
Foundations $48.96
Individuals $240.60

5%
8%
15%
72%

Source: Giving USA, 2014

Figure 2. Source: Giving USA, 2014

tutoring children after school, delivering food to the elderly and disa-
bled. People from lower economic classes also donate, although the ben-
eficiaries of their donations tend to be somewhat different. Very general-
ly speaking, they donate more to religious organizations. Besides, not
only adults volunteer their time and money. A great number of high
school students participate in volunteering activities during an academic
year.

Traditionally US philanthropy has been attributed to a white wealthy
man for a long time. The changing role of women in contemporary socie-
ty has created new opportunities for them to realize their potential, to
unleash their talents, to provide volunteer help and financial support,
particularly at higher education institutions serving the public good. One
of the most important contributions to describing the historical in-
volvement of American women in educational philanthropy is A. Wal-
ton's research *Women and Philanthropy in Education* (2005). In this
work she analyses how prosocial behavior, in this case donation of time
and support of local educational initiatives, should be considered as
valuable asset for our understanding of higher education today.

> Since at least the early 1800s, U.S. women have participated in shaping edu-
> cation through philanthropy…Indeed, by volunteering their time and donat-
> ing both money and gifts in-kind, women have fashioned careers as philan-
> thropists and educators, have used education to promote social change, and

have been instrumental in establishing and sustaining a wide array of institutions where education occurs (Walton, 2005, p. 2).

This paper will provide analysis of some of the peculiarities of women's philanthropy in higher education.

It's significant to point out that in gender-blind research, women's experiences and contributions remain invisible, and, consequently, important aspects of an issue remain undocumented and underestimated and, therefore, may be misunderstood (Leduc, 2009). Gender-sensitive research pays attention to the similarities and the differences between men and women's experiences and viewpoints, and gives equal value to each. It helps both men and women concerned by a problem to analyze an issue, understand its causes, and find solutions taking into account age, social and marital status, generational differences, educational and religious backgrounds, income levels, etc. A gender-sensitive research methodology is usually more participatory and can contribute greatly to empowering people, notably women (Callamard, 1999; Leduc, 2009). So, what are the key differences between men and women as philanthropists? What is women's potential as philanthropists? What impact on charitable giving does marital status have? What is the percentage of women participating in charity? Do philanthropic behaviours differ by gender? Why is women's philanthropy of increasing significance and interest nowadays, particularly in the field of education?

Thus, the purpose of our research in terms of this paper is, firstly, to explore how the changing role of women in contemporary society has created new opportunities for women to contribute their time, energy, money for the development of education and, secondly, to find out by means of analysis which best practices of fundraising from women's philanthropy in the U.S. have the best potential for being transferred into the Ukrainian context.

If to ask passers-by in the streets of American cities,

Who is the first person that comes to your mind when you hear the word "philanthropist"? Most respondents would more likely say Bill Gates, Warren Buffett, and George Soros. If Ukrainians were asked such a question they would probably recall businessmen and public activists, such as Victor Pinchuk, boxers Vitali and Vladimir Klitchko or some regionally known benefactors. Upon querying the word "philanthropist" in the Google search engine it provides information about male donors on the first few pages. Recently, the Ukrainian magazine "Correspondent" presented the 10 most generous benefactors of Ukraine in its ranking (Корреспондент, 2011).

There was only one woman among them, Victor Pinchuk's wife. This gives us a motive to discuss philanthropy among couples, as will be done later in this article. Traditionally, women's philanthropy and social status was tied to their husbands' wealth. Thus, it's reasonable to admit that, in most countries, charity is associated with male names.

Nevertheless, the historical perspective on women's giving shows that many determined and dedicated women have played significant roles in the history of women's philanthropy in the USA. Following are only a few examples of these trailblazers in the field of higher education:

In 1643 Lady Mowlson (Ann Radcliffe) endowed a scholarship fund for sons of blacksmiths and farmers at Harvard, created just 7 years earlier. Mary Lyon was a pioneer in women's education in America, founding in 1834 the Wheaton Female Seminary which became Wheaton College and the Mt. Holyoke Female Seminary in 1837 which became Holyoke College. Sophie Smith opened Smith College and endowed a school for the deaf in Northampton, Massachusetts in 1875. Mary Elizabeth Garrett made a large donation to the John Hopkins Medical School under the condition to open up medical education for women in 1893 provided that the university agrees to admit women on the same basis as men. More recently, independent schools, colleges and universities have celebrated significant gifts from women donors. Darla Moore was praised for her gifts totaling $70 million to the University of South Carolina in the late 1990s. Jane Addams was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, in 1931, for her work at Hull House in Chicago, which provided educational and domestic training for women and immigrants. Meg Whitman gave $30 million to her alma mater, Princeton University, in 2002. Alumna Barbara Dodd Anderson contributed $128 million to the George School, an independent secondary school outside of Philadelphia, in 2007. And, in 2009, Joanna Krotz speculated that the anonymous $100 million donor to colleges and universities was a woman (Krotz in Women's Philanthropy Institute, 2009, p. 6).

The history of Ukrainian charity is part and parcel of the national past. As a social phenomenon, it is one of the oldest traditions that comes from ancient times. The origins of philanthropy are inextricably linked with the emergence of an Ancient Kiev Russ state in the 9th century and the establishment of Christianity as the state religion, when support of the sick, the poor became a form of the realization of the Christian commandment to love thy neighbour. According to the historical experience, the charitable initiatives of women were not limited to

only giving alms "for the sake of the salvation of their own souls", which had more religious and emotional nature. That kind of assistance increasingly extended beyond their personal interest and gradually regained a conscious socially meaningful character that was made possible by the high social and juridical-legal status of women in society. It should be noted that Ukrainian women, unlike Russian women or those of Western Europe, were initially treated, and consequently behaved, as independent and freedom-loving persons. They had equal rights and freedoms with men, and were active participants in historical processes: they influenced politics, social production, educational development, and the social, spiritual and cultural life of the community (Ільченко, 2012b, pp. 89-95). As a Ukrainian researcher N. Polonskaya-Vasilenko wrote

> ...ancient Kiev Russ law recognizes a woman to be equal to man; she takes the second place after her husband in the matrimonial system, but after his death she becomes the head of the family. From the story about Igor and Olga[3] we can see that women had significant rights at the dawn of the state (Полонська-Василенко, 1965, p. 49 in Ільченко, 2012a, p. 92).

Nevertheless, in our opinion, charity has a male name and a female face in the 21st century. It's fair to assume that men are there where politics and money are, while charity in many cases, rests on fragile female shoulders. The US research shows that 84% of all donations are made by women. This fact is confirmed by men, 92% of whom admit that women affect their decisions concerning charity in most cases. In the United States, on average, high net-worth women give 3.5% of their total wealth to charity each year, almost double the 1.8% given by men (Barclay's Wealth Study, 2009). In addition, women give more than men to different spheres of charity (religion, health, education, environment, etc.).

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[3] The Tale of Igor's Campaign (Old East Slavic: Слово о плъку Игоревѣ, Slovo o pŭlku Igorevě; Russian: Слово о полку Игореве, Slovo o polku Igoreve; Ukrainian: Слово о полку Ігорвім, Slovo o polku Ihorevim) is an anonymous epic poem written in the Old East Slavic language. The title is occasionally translated as The Song of Igor's Campaign, The Lay of Igor's Campaign, The Lay of the Host of Igor, and The Lay of the Warfare Waged by Igor. The poem gives an account of a failed raid of Igor Svyatoslavich (d. 1202) against the Polovtsians of the Don River region. While some have disputed the authenticity of the poem, the current scholarly consensus is that the poem is authentic and dates to the medieval period (late 12th century) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Tale_of_Igor%27s_Campaign.

According to the 2011 Study of High Net Worth Women's Philanthropy and The Impact of Women's Giving Networks, the most important reasons are as follows: women understand how their gift can make a difference; they want to support an efficient organization, and have a desire to give back to the community. The least important reasons are the following: to further business interests, to honor the legacy of others, simply because they were asked (see Figure 3).
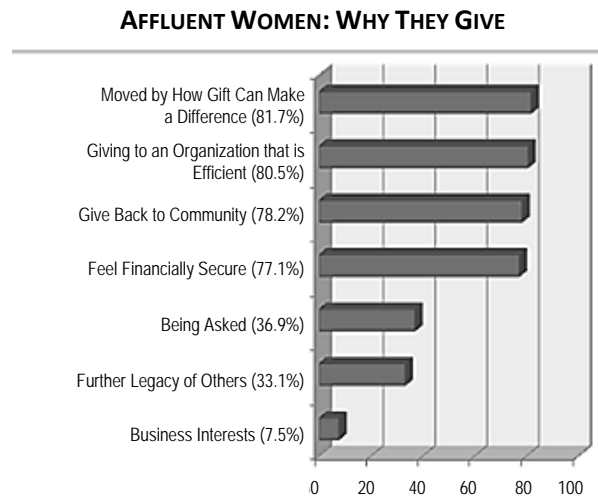
AFFLUENT WOMEN: WHY THEY GIVE

Figure 3.

