



I REALLY WANTED TO BE A MECHANIC
BUT THERE WERE NO APPRENTICESHIPS FOR WOMEN

SEXISM & EDUCATION
CONFERENCE -
NOTTINGHAM 1-3-75
DISCUSSION PAPERS &/OR
WORKSHOP REPORTS 25p

SEXISM AND EDUCATION CONFERENCE NOTTINGHAM MARCH 1st

The conference took place on Saturday March 1st at the Nottingham Teachers' Centre. It was very well attended - 250 people came, some from as far away as Dundee and Southampton.

The decision to hold a conference came from a series of different meetings in Nottingham, although we hadn't originally envisaged such a large national response. The organizing group consisted of members of the N.U.T. Women's Liberationists, and a member of C.H.E. The conference was open to anyone interested in the subject, but not surprisingly, a large proportion of those attending were teachers and in the N.U.T.

The discussion papers contained in this report were written by individuals on the simple basis that they offered to do so, the only unifying factor being a desire to actively oppose sexism. Similarly, the workshop reports were written up by individuals at each workshop who offered to do so, and are reproduced here unedited.

We thought the conference was 'successful' - although as the organizers success tends to mean that there was enough food and space, all the speakers turned up, and all the kids were collected from the creche at the end. It was useful both from the point of view of the exchange of ideas, information, plans and experiences which took place there, and the discussion generated more widely by the publicity in the national press, etc.

We think people should seriously consider organizing 'local' workshops on aspects of sexism and education as there is fairly widespread interest and concern about it at the moment, especially amongst teachers after the discussion at this years N.U.T. conference. We will give a more detailed account of our experiences and problems and useful addresses etc., to anyone thinking of organizing a local event.

Finally, we would like to thank everyone for coming, and Tony Padfield and the staff of the Teachers' Centre for all their help.

CONTENTS.

Discussion papers; Sexism and Education; Presentation of Sex-roles in British Reading Schemes; Sex Education; Sexism in the Classroom; The Working Womens' Charter; Women and the Unions; How Teachers can take up the Working Women's Charter; Homosexuals and the Education System.

Workshop Reports; Working Women's Charter; N.U.T.; Sex Education; Childrens Books; The Family; School Visits (The Cambridge group); Gay Oppression Oppression and education.

Additional Material; Report on the Working Women's Charter from North London Teachers Association; The N.U.T. Conference; The National Abortion Campaign.

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P&P Tina Pamplin, 4, Melrose Avenue, Sherwood, Nottingham. Tel. 601588.

SEXISM AND EDUCATION.

Suggest to an educational administrator, head of a school, or a teacher that what is being taught in schools is racist, or discriminates against working class or black children, and they will blush, go hot under the collar and immediately try to disprove your points. The very least they would do would be to offer to initiate an immediate investigation.

Suggest to the same person that school organisation, curricula and teaching methods, are sexist, that they discriminate on grounds of sex, and they will look at you blankly, or even attempt to justify it.

The question of sexism in schools has, until very recently, been largely ignored. We hope that this conference will go some way towards reversing this trend by first of all discussing what sexism is, how it operates and how we can organise against it, and also by bringing together the ideas of a wide variety of groups and individuals who have already been working on this question.

What is Sexism?

The first question that we have to tackle is precisely what do we mean by sexism? From what standpoint do we start?

Essentially our position is that sexual stereotyping and the resultant discrimination, in terms of sex-appropriate behaviour, expectations and roles are closely integrated into all the ideas, practices and institutions of our society.

To put it at its simplest, Women, in this society, automatically tend to be defined in terms of their position in the home as wife and mother. This is seen as their main social function, even though many women may not marry or have children and even though the actual time spent in child bearing and rearing has been drastically reduced. Titus, for example, in 'Essays on the Welfare State', estimates that a woman in the 1890's would spend an average of 15 years in a state of pregnancy or nursing a child, compared with 4 years for the average mother of today. It is also true that women perform the important, but unrecognised, task of 'looking after' the needs of two crucial economic and social forces i.e. this generation of workers and the next. Moreover, this 'looking after' process has become firmly institutionalised into the private world of the family. Women's role in society, therefore, is overwhelmingly determined by this assumed, primary, responsibility to the family, even, as in the case of single, working women, such a family doesn't even exist!

As a direct result of this girls are taught to be passive, docile creatures, limiting their aspirations to a 'handsome' husband and a 'beautiful' home. The education system is certainly not neutral here, but actively collaborates in this process, reinforcing and developing certain attitudes, expectations and behaviour into its pupils. A good example here is the author of the first 'Social Contract' - Rousseau - who had very definite ideas on how women should be 'educated'.

"Women's education should be planned in relation to men; to be pleasing in his sight, to win his respect and love, to train her's in childhood, to tend him in manhood, to counsel and console, to make his life pleasant and happy. These are the duties of women for all time and this is what she should be taught while she is young".

Now most of us would want to laugh at that statement, believing that education today has changed and progressed. However, the joke turns a little sour, when we realise that some 200 years later, in 1964, Sir John Newson a 'prominent educationalist', was still capable of saying that.

"We try to educate girls into becoming imitation men and as a result we are wasting and frustrating their qualities of womanhood at great expense to the community. I believe that in addition to their needs as individuals our girls should be educated in terms of their main social function, which is to make for themselves, their children and their husbands, a secure and suitable home, and to be mothers".

Little wonder then that women continue to enter life at a disadvantage. They, mostly, do not receive the education or training they merit and are generally condemned to work in boring, unskilled jobs with low wages and status. Sexism, of course, cuts both ways. Just as women are expected to be passive and docile and homely, so men are expected to be aggressive, outgoing, decisive and career minded. This division reflects itself throughout society and within the educational system. Boys are expected to be more independent, less loving; they are expected to climb trees, get dirty, aspire to great things, be a brilliant mathematician or an untidy writer etc. etc. It has never been proved that females are genetically inferior to males, congenitally incapable of leading an active, independent, intelligent existence. So it's up to us to show that sex differences in behavior, roles, abilities and goals are the result of socialisation. If we accept this then we cannot simply sit on the fence refusing to do anything about it. We need to look fairly and squarely at how socialisation operates and how we can set about changing things to remove the discriminatory divisions between the sexes and to begin to create the conditions necessary for people to achieve their full potential regardless of whether they are male or female.

Sexism and the Education System.

Here we should be careful not to view the Education system in isolation from other institutions in society, notably, of course, the family. For the process of sex-role socialisation and gender stereotyping begins long before children go to school. It starts as soon as children are dressed in a frilly dress or in trousers and T shirt; given a doll or a lorry to play with; expected to come in from playing clean and neat or sweaty and dishevelled. Already by the time children start school they have a certain code of conduct to adhere to and a certain view of adult men and women.

The organisation of school life serves to reinforce these preconceived ideas turning them into self fulfilling prophecies. Teachers have their own standards which they expect the children to adhere to, with the girls being clean, neat, quiet, gentle and obedient. Teachers will tolerate boisterous, noisy, mischievous behaviour in boys that they wouldn't even expect to encounter in girls.

The teaching materials used in primary schools are often blatantly sexist - one cannot be too subtle with six year olds if you want to get your ideas across, and so, particularly in reading schemes, we see a grossly distorted view of the world with 'Mum' forever washing up, cleaning, hanging out the washing and generally waiting on everyone hand and foot. As Glenys Lobban shows in her article - Presentation of Sex Roles in British Reading Schemes (reproduced for this conference) - women are only shown in their 'homely' role, they do not go out to work, drive cars, wear trousers or do any of the heavier jobs around the house.

And yet despite this 'hammering' which the female role takes in primary schools, it has been shown that girls do equally well as boys in primary schools, if not better (Douglas - The Home and the School). However, by puberty the cracks are beginning to show. It is not considered 'feminine' to be intelligent, certainly not 'feminine' to beat a boy in an argument, come top of the class or be good at maths and science. The pressures are constantly being applied by magazines, television and advertisements for girls to look good and 'get their man'. These pressures reflect themselves in various ways: in the number of girls leaving school early, in the trend for girls to take arts rather than sciences, in the lower proportion of girls taking O and A levels, in the small percentage of girls going to University compared to the large numbers at Colleges of Education, and in the abysmally low numbers of girls going on to apprenticeship or day release courses once leaving school.

All these points are statistically presented in the sheet included with this document. What these figures show is a depressing picture of the educational system as a kind of grading machine - sifting out the majority of girls early on, with working class girls the first to go, leaving only the more privileged 'superwomen' of the middle classes at the end.

Although there is, theoretically, equality of opportunity in education for boys and girls. This is only equal in so far as few courses are actually barred to girls. It is unequal in the sense that not all courses are equally used. Girls end up with fewer qualifications, and where education and training are factors in social status, women will be condemned to second class status unless something is done. Changes need to be made both in the objective conditions - more facilities, more opportunities etc., and in the subjective conditions - changing the way in which girls see themselves, the attitudes they have, the goals they set themselves.

How do we change the present situation?

Having recognised the fact that sexism does operate within the education system and has a specific impact on the aspirations and attainment of girls how do we even set about changing this? If we are not to accept the discriminatory division between the sexes, then we must mount an active and vociferous campaign within the Union and within society generally to give widespread publicity to these issues and to initiate changes.

An excellent way to begin raising the question in the N.U.T. is through support for the Working Womens Charter - a ten point charter of rights for women, relating both to their position at home, in education and training, and at work. A document on the Charter is being distributed at this conference, and so further explanation is not needed here. However, support for the Charter does offer the possibility of raising the issue of educational opportunity for girls, and the role of sexist school books, teaching materials and curricula in limiting girls aspirations and confidence. It is also capable of dealing with the question of women as teachers, and their underrepresentation in scale posts, higher education, and within the Union as executive members and officials.

Nottingham N.U.T. Association proposed support for the Charter as a motion for National Conference. This motion now appears 6th on the N.U.T. agenda and therefore gives us a good opportunity of stating the facts and forcing the Union to take a position. We will be proposing the setting up of a working party to investigate discrimination in education on grounds of sex. We also hope to propose that the N.U.T. holds a special conference on the question of Women and Education in order to better educate its membership on these issues.

Already this ex Sexism and Education conference has been widely discussed, now we must seize the opportunity to get even greater publicity for our findings. Much valuable research has recently been done on reading schemes and teaching materials, noting the stereotyped way in which they present sex roles. Sad to say most teachers are hardly aware of what is going on. Meanwhile, publishers can cheerfully dismiss any protest as irrelevant. We must work together to bring these points to the fore, putting forward specific demands around books and teaching materials. For example, we could select a particularly sexist reading scheme or school book, and demand through the Union that this be withdrawn from schools. Once publishers were confronted with such actions they would be forced to reconsider the material they produce. There also needs to be a greater communication of ideas between people who are working on this problem and who are beginning to produce non sexist books, tapes, films, of their own for use in schools and colleges.