Thus, women's activism influences global trend toward the creation and development of organizations that are established by and for women. For example, the *Women of Color Fundraising Institute* offers a training program for women in nonprofit organizations. This program teaches them how to write grants, solicit funds, plan special events, and organize a budget. The *Women's Philanthropy Institute* mission is to help women gain confidence as donors. They provide statistics and trends on women and philanthropy, as well as motivate women to become leaders and philanthropists. The *Women of Inherited Wealth* program teaches about responsible investing, developing charitable interests, and supports women with inherent wealth on making personal philanthropic decisions. The *W.K. Kellogg Foundation* promotes philanthropy by implementing strategies to link the pursuits and issues of women's funds

with mainstream philanthropic activities (Richardson, 2000, p. 11). But it's not just who gives that is changing—there is, after all, a rich history of high-profile women contributing generously to significant causes— but it's *how* they are giving and to *whom* that is redefining contemporary philanthropy. Private foundations and public charities dedicated to fundraising *by* and *for* women have grown at a faster rate than giving by the overall foundation community. A report conducted by the Foundation Center and Women's Funding Network found that from 2004-2006, giving by women's funds' grew 24%, while foundation giving overall grew by 14.8%. These same women's funds saw double-digit fundraising gains during this period; in 2006, they raised $101 million, up from $72 million in 2004 (Forbes, 2009). Global women's organizations began to flourish in 2005. However, their budgets are still relatively small. The major donors to these organizations tend to be individuals. New sources of gender related issues funding emerge because women's issues are widely discussed and professionally covered in media around the world; thus they attract attention to these issues and promote charitable initiatives to solve them. The majority of international donors are convinced that a lot of social problems can be solved by investing in women. Norway, Sweden, Spain, the Netherlands have government funding programs for women's funds. Unfortunately, no Ukrainian women's organizations have received financial aid from the government.

These trends do not leave researchers, experts, or women themselves indifferent. Organizations that focus their activities particularly on issues of women's philanthropy have been actively created since the late 20th century in the USA and Western Europe. Thus, in nearly every state in the U.S. there are research centers on women's philanthropy, women philanthropist associations, and women's philanthropy institutes at universities that encourage students to do research on this topic. A variety of literature has been published: from popular scientific genres that describe the peculiarities of women's philanthropy; and research that analyses trends in this regard; to methodological ones that give practical recommendations and teach how to work with female donors.

Another argument for the delineation of women's philanthropy into a separate field does not sound very encouraging for men. As women outlive men an average of 5.2 years, there are predictions that in 50 years $41 trillion will change hands from one generation to the next, with 70% of this amount being controlled by women. The fact that women have a greater life expectancy and, in most cases, inherit the

family property (depending on the cultural and legal context) gives reason to believe that substantial philanthropic decisions are and will be taken by women. Moreover, nowadays women do not only advise men. They are the members of governing bodies of charities or the heads of organizations led by their husbands. Women do not just sign the cheque, but immerse themselves in the problems addressed by organizations, and, monitor the performance of approved projects. Women are ready to support efforts to address more complex problems that will eventually lead to great results. They are open to suggestions, and study previous experience in order to avoid mistakes. Understanding the motives of women engagement in philanthropy has many practical implications for universities. To cite just one example, women often have a greater influence on decision-making regarding family financial expenses, and particularly those having to do with charitable expenditures (Kamas, Preston & Baum, 2008, quoted after: Drezner, 2011, p. 42).

Women have been part of the US philanthropy in higher education since its inception. At first they gave handmade candles, blankets, and other items, and gradually founded women's colleges after their long exclusion from higher education. Over the past few decades, the presence of women in the philanthropic field has significantly increased (Shaw-Hardy and Taylor, 2010, quoted after: Drezner, 2011]). Considering the increasing economic power of women, although it is appropriate to note that a gender gap in incomes still exists, we may conclude that women can be influential philanthropists or manage foundations and non-profit organizations just as well as men (Gasman, 2011, quoted after: Drezner, 2011). However, research on women's monetary philanthropy in U.S. higher education does not reveal this subject to the fullest extent (Drezner, 2011, p. 42).

Analysis of philanthropy in a more general level may be useful for understanding women's philanthropy in higher education. According to Capek (quoted after: Drezner, 2011, p. 42), women, as well as people of different colors, are not inclined to charity and are less generous than men. But taking into account such variables as age, health, income, number of children and dependents, Capek concluded that the differences between male and female philanthropists are insignificant.

One factor that makes our understanding of women's philanthropy more complicated is the difficulty associated with figuring out how much and how often women donate to charity. In the *sources on economics* the research results of genders charity levels are diverse (Bekkers and

Wiepking, 2007; Cox and Deck, 2006; quoted after: Drezner, 2011, p. 42). Some researchers believe that women are more generous than men, and make larger donations (Andreoni, Brown, 1998 and Rischall, 2003; Bekkers, 2004; Carman, 2006; Croson and Buchan, 1999; Eckel and Grossman, 1998, 2001, 2003; Eckel, Grossman, and Johnston, 2005; Kamas, Preston, and Baum, 2008; Mesch, Rooney, Steinberg, and Denton, 2006; quoted after: Drezner, 2011, p. 42), others do not find significant differences (Bolton and Katok, 1995; Frey and Meier, 2004; quoted after: Drezner, 2011, p. 42); but there are also scholars who characterize differences in charitable behaviors between men and women, considering men to be more generous (Brown-Kruse & Hummels, 1993; Chang, 2005; Frey & Meier, 2004; Jackson & Latanè, 1981; Meier, 2007; Sokolowski, 1996; quoted after: Drezner, 2011, p. 42). According to other sources, women are more prone to charity than men, but the latter make larger contributions (Andreoni, Brown & Rischall, 2003; Bekkers, 2004; Belfield & Beney, 2000; Einhof, 2006; Lyons & Nivison-Smith, 2006; Mesch, Rooney, Steinberg, & Denton, 2006; Piper & Schnepf, 2008; Weyant, 1984; quoted after: Drezner, 2011, p. 42). This phenomenon could be explained by the gap in income of women and men (Drezner, 2011, p. 42). One of the statements from Adam Smith's Theory of Moral Sentiments could be a proof in support of the idea expressed above—

> The propriety of generosity and public spirit is founded upon the same principle with that of justice. Generosity is different from humanity. Those two qualities, which at first sight seem so nearly allied, do not always belong to the same person. Humanity is the virtue of a woman, generosity of a man. The fair sex, who have commonly much more tenderness than ours, have seldom so much generosity. That women rarely make considerable donations is an observation of the civil law (Smith, 2005, p. 171).

Analysis of the *literature on sociology and social psychology* allows us to outline motive differences in prosocial behavior, including volunteerism and monetary philanthropy. Some scientists believe that gender is a variable value, which affects the amount of donations and contributions, compassion and altruistic behavior. Hoffman (1977, quoted after: Drezner, 2011, p. 44) argues that empathy is more inherent for women than men, and that women are more likely to feel guilty for social inequality, and therefore demonstrate greater prosocial behavior. Piliavin and Charng (1990, quoted after: Drezner, 2011, p. 44) find women to be more inclined to charity than men. Others point out that gender differ-

ences are related to religious and cultural beliefs and commitments (Jha, Yadav & Kuman, 1997, quoted after: Drezner, 2011, p. 44). Capek (2001, quoted after: Drezner, 2011, p. 43) argues that "few sources of reliable data accurately document patterns of women's donating behavior or account for giving differences between women and men". Hodgkinson and Weitzman (1996, quoted after: Drezner, 2011, p. 44) reported on a biannual meeting of the Independent Sector "Giving and Volunteering" and proved that married women make smaller contributions than their husbands. However, Boston College's Social Welfare Research Institute found the opposite, that women are more prone to charity than men (Schervish, 1997, quoted after: Drezner, 2011, p. 43).

Most studies show that women are involved in volunteering significantly more than men (Einolf, 2006; Hodgkinson, Weitzman, Noga, and Gorski, 1992; Hodgkinson & Weitzman, 1996; Mesch, Rooney, Steinberg, and Denton, 2006; Sokolowski, 1996; Musick & Wilson, 2007; quoted after: Drezner, 2011, p. 44). Some studies show positive and significant relationship between charity and volunteering (Brown & Lankford, 1992; Parsons, 2004; quoted after: Drezner, 2011, p. 44). In addition, Parsons (2004, quoted after: Drezner, 2011, p. 44) found that female volunteers are more likely to provide financial support to the same organization where they provide volunteer services. Parsons concluded that volunteering helps women feel connected to the organization. This finding is important for universities, because they have to involve alumni and other potential donors by means of volunteer opportunities (Drezner, 2011, p. 43).

In terms of the subject of this paper, it is important to analyze the research done in the field of giving decisions among couples. Andreoni, Brown, and Rischal (2003; quoted after: Drezner, 2011, p. 44) found that among heterosexual married couples with a joint household, men were more likely to make decisions regarding charitable contributions. Education and income were more significant determinants than gender. An interesting fact was that, when donation decision making belonged to women, the educational institutions, such as their alma mater, often received donations. Rooney, Brown and Mesch (2007; quoted after: Tempel, Seiler & Aldrich, 2011, pp. 165-166) studied the interrelationship of gender and philanthropy in education. The results of their study coincide with those obtained by Andreoni, Brown, and Rischal (2003; quoted after: Drezner, 2011, p. 44). Subsequently, they proved that when women make a decision, the amount of the monetary and volun-

tary contributions to education increases. These results are also important for fundraisers in higher education, because they should take into account these peculiarities while working with heterosexual couples. For example, it would be appropriate and beneficial to solicit a university graduate wife, even if she is an alumna of another school (Drezner, 2011, p. 44).