This document has attempted to give some background to the discussion and to provide some basic information. The suggestions for action at the end are by no means conclusive and are intended to provoke discussion rather than provide the 'final word'. Essentially we hope that as many people as possible will be able to use this conference, short as it is, to exchange ideas and to sketch out plans for the future.

Jane Browne (Notts. N.U.T.)

General InformationSecondary Schools - Resource Allocation.

The very way in which resources are allocated to schools discriminates against girls. A recent investigation found that staffing, accommodation and general allocation of resources for science and technical subjects are consistently at a lower level in girls than in boys schools, and for girls in mixed schools.

"Not only science accommodation was affected; consistently more teaching spaces were built for handicrafts than homecrafts- in one mixed medium school in a ratio of four to one" (E.M. Byrne Rationing in School, New Society 20:6:74) The report 'Half our Future' also shows that more time is spent on science and maths subjects in boys than in girls schools. The Ministry of Education bulletin 2A of 1954 actually suggests less lab. space for science and no provision for technical subjects at girl's schools.

Choice of Subjects.

Girls are more likely to choose arts subjects than science subjects :

In 1970, only 1/5 of O level candidates in Physics were girls and only 1/15 of the candidates for C.S.E. Physics were girls.

At A level, 1/2 of the girls entries were in arts, 1/5 in science. While for boys 1/2 of the entries were for the sciences and 1/4 for arts.

In 1969, the ratio of boys to girls in different subjects at A level was as follows: Physics 6:1, Chemistry 4:1, Maths 5:1, Technical Drawing 200:1

Higher Education.

Fewer girls than boys go on to further or higher education once leaving school. At University girls form 40% of total students, in Colleges of Education girls form 2/3 of total students but in further education girls only make up 1/3 of the total students.

At Universities, the greater the 'prestige' the smaller the proportion of women students: Small civic-35%, Large civic-25%, Oxbridge-12%

At Postgraduate level, only 22% of students are women and 12% of these are on certificate of education courses.

Day Release. In 1973, 10% of girls in employment had day release, whereas 40% of boys did. The T.U.C. has noted that industries where there is the lowest numbers of girls receiving day release are the one employing the largest numbers of women e.g. the Distributive trades: 2% day release for women, Textiles: 2.4%, Clothing and footwear 2.4%

Apprenticeships. In 1973 7% of working girls were in apprenticeships (and 3/4 of these were in hairdressing) there were 42% of boys in apprenticeship schemes.

Teachers.

68% of all teachers are women. 76% of all primary teachers are women and 43% in secondary. The education system is so weighted that secondary schools have better pay and promotion prospects. 1/2 of all women teachers are on scale 1. 1/2 of all men teachers are on scale 4 or above. Women predominate in the lower scales, and Houghton has only served to make a greater separation between the scales. Before Houghton there was a 9% between the bottom scale 1 and scale 2, this has now been increased to a 25% ~~increase~~ difference.

N.U.T.

74% of the members of the N.U.T. are women, and yet there are only 6 women members on the executive. Only two of the officials appointed by the executive are women.

Presentation of Sex-Roles in British Reading Schemes

Glenys Lobban

Glenys Lobban teaches at an EPA junior school in Islington. This article is based on an extended enquiry undertaken into children's readers.

The major premise underlying the current debate about class and race bias in reading schemes is that the content of the schemes influences children's attitudes to the world and to themselves. Reading schemes are presumed to be particularly influential because they are usually the child's first introduction to the written word and they are presented within a context of authority, the classroom, and most children read them. They are hence presumed to convey official approval of attitudes the child will have already learned in the pre-school years from parents, the media and other persons in the society. Current knowledge suggests that children's and particularly their first readers do influence children's attitudes. They do this by presenting models like themselves for the children to identify with and emulate. In addition they present an official view of the real world and 'proper' attitudes.

It is now generally agreed that reading schemes such as the *Ladybird* scheme, which show a white middle-class world peopled with daddies in suits, and mummies in frilly aprons, who take tea on the lawns in front of their detached houses, are likely to be irrelevant and harmful for urban working-class and black children. They do not provide them with models like themselves, they implicitly, if not explicitly, denigrate these children's culture and imply that what is real and proper is also white and middle class. If this argument is accepted for race and class bias in reading schemes then it must equally apply to another type of inequality within our society, namely sexual inequality.

Ours is a patriarchal society where females are economically and legally discriminated against, where males control all the major social institutions, and where two distinct sex-roles, the 'feminine'-passive and the 'masculine'-active, exist. As nobody has proved any genetic difference between females and males other than those related to reproduction, we must conclude that the sex differences in temperament, interests, abilities and goals, are the results of socialisation. If we assume that despite class and race discrimination in our society, reading schemes should not mirror this and denigrate these groups, then we should also demand that such schemes do not mirror male-dominated sex-roles and denigrate females.

To my knowledge few people have extended the argument in this way, and indeed no broad-ranging study of the way sex-roles are presented in British reading schemes even exists. This article will describe a preliminary study on sex-role content in readers which I undertook to begin to remedy this lack of information.

The sex-role content of six popular British reading schemes was coded. I chose two schemes published before 1960 ('Janet and John' and 'Happy Venture'), two published in the 60s ('Ready to Read' and 'Ladybird'), and two recent schemes ('Nipper' and 'Break-through to Literacy') which are designed specifically for urban children. I coded the content of 225 stories in all. 179 of these had people as their central characters and I listed the toys and pets, activities and adult roles these showed for each sex and both the sexes.

Table I gives a summary of these results. It lists the toys and pets, activities and adult roles for each and both of the sexes that figured in three or more of the six reading schemes. In all cases single sex activities are those which figured as single sex in five of the schemes and in some of the readers in the remaining scheme.

A glance at Table I shows that the schemes rigidly divided the sphere of people's activity into two compartments, 'masculine' and 'feminine' with very few common characteristics. The number of 'masculine' options exceeded the number of 'feminine' ones in every category and they tended to be more active and instrumental and to relate more to the outside world and the outdoors than the 'feminine' options which revolved almost entirely around domestic roles. Only 35 of the 179 stories I coded had heroines, while 71 had heroes. The heroines were seldom being successful in non-'feminine' spheres, while the heroes were frequently brave and adventurous. In the 'Nipper' scheme, for example, a heroine who ran away got lost, caught the wrong tube and found herself back home and gave up, whereas boys who went off on their own frequently found adventure. In the remaining 73 stories there were female and male central characters but it was almost always a boy who took the lead in all non-domestic activities and let the girl help or watch. In the 'Janet and John' scheme, for example, while both children had dogs, Janet's was a puppy while John had a big dog. Boys were more frequently responsible for the care of the pets, and owned larger versions of a common toy such as a boat, and usually did better at common activities; eg. the boy reached the top of the tree while sister sat on a lower branch. In the classroom situation both sexes were equally good at reading and writing, but they were frequently shown with toys or apparatus conventionally appropriate to their sex. Frequently in situations where the children participated equally, their parents played out conventional roles. When both sexes made or built anything the boy usually did so more or excelled and Dad was the instructor unless they were learning to make cakes. Mum was never shown teaching them to build anything or to play sport.

It is illuminating to contrast the female and male worlds the schemes showed. The female world was almost entirely oriented around domestic activity and childcare. The message that the schemes conveyed was that a woman's place is in the home and that little girls should spend their time learning 'feminine' skills such as cooking and childcare. It is significant that the only new skill learned by girls in three or more of the schemes was taking care of a younger sibling. The adult models available were all situated in the home and shown doing domestic activity. The 'Nipper' scheme was the only one which showed working mothers and this was for a minority of the mothers shown. The fact is that the majority of women in Britain are in paid employment outside the home and many of them are neither shop assistants nor teachers (the only both-sex jobs in the schemes). This makes the schemes' relega-

tion of women to the home even more invidious. The only two girls' activities that allowed physical activity were skipping and hopping. Neither of these develop group co-operation nor the varied motor skills that the range of boys' activities and games offered.

The male world the schemes described did not include toys or activities that allowed expressive or nurturant behaviour. Boys' toys and activities were such as to allow the learning of independence and a variety of instrumental and motor skills. The boys' world was oriented outside the home and their toys and their adult models suggested a variety of future occupational goals. Boys, unlike girls, spent time watching adult males, who weren't relatives, performing their occupational roles. The idea that it was the boys who would have jobs was often explicitly stated. While girls were told they'd be like Mum or voiced such ideas, the boys expressed the desire to be train-drivers and the like. In only one of the 'Nipper' readers was a jobless father shown, and this dad was just temporarily out of work, while virtually all mums were jobless permanently. Thus, while the scope of adult male roles was somewhat limited, the schemes clearly conveyed the idea that it was males who had jobs, and who were responsible for the maintenance of all aspects of the 'real' world except for childcare and cooking.

The schemes also showed the interaction within the family in rigidly traditional terms. 'Nipper' was the only scheme which showed female single parent families and none of the schemes showed male single parent units. None of the schemes showed Dad doing housework or cooking anything other than a cup of tea. (The one exception was in 'Ready to Read' when Mum was in hospital having a baby.) Dad was always the one who drove 'his' car (only one reader in one scheme showed a woman driver), his authority was ultimate and he usually initiated and directed all family activities. All the schemes abounded in pictures of Dad reading the paper or watching television, while Mum bustled about preparing and serving food, and washing up, often with the help of daughter. Once again, as in the case of female employment, the schemes' version of the family was even more rigidly traditional than current practice. Many British women drive cars and do handiwork, and in many homes cooking and cleaning are tasks which are shared by the family, but none of this was reflected in the schemes.

In summary the reading schemes showed a 'real' world peopled by women and girls who were almost solely involved with domestic activity and whom the adventurous and innovative males might occasionally allow into their world (the rest of human activity and achievement) in a helpmate capacity. The world they depicted was not only sexist, it was more sexist than present reality, and in many ways totally foreign to the majority of children, who do have working Mums, and at least some experience of cross sex activities.

The question that now arises concerns the impact of these readers on the attitudes of girls and boys to themselves and the world. If, as research suggests, characters like themselves suggest new modes of behaviour for children and define what they should do and want, then the models of their own sex available to the readers could only serve to reinforce the patriarchal sex-roles the children have already learned. The present

policy in primary schools (see the Plowden Report) is for all the pupils to do traditionally one sex activities like cooking and metalwork. The content of the reading schemes is opposite to this policy, and might well neutralise these non-sextyped experiences, or convince the children that experiences in school are unrelated to the 'real' world outside. The schemes, like the rest of children's and adults' literature (see Millett, 1970), concentrate on the exploits of males. The girls who read them have already been schooled to believe, as our society does, that males are superior to females and better at everything other than domestic work, and the stories in the schemes cannot but reinforce the damage that our society does to girls' self-esteem. The total lack of female characters who are successful in non-feminine activities and jobs and who are independent, ensures that girls with these aspirations will receive no encouragement. In the same way, boys who feel the need to express gentleness and nurturance will find no male models to emulate. In short, these schemes in no way question the correctness of a society which deprives both sexes of full expression of their capabilities, and, in fact, they endorse a set of sex-roles that are even more rigid than our present role division.

One of the arguments that might be given to justify male bias in reading schemes is that boys have more reading problems. Certainly girls learn to read in spite of the male bias in readers but at what price to their self attitudes? If the primers children were given paid them the compliment of being intelligent beings able to comprehend complexity and depicted a world real to the majority of children (with girls who were tough, children of varied colour and nationalities, boys who cried, motherless or fatherless families, working parents, family fights, violence, television and other phenomena familiar to them) they would involve all the children. If we as educationalists care about the full development of each individual child it is time we became fully aware of how materials such as reading schemes denigrate females as well as other groups. It is time we acknowledged and attempted to change this sexist aspect of their content, and of our society, along with the class and race inequalities.

References

1. Reading Schemes used

- a. *Breakthrough to Literacy*. D Mackay, B Thompson, and P Schaub. London: Longmans, for the Schools Council, 1970.
- b. *Happy Venture Reader*. F J Schonell and I Sarjeant. London: Oliver & Boyd, 1958.
- c. *Janet and John*. M O'Donnell and R Munro. Herts: James Nisbet & Co, 1950.
- d. *Ladybird Key Words Reading Scheme*. W Murray. Loughborough: Wills & Hepworth Ltd, 1964.
- e. *Nipper*. London: Macmillan Ltd, 1968.
- f. *Ready to Read*. M Simpson. London: Methuen, 1964.

2. References cited in text

- a. Millett, K. *Sexual Politics*. New York: Doubleday & Co Inc, 1970.
- b. Plowden Report. *Children and their Primary Schools*. London: HMSO, 1963.

TABLE I

The sex-roles that occurred in three or more of the six schemes coded

THE SEX FOR WHICH THE ROLE WAS PRESCRIBED	THE CONTENT OF THE CHILDREN'S ROLES				THE ADULT ROLES PRESENTED
	TOYS AND PETS	ACTIVITIES	TAKING THE LEAD IN BOTH SEX ACTIVITIES	LEARNING A NEW SKILL	
GIRLS ONLY	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Doll 2. Skipping rope 3. Doll's pram 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preparing the tea 2. Playing with dolls 3. Taking care of younger siblings 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hopping 2. Shopping with parents 3. Skipping 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Taking care of younger siblings 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mother 2. Aunt 3. Grandmother
BOYS ONLY	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Car 2. Train 3. Aeroplanes 4. Boat 5. Football 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Playing with cars 2. Playing with trains 3. Playing football 4. Lifting or pulling heavy objects 5. Playing cricket 6. Watching adult males in occupational roles 7. Heavy gardening 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Going exploring alone 2. Climbing trees 3. Building things 4. Taking care of pets 5. Sailing boats 6. Flying kites 7. Washing and polishing Dad's car 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Taking care of pets 2. Making/Building 3. Saving/Rescuing people or pets 4. Playing sports 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Father 2. Uncle 3. Grandfather 4. Postman 5. Farmer 6. Fisherman 7. Shop or business owner 8. Policeman 9. Builder 10. Bus driver 11. Bus conductor 12. Train driver 13. Railway porter
BOTH SEXES	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Book 2. Ball 3. Paints 4. Bucket and spade 5. Dog 6. Cat 7. Shop 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Playing with pets 2. Writing 3. Reading 4. Going to the seaside 5. Going on a family outing 			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teacher 2. Shop assistant

SEX STEREOTYPING IN THE PRESENTATION OF JOBS AND CAREERS.

Glenys Lobban has shown how primary school books present a very stereotyped view of adult roles. The choice of jobs and careers presented to children are equally stereotyped.

The following are two selections from a popular pair of American Hallmark matched books... "What Boys Can Be" and "What Girls Can Be".

The words speak for themselves. We are told that boys can be.....

- A FIREMAN who squirts water on the flames, and
- A BASEBALL PLAYER who wins lots of games.
- A BUS DRIVER who helps people travel far, or
- A POLICEMAN with a siren on his car.
- A COWBOY who goes on cattle drives, and
- A DOCTOR who helps to save people's lives.
- A SAILOR on a ship that takes you everywhere, and
- A PILOT who goes flying through the air.
- A FARMER who drives a big red tractor, and
- on TV shows if I become an ACTOR.
- AN astronaut who lives in a space station, and
- someday grow up to be PRESIDENT OF THE NATION.

The second book tells us that Girls can be.....

- A NURSE with white uniforms to wear, or
- A STEWARDESS who flies everywhere.
- A BALLERINA who dances and twirls around, or
- A CANDY SHOP OWNER the best in town.
- A MODEL who wears lots of pretty clothes,
- A big star in the movies and on special TV shows.
- A SECRETARY who'll type without mistakes, or
- AN ARTIST painting trees and clouds and lakes.
- A TEACHER IN A NURSERY SCHOOL some day, or
- A SINGER and make records people play.
- A DESIGNER OF DRESSES in the very latest style, or
- A BRIDE who comes walking down the aisle.
- A HOUSEWIFE someday when I am grown, and
- A MOTHER, with some children of my own.

The ultimate goal for which little boys are to aim is nothing less than president of the nation. For girls the comparable pinnacle of achievement is motherhood!

Glenys Lobban's article "Presentation of Sex Roles in British Reading Schemes" reproduced with the kind permission of Brian Simon from 'Forum for the Discussion of New Trends in Education' Spring 1974 Vol. 16 No. 2

"Next to the Family, Teaching has the greatest influence on the Society in which we live." Houghton '75

This quote is a good reference point. It tells us how both institutions: Family & Teaching, are seen at present--by Houghton at least--as fulfilling a very important role in the society in which we live. Each; in its own way is encouraged by the justices of countless respectable & influential committees; boards; inquiries or what have you, in serving the needs of a Society; as such needs arise, in the kind of "ad hoc," independent, and; so called: "spontaneous;" way which the governors of this Society like. They like it because; on the one hand, it passes for Freedom --conveniently containing and limiting its self-- and; on the other hand, it keeps things sufficiently fragmented & incoherent to prevent those governed from seeing the wood within the trees. In what way are we governed, by whom and on whose say-so???

EXAMPLES: A MOTHER believes that her children are her "raison d'etre" and agrees that her delinquents are her own failures.

HEAD teachers salvage esteem by managing to cope with the low budget they had last year--or lower as the effect of CUTS in educational expenditure; despite the cost of maintaining a British presence in N. Ireland (£3m a month), become felt--whipping, when the truth is that the only way to get the staff/money/materials increasingly needed as social dissatisfaction comes out in the young, is to pressurise the Local Authority.

The Extended Family Declines

Before technology rolled into town; unloading Spinning Jennies and self-lighting tinder boxes; before Industrialisation, about 150 years ago, people were mostly quietly unaware of a world beyond the next village. They thought the wheel was just wonderful. They worked at cottage industries and the few--the Smith/Joiner/Po the few that did specialise could see some of the worth of; and were not so obviously alienated from; the product of their labour.

The family structure also differed from the Houghton Civilization. This "extended" type of Family was very different from the isolated (Nuclear) family units which confront us today. Not only was there a more central economic reliance on one crop, one good season or; in times of natural disaster, one unified purpose, but this more communal atmosphere spilled over into shared emotional/psychological support at Birth, Death and in between times. Figures like grandparents not only held a secure social position; but also the daily round of Child-Minding & housework where possible. The children were not

only looked after by the women. The men did this work; as did the women share in productive labour. In short; the Extended Family tended to permeate the whole community far more than our contemporary Nuclear Family.

Then Came the Industrial Revolution

Although; on closer inspection, we can see that Trade was already breaking down contained local agrarian communities by the mid-17th Century, pre-Industrial Society stood as skittles against the shock of the technological cyclone that broke around the turn of the 19th Century. Whole families split or moved to cities; where the real money was, where they tried to reform their previous emotional/economic support systems. As many an immigrant family finds: it's just not easy. The old roles of the heads of the families became increasingly subordinated to the Firm. The new skills required were taught at the workplace instead of at home. Though; at first, whole families were taken on, the rapid technological advancement ensured their eventual redundancy. Lay-offs are as old as Industrialisation. It became apparent to the Governors that it was inefficient to have whole families cluttering up their nice new manufactories when; really, the Man worked best on his own while the Woman got on with the mothering somewhere else. The benevolent Bosses built "Dwellings"; at a 'fair' rent of course, for the Wife to get on with this chore. It wasn't really their responsibility to ensure the production of the next generation of Workers. No more than the welfare of the present. Not for them the full responsibility for industrial accidents; the crippling diseases of miners; for the provision of a system of safe healthy happy nurseries; freeing both parents and children of an incestuous excess of each others company. Compare Britain; here, with Hungary, where women are; at least, allowed 2 weeks absence with full pay and an optional period of 3 months with flat rate payment of approx 1/3 wage of unskilled worker while their job is kept open.

As I was saying: the Family changed. Unconsciously its members came up with and lived out all the bourgeois solutions predicted for them by their Industrial Overlords, tongue-tied by the famous inaccuracy that the Family is "the cornerstone of Society" when the fact is that the Family is almost on a par with its constituents in providing a small part of the huge profits for the few—with hardly a word to say in the bargain. Likewise schools!

The State

As Today; that most supreme expression; possible under Capitalism, of "a plurality of interests—of all races; creeds and sex and Class—the State, exhibited a bias not unheard of in any hierarchical institution; be it British Army, School, Police Force, Labour Party or; indeed; Family where everybody has their own axe to grind; voluntarily or not, and

where personal interest is never very far from any argument.

Shaftsbury housed them. The Salvation Army poured soup down them and made enough noise to keep them quiet and the Government of the day gave sops; like the Factories Act, ensuring that children would not be exploited until their 10th Birthday. This must have presented some early ROSSLA problems--in the beginning children had been working; almost as soon as they could walk, quite safely in fields....but in busy hosiery mills or mines? Of course, their "natural" guardians-- the Women-- would be "at home" to mind them, but then, women couldn't stand heavy factory work and this was a convenient side-effect,.....NATURALLY!

Social Democracy could afford a few luxuries with an advancing economy (the Commonwealth helped matters). So, we got Schooling and Health & Social Workers. Well of course, they did serve a purpose-- "Socialisation" it's called; making 'happy' Workers-- So everyone benefited; though some more than others (Factory workers need to read instructions. So, too, do (even) Housewives!).

From 'Extended' to 'Nuclear'.

Over a century, or thereabouts, we've experienced a fierce tendency to specialise in all spheres of human activity. There has occurred a society-wide "division of labour" to meet the requirements of a Capitalist economy. Nowhere in Society has this been more felt than in the Family. Unseen as it is, that competitiveness (that WE teach); so essential to Capitalism (because of its divisive quality), has led to alienation and isolation at work, to rift of family from family, sister from brother, friend from friend, worker from worker,.....so that our expectations of life fall as low as befits the Ruling Class.