Over the past few decades US wealth has been consolidated in the hands of an ever-shrinking group of people. Today almost 85% of the nation's capital is owned by approximately the top 20% of Americans. However, for many of these wealthy Americans charity is becoming increasingly important. Like the rich of the past "golden age," such as Cornelius Vanderbilt and Andrew Carnegie, who were unprecedentedly generous, in today's "golden age" America's wealthiest citizens also donate staggering sums to charity. However, today's philanthropists do not simply sign a check for charity and forget about it. All of them, from Bill Gates to Philip Berber, take an active role in the distribution and use of their donations.

DailyFinance website explains how American billionaires are engaged in charity. In 2000, when Philip Berber sold his company, CyBer-Corp, to Charles Schwab (SCHW) for $488 million, the Irish-born philanthropist and his wife set aside $100 million to fund their own charity "A Glimmer of Hope." Tasked with "lifting women and children out of extreme poverty in rural Ethiopia, the group has built almost 200 health clinics, dug thousands of wells, funded hundreds of education projects, and has extended millions of dollars in microloans" (Daily Finance, 2011).

Once the first technology magnate in the United States, today Bill Gates is a major philanthropist of the country. The co-founder of Microsoft and his wife Melinda have allocated half of their $54-billion fortune to the Gates Foundation, which aims at fighting poverty around the world and funding educational projects in the United States. In many ways, this charitable fund follows the business model of Microsoft, it being based on Gates' belief in the transformative power of technology. It is extremely beneficial for the Fund that Gates is personally engaged in it. In 2006 he stepped down from his position at Microsoft to be involved in philanthropy full-time. The Gates Foundation has become the largest and one of the most transparent charities in the world; thanks, in part, to a famous investor, Warren Buffett, who allocated $37 billion to its further development in 2006. As the investor admitted, he followed the

main principle of his own investing strategy: finding good organizations with talented managers and backing them. His company, Berkshire-Hathaway (BRK.A) is involved in the management of all assets that it buys, and Buffett participates actively in the activities and is a member of its board of trustees. In addition, Bill and Melinda Gates and Warren Buffett launched the Giving Pledge in 2010 in an effort to get America's wealthiest families to give away their surplus wealth to better the world. The initiative was successful. The foundation has received pledges from 59 U.S. richest tycoons, including George Lucas, David Rockefeller and Ted Turner. Three members of this year's new pledge class—Quicken loan founder Dan Gilbert and his wife Jennifer, Related Group co-founder Jorge and his wife Darlene, and Leonard and Claire Tow—attended the Forbes 400 Summit on Philanthropy, a gathering held in New York this past June (Forbes, 2012). Upon analyzing The Giving Pledge list of current pledgers we conclude that the world's wealthiest individuals and couples have made a commitment to dedicate the majority of their wealth to philanthropy (The Giving Pledge).

One more point to be discussed is organizational choice. Women, as well as the representatives of communities of colour, tend to make donations and help those organizations that had an impact on them or someone close to them (Burgoyne, Young & Walker, 2005; Parsons, 2004; quoted after: Drezner, 2011, p. 44). Andreoni, Brown, and Rischal (2003; quoted after: Drezner, 2011, p. 44) found that men focus their attention on a small number of non-profit organizations, while women are more likely to distribute their charitable assistance between more than one organization. In addition, Einolf (2006; quoted after: Drezner, 2011, p. 44) and Rooney, and Mesch (2007; quoted after: Drezner, 2011, p. 44) consider that women, unlike men prefer charitable activities for the benefit of educational institutions and organizations. Other researchers (Okunade, Wunnava & Walsh, 1994; Wunnava & Lauze, 2001; quoted after: Drezner, 2011, p. 44) did not find any statistical difference between men and women when it concerned alumni giving. According to Wunnava and Lauze (2001; quoted after: Drezner, 2011, p. 44) women are more consistent and regular in their charitable activities, while men give more significant philanthropic support to tertiary education (Okunade, 1996; quoted after: Drezner, 2011, p. 44), although not regularly (Drezner, 2011, p. 44). Thus, philanthropic behaviours differ by gender. Women, generally, are socialized differently, have different communication styles, and have different philanthropic motivations. Men, for exam-

ple, tend to want to make their community a better place by providing
services where government can't or won't. Women, by comparison, tend
to identify with certain causes and help individuals meet their basic
needs (Moline, 2010). Moreover, women have different attitudes to-
wards wealth, money, and philanthropy based on their generational
experiences (Guardianship vs. Ownership) as follows:

> *Greatest Genera*tion – born before 1925 (currently 85+): "Not my
> money" (collectivists).
> *Silent Generation* – born 1926–1945 (currently 65–84): Passionate
> for cause.
> *Baby Boomers* – born 1945–1964 (currently 46–65): Women's mo-
> vement.
> *Generation X* – born 1964–1980 (currently 30–46): Inherited and
> earned / independent and empowered.
> *Millennials* – born 1980–2000 (currently < 30): Confident, open to
> change (Moline, 2010; Sargeant & Shang, 2010, pp. 545–547).

Following the logic of our research, from the standpoint of a gender
approach we perceive that a woman-philanthropist, with her psycho-
physiological differences, mental and emotional constitution, spiritual
and volitional peculiarities, value and ideological orientations such as
socio-cultural gender, carries the main genetic code of society to sustain
survival, procreation, and protect children, the elderly, the sick, and the
needy. Such a perception, and the scientific understanding of the image
of woman, determines her to be an active subject of philanthropy in edu-
cation, the sphere of social practice, which in terms of the gender dimen-
sion we interpret as: (1) an expression of natural and acquired humane
qualities and virtues; (2) an organic part of total charitable practices in
education; (3) an integral part of national and cultural revival of the
state, the formation of ethical and spiritual values of nation; (4) a factor
of social adaptation of woman in society; (5) a step towards understand-
ing her role in society, self-knowledge, self-realization of her personality,
enhancing her social status and authority; (6) a transition link in the
chain of changes in gender stratification of society, gradual reorientation
of the role of woman from a "passive observer" to an "active participant"
of public life; (7) an indicator of social progress, the level of develop-
ment of democratic, egalitarian relations in society (Ільченко, 2012a,
pp. 116–123). Consequently, gender matters in philanthropy. Research
suggests that women's philanthropic interests and habits differ from
men's because women approach philanthropy with different motiva-

tions and goals. Fundraisers cannot assume that what works well for men will work well for women, too (Tempel, Seiler & Aldrich, 2011, pp. 162–171), so efforts need to be made to solicit and cultivate female prospects. Thus, the fundraising strategies and tactics that will work better for women, as opposed to men are as follows: firstly, fundraisers should be mindful of different marketing and communication styles, and women's attitude toward money; secondly, they should integrate gender and generational differences, marital status and family factors, race and culture into fundraising strategies; thirdly, women's internal and external barriers to giving should be taken into account; and eventually, fundraisers should consider their institutional readiness for women's philanthropy. As we move further into the 21th century, it is likely that more women will become active in philanthropy.

Conclusion

Literary sources on women and philanthropy are far from arriving at definite, clear conclusions. Many research studies on the peculiarities of women's philanthropy contradict one other, and they do not fully reflect how often women engage in charitable practices, what amount of money, time, energy they contribute, and what their motives are. In fact, there is no doubt that women are very generous, humane and inclined toward philanthropy. Their ability to be directly involved in charitable activities strenthens with the growth of their economic power in society. As women around the globe have increasing access to education and income, they can and do become a more powerful voice for change. Analysis and understanding of the research data, even though much of it is still ambiguous, will motivate universities to better consider the ways in which they can appeal to alumni for their philanthropy, and to make more rational choices in the communication strategies they employ to solicit them. Women are increasingly involved in the university community at all levels of academic, administrative, and development life. As universities strive to secure much needed financial resources for academics, research, scholarships, community engagement, and more, they must create a welcoming and inclusive environment to engage women donors in university life.

Thus, taking into account the progressive prognostic potential of women's philanthropy, given the role they play in the USA, we believe

that in today's conditions as Ukraine moves toward standards in terms of higher educational area, and philanthropy, including women's charity, a civic, socio-economic and professionally organized function (along with government support programs). Furthermore, philanthropy within the national higher education in Ukraine is interpreted by us as a genetically "innate" feature of the Ukrainian people, which defines its spiritual and intellectual background, and eventually reflects a distinctive position of the Ukrainian nation among others. In the system of national higher education and the cultural community, women's philanthropy is one of the consolidating factors for the establishment and development of a democratic, civil, and civilized society. Women already provide new ideas, new visions, new perspectives, and new resources to transform society, and will do so at an increasing rate as Ukrainian society continues to develop.