The Nuclear Family

The Nuclear type family serves to prepare fledglings to accept the un-happiness of an alienated and alienating existence (against a backdrop of half-truths & deceit) in a Society whose constituents-- individual human beings--are increasingly alienated & isolated from each other. Capitalism makes capital (pardon me) out of this. It calls it: FREEDOM. It is "Bourgeois Individualism". It boasts Independence, It means Isolation/Alienation. Alienation of self from others & of self from Self. Self alienation occurs at work, in recuperation, in self expression and; then, in thinking. We experience a jamming of the decision making mechanism; an indecision, an inner conflict--schizophrenia--which seems to come from outside. But we're told that it will go away if we don't think about it and we get used to: having a straight tie, feeling insecure, worrying about smelling, supporting only one football team or Political Party, doing work we wouldn't ask anybody else to do, believing in one God, loving only one person, touching only one person/sex/colour.....cutting off our own personal horizons in preparation for the voluntary political castration nec-

essary to a Faith in "Representatives" like HeathWilsonThatcherEtcetera
.....in fact, we often have two well-defined secret personal self-
images— Private & Public —;always in conflict, out of which double
standards arise. We have to become very adept at rationalisation in
both private and public spheres and the excuses in one often rely on
'accepted' weaknesses in the other.....So, we base our "personal rel-
ationships" on this clash between our needs and the requirements of a
capitalist economy and then are surprised that we; as Individuals,
squabble because our own needs clash with others and we end up
"papering over the cracks" with self-deception/suppression/repression.

One field of Human self-expression; Sexuality, has been alarming-
ly contorted to make Capital. Through every medium available to the
Governors of Production there drifts the insistence that our physical
shared expressions of affection be tailored to fit the modes of
production and; as consolation (but; more: as insult to injury) that they
be eroticised into some official libido. Far from reducing sexual
misery, these trafficings only enlarge its field extending the range
of frustration and want, allowing the transformation of desire into
the compulsive need to consume and ensuring the production of
demand-- the motor of Capitalism. We neatly learn to separate our
Feelings from our Reasoning (and tend to prize the latter more). The
Family helps Capitalism out; here, by "socialising" boys and girls
into being big 'reasonable' Lumberjacks & little 'intuitive' wife-jills
(Nurses at best). Between these two gems; are scattered 4,000 million
misfits + you&me.

So Far So Bad....

If we are tempted to think that Humankind's alienation is at its
zenith and that the Nuclear Family has gone as far as it can go in
introversion; let's think back over the forces that have changed its
structure from Extended to Nuclear and imagine the tensions brought
about by increasingly bitter competition on an International scale--
the present "crisis" in International Capitalism, for example. Not for
nothing do fascist groupings; like the National Front, surface at times
like these with their ever more crude racist/sexist Family stereotypes
(compare Hitler's Lebensborn- Spring of Life -Movement; with its
concept of Women as Gebarmaschinen- Child Bearing Machines- available
to racially pure Aryan soldiers for sexual intercourse, or
Rekrutenmachen- Producing Recruits). Whilst; at the same time, happily,
there grows a healthily critical upsurge of dissatisfied awareness
from within-- Strikes. Divorce, etc.....

With stresses like these; something's got to give. Wonder what
it will be: Bosses? Workforce?
State? Armed Force(s)?
School? Family? Self?
Some Other Country's Workforce? Some Other
Country's Armed Force? Some Other.....

SEX EDUCATION

This paper sets out to ask questions, rather than lay down any lines, on the subject of sex education. We hope some answers may emerge in the course of the workshop.

Some aims of sex education

1. pure information to dispel ignorance and fear. people should know how their bodies work and what they consist of so they can cope with their functioning and when they go wrong, rather than rushing off blindly to a medical 'expert' who may or may not give them the best treatment. people should ideally see their doctor as a fallible resource to be used, rather than as a magician or father-figure to be implicitly trusted. (Actually lots of people distrust doctors without daring to admit it). This applies as much to the biology of reproduction as much as anything else, in fact more so since this is something that affects nearly all men and women at some point. A woman can't make any real choice of contraceptive if she doesn't even understand what they do & how they work. Similarly abortion, childbirth & menopause are much less scary if a woman knows what's going on - they will probably hurt less - and men should know too, so they can participate. Ultimately this leads to self-help methods but that's straying from the topic.
2. Control of your body - this is linked to the above. Women in particular feel helplessly at the mercy of the wombs, pregnancies "just happen" - as in so many other spheres, women feel powerless and in the grip of forces larger than themselves so they cannot move to direct and affect their lives. To many women childbirth is a nightmare of ignorance and fear, being alternately pushed around ~~xxxxxxx~~ and ignored by bossy medical staff. Only when you understand something can you begin to control it - but to make the knowledge really work for you, you must get together with other people in the same situation to change it, too.
3. Demystification of the body - women are brought up to see themselves as sex objects, as men are taught to see them. Their breasts are for decoration not babyfeeding; in contrast most women think their genitals down there are malformed, disgusting, that natural discharges are to be deodorised out of existence. (Typist used to wonder how ~~xx~~ men could bear to do oral sex on a woman, nosing around that foul area). Boys worry about their penis size - is it too big, too small, a funny shape? Certainly the whole subject is highly embarrassing and VD (which includes ANY disease down there, and even periods) is the worst thing in the world. practical down-to-earth sex education could do a lot to dispel these attitudes.
4. An end to sexual repression (which is so strongly linked to the narrow, reactionary personality, and to fascism). We must get rid of the 'sex is evil & dirty' myth, the puritanical attitude which says that anything you do for pleasure is sinful, anything that's nasty (like alienated work) is good for you. Hence the feeling that sex must be paid for - by babies - by the woman - the 'sex on the rates' outcried by newspapers when free contraception is proposed - girls and boys who have sex without using birth control because they think they should 'take the consequences' of their actions. We must discuss all this in sex education.
5. The resurrection of female sexuality denied for centuries by every imaginable authority & still denied today in so many sex education books (see below). The transformation of male sexuality from technique, performance, competition, bump and grind into gentle feeling, sensitivity and opening out. Actually, just teaching anatomy (what bodies are made of, what shapes they are, where you find what) and physiology (how the body works, how the different parts interact with each other) can help people enjoy sex more - boys become less aggressive, girls less passive,

No doubt people can think of more aims.

Teaching basic biology & the 'mechanics' of sex.

This hasn't posed problems for us or our friends, whether we've spoken of VD/contraception/periods/'having sex' (or whatever expression you use). It's better in single sex classes cos girls are inhibited from asking personal questions or stating opinions in the presence of men. We feel it's better not to invite specialist speakers from the FPA or wherever - better to keep

to the person the class/audience knows - also people from FPA may have sexist attitudes. One college I know gets a man from Durex to talk about contraception etc.. of course he pushes the sheath as the best method of birth control, which it isn't, and also gives out a nasty little booklet about Lerv 'n marriage which is really sexist. You can do it, don't rely on experts. If a teacher doesn't know about contraception - then you should:

We feel it's essential not be embarrassed, and to be open to talking about your own personal experiences e.g. 'when I use the cap I feel'. If YOU won't give away anything about YOURself, why should kids or adults open up to you and ask personal questions?

This open approach is much easier in biological, mechanical matters than when approaching the vexed question of

SEXUALITY

How do you start discussing this? We don't mean 'love' and the gushy chapters on this subject in some sex ed. books, which may mention the throb of the heart but altogether ignore the throb of the clitoris.

One possible approach is through biology - a chat about contraception can lead into a discussion of sexuality/sexual technique/hang-ups/orgasm. But this doesn't always happen. Another approach could be a lesson on the physiology of the orgasm in the style of Masters & Johnson (Human Sexual Response is their book) i.e. what happens to the body when you come. Has anyone tried this? Does it work?

Certainly there's little help to be gleaned from

Sex Education Books

most of which would be best entitled 'how to make babies'. Quite apart from their frequent coyness, their moralistic and/or patronising tone and attitudes, their sex-role stereotyping, & their distortions, they completely deny female sexuality. Puberty to boys means exciting erections, sexy wet dreams, solo or mutual masturbation with other boys; to girls it means periods. Boys are sexual; girls just bleed. Adolescent sexuality may be a source of guilt & embarrassment to boys, but at least it's recognised. In girls it's not supposed to exist. Further more sex ed. books tie up the sexual act to reproduction and motherhood (but adolescents just don't experience their sexuality that way (nor do we, come to that). You don't have a grope at a party/bus stop/wherever cos you want a baby! So sexual feelings don't connect in any way with "sex education". Girls are bewildered/guilt-ridden/dismayed by the power of feelings coming from their bodies, 'losing your virginity' becomes for many purely a moral problem unconnected with possible pregnancy. Usually bisexuality/homosexuality is unmentioned; the white middle-class heterosexual nuclear family is the norm - surprise, surprise one of the few good sex education books we've come across is 'Boy, Girl, Man Woman' by Bent Claussen, introduction by Micheal Schofield. Any others? Should we get together & write our own?

Sex Education in the school

many problems: if you're too explicit, too open, say too much about yourself, you'll get kicked out, the head will find out, the parents will complain. So you just hope the kids won't grass on you, or you tone down your remarks. Both unsatisfactory. Or is anyone happy?

Some teachers can't bring themselves to talk about their own experiences for fear of gossip, in the school, in the staffroom. So you're ashamed that you have sex, that you masturbate, that you're a sexual being? Well, so are most other people.

Sex Education outside school (to all ages)

Much potential. Some possibilities are:

1. Adult education classes - we run a 'women's health course' covering anatomy, contraception, abortion, pregnancy, childbirth, menopause, sexually-transmitted diseases, nutrition, Western and Alternative medicine, and self-help. One course in the local community centre lasts 10 weeks and women aged 13-42 have attended. The other is 6 weeks at a nearby teacher-training college. Each session lasts from 2 to 3 hours. We want to extend this to other places, but we find sexuality very hard to deal with as such.

2. once-off talks, on the lines of the FPA etc., to day-release apprentices, young workers at Community Industry, etc..

3. sex education as part of general studies at a college of further ed., or technical college, or art college.....
4. Youth clubs - a 6-12 week course could be run in these surroundings. Has anyone taught sex education in a youth club and how did she/he find it? We find it an exciting prospect.
5. When the Little Red Schoolbook came out it received massive publicity so all kids wanted to get hold of it. When they did, the great majority turned straight to the chapter on sex. So perhaps we need another little red schoolbook, but JUST about sex.... of course the publisher who brought it out got into trouble. Who's willing to lay themselves on the line?

The situation is complicated by the necessity for getting PAID for the sex education we do - it takes a lot of work and we can't do it for nothing. We have to have lots of aids & slides, films, etc. cost money - we make our own charts a lot, use our own and friends' contraceptives for samples, beg loads of free leaflets from the FPA, British Pregnancy Advisory Service, etc - the usual teaching problems....