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Womanhood—contemporary paradoxes of equality and exclusion

ABSTRACT. The article analyses currently emerging patterns of womanhood in the socio-cultural context. The author, using the feminist discourse, attempts to answer the following questions: What positive changes (based on the idea of gender equality) had taken place in terms of how the pattern of womanhood is culturally constructed? Are there still such areas in the contemporary model of woman's life, where we observe certain forms of discrimination, based on a stereotypical attitude (in both: biological and cultural sense) towards gender issues? The author, by adopting the gender perspective, analyses fundamental areas in women's lives: professional career and private life, to verify the level of their social (re)construction. Her reflection is also enriched with ponderings about the place of womanhood in popular culture. Through references to numerous research findings taken from the professional literature (mostly Polish), she tries to demonstrate that there are two opposing forces that influence womanhood: the first one bases on the mechanism of stereotyping and gender discrimination (determined by the essentialistic perspective) and the second one promotes equality discourse (determined by the perspective of social constructivism). In conclusion, the author makes the assumption, that contemporary patterns of womanhood balance on the line between two worlds, in which deeply rooted tradition (conditioned by the biological determinism) coexists with modern egalitarianism. The specific discrepancy between outer and inner (self)perception of the social and professional roles women play causes many dilemmas and forces them to make difficult decisions in life.

KEYWORDS: feminism, exclusion, women's careers, women's emotional life, womanhood in pop-culture

"[Our society] assigns different roles to the two sexes, surrounds them from birth with an expectation of different behaviour, plays out the whole drama of courtship, marriage, and parenthood in terms of types of behaviour believed to be innate and therefore appropriate for one sex or for the other. We know dimly that these roles have changed even within our history" (Mead, 2001, p. 23). If we were to believe Margaret Mead's words, the concept of womanhood (masculinity) is a flexible category, undergoing constant (de)construction. Drifting through time and space, it becomes more and more fluid and inconsistent, which certainly hin-

ders the process of giving it a particular form or shape. Socio-cultural standards, changing in every age, determine new, often contradictory, models of "the new woman". Through the reference to the gender schema theory by Sandra Bem, I would like to present currently emerging patterns of womanhood, which are, as I assume, the result of the early socialization of girls and boys (Lipsitz-Bem, 2000, p. 129), whose developing identity becomes a "creation of an individual as well as culture" (Lipsitz-Bem, 2000, p. 145). The subject of my analysis tackles two fundamental fields in women's life: the private and professional sphere. My reflection is also enriched with the cultural aspect, dealing with the role of womanhood in popular culture. As I take into account the feminist discourse, beginning with the 1st wave of feminism, I try to answer the following questions: What positive changes had taken place within the cultural construction of the model of womanhood? Are there still such aspects of "modern" woman's life, where we can observe signs of a discriminating outlook (both biological and cultural) on the gender issue?

The official battle for equal rights: first, second and third wave of feminism

First-wave feminism, began in the decline of 18th century (ended in the fifties-sixties, 20th century), supported with the idea of liberalism rooted in the Enlightenment (Zamojska, 2000, p. 1), was named the liberal feminism (Tong, 2002, p. 26). "For the first time in history, feminists of the Enlightenment formulated a theory which liberated them from constrains of «unfair tradition» via equality, enabling women as a group to «self-authorize» themselves to emancipation". On one hand, then, liberal feminism was based on a notion, that every human being, as a rational entity, "having the same reason and free will" (Bator, 2001, p. 32)—regardless of their sex—has equal rights in terms of access to public life, and the pathway to liberation leads through education. Though from the other hand, the success of emancipation depended on the fact, that women achieved "male standards" (Tong, 2002, p. 24). Therefore, we must emphasize, that the ideological quintessence of the first-wave feminists' pursuits focused on the women's social status and their participation in public life, while turning a blind eye to private life issues (marriage and family relations).

Subsequently, the "postwar" second-wave feminism (beginning in the sixties, 20th century), sometimes called the "feminism of new difference" (Bator, 2001, p. 49), emerged in response to the disappointment with results of the emancipation activity in the 19th century (Ślęczka, 1999, p. 31).

The second-wave feminism was based on a conviction, that the problem of asymmetry is rooted more deeply in the social structure and that the fundamental form of reproducing gender inequality is the culture factor. The main subject of deliberation was the question of womanhood at large, the concept of emancipation and sexual difference (approached in various ways) (Zamojska, 2010, pp. 74–74). "Modern feminism *à rebours*", approving of essentialist perspective, headed towards solving the problem of inequality through glorifying womanhood identified with nature, while simultaneously degrading the "culture-infected" masculinity. In the innovative cultural feminism, however, "the sexual difference started to be understood as a *sex/gender* distinction" (Bator, 2001, p. 56). Although sex, regulated by biology, remained unchangeable, gender, determined with socio-cultural repressions, went through many transformations (Bator, 2001, p. 57). "The category of gender difference" became the keyword of the second-wave feminism and offered a chance to liberate from "fallogocentric" reality, (unsuccessful due to the movement's internal division) (Bator, 2001, p. 48).

Formed in the end of 20th century, the third-wave feminism turned towards universal values, in which the concept of gender became relative (Tong, 2002, p. 58). According to Eva Zamojska, its followers postulated "the advanced individualization in creating each person's identity, male or female, and rejecting (through deconstruction) any determined (biologically, metaphysically, socially, culturally, ideologically) feminity or masculinity" (Zamojska, 2000, p. 7).

When analyzing contemporary theories linked with construing feminity-masculinity, we observe a specific discrepancy, which began with the first-wave feminism, between biology and culture, tradition and changeability. Undoubtedly, emancipation movements and raising self-awareness among women has caused significant changes in shaping a new pattern of womanhood: the model of an "active woman," manifesting itself in the need for independence: wide access to education and conscious career planning—something that the 19th century's feminists could only dream about—became a reality today (Bartosz, 2011, p. 263).

Womanhood and social stratification
on the labour market

If we search for new patterns of womanhood in professional life, we observe, that the affirmation of women's gender identity usually does not lead to conflict in workplace where the proportion of women versus men is close to 1 : 1 (similar number of male and female workers) or 0 : 1 (more women or mostly women), in so called "female jobs" (Wiśniew-ska-Szałek & Wiśniewska, 2007, p. 168). Krystyna Janicka says we are dealing here with the classic example of the horizontal labour stratifica-tion (Janicka, 1995, p. 95), which is, accor ding to Natalia Sarata "the result of referring to stereotypical female and male competences" (Sara-ta, 2011, p. 272). A woman takes on a role of serving other people. Only she is equipped with enough humility, readiness to sacrifice herself, compromising her own benefits to serve higher values. She is also help-ful and skillful in using indirect social influence strategies. (Mandal, 2004, p. 231). Therefore, it is not surprising that in this perspective a woman's professional life manifests itself in "public sector and activi-ties in social infrastructure, that is caregiving, food supply, health and hygiene" (Janicka, 1995, p. 95). This is when the ideal of womanhood turns around stereotypical concepts, permeated by biological determin-ism, telling a story about caring, empathic and submissive female nature. (Reszke, 1991, p. 153). Such ideal, reflecting itself in a long-standing cultural transmission, somehow imposes a conventional distribution of duties and reinforces the "value system that is charcteristic for the Eu-ropean civilization", where we find "clear patterns of womanhood and manhood" (Janicka, 1995, p. 96). The results of the report "Women, Men and Working Conditions in Europe", based on findings from the fifth European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS), conducted in 2010, over 78% of the population working as general clerks, personal care workers, health associate professionals, and cleaners are women. It turns out, that also in Poland "76% of intermediate level administrative clerks, office workers, retail and service workers, with dominance of physical, un-skilled labour, and in education—97% of school pedagogues, 90% of the primary school teachers and 70% of high school teachers are women" (Sarata, 2011, p. 276). As Suzane Maddock puts it, female jobs are social-ly perceived as unattractive, because they represent low wages, "inferi-ority" of the work role and limited promotion opportunities (Maddock, 2003, p. 81). This type of gender stereotyping is described in the profes-

sional literature as a "sticky floor" phenomenon (Brannon, 2002, p. 404). On the basis of such concept, as Joan Acker puts it, lays the notion of women's low status on the labour market, which in practice means male domination on executive posts (Acker, 1990, pp. 139–140). Empirical data shows, that the phenomenon of "female grouping" on particular labour market segments is still present, mainly because of the educational choices young women make. It turns out that the majority of female students graduate either in humanities or medicine. (Smith et al., 2013). Analyzing professional situation of women who internalize this model caused me to conclude, that they are prone to experience a discrepancy between the external and internal (self)perception of the role they take on. By playing the role which meets social expectations, they gain approval—or rather avoid disapproval—from their environment, yet they may be struggling with the inner sense of "underestimation" and gender discrimination. I define such model as the "Faithful Traditionalist".