At the health course in the community centre we are financed by the WEA (Workers Educational Association), We found them very willing to put on the course but we are responsible for seeing that at least 8 people turn up. They close the class otherwise. So, of course since it's women, it means we have to offer babysitting arrangements, too....

A few words on Reich

Some people will have read the works of Wilhelm Reich and know all about the Sex pol movement in the Germany of the 1920s and 30s. For those who don't...

Reich and his friends in the Communist party (who eventually expelled them) used the already-well-established youth wing of the party to spread their ideas about sex and to do sex education. Once it was known that they did this young people came from far and wide to find out about sex. They covered the basic mechanics of the whole business - the facts of life, contraception etc. and discussed the physical difficulties in having sex when you're young - no where to go/attitudes of parents and authorities/etc.; The fact of sexual repression being a tool in the hands of the ruling class to keep down the working class was also gone into. They put a lot of emphasis on demystifying the obstacles - working out why they were unhappy, frustrated etc..

Reich has been criticised for his heterosexual bias which was reflected in the sex pol movement - however, in Germany at the time homosexuality has strong links with the fascist movement and was also associated with ruling class decadence - so in that specific climate it is understandable, if not excusable, why it got put down.

Really a reading about the sex pol movement shows us that it IS possible to build mass movements for change on the issue of sexual repression, and demonstrates what a vital political function sexuality has.

And a few words on the FPA, etc..

Many ~~workers~~ ^{workers} of the Family Planning Association are very nice people. However it is important to recognise that their ideology is not necessarily ours. The organisation upholds the nuclear family, marriage as it stands etc. and people in it are as sexist as the next person. While advising young people to use FPA clinics we must not be uncritical, therefore - we find them alienating, so will they. How to make places to get contraceptives less alienating is another topic, one which women's health centres have begun to tackle - but this is not the place to go into them.

Finally, remember that Sir Veith Joseph, too, pushes sex education, so that young women in social classes 4 and 5 won't have lots of sub-standard babies. We don't groove on teenage mothers-of-four either, but our reasons are very different, and this has, somehow, to come across in our teaching. Population control raises its head too - women should choose for themselves to limit their childbearing, not because they're told to by yet another authoritative man. Otherwise, when the population needs to expand, women will be told to start producing again, facilities for contraception & abortion will be removed and we'll be back at square one. We could discuss this too in the workshop.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

We have done more teaching of "womens health" than sex education, and havn't done much on men. This booklist reflectz that bias. please add to it.

Recommended

Our Bodies Ourselves - by the Boston Women's Health Collective, £1.50 *
 Chapters on anatomy, periods, sexuality, childbirth etc.etc.

The Birth Control Handbook - 7½p *

The VD Handbook - 7½p *

Boy, Girl, Man Woman - Bent Clausson - good sex education book.

The Menstrual Cycle - Katharina Dalton - 40p penguin.

Very clear explanation of a difficult subject, but Dr. Dalton's attitudes are puritanical and reactionary e.g. she doesn't seem to think that unmarried people have sex. Very useful book, though.

'Birth Control Handbook' - Edinburgh University Students Union. * 25p*

pretty clear and informative. Includes some (not enough) info on abortion and VD. pictures - useful in classwork.

Human Sexual Response - Masters & Johnson (shortened paperback available).

Family planning for Doctors - International Planned Parenthood Federation
 Available from medical bookshops. The low-down.

Useful, but not incredible

FPA leaflets - free from your nearest clinic, or from FPA headquarters
 (see address below)

British pregnancy Advisory Service leaflets, free, address below.

Serilisation and vasectomy - Clive Wood. 60p paperback.

The Well-Body Book; £2.50 *

Charts and models: expensive, but good, from: Adam, Rouilly,
 write for free catalogue. 10 Winchester Road,
 London N.W.3.

Maybe you could get your local teachers' centre or schools museum service to stock charts and models of the reproductive organs - ours, in Leeds, has hearts, lungs and what you will EXCEPT for genitalia. Coincidence?

The Family planning Resource List has lists of films, slides, books and many other teaching materials explaining sex, birth, etc. to different age-groups. The list costs £2.50 - maybe someone at your local clinic has one you could borrow - otherwise get it from: The Family Planning Association, 27-35 Mortimer Street, London W1A 4QW. Tel. 01-636 7866.

British pregnancy Advisory Service has branches in Birmingham, Coventry, Moseley, Leeds and Brighton. You could write to them: First Floor, Guildhall Buildings, Navigation Street, Birmingham B2 4BT, for leaflets etc..

Commercial drug manufacturers are a good source of free literature and models - we have a great model of a uterus with a coil in it, real size, from GD Searle the pill-makers. Some produce lavishly illustrated books about how their product works - anyway it's worth writing to see what they come up with.

Womens Health Groups known about and existing in Britain at present were listed in Spare Rib no. 32 31. Spare Rib, 9 Newburgh St., London W1A 4XS.

General books - Ann Oakley's 'Sex, Gender and Society' is good, so is Lee Comer's "Wedlocked Wives".

Apologies for typing due to rush of writing AND a lousy typewriter.
 One day we'll make our fortunes teaching sex education and buy another.
 Well, perhaps not....

Contact us at:
 4 Hilton Road,
 Leeds 8.

love

Alison & Penny

& George and the Womens Health Group.

Sexism in the Classroom- some brief notes for discussion.

1. Attitudes and Expectations.

a) Do you excuse behaviour in boys that you would not tolerate in girls because 'boys will be boys'? When girls are fighting do you say, "I'm surprised to see two girls fighting, aren't you ashamed of yourselves, etc."

b) Do you have different expectations of children's work, e.g. girls are expected to be neat, careful, to try and give teacher what she/he wants. Boys can be more adventurous and independent, aren't expected to have neat handwriting etc.

Do you suggest topics to them in a sexist way? A teacher at my school came in to do a 'demonstration' lesson when I was a probationer and started like this: "We'll write a story today with the sea today boys and girls- the boys will probably want to write an exciting story about pirates or submarines. You girls, well you could write about mermaids or something."

2. Classroom organization.

Do you organize the class by sex, e.g. girls line and boys line for going down to the hall, children seated in class according to sex. Do you punish boys by making them seat next to girls or vice-versa? Do you discipline/control boys by calling them 'big daft girls', or girls by saying they're 'acting like boys'.

When talking to kids or sending messages home, do you assume that 'Mum' is at home and that it is 'Mum' who should be concerned e.g. 'tell your Mum to sew a new button on', 'tell your Mum you were sick', 'tell your Mum you need a packed lunch for the trip'.

Do you pick girls to help with the tidying up because they are better at it? In my school the head asked for some 4th year lads to move the chairs for the Xmas concert and some girls to wash the coffee cups.

3. Things it might be better to do.

a) The opposite of all the points in 1. and 2.

b) Encourage boys and girls to do sewing, football, cooking, tidying, washing-up etc. Ridicule boys who say girls can't play football by examining everyone's feet, ditto with sewing, examining hands, counting fingers etc.

c) Use whatever non-sexist resources you can find or make. Do 'the 1st woman in space' as well as 'the 1st man in space', etc. When reading traditional stories, change the roles around so that the poor, feeble, handsome Knight gets rescued.

c) Don't necessarily discourage girls from fighting- they probably need to learn how to defend themselves. When primary school girls complain that boys are lifting their skirts up, or chasing them, tell them to pull the boys trousers down and chase back.

Discussion openers for use with older kids.

1. Have the girls complete either or both "I would (would not) like to be a man because..." For the boys substitute "woman". This should indicate what they see as the advantages of each sex and how they perceive the division of roles.
2. Another way of putting the above- "If I were a boy(girl), I would (like to).. Do they feel they can't do or become these things, given their actual sex. E.g. If a girl says "If I were a boy I would climb trees and play football, she should be asked if she does climb trees and play football, why not if she doesn't would she like to, what makes her think she can't, etc.
3. Keep a running list of 'ways I have benefited by being a male/female today'. Or keep two parallel lists, plus and minus.
4. To illustrate how selective generalization works, give some facts about men and have the pupils generalize from them. For example: FACT: Men have a much higher incidence of heart disease than women. GEN: Employer to male job applicant: "I'm sorry but we can't take the risk of employing a man for this job, you might have a heart attack in the cockpit and crash the plane."

FACT: The male hormone testosterone is considered by many scientists to be the cause of aggression. GEN: Men are always fighting and getting violent. They can't be trusted in positions of power.

5. Role reversal games- conduct a marriage ceremony in which the mother gives away the groom, they're pronounced woman and husband, and become Mrs. and Mr. Jane Smith. Have students conduct interviews with prominent men, asking them for their favourite home repair techniques, how they combine marriage and career, what size suit they wear, how they manage to stay young and handsome.
6. Have girls write on "What I like best about being a woman", "What I hate most about women". "What I like most in men", "What I hate most in men", "What I like most in men". Reverse for boys. Compare and discuss the male and female likes and dislikes. Are they complementary, similar, dissimilar, etc?
7. List words and phrases referring to unmarried women. To unmarried men.
8. Have females pretend they are male and plan their future. Reverse for males.
9. Have females pretend that marriage is not an alternative and plan their future.
10. Have students monitor T.V. ads, T.V. programmes and comic strip characters for examples of sexism.

THE WORKING WOMEN'S CHARTER.

1. The rate for the job, regardless of sex, at rates negotiated by the trade unions, with a national minimum wage below which no wages should fall.
2. Equal opportunity of entry into occupations and in promotion, regardless of sex and marital state.
3. Equal education and training for all occupations and compulsory day release for all 16-19 year olds in employment.
4. Working conditions to be, without deterioration of previous conditions, the same for women as for men.
5. The removal of all legal and bureaucratic impediments to equality, e.g. with regard to tenancies, mortgages, pension schemes, taxation, passports, control over children, social security payments, hire-purchase agreements.
6. Improved provision of local authority day nurseries, free of charge, with extended hours to suit working mothers. Provision of nursery classes in day nurseries. More nursery schools.
7. 18 weeks maternity leave with full net pay spread before and after the birth of a live child; 7 weeks after birth if the child is still-born. No dismissal during pregnancy or maternity leave. No loss of security, pension or promotion prospects.
8. Family planning clinics supplying free contraception to be extended to cover every locality. Free abortion to be readily available.
9. Family allowances to be increased to £2.50 per child, including the first child.
10. To campaign amongst women to take an active part in the trade unions and in political life so that they may exercise influence commensurate with their numbers and to campaign amongst men trade unionists that they may work to achieve this aim.

Women teachers and the Unions.

68% of the teaching force is female. The N.U.T. is the largest union with about 229,000 women members, 74% of its total membership. It is well known that the NUT does not further the interests of its women members in terms of policy or representation: 1/4 of the executive are women, as are 3 of the 42 appointed officials. Facts like these have tended to encourage some women to join the U.W.T.. However this union is very professionalist in character and orientated towards career women (ie women without family ties) It also takes a more right wing line on education in general. It has traditionally been dominated by the N.A.S. (which union actually opposed the implementation of equal pay) and will soon be merging with them. The NUT is the largest and most 'progressive' of the teachers unions and has the greatest positive potential.