Situation changes dramatically, when womanhood trespasses on male territory. If a woman takes on a job which is largely dominated by men, i.e. of a manager or a lawyer, it certainly "switches on" another mechanism of gender inequality at work—the vertical segregation. The "glass ceiling" phenomenon reflects accurately in the Polish General Social Survey investigation, cited by Henryk Domański, about the place of women in the hierarchy of managerial posts (general managers, lower managers, non-managers). It turns out that in thirteen years, i.e. 1992–2005, "the shape of the job position ladder" is relatively solid and resembles a pyramid, on the bottom of which there are women non-managers. Such disproportion remained unchanged "also when we looked at the level of education, work experience, the size of place of residence and a few more variables" (Domański, 2011, p. 265). Similar results on the social stratification phenomenon in the workplace were presented by Erik Olin Wright and Janeen Baxter they showed that proportion of women (against men) on higher management positions equals $1 : 2$ (Wright & Baxter, 2000, pp. 277–278). What action then should be taken by women, who managed to plough through the "thicket of corporate jungle" and stand on the top of androcentric power? What difficulties did they overcome—and still must—to maintain status quo? Referring to the thought of Agnieszka Gromkowska-Melosik, it is worth to assert, that "a woman, who holds a position of power over people and involves decision making, is somehow entrapped within contradicting

social expectances" (Gromkowska-Melosik, 2012, p. 79). If she wants to achieve and then keep a high job position, she has to resign from the majority of attributes, commonly identified as womanly (Gromkowska-Melosik, 2012, pp. 82–83), and adopts a male identity. "Equipped" in a package of psychic resources, such as: professionalism, endurance, logic, leadership skills (well rooted in culture and passed on via socialization, as typically male traits), she demonstrates them while using standards of the opposite sex in creating her external image. Then she fulfills criteria of big corporations, which allow promotion and further career development (Brannon, 2002, p. 399). On one hand, battling with "the stereotypical attitude towards her gender (womanhood)" through assimilation of male patterns increases the chance of professional success, but on the other hand, it exposes her to "the accusation of losing her feminity" (Gromkowska-Melosik, 2012, p. 79). A woman who tries to neutralize this gender dissonance, sometimes manifesting itself as a psychological struggle, as Ilana Löwy puts it, chooses the option of "bilingualism." Opposed to the risk of losing her womanhood, she selectively (depending on a situation) "employs" male or female attributes (Löwy, 2012, p. 159). This perfectionism, through which she tries to express her personality in every life sphere, reflects itself, according to Bogusława Budrowska who cites Marjorie Hansen-Shaevitz, in a "superwoman syndrome." The author explains, that is has its source in "a socialization message addressed to girls", based on the patriarchal model. This is how an adult woman becomes convinced, that each and every action she takes should exemplify her professionalism (Budrowska, 2003, pp. 65–66). This balancing between traditional cultural transmission (striving to be feminine) and inner affirmation of professional satisfaction (taking up male schemes) designates—as I think—new standards of widely understood pattern of womanhood: "The Woman Warrior."

Womanhood on matrimonial market:
the need of self-fulfillment versus/and synchronous love

"She is happy and satisfied with being single, which means that she is not a frustrated old spinster, by all means searching for a husband and love" (Szlendak, 2010, p. 467)—this fragment is about a woman who is not involved in an intimate, relatively stable relationship. In Polish sub-

ject literature, an urban single, or—according to American researchers—a single professional woman, is a contemporary alternative to the so called model of "living alone." It describes an independent, educated woman (Tymicki, 2001, pp. 77–105), who surrounds herself with a web of support from her family and friends, while actively participating in a cultural and social life (Czernecka, 2012, pp. 139–140). According to the GUS [Central Statistical Office in Poland] survey from 2011, 33,4% of female population between 25 and 34 year of age were single (Nowak et al., 2012). The phenomenon of being single was also observed among young Japanese women in their thirties, half of which (50%) in 2001 identified themselves as singles, thus outnumbering their peers from the United States (37%)[6] (Berg-Cross et al., 2004, p. 40). The results of Barbara Witehead's analyses, in the group of American single women, have shown, that young women's life priorities had changed. They internalized (as a consequence of upbringing) a new, non-stereotypical pattern for creating their future, on the basis of which lays self-fulfillment. Professional education and getting a satisfying job that allows being financially independent became the most important venture for young women, lasting usually until the 30th year of age. The lack of a partner—according to this author—in majority does not result from a conscious decision of staying single, but is a side effect of realizing "the new life pattern" (Whitehead, 2003, p. 9), in which being well educated and a chance to live in cohabitation or having strictly sexual relationships (Whitehead, 2003, p. 10), caused them to postpone the decision to marry (Whitehead, 2003, p. 14).

Today's singles—women with high self-esteem, conscious of their capabilities—expect more and more from men, which certainly prolongs the time of finding an appropriate partner. In turn, as years go by, "women's chances of getting married drop sharply when they get past their thirties and almost hit the rock bottom, if they get past 35th year of age" (Szlendak, 2010, p. 468). Here we see a classical paradox: a young woman, absorbed with pursuing her career, postpones finding a partner, but when her financial and professional situation seem to stabilize (30–35 year of age), the number of potential candidates severely drops. The results of Beata Łaciak's survey in the group of Polish schoolgirls

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[6] "According to American research data, in the past 30 years the number of married women aged 24 increased from 36% to 72%, and for women aged 30-34, from 6% to 22%" (Slany, 2002, pp. 117–118).

and young, unmarried women seem to confirm the above correlation. It turns out that in the hierarchy of schoolgirls' dreams (49%) as well as adult women (45%), the first place belongs to education and getting an interesting job. A satisfying family life comes second—it is chosen by 43% of schoolgirls and 42% of young unmarried women (Łaciak, 2002, p. 147, 167). Therefore, motives that make women stay single can be understood in the context of two coexisting opposites: free choice and constraint. As long as the first one results from a conscious resignation from unsatisfactory relationship, the second one is conditioned with the situation of not having a proper candidate, which whom a close, intimate relationship could be built (Paprzycka, 2008, pp. 58–59). However, none of the aforementioned options reflect an open declaration against being in a long-term relationship. The authors of the article "Living Alone: Its Place in Household Formation and Change" (2004), quoting research results of Lynn Jameson and her colleagues (2003), claim that the majority of young women perceive being single as a passing, temporary situation (Chandler et al., 2004). It is visible especially among Polish respondents. A positive image of a modern urban single woman is received with reluctance due to the traditional view on marriage and maternity as the woman's life fulfillment, still strongly rooted in Polish culture. "Alone but not lonely" single women argue, that their openness to having a partner and raising a family are elements of the life plan they want to realize, therefore, just as Emilia Paprzycka, I shall call them "Contemporary Marriageables" (Paprzycka, 2008, pp. 330–332).

Another pattern of womanhood, significantly changed due to emancipation, can be observed in marriage. More and more often young, educated women, who make a decision to legalize and/or sacramentize their relationship, reject traditional, patriarchal offer and choose equal partnership. Then they enter into "egalitarian marriages, also known as marriages with partnership, which means, that both sides have careers and their identification mark is compromise, constant negotiation in every sphere of their lives" (Szlendak, 2010, pp. 410–411). Each spouse is—according to Ulrich Beck and Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim—an "individual person," who pursue their own dreams and professional aspirations. Financial independence of both parties limits their expectances in a relationship to "emotional support" (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002, p. 72). According to the results of research conducted by Renata Siemieńska, the number of people opting for a partnership in the family model is raising in Polish society (Siemieńska, 2011, p. 203). Achieving this type

of a relationship undoubtedly requires a new perspective on a question of "roles in love life." Abandoning the traditional image of a romantic feeling, a continuation of patriarchy, allows women to regain their identity. Marriage is no longer a goal in itself (Szlendak, 2010, p. 144) and choosing a partner for life becomes a conscious and independent process. "The pure relationship"—which is how Anthony Giddens calls the new, alternative form of regulation in a partnership—is a "close and stable emotional bond with another person" (Giddens, 2007, p. 75), based on the principle of intimacy (Giddens, 2007, p. 117). When we think about it in the context of liberation, we must state that this type of a relationship gives a chance of creating new standards for the family roles. Anna Titkow's research has shown, that Polish people approve of the concept of egalitarian relations between men and women, although the model of partnership, assuming fully even distribution of duties in private as well as professional life, is much more favoured by women (Titkow, 2007, pp. 229–230). It turns out then, that the autonomic participation of both spouses in family and professional roles is not equivalent to total devaluation of stereotypization mechanisms, deeply rooted in culture. The influence of culturally (re)produced gender inequality can be clearly seen when it comes to distributing daily chores. The majority of housework, such as laundry, ironing, cleaning and cooking is still a "feminine" domain (Giddens, 2012, p. 374). Research in European countries conducted by Voicu, Voicu and Strapkova (2007) confirms it. The highest rate of difference between men and women is observed in Greece, Turkey and Malta (above 70%), as well as Portugal, Slovenia, Italy, Bulgaria, Cyprus and Austria (above 60%). Also the result of the European average seems to be distant from the idea of gender quality in this matter (53%) (Giddens, 2012, p. 347). The factor which reduces disproportion of this kind is women's professional career (i.e. on managerial posts), which directly forces men to take over some of the "women's duties" (Brannon, 2002, p. 297).

In practice, the regulation of mutual relations between partners is not the only source of conflict. We must also mention the negative influence of external systems on the family. It can be exemplified through relation between women's work life and birth control. Maternity—still perceived as a "central attribute of womanhood" (Budrowska, 2003, p. 57)—is still a subject of professional discrimination, as "women's individual aspirations start to contradict the family" (Slany, 2002, p. 109). Therefore we can conclude like Judith M. Bardwick and Elizabeth Dou-

van, that the free choice becomes a personified oppressor (Bardwick & Douvan, 1983, p. 182). A woman is facing an incredibly difficult dilemma: should she resign (at least for a period of time) from her career to give birth "an economically worthless but emotionally priceless" child (Slany, 2002, p. 106), or should she postpone the decision about becoming a mother and, like her partner, devote herself to her career.

How Polish women try to solve this problem? Empirical data indicates, that young, educated women perceive career and motherhood as categories which not necessarily exclude each other (Titkow, 2007, p. 162). It appears that for them the family is still an autotelic value (Titkow, 2007, p. 238), and—according to Agnieszka Gromkowska-Melosik—balancing "work with being a mother, spouse and housewife is a specific form of matriarchy" (Gromkowska-Melosik, 2008, p. 107). On the other hand though, according to the public opinion, "the right time for a career" in married women's life is a period before giving birth to a child, or when a child is already autonomous "enough" (Titkow, 2007, p. 237).

The emerging pattern of womanhood, "refurbished" with the new relationship with a partner and a liberal view of self-fulfillment is confronted with the perpetual, biological determinant of womanhood—maternity and a partial stereotypization of family roles. On one hand, a woman is freed from external patriarchal constraints, but on the other, she is a subject to the inner imperative of the essentialist ones and becomes—in my opinion—the "Emancipated Hera" (referring to the mythological goddess, patron of home and marriage).

Women and mass-media:
The paradox of constraining the body for liberation

When analyzing current patterns of womanhood, it is worth to notice the message constructed by the media, which, according to Margaret L. Andersen "shows women and men are portrayed in stereotypical ways" (Andersen, 1993, p. 54). The evident sexualization of today's culture and the cult of beautiful, perfectly shaped body creates an obligatory ideal of beauty which reduces women to sexual objects. A modern woman should look after her beauty in order to keep her body fit, vigorous and active. Simultaneously, in words of Zbyszko Melosik, she is "constantly tyrannized with advertisements and texts from popular magazines" which become a "decalogue" of how to stay young and beautiful

(Melosik, 2001, p. 37). This type of attitude would certainly disappoint 19th century feminists, who claimed, that the "beauty fixation" served only as compensation. It was a form of substitute that regulated the lack of access to education and professional life for women (Löwy, 2012, p. 77). When we try to explain causes of this phenomenon in our culture, we can recall opinions of Ilana Löwy, a distinguished scholar. In one of the chapters of her book *The Chains of Gender. Masculinity, Feminity, Inequality*, she writes, that female body is constantly "assessed, valuated and judged". The culturally constructed message declares directly, that a woman should always control her appearance. Immaculate makeup, perfect hair and fashionable clothes are the quintessence of the external image of feminity. A woman cannot allow herself to show any signs of physiological/biological imperfections, which could even slightly disrupt her idyllic, perfect image. She becomes a slave of her own body, satisfying desires of her ruthless critic, lurking from behind her mirror reflection. According to Ilana Löwy, affirming one's identity through body image is a form of gender equality. "The right of looking at female body is inseparably linked with inferiority of women's status. They are obliged to constant thinking of their feminity, that is, of their appearance" (Löwy, 2012, p. 101). Pierre Bourdieu, who represents a similar way of thinking, says that feminity is perceived as a "symbolic object, whose being (esse) is first and foremost being-seen (percipi)" (Bourdieu, 2004, p. 82). Why then female body is a product of consumption that arouses desire in (male?) "consumers"? Trying to find an answer to this complex problem, it is worth to refer to the Sandra Lipsitz Bem's concept of androcentrism, seen in context of male domination. According to her, perception of the world based solely on male point of view situated women on marginal position, reducing her to the serving certain functions (usually limited to procreation and caring for her offspring) (Lipsitz-Bem, 2000, p. 51). Despite the fact that relicts of old times were conquered to a large extent, some of them still remain in the social consciousness, but in a modern form. The message formulated in mass-media about the sensual nature of women clearly limits her functions to "satisfying male desires" (Lipsitz-Bem, 2000, p. 139). The reason for such situation can be found in early processes of socialization, which seems to be different for both sexes. It takes place because stereotypical "cultural patterns [are learned] from the nursery years" (Budrowska, 2003, pp. 55–56). Such contrasting way of looking on the issue of womanhood (as opposed to masculinity) presents a woman as a creature

diametrically different from a man; Simone de Beauvoir in her famous book *The Second Sex* calls her "The Other" (Beauvoir, 2007). Representatives of the above idea are "proud of exposing their bodies, objects of desire, to the public" (Löwy, 2012, p. 80), believing that their exposed bodies are not the mechanism of constraint but an instrument to gain domination over men.

Basing oh the above analyses, we can single out another current pattern of womanhood, the result of socialization and the special influence of mass-media, which I allow myself to describe symbolically as a "Pop-Culture Star". The more intense is the superficial glamour of this "Star", the stricter and more determined she becomes in internalizing beauty standards from the culture. Her body is both an object of cult and an object of financial hopes of large cosmetic corporations and prestigious fashion designers.

The above data does not allow us to create a monolithic—from a perspective of a certain conception—pattern of womanhood, which would unequivocally reflect the traditional or egalitarian model. In our times, women balance between the two worlds, where deeply rooted tradition (derived from biological determinism) coexists with modern egalitarianism. The unquestionable success in the field of (re)definition of gender roles enabled women to access those spheres of social life which were, not that long time ago, reserved only for men. By citing the thought of Emilia Paprzycka, I wish to say that "the stereotype of so called traditional feminity seems to be still mandatory in terms of components of personality traits and appearance, external attributes of feminity, whereas egalitarian model of womanhood is more and more significant in terms of components of women's social and professional roles" (Paprzycka, 2008, p. 190). There are still some "invisible" barriers, originating from the traditional view of gender issues, seen only through the filter of biology. Contrary to the popular belief about effectiveness of equality discourse, we can observe the existence of some socially constructed and reproduced stereotypization processes and gender discrimination in some areas of public (work, media) and private life. However, we must emphasize that it is not just men who adopt a dichotomous, simplified strategy of gender perception. Some women, despite realizing the model of "modern" feminity, yield to stereotypical pressures of socialization in some aspects of their lives.

To sum up, I would like to say that patterns of contemporary womanhood seem to form a mosaic of internalized, partly feminine, partly

male attributes, adopted selectively, allowing women to realize their goals and challenges effectively, and that they are a form of adaptation to the still—I dare say—strongly androcentric reality.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Susan A. Speer and Elizabeth Stokoe (eds.), *Conversation and gender*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011, pp. 344

Conversation and gender offers a valuable contribution to the contemporary study of the relationship between language and gender (or sexuality) informed by the methods of conversation analysis (cf. Kitzinger, 2000, 2007; Schegloff, 1997; Speer, 2002; Stokoe & Weatheral, 2002). Combining theory, methodology and practice, it offers the most recent developments in the field and showcases state-of-the-art research at the intersection of gender and conversation. The chapters offer unique insights into the minute details of the interactions to uncover how gender becomes relevant in a conversation. They thus constitute a successful endeavour at countering arguments claiming the inability of conversation analysis to address issues related to structural reality.

As outlined in the introductory chapter, this volume has a two-fold goal, theoretical and methodological. While the former is expected to broaden the understanding of the relation between conversation and gender as participants' concern produced locally to accomplish social actions, the latter is largely instructive and aims to show the practical affordances of conversation analysis (henceforth, CA) and related methodologies (membership categorization analysis and discursive psychology) for gender research through detailed demonstration of these methods in use.

The book comprises fourteen chapters: an introduction and thirteen relatively self-contained and original empirical studies that allow a reader to focus on selected aspects of gender and conversation. What unites these contributions is their reliance on audio- or video-recorded naturally-occurring data (e.g. domestic telephone calls, face-to-face conversations, police-suspect interviews, calls to helplines or children's play), their treatment of gender as participants' category and the identification of regular situated practices in parallel contexts.

Chapter 1 serves as a general introduction to the field. Based on an impressive overview of the existing literature on gender and language research, Susan A. Speer and Elizabeth Stokoe contextualize the distinctive analytic position of the current book and provide a succinct but rather solid critical discussion of two other strands of research i.e., the *sex/gender difference* approach and the *gender construction* approach. These competing bodies of work are contrasted with the CA-inspired approach to the study of gender and conversation. Here, Speer and Stokoe discuss the suitability of

CA for gender and language studies. In particular, they highlight the problem of relevance and procedural consequentiality as integral to CA methodology, as well as consider key distinct research questions addressed by current CA studies of gender. The chapter ends with a brief consideration of the issues and questions raised by the authors in this volume and lays out directions for future research. Importantly, Speer and Stokoe suggest one especially current guideline to produce CA findings accessible for use outside the academia.

The remaining thirteen chapters are loosely organized into four sections unified by the research questions they pursue. However, certain dialogic or polemic relations can be identified between the studies within and even across the sections.

Part I: Gender, person reference and self-categorization

The following three chapters seek to address the question of whether linguistically gender-neutral and linguistically gendered reference tools for categorizing oneself and others can become relevantly gendered in interaction. This section is opened by Clare Jackson (Chapter 2), who engages in a feminist analysis of naturally occurring telephone calls in order to demonstrate how the self-reference 'I', typically described by CA researchers as 'reference simpliciter' (Schegloff, 1996, p. 440) that masks crucial categorial information (identity-related categorization such as age, gender or ethnicity) about the speaker, is "rendered hearably gendered in the context of its production" (p. 31). Jackson extends the status of the self-reference 'I' and empirically demonstrates "its localized context-specific capacity for conveying [gendered and age-related] categorical information without having to name the category" (p. 36). Her analysis illuminates how social actors are explicitly or obliquely oriented to themselves as relevantly gendered when producing commonsense (gendered) norms and positioning themselves as individuals in relation to these norms. Given this specific sequential placement of the investigated phenomenon, Jackson's findings constitute a promising starting point for further research on other categorial information and category-neutral personal pronouns as vital tools for negotiating the relationship between the self and society in multiple social contexts.