The under representation of women in policy and control of the union should not be seen as a sexist manoeuvre by a group of male chauvinists but as a problem which reflects the real oppression of women in this society. However the problem of getting mass involvement in the Trade Unions is a general one and not confined to women. The bureaucracies of the unions never really seek to involve the membership in activity because doing so would endanger its own position. The problem of involvement is accentuated in the NUT because the leadership do nothing to attempt to deal with the specific problems that women face. However, this cannot be resolved simply by organizational changes in the union's structure.

Within the union we must continually raise discussion and make demands about the position of women. There are several areas.

1) Union Democracy

We should demand that union meetings are held in school time. In most unions the long working day is a barrier to active participation, women have the additional burden of family responsibilities to prevent them attending. Union meetings held outside school hours should always have creche facilities. Local Associations should do surveys to ascertain the extent of the need.

2) Maternity leave, family sickness leave etc.

See paper on the Working Women's Charter.

When formulating demands we also have to consider the problems that women face as teachers. Mass involvement of the membership will not come about through the demands outlined above. We must take up the fight against women's oppression within those campaigns that attempt to solve the more general problems of teaching. There are at present three main areas:

1) Salaries.

A central part of the struggle should be to take up the relation of scales and low pay to the woman teacher. Houghton justified the low increases on scale 1 by dangling the carrot of promotion before us - but the majority of women are non-graduates teaching in primary schools and likely to remain on Scale 1.

2) Conditions in service, contract etc.

In the primary sphere there is practically no allocation of free periods. Thus school preparation and marking must be done at home where women are already overburdened with family responsibilities. The problem of class size particularly affects primary schools. The questions of sick leave for family illness, maternity leave etc., should all be taken up in relation to the contract.

3) Education cuts.

The recent cut backs affect all teachers. Women suffer particularly because of the cuts and non-expansion of nursery education and the non-employment of part-time teachers. Already in several areas the Charter Campaign has been active in fighting the cuts in the nursery programme.

There are many other issues on which should attempt to formulate

How Teachers can take up the Working Women's Charter (A few suggestions)

a) Pay

Teachers are supposed to have equal pay- but it would seem that some are paid more equally than others: 1) Over $\frac{1}{2}$ all women teachers are on Scale 1. 2) Over half all men teachers are on old Scale 4 and above. 3) $\frac{2}{3}$ of women teach in primary schools (where fewer scaled posts are available because less points are allocated for younger children) 4) Far more women than men enter teaching from training colleges and thus do not qualify for graduate perks. (NB. Houghton has increased the graduate/non-graduate differential) 5) Women teachers are often not given jobs of responsibility because:

- if they aren't married they'll get married and probably stop work.
- if they are married they'll get pregnant and have to stop work.
- if their husband decides to change jobs and move, they'll change as well.

As well as these factors, discipline and control are often associated with violence and physical strength which are characteristics not attributed to women.

Therefore the demand for abolition of the scales and the graduate/non-grad. differential should be included in pay demands as it would benefit most women teachers.

b) Maternity Leave.

The contract under which most people are at present employed states that after ^{working} 13 weeks we are entitled we are entitled to 7 weeks leave before the birth and 11 weeks after. The first 4 weeks on full pay, the rest on $\frac{1}{2}$ pay. Unless you provide a medical certificate after 18 weeks you must go back to work. You have no job security after 18 weeks. This provision is not adequate and has many loopholes. Our demands should be a) the extension of maternity leave to 18 weeks before and after the birth. b) no loss of increments, pension rights etc.. c) Paternity leave for 18 weeks after birth. d) provision of nurseries so that teachers can return to work e) the right to maternity leave for all unmarried mothers and part-timers.

c) Family Sickness Leave.

The present I.L.E.A. ruling on family sickness leave is that 3 days a year are allowed. (Some authorities differ). This is obviously not adequate and in many cases would mean considerable loss of pay. We should demand that it is made the same as it is for personal sickness i.e., you phone up for the first 3 days and then produce a doctor's note for the person you have to look after to cover you for the duration of the illness.

d) Contract of Service.

Obviously a good contract of service would benefit women particularly. If they teach in a primary school they don't get any marking and preparation time during the day, and in secondary schools free time is often taken away. If women have domestic commitments they have little time in the evenings. Also included in this contract of service should be conditions such as maternity and family sickness leave.

e) Nursery facilities

The provision of nursery education is one of the first things to be axed by the education cuts. The provision of nurseries is essential, not only educationally, but to provide proper care of children while parents are at work or out. The demand on the charter is very abstract; a good way of taking up the campaign would be to demand nurseries attached to schools. E.g. Nurseries attached to each school, provided by the L.E.A. and the local council and open to all teachers, ancillary workers and parents of children who attend the schools. This would be the 1st step in a campaign to provide nurseries for all under 5's.

(For further information contact Jane Leggett, 18, Finsbury Park Rd., London N4. 01.226.2491)

Women

& the Unions continued. policy for the IUT: the control of sexist books, curricular and practices; career and job opportunities in local areas, investigating which do not offer girls apprenticeships or equal pay. This year the IUT conference is going to discuss the Working Women's Charter, so we should discuss today exactly the way we want the leadership to take up the question.

The sacking of CHE member John Warburton from St. Marylebone C.E. school has focused considerable attention on the plight of the homosexual teacher. Good. But there's a lot more to the issue than a simple dispute about the right to sack. Quite obviously the sacking itself is extremely important. It comes at the same time as a more general pattern of harassment of militants both in teaching and in the social services. It also marks the beginnings of what could be a big crusade against homosexuals. The House of Commons, and the Home office are already considering questions raised by Jill Knight MP about the presence of homosexuals in the social services. Ms Knight's attitude is not believed to be sympathetic. If then we recognise that there is writing on the wall and that it is not pleasant we can say two things: firstly anyone who believes that the main issue is simply a trade union fuss over victimisations ~~over~~ ^{onto} which issues like homosexuality only impinge in a minor way is, not put too fine a point on it, living in cloud cuckoo land; on the other hand it would be equally absurd to try to see anti-homosexual activity in isolation from the whole pattern of repressive activity.

There is a certain logic to the weeding out operations being undertaken in teaching, in social services, and to a lesser extent in health. The sackings and harassments are being undertaken at the same time as big cut backs are being made in expenditure on schools, hospitals and (the latest casualty) libraries. Now, actually most of the cutbacks so far are simply cut backs in growth (no new staff taken on, building programmes abandoned) or attempts to cut corners (high alumina cement e.g.) which is to say they are the thin end of the wedge. But even that thin end is being vigorously protested against, most noticeably in the health service. If the whole wedge then is to be pushed into place then the tougher knots of resistance will have to be eroded. Whence the sackings.

Why the cutbacks? There has been some mention in the press of an economic crisis. What that crisis is about is a decline in the rate of profit made by businesses and enterprises. Traditionally there are three ways out of such a problem for those concerned. Expand the market, for example by spreading overseas. That's not one firstly because in the rest of the capitalist world exactly the same problems exist and secondly because the third world has already been mopped up one way or the other. Alternative two is to have a war. However the western nations have got so good at that particular little trick that it's now too dangerous a vein for them. Alternative three is to knock down wages (cheaper labour better profits). That was tried in Britain during the period of the tory government. Large numbers of workers (most dramatically and finally the miners last february) showed reluctance to have their pay packet mucked about with. Upshot - end of tory government and end of punch up strategy. That doesn't leave very many options. The whole business becomes, for capitalism a matter of getting in through the back door. Since it's obviously not possible to bash your way to wage cuts you must either invite the cooperation of the victim or sneak up on her unawares. The first approach can be seen at work in the present stream of nonsense from every quarter about the national interest. On the one hand there's the amazing 'please lay your head on this chopping block' social contract. On the other there is parliament's new found ability to tune up the machinery for bashing militants by doing so over issues which 'aren't economic'. The sort of nasty implications in this sort of jiggery pokerey become plain once you look at the determined assault by Roy Jenkins on civil rights in the prevention of terrorism act. This legislation ~~is~~ ostensibly aimed solely at Irish republicans (who at least have the benefit of several decades experience of such laws) in fact is used in a far more wide ranging way. The implied suspension of habeas corpus in its provisions was used to ensure the detention without trial of the Italian immigrant marxist Franco Caprino. The final strand, incidentally, is this particular web of nastiness is that the holding charge used on Caprino was taken from the immigration acts. The same clause has been used to justify witch hunts amongst the immigrant population up and down the country. And of course these sort of stunts come off because the working class in Britain, for all its trade union strength, is politically very weak. Racism, anti-Irish feeling, and sexism have great strength. They can and are being used as vehicles for a more general repressio

There is a lesson for us to learn here. We cannot fight for the rights of homosexuals, nor can we engage in economic self defence without being able to fight for an alternative education system. Such a system must give sexuality (and within that homosexuality) its proper place and the changes must extend to all corners of the education system. Of course one cannot separate education about sex from the context of education as a whole. At the same time it is impossible to divorce the struggle over sexuality in education from the wider dimension of sexual struggle. Most crucial of course is the need to take a stand on the situation of housewives and women workers. But there are very many other matters - the sexual rights of children for instance (it is interesting that sex education is always considered to be a secondary school 'subject') which are at present non-existent. The right of children to learn by experiment and experience has completely disappeared if it ever existed. Within this we can see two very important things about homosexuality; firstly that any attempt to promote the independent sexuality of women automatically increases the importance of lesbianism in people's minds. Therefore, conversely, any attempt to fight for the sexual independence of women will fail if it is fought for on a purely ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ heterosexual basis. Secondly if you are in favour of the liberation of women and see the economic importance and the importance to women's liberation of abolishing the family then it is impossible to hold the view that sex is primarily procreative. Once you junk that idea then the notion that the physical sex of the person (s?) you are carrying on with matters at all starts to look very silly. In short, at every level from the crudest economic demand upwards the demand for the right of homosexual self expression is an integral part of the activity. It is necessary therefore to CONSCIOUSLY AND POLITICALLY recognise this.

On this basis we reject the laughable ideas of those who try to restrict the struggle round education to simple Trade Union objectives. At the same time however we must be absolutely clear that the gay issue in education cannot be separated off in the other direction either. It is absolutely vital that homosexuals are grouped together, that their isolation is overcome. We might add that in that process the interests of homosexual women (whose problems are even greater than those of the men since the existence of lesbianism is barely recognised) must be paramount. But these sort of steps are only first steps. The most pressing overall need is to carry the struggle on the gay question out into the (supposedly) heterosexual masses, to make it in PRACTICE part of an integrated struggle. There is no separate gay solution anymore than there is a separate heterosexual solution.