Similarly, in Chapter 3, Victoria Land and Celia Kitzinger address the topic of first person self-categorization. Using data from ordinary telephone conversations, they investigate rare instances when speakers explicitly deploy various category descriptors (e.g. a schizophrenic, student or queer) to categorize themselves amidst their mundane social activities. Taking on board Schegloff's (1997) claims about the multiplicity of social categories and category relevance, Land and Kitzinger straightforwardly demonstrate that "the availability of a [gender] category membership is not necessarily sufficient warrant to claim that this membership is directly relevant to the

participants at that particular interactional location" (p. 61). Rather this is determined by locally accomplished actions. The undeniable value of this finding lies in its challenge to *difference studies* in language and gender research. Land and Kitzinger convincingly argue that "gender is not omnirelevant" (p. 63), and being a man/woman does not always presuppose speaking as one. By implication, the reduction of speakers to essentialist gender categories done by other research traditions runs the risk of disregarding participants' orientations to their most salient aspect of identity at that moment.

In contradistinction to the first two contributions, in a theoretically dense Chapter 4, Noa Logan Klein explicates the salience of gender categorization in non-recognitional references to non-present third parties. These references are of particular interest to gender and language researchers as they are not used to be recognized by the recipient and function either as 'information-free placeholders' (Klein p. 66) which do not carry any categorial information about the referent or as 'simple' references (Schegloff, 1996, p. 440). Klein, however, argues that gender categorization is the minimum amount of information in non-recognitional person reference that speakers need in the basic practices of recipient understanding and recipient production of subsequent references. This makes "gender—perhaps even the—central mechanism for classifying people in English speaking cultures" (p. 66). It is particularly fascinating to see how, in Extracts 9 and 10, the recipients resort to their commonsense knowledge of the categories 'teacher' and 'boss' in their struggle to select a gender pronoun matching the previously mentioned referent whose gender categorization is obscure. Contrary to Land and Kitzinger (Chapter 3), Klein concludes that the systematic inclusion of gender categorization in non-recognitional person reference testifies to "the robustness of gender as a social institution and its omnirelevance in social life" (p. 82).

Part II: Gender, repair and recipient design

This section comprises three chapters that look into how the category of gender may or may not be relevant to the way speakers self-repair their talk and design it for its recipients. Elizabeth Stokoe (Chapter 5) extends the discussion from the previous section and focuses on the self-initiated self-repair of consecutive references to absent third parties to provide a more nuanced understanding of situated orientation to gender. Using audio- and video-recorded data taken from a remarkable variety of research sites (e.g. ordinary conversation, university tutorials, police-suspect interviews, online blogs, a sit-com comedy or neighbour mediation sessions), she explores four puzzling patterns of repairs where one referentially adequate gender category term ('girl', 'woman', 'lady') is replaced or juxtaposed with a consecutive one from the same category collection used to refer to 'women'. And,

she scrutinizes them for speakers' orientation to gender. Stokoe argues that repairs are bound to recipient design and analyses her data through the lenses of the 'speaker indexical' nature of interaction (Edwards, 2005) whereby speakers, aware of their talk being evaluated by its recipients, design it to "manage both the object side and subject side of the actions their talk is to accomplish" (p. 93). Stokoe concludes that although these repairs are always linguistically gendered, they "may or may not be 'oriented to gender in the feminist, political sense" (p. 111).

In Chapter 6, Sue Wilkinson applies the concept of recipient design to a pre-fabricated stretch of talk ('signature formulation') that a female call-taker delivers to callers on a fibromyalgia helpline in multiple similar iterations. The recipient design of the institutional talk can be analyzable as sensitive to callers as both individuals and category members. Although the author briefly discusses her study in relation to the scripts of institutional interaction in the analysed helpline setting, this could be supplemented with a reference to Anssi Peräkylä and Sanna Vehviläinen's (2003) concept of the stocks of interactional knowledge', that is, quasi-theories of client-professional interaction. Nevertheless, Wilkinson's meticulous analysis of recipient-designed practices in terms of their sequence placement and interactional unpacking allows a reader to easily trace fine-grained details unifying or differing the presented data excerpts. More globally, the analysis also shows how by using CA methods, instead of relying on prior assumptions of gender, researcher can unveil how people do gender in interaction. That is, while Wilkinson claims that the call-taker displays an implicit orientation to gender when she proffers scripted talk to designated recipients whom she takes to be hearably female (this may initially seem to reproduce comparative 'sex differences' research), her CA-informed study however starts with practice first, and then she observes how the use of signature formulation correlates with "the presumed gender of the participants. Gender is thus endogenous to the interaction rather than imposed upon by the analyst" (p. 133). The chapter ends with a suggestion for future research to "specify how an orientation to gender (or some other category set) is consequential for the content and course of the interaction" (p. 133).

This section closes with Chapter 7 in which Alexia Hepburn and Jonathan Potter engage with one of the most emblematic strands of sex/gender difference research whereby tag questions supposedly index women's talk and their inner psychological state of unassertiveness and powerlessness (Lakoff, 1975, see also O'Barr & Atkins, 1980). The context-sensitivity of CA and discursive psychology allows the authors to empirically examine the function of tag questions in recipient-design where they are contextually linked to specific conversation practices. Through a rigorous micro-level analysis of three parallel fragments of interaction taken from different (institutional and conversational) settings, Hepburn and Potter contradict previous research and demonstrate a systematic pattern of how tag ques-

tions paradoxically become powerful invasive and coercive devices for actions that have already been rejected, and participants themselves do not orient to them as gendered features of talk. It needs to be stressed that the study cautions against making any haphazard associations of linguistic features with macro-social categories and psychological states without attending to interactional detail. In consequence, Hepburn and Potter's work unequivocally exemplifies an important research trajectory that breaks with traditional sociolinguistics and, in line with the tenets of this volume, treats gender as the participant's category, not the analyst's, and psychological themes as resources for action, rather than underlying identity-related states.

Part III: Gender and action formation

The chapters in this section share a common analytic interest in how gender is relevant, irrelevant or omnirelevant to the accomplishment of social actions. The first contribution (Chapter 8) in this section is from Susan A. Speer, who examines the role of reported third party compliments in transsexual patients' passing as 'real' men or women. The author successfully engages the triangulation of data sources taking her empirical material from psychiatrist-patient consultations in a gender identity clinic, telephone-mediated interviews with transsexual users of the clinic, and audio- and video-recordings of ordinary conversations. Across her data set, Speer observes a systematic deployment of reporting third party compliments that allow speakers to objectively evidence positive and/or gender-relevant features of their appearance, attributes or character in order to get positive assessments, and avoid the negative characterological inferences associated with overt self-praise and bragging. This is possible because of the embedded character of these compliments that creates an epistemic distance between the speaker and praise. Moreover, reporting compliments performs a subsidiary role to other more focal actions, which allows the transsexual speakers to "objectively evidence that they pass [...] as 'real' men or women" (p. 157), and hence do gender while they are involved in other activities not concerned with performing gender. Speer concludes that if gender is omnirelevant (although Land and Kitzinger in this volume claim otherwise), "it makes sense that doing, indexing and orienting to gender co-exist with, and get woven relatively seamlessly into the texture of interactional slots whose primary purpose is the accomplishment of other actions" (Speer & Green, 2007, p. 362).

Jack Sidnell's study (Chapter 9) scrutinizes another type of action, that is, joke telling that takes place between three men and a woman. Here the focus falls on the question, *D'you understand that honey?*, which a male conversationalist poses to his female partner. Sidnell's exceptionally in-depth analysis of participants' verbal and embodied conduct (although I must

admit it could have been a bit more succinctly presented), in particular his attention to gaze and body position, combined with the concept of participation framework allow him to uncover the nuanced ways in which the co-present participants partake in the activity under study. This multimodal analysis enables him to demonstrate how the question works to "convey a [gendered] categorization of the participants […] as prerequisite to understanding [the joke]" (p. 198), and constructs it as designed exclusively for a male audience. It is worth noting that through the sequential analysis of the interaction, Sidnell empirically exposes how social actors readily "co-implicate a larger framework of 'genders as separate sub-cultures'" (p. 184) to account for cross-gender miscommunication. More broadly, this study exemplifies that CA tools make it possible to excavate potential gender differences in talk without the analyst presupposing them before the analysis proper. Although the author himself remains critical of the cultural approach to the study of gender and language, the notion of gender difference emerges from his study as a pervasive set of ideas the participants themselves, not the author, locally use to make sense of surrounding reality.

Chapter 10 continues the theme of potentially humorous interaction. Wayne A. Beach and Phillip Glenn address the question of how orientation to gender becomes participants' concern in bids and responses to intimacy. Based largely on contiguous phone calls between family members who report an incident about an ill mom's smoking, the authors demonstrate how male callers attempt to launch expanded affiliation sequences through the enactment of gendered roles and the production of improprieties associated with gendered topics. Atrocious as it is to comically depict a family member dying of cancer, some recipients may either accept such bids in pursuit of intimacy (this is the case of Excerpts 10, 11 which do not come from the analyzed sequence of calls) or decline to self-affiliate with such improper talk and, as a consequence, orient to the gender work as subsidiary to other more focal social activities. On such occasions, the "gendering of the scene remains implicit […] gender roles are present but not foregrounded" (pp. 214, 221).

Part IV: Gender identities and membership categorization practices

Each of the final four contributions focuses on how identities are constructed through membership categorization practices. In Chapter 11, Carly W. Butler and Ann Weatherall, similarly to Susan A. Speer, take up the concept of 'passing' and look into its situated realization. They offer good empirical translation of Garfinkel's (1967) ground-breaking study of transsexual Agnes, who tried to pass as a woman. Interestingly, the contributors present a rare case study of a 6-year-old boy (William) who temporarily assumes an identity of a girl (Charlotte) in interaction with his classmates. His cross-gender identity becomes interactionally relevant, is oriented to,

consequential and accountable many a time during the analyzed spate of interaction. The authors identify three pervasive and interwoven interactional practices that help the children to "generate, maintain and ignore William's new identity as Charlotte" (p. 232). These include the differential distribution of epistemic rights and responsibilities associated with a person's identity and their social relations, the organization of person reference, in particular personal names and pronominal indexical references, as well as gender categorization activities. I must however say at this point that the use of 'passing' in this study is slightly perplexing. Its conceptualization diverges from the one proposed by Bucholtz (1995), who views it as "the active construction of how the self is perceived" (1995, p. 352) in order to claim membership in the opposite (e.g. cross-gender) category. While I can clearly see such a construction of the self in the presented data, however, other participants' displayed (lack of) recognition of William's aspired-for identity suggests not only that William's passing was unsuccessful, and thus it should be qualified as attempts at passing, but also that it was part of the ongoing interactional business. Therefore, what Butler and Weatherall demonstrate is rather collaborative work on a cross-gender identity that accompanies William's struggle to pass as Charlotte. Nevertheless, their analysis clearly illuminates that gender category membership and/or even a "quite remarkable claim of a change in identity and gender was [collaboratively] accomplished by rather ordinary conversational procedures" (p. 249). This finding can serve as a practical guideline for gender and language researchers on how and, more importantly, where to seek evidence of how social actors do gender in their everyday encounters.

By the same token, Marjorie Harness Goodwin (Chapter 12) also takes on board the question of how children proffer gender identities amid their everyday talk. Integrating the methodological apparatus of CA and membership categorization analysis with her ethnographic observations of two children's peer groups, she looks into how these children's formulations of gender accomplish affiliative and adversarial alignments or stances in the context of conflictual interactions, such as disputes, complaints or assessments. She argues that "through examining stance-taking we can come to grips with the concerns that deeply animate participants" (p. 251). For instance, the analysis evidences a heteronormative social order as a commonsensical resource used and maintained by the participants. Also, gender person formulations become crucial tools for maintaining boundaries of the children's gendered groups and spaces. Goodwin's analysis demonstrates an intriguing property of categorical formulations—indexicality. That is, gendered terms such as 'girl' when mobilized as intensifiers during disputes can carry either positive or negative valance as a result of prosody and embodied conduct, "the same person formulation can have very different meanings depending on the interactive context in which it emerges, as it takes its meaning from the activity-in-progress being produced through its utterance" (p. 268).

In Chapter 13, Angela Cora Garcia and Lisa M. Fisher look into the institutional context of divorce mediation where the category of gender emerges as particularly salient. Drawing on a video-taped divorce mediation session, the authors explore how gender inequality is collaboratively constructed by male and female participants in interaction. The affordances of CA integrated with an interpretative analysis allow the authors to uncover how participants implicitly rely on their own experience of family and commonsensical assumptions regarding the gendered distribution of spousal and parental roles in the traditional family unit in order to make strategic claims for custody of their offspring. It is interesting to observe how through the details of talk "participants collaboratively construct the local micro-political gender order" (p. 291) to the wife's disadvantage as one party to this collaboration. This is quite unsettling given the interactional work of the skillful and well-trained mediators, and their professional theories of interaction against gender bias. I must also acknowledge the relevance of the findings to the professional concerns of divorce mediators. Although other studies in the volume (cf. Hepburn & Potter) do have the potential to address acute social problems, their authors—regrettably—silence this possibility. Yet, Garcia and Fisher attend to the issue of practical relevance directly in their concluding remarks. This testifies to their sensitivity to real-life problems and, more globally, constitutes an indispensable step for creating a new tradition of applied CA research.

The volume concludes with Chapter 14 by Jakob Cromdal, who combining the methods and insights of CA and membership categorization analysis examines how children evoke, produce and exploit "some culturally distributed notions of gendered behaviour" (p. 295). Not only does Cromdal detail how the category of gender—as a practical concern—is orchestrated to deal with local matters of participation in mundane peer activities (likewise Chapter 11), but he also presents how "social and moral orders are invoked and locally produced" (p. 295) in interaction. It must also be stressed that Cromdal's study uses bilingual English-Swedish video-recorded conversations and is the only contribution in this volume that draws on non-English-language data. This comes as a surprise as gender is ultimately bound up with culture and language, and studies considering multilingual and multicultural data could greatly enrich our understanding of gender vernacular knowledge and sensitize us to how it is oriented to in other societies.

In sum, *Conversation and gender* has all that a study on the intricate relation between gender and conversation should possess. It integrates theory, methodology and practice. A great asset of this publication is its rebuttal of charges against CA as too rigorous to address issues related to structural reality. The studies in this volume problematize long-lasting assumptions regarding gender and language use generated by other research traditions which reified gender essentialism and advocated gender constructionism. This would not be possible without the current ethnomethodological

understanding of gender as participants' category and CA attention to inter-actional detail. The contributions in this volume address some of the incon-sistencies engendered by the previous studies and further or nuance the existing scholarly findings of other CA-inspired work. Also, to varying de-grees they engage with the debate on gender omnirelevance and feminist CA as a separate field of study.

This collection of papers is rather too specialized to be treated as an in-troduction by newcomers to the field of gender and language within the CA perspective. Part of the problem is the technical machinery of CA as a meth-odology. Nevertheless, the empirical studies yield fresh insights into how gender is drawn upon in social encounters, and how it can be studied as an empirical phenomenon. They also provide inspirations for researchers, raise new questions for future research trajectories in the field and bring to the fore a plethora of new research sites from which to draw audio-recorded but more increasingly video-recorded empirical data. Finally, fine-grained analyses of talk-in-interaction make excellent demonstrations for research-ers of how CA-informed studies of gender should be executed (see also An-taki, 2011).

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Agnieszka Gromkowska-Melosik, *Edukacja i (nie)równość społeczna kobiet. Studium dynamiki dostępu* [Education and social (in)equality of women. A study of the dynamics of access], Kraków: Oficyna Wydawnicza "Impuls", 2011, pp. 516

The book under review constitutes a new opening in the contemporary Polish research into education. The author analyses the relationship between female education and female identity in the context of social (in)equality adopting an interdisciplinary perspective. At the same time she carries out her project both eloquently and with ease. Also, the book contains the most recent and comprehensive international literature overview.

The publication is divided into two parts. The first one contains theoretical considerations regarding various "alternative" socio-educational realities inhabited by the contemporary woman. Here, the author discusses processes of educational socialisation saturated with androcentric models and values. Considerations of the phenomenon of "learned helplessness" of girls with regard to acquiring mathematical competencies can be seen part and parcel of the same research trend. Furthermore, the issues of social constructions of boys' educational failure are also addressed. The author demonstrates that their educational achievements are significantly lower than is the case with girls. It is worth emphasising the part of the book that treats about issues surrounding single-sex and mixed-sex education. The results of analyses are somewhat surprising as they point to the fact that—in the majority of countries—women have not only caught up with men, but they have even become the primary parties to be granted access to higher education. This also concerns countries which have been perceived as exotic, i.e. Namibia, Jordan or Mongolia. These observations also refer to the

stereotypically male studies, such as law, management or medicine and are valid for elite universities such as Oxford or Harvard.

An immensely interesting is the insight into the identities of contemporary women referring to the neoliberal ideology, the issue of masculinisation of successful women, relocating social aspirations of women to the domains of body and consumption, and the complicated relationship between professional career and motherhood. Theoretical research in this part of the book, carried out by Agnieszka Gromkowska-Melosik, draws on a representative sample of the literature in the field. One notices reference to the direct gender hierarchy theory as well as structural inequality, which enable the researcher to provide an alternative view of the dynamics of access/exclusion of women from education and from the job market.

The second part of the book is empirical in nature. The author presents research results which are the output of a superbly designed qualitative methodology. Agnieszka Gromkowska-Melosik carried out in-depth interviews with female managers occupying high positions in corporations as well as with female academics affiliated with prestigious Polish universities (PhD-holders and above). As a result, the reader is granted access to a subjective but genuine picture abounding in dilemmas regarding identities of contemporary successful women in relation to the following categories: individuality, issues of discrimination against women (also coming from women), motherhood, masculinisation of aspirations in the bodily and sexual domains, and the role of consumption in the construction of identity of the research participants. In this way, the researcher transfers the assumptions and theories reconstructed in the first part of the book to the "real" world where contemporary women live and function.

Within the developing research into femininities and masculinities, Agnieszka Gromkowska-Melosik's book is a definite must-read. This publication goes beyond the stereotypical perceptions and analyses of female and male access to education and the job market. The innovative suggestion as to how girls and boys should be socialised into their genders—an alternative to the pedagogies of gender—is especially worthy of readers' attention. It is beyond doubt that this interesting book provides new contexts for social and professional analyses of contemporary women and constitutes an immensely important stage of analyses of femininities and masculinities.

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