I have given here a brief and discursive account of ideas I feel to be important to the discussion. In closing I want to make two further points both of which focus my material, though in different ways. The first is that granted the omnipresence of the police and the law in the lives of homosexuals (and not just men- clubs for homosexual women ~~xxx~~ get more than their fair share of police attention) and granted the importance of the same things to the more general operations of the ruling class, then the central issue at the present time is that of the STATE. The activity of the state gives a sharp edge to the necessity for us to get political answers to sexual questions and emphasises that our solutions ~~xxxxxxx~~ are revolutionary solutions. The second focus is a practical one. On May 10th-11th there occurs at Leeds Polytechnic the first national conference of gay working people. This conference is open equally to the gay movement, the left and the trade union movement, and the women's movement. The issues will get another airing there.

MARTIN O'LEARY.

Working Women's Charter Workshop Report.

The discussion was led off by Jane Leggett from Hackney N.U.T. Amongst other things she described what had been done by Hackney N.U.T. - a motion of support for the charter had been proposed by a group of teachers who had been working on the charter. It was passed by the Association who then held a meeting on the Charter. Initially they looked at the sexist content of books and materials and at wording a motion for national conference. A sub-committee of the Assoc. was formed, and following a local conference on the Charter, a joint committee with the A.T.T.I. was set up.

The first campaign they are taking up is on nurseries. They have put forward a motion to the Assoc. demanding nurseries attached to all schools, to be provided by the Local Authority, for the use of ancillary workers, teachers and parents of children at the school. If the motion is passed they will then call a meeting and attempt to involve all local tenants and community groups, Trade Unions etc., through the use of such things as petitions, surveys, etc.

Points brought up in the discussion.

Position of women re. National Insurance - a woman gets less sickness benefit. If the husband is at home looking after the kids, and the wife working, and she becomes unemployed, she cannot claim for her dependents.

Position of unmarried women teachers who have children - they may be sacked, transferred, loose pay when their kids are sick etc. (see "Please Ms" A report on the experiences of some unmarried mothers in teaching. Published by One Parent Families, 255, Kentish Town Rd., London, NW5 2LX. 15p) Maternity benefits are at present discretionary for unmarried teachers, although the proposed new contract would "exclude any reference to marital status".

Question of amending the W.W. Charter - It was felt that the Charter could be improved, but that this could best be done at a big National Conference called for that purpose. Useful publicity and discussion could arise from mobilizing for ~~it~~ it, and it would avoid the confusion of having lots of slightly different Charters. The Rank and File Teachers group's Women's Charter was mentioned, but was felt to be totally inadequate, e.g. it didn't include demands on social issues, on abortion it asks only for time off for an abortion, and it is divisive because it only refers to teachers. The W.W. Charter was felt to have the potential of uniting all working women and men around demands which tackled both the social and economic aspects of inequality.

This led to a discussion about the myth of equal pay - that unequal opportunity and direct discrimination make what is in theory equal pay, in fact, unequal pay. The social issues behind equal pay are never taken up, but we must explain them to the Trade Union movement - We could try to get the N.U.T. to sponsor public meetings on equality in education, explaining why and how women find themselves in the worse jobs, examining apprenticeship schemes etc.

The problem of getting women involved in the union was discussed. As well as nurseries ~~xxxxxxx~~ and creches being a prerequisite, it was also felt that meetings should be held in school time.

1975 is International Women's Year and also, supposedly the year of equal pay and sex discrimination legislation - both of these were seen as meaningless and ineffective because they represent a formal recognition of a problem without providing the concrete, practical means of improvement.

A motion of support for the Charter had been voted to 6th position of the motions for N.U.T. conference at Easter. But it was felt that we should not sit back waiting and hoping that conference would pass the motion and the 75% male Executive give a lead in the struggle. It was decided that a nationally coordinated pressure group was needed to take up campaigns in the localities with a view to holding a conference on the Charter and the N.U.T. next autumn. The first steps towards building for this were a meeting on the Charter at the N.U.T. conf., and a national meeting in the summer term to discuss and plan activities and the organization of this conference.

All those wishing to be informed about the meeting and/or the conference should contact Cath yo Young, 58, Wishford Point, 1 Inglesham Walk, Hackney, E95NF.

Women and the N.U.T. Workshop report.

The discussion was introduced by Deny Fitzpatrick of Westminster N.U.T.

A lot of the discussion duplicated that in the W.W. Charter workshop. It was felt that there was a need for some kind of national organization and coordination of campaigns against sexism etc. The example was given of the Houghton report and subsequent pay settlement, which apart from being in an overall sense disastrous for teachers and the education system, worsens particularly the position of women teachers. The majority of women are at the bottom end of the scale structure, and Houghton gives most to those nearest the top and increases the differentials between scales. A nationally organized caucus could have produced and distributed material explaining these facts to women teachers. Some London teachers pointed out that in some recent London strikes, primary schools with largely female staffs had been among the most militant schools.

The question of women's caucuses was then discussed at some length.-whether there was a need for one and how it could be organized. Most people were in favour of the right of oppressed groups such as women, blacks, etc., to form caucuses in unions. However, it was felt that since the W.W. Charter had fairly wide support in the N.U.T., having been voted to 6th position in the list of conference motions sent by Local Associations, active campaigns based around this were probably the most useful way of raising and fighting on the question of Women's Oppression, both in the N.U.T., for the present at least. It was felt that we should fight to make the N.U.T. take up all the main issues being discussed at the conference e.g.-support for victimized gay teachers and assertion of the right of teachers to be homosexual and not to have to risk losing their job or promotion prospects if they are open about it. -campaigning for the provision of non-sexist books and teaching materials, and for something like a non-sexist code of practice for the classroom. Using the weight of the union to persuade publishers, writers, etc., to provide better materials.

We decided that pickets of book exhibitions and publishers would be a possible useful way of gaining publicity and spreading ideas and information.

An embargo/ban by the N.U.T. on one particularly offensive reading scheme was seen as a possible useful focus for a campaign. Someone pointed out that any campaign involving provision of new or different materials would have to go hand-in-hand with campaigns for the restoration of the cuts in education spending, and for an increase in spending.

It was finally decided that at present a campaign around the Working Women's Charter was the best way of fighting on these issues, and that the campaigns should be active on a local level, and involve as many people as possible.

Report on the A.T.T.I. Conference.

At the A.T.T.I. (Assoc. of teachers in technical institutions) annual conference this May a women's rights motion was accepted with only 2 votes against. It incorporated the Working Women's Charter and asks for the right to one year's unpaid leave for either parent on the birth or adoption of a child. It also demands 4 weeks paternity leave with all provisions applying equally to married or unmarried parents. In an amendment to the motion delegates voted in support of a woman's right to choose an abortion and pledged opposition to James White's Abortion (Amendment) Bill.

The chairperson of the A.T.T.I.'s women's rights working party, Ms Margaret Rawlings, said that it was hypocrisy in International Women's Year for Parliament to be considering restrictions on the freedom of women to choose. If the Bill were accepted it would not reduce the number of abortions it would merely force women to accept the immense dangers of the back-street abortionist. Other delegates said that the bill was a disaster for working class women. Ms. Sarah Clegg said it was the victims of rape, those living in overcrowded conditions, and those already enduring the greatest social deprivation who would suffer most if the bill became law. 'What this Bill will do is make it illegal for us as teachers to even inform students who come to us for help and advice about the option of abortion', she told delegates.

Sex Education Workshop Report.

1. Outline of someone's experiences teaching this subject to 11-13 year olds in a Coventry Comprehensive. Found them very interested in factual information and the mechanics of contraception, etc. Problems encountered included a) Limitations of teaching materials e.g. BBC films. Many provide good background information but there is a shortage of good follow-up material, particularly for things which lie outside purely factual info.- one problem was that the pupils came from a variety of racial and social backgrounds, and had been socialized into very different attitudes towards sex. Indian pupils were mostly shy and relatively ignorant, while a lot of West Indian boys, even at that age, were out to 'get a lay'. Therefore the subject needed to be approached in ways that were more than just factual.

b) links with a), - the problems of boundary definition. Can sex education be seen as something separate from, say, the study and questioning of social values? This is a particular problem for socialists and feminists. How can we attack social conventions without threatening kids' most basic beliefs and security? To what extent and in what way should homosexuality be discussed? How can we get away from the strong tendency to identify sex as only something which takes place within the family?

2. How to teach sex education. To what extent should the teacher utilise personal experience? The general feeling of the group was that this is desirable.- In a French lesson a teacher will naturally talk about her/his visit to France last summer. The danger is that sex might be set apart as something other than normal and everyday, and mystified even more than it is already. An account of a personal experience can often act as an ice-breaker and encourage pupils to be less nervous in talking about their own experiences and worries.

3. Attitudes of headteachers and L.E.A.s, and the restrictions which these impose on teachers.

a) The case of John Warburton was mentioned. He is a teacher who was banned from teaching in inner London schools because he refused to sign a statement promising not to mention homosexuality outside the confines of a structured sex education curriculum approved by the head. This obviously reflects an anti-gay attitude on the part of the I.L.E.A., which generally extends into any area which is not strictly adhering to social conventions-i.e. sex within a monogamous, heterosexual, legally sanctioned relationship. To what extent might this attitude affect the teachers ability to teach 'sexuality' i.e.- sex as something to be enjoyed, and how to enjoy it.

b) Frequently sex education subsumed under P.E. or Biology, and often given more frequently to girls rather than boys. Low priority in education programme is reflected by the virtual absence of sex education from all Coll. of Educ. schedules. Leads to many teachers feeling unqualified to teach it.

c) What should be done? Need for teaching and student unions to press for changes. Given that great changes are unlikely immediately, students could take the initiative and form their own study groups on the subject.

4. Young people, sex, and law- discussion about the law as it relates to young people and how this affects sex education eg: the age of consent, medical and parental attitudes towards providing contraception for under 16s. Should teachers be active in pressing for changes in the law? To what extent should they discuss this with the pupils?

5. Using outside speakers for sex education- for and against.

For-might make the kids more relaxed and forthcoming because they would not associate the speaker/group with school authority.- Outsiders would have less to lose by non-conformity.

Against-Unless a series of discussions could be arranged, follow up would be difficult and the whole thing pointless.-If any speaker represented an interest (eg. worked for a particular contraceptive firm) he/she might give an unbalanced survey of the full range of methods/services available. There was also a discussion about Women's Health Groups. While most of us agreed that it was desirable that women should know their own bodies and that much of the mystique of medicine should be removed, some doubt was expressed about the value of concentrating too much on the sexuality of one's

Sex Educ. Workshop, cont.

own sex and too little on that of the opposite sex. As already pointed out girls tend to receive more sex education than boys, who are often more ignorant. Many people thought that mixed classes were less successful because of adolescent inhibitions, so segregation might be useful some of the time.

6. Sex Education in Primary schools.

On the whole we felt that the subject should not be reserved for secondary education, but that all teachers should feel free to answer kids' questions as they arose. Basic attitudes are formed at a very early age so its important to create an open straight forward attitude towards sex at an early age.

7. S.P.U.C. and LIFE.

We discussed the influence which organizations such as these are having in schools, and the importance of equipping teachers to counteract their influence. Again, more factual knowledge is needed by the teachers themselves, so that they have the confidence to challenge the myths propagated by these groups. It was suggested that some heads might not let these groups speak if they knew exactly how they operated etc. It might be a good idea for Women's groups to contact heads and explain their tactics, and it might be possible to get such organisations banned from schools through the teaching unions.

8. Assessment.

It was strongly felt that though the workshop had been interesting, it lacked direction. Because the conference was not organised on a delegate basis, definite proposals could not be made and voted on, (especially with regard to points 3, 4 & 7). It was proposed that we should hold another, delegate based conference in the near future, so that resolutions could be properly discussed and agreed on and brought up in the various unions involved as a basis for action.

Children's books workshop report.

Numerous surveys show that women are un/nisrepresented in text, titles and pictures. No one wants to put down women who do stay at home- but even in our sexist society they do other things than placidly wash up, cook, and serve dad's tea. In fact, women form over 37% of the workforce, but this isn't shown in children's books.

Even small children are already socialised into sex-role stereotypes- how can you counter this in literature? How much influence can 6 hours a day in school have anyway?

If there are no suitable non-sexist, non-racist books available, what about making your own? Not making rules about not showing racism, sexism, etc., but trying to show them in a context- You can't expect books to change attitudes - but at least you could make children aware that they are attitudes. However, individual production of materials places a tremendous burden on the teacher, and is obviously not the best solution.

Series such as "Nippers" were discussed- They are supposed to be progressive because they reflect society in a more realistic way. In fact they only show women in the same stereotyped domestic roles as other kids' books.

Obviously, since a lot of women spend a lot of time cooking, cleaning etc., they should be shown some of the time in this situation; but it shouldn't be portrayed as a totally engrossing, fulfilling and happy role to be in- women should be shown being tired, frustrated and fed-up at home as well..

The books and comics children are exposed to outside of school are also very sexist. All the major comics are produced by 2 companies, the production of any radical comic would be prohibitively expensive.. Teenage magazines are also pretty horrifying - it might be worth looking at them with a class and discussing their content.

Ideas for change

Pressure should be put on publishers, booksellers and buyers at all stages. People should write to publishers complaining about the sexist nature of a book detracting from what could have been an excellent book. Inspection copies should be sent for and then sent back with similar comments. We must educate teachers, unions and the public about the content of children's books. Parents must be made aware of the effect it has on their

Children's books, cont.

children's aspirations and development. Things like pickets of book exhibitions should be used to get publicity and provoke discussion.

There was a need to look at all text books, not just children's readers.

The Bullock report could be used as a way of starting discussion of readers and English books.

One way of working at the present might be to choose one particularly bad scheme and fight for the unions to put an embargo on its use. The fact that the Working Women's Charter is going to be discussed at the N.U.T. conference could be a lever for getting local working parties set up to look at books and materials. N.U.T. members should need to discuss this.

Any information on non-sexist material should be sent to: Non-sexist Children's Books Newsletter, 22, Stannore Road, LEEDS 4.

Discussion on the Family, workshop report.

To what extent can change in the family structure be absorbed by bourgeois society? What are the alternatives to the family, and to what extent are they really different? Legal ties need not affect relationships, role-playing etc.; living together, sharing the workload etc., do not change the economic and ideological function of the family unit.

Nurseries were obviously necessary, but the kind of education given in them was also important (ie it should be non-sexist).

There was a discussion on living in collectives and the organizational and other difficulties involved, -on what basis could viable collectives be formed-economic (pooling wages, sharing 'housework'), -based on a greater awareness of personal relationships, was a feeling of commitment, political, or religious, needed? Necessary to bring together and analyse practical experiences of alternatives.

There was a discussion the relationship of school to the family. Is school just seen as a dumping place for kids to free parents for work? Would we ideally get rid of the divisions between school, work and leisure? What alternatives are there to school anyway?

There was a discussion on the politics of the family, its relation to the bourgeois state. Is a socialist revolution for any change with regard to the family? Is the social ownership of the means of production necessary for the prerequisites of communal living to be created (eg socialized eating facilities, laundries etc.)? In this context it was necessary to choose demands which challenged the state and its ideology eg the demands of the Women's Movement.

NOTTINGHAM NOTTINGHAM NOTTINGHAM NOTTINGHAM NOTTINGHAM NOTTINGHAM NOTTINGHAM

The Nottingham Women's centre is at 26, Newcastle Chambers, Angel Row, (near the Bell Inn.) Nottingham Women's Liberation group meets there every Thursday at 8pm. The group is active in many different campaigns which meet during the week, these include- The Working Women's Charter Campaign (every 4th Wednesday), the Battered Wives Campaign, nurseries and Child Care campaign, National Abortion Campaign and Women's Abortion and Contraception campaign,. The local newsletter can be obtained from 41, Cromwell Street, Nottingham.

For the best selection of books on Women's Liberation available in the East Midlands, visit PATFINDER BOOKS, Goldsmiths Street, Nottingham (near Trent Poly Students Union).

Report of workshop initiated by Cambridge Women and Education group
on school visits to discuss sexism and the Women's movement etc.

There were representatives from C.H.E., G.L.F., the W.L.M. as well as teachers at this workshop. Most of them had had some experience of discussing sexism in schools.

We found that we had several problems in common. We agreed that a one-off visit was unlikely to be very fruitful for a number of reasons—lack of continuity and follow up, lack of contact with teachers, not knowing the children or the teachers, difficulty of getting an 'intimate' discussion going in one 40 minute period, all these allowing sexism to be dismissed as an issue by the schools and put away for another year.

The Cambridge group is attempting to remedy some of its own problems of this kind. We are intending to write a pamphlet/questionnaire to precede us into the schools and give some preliminary contact with teachers and pupils in which we can follow up afterwards. We want to extend our contacts at the local Colleges of Education. We are also thinking of having a holiday meeting with all the teachers whose classes we have visited this term.

There were several useful suggestions: You can get children to write or tape anonymously any embarrassing questions prior to your visit which can then be dealt with in the discussion without embarrassing the individual child. You can get 6 tapes and a pamphlet of the feminist local radio series "Not just a pretty face", free, if you send clear tape for recording them to BBC Radio Sheffield.

We agreed that both teachers and 'visitors' could start this type of discussion with children of primary school age; that talking to teachers, student teachers and P.T.A.s was equally important, and that both women and men should be involved in this sort of work. One of the Cambridge group stressed how important it is to realise that we can use our ideas to put kids down if we fail to realise what they enjoy and their lack of alternative life styles. We must have real alternatives to offer and in particular, practical knowledge, (eg of contraception). We must understand how the children's experience and therefore their needs may be different from ours.

Towards the end of the workshop we focused on our experience of discussing homosexuality with children and students. All of the problems and suggestions mentioned earlier also applied to gay groups visiting schools but there are obviously some additional difficulties. The subject of homosexuality is still much more taboo than that of 'women', particularly where young children are concerned. The experience of Bath C.H.E., who had had some success starting Gay Rights groups in the local university, but had only got into schools 'through the backdoor', was general. Difficulties in getting both men and women to talk about being gay had been experienced, and one student teacher gave an example of the place of homosexuality on the college curriculum—between spastics and mental hospitals.

Finally we agreed that it would be mutually beneficial for Women's and Gay groups to work together in this area.

Postscript from one of the Cambridge group: I feel it is necessary for my own and any similar groups to define our aims most clearly. On our school visits are we trying to present our image of the Women's movement, and raise the consciousness of teachers and pupils with regard to sexism and capitalism, or change the education system? Or all of these things at once? My own concern with the Women's Movement and its dynamic relation to the rest of society may not be shared by teachers who have to work in a divisive Educ. System. If we are clear about what we are trying to do in particular, we might be more effective in achieving what we are all aiming for—in general—the eradication of sexism.

(Cambridge Women and Education group can be contacted ~~via~~ C/O J. Smith,
24, Hertford Street, Cambridge)

Gay Oppression and education workshop report.

Angela Needham (Executive member, Campaign for Homosexual Equality) opened the discussion. She talked about the C.H.E. Education Campaign which started about 2 years ago. There is a manual for C.H.E. groups. A discussion developed about the John Warburton affair and the sort of blackmail agreement he and others are expected to sign- not to mention anything controversial, like homosexuality, in the classroom. Education authorities have been approached by C.H.E. and the Gay Rights Working party of the N.C.C.L. There are different attitudes towards the subject from heads, parents, and I.L.E.A.s. It was stated that usually the back door approach had to be used to get into schools and talk to classes, as heads were often wary of responding to a direct request. However, Nottingham and Derby C.H.E. and other places like B'ham and London have had good reactions and made good progress. A Gay Rights campaign has been going in the N.U.S.S. for about three to four months now. It is a small group and help is needed from gay teachers and other gay groups in education. C.H.E. is producing a study kit which should be ready by the end of next term. Good pamphlets available were "Growing up homosexual", and a leaflet from C.H.E. entitled "All you wanted to know about homosexuality". It was felt that sex was just one part of life, and for pleasure. Homosexuality is not just about sex, it is a way of life. Our first task is to educate ourselves as liberated gays. To show people that homosexuality can be beautiful. It was felt that we should not be so closeted and should be more open in talking to others. It was also felt that we should behave in 'straight' pubs as we would in 'gay' ones. We do not want to be 'tolerated' but to be accepted in our own right. We would appear to be a threat to society in that we do not produce children and do not conform to the capitalist family unit. We wanted not equality as such, but something better out of life. We question the way the whole of society functions. Homosexuality goes beyond sex; we seek a non-labellistic society.

GAY TEACHERS GROUP.

There are active Gay Teachers Groups in many parts of the country. Anyone wanting to get in touch with one should contact Paul Patrick, 14, Holden House, Deptford Church Street, London, S.E.8.

The group has been extremely busy recently working for the reinstatement of victimized gay teacher John Warburton. He has been blacklisted by the I.L.E.A. who won't employ him unless he signs an undertaking not to mention homosexuality in his lessons. He has been offered a job by the governors of Holland Park school which he can't take because of the blacklisting. Ms Caroline Wedgewood Benn, chairperson of the governors of Holland Park School, said that asking a teacher to sign such an undertaking was "discriminatory and sets a dangerous precedent"

Future activities of the Gay Teachers Group include-

Presentation of John Warburton's petition and the lobby of the Education Meeting of the I.L.E.A. on Tuesday 24th June at 2.30p.m. Main Entrance, County Hall, London, S.E.1. As many people as possible are urged to attend at the time stated or immediately after school.

DISCO Saturday 5th July at the Sols Arms Pub, Hampstead Rd. (Nearest tube- Warren Street.) 8pm until midnight.

First Meeting next term- Wed. 10th Sept. University of London, Students Union, Malet Street, W.1. Meet in bar at 7.30, meeting to commence at 8.

Additional Material on the Working Women's Charter.

1) Motion passed by North London Teachers Association NUT.

- "That the Assoc. agree to work for the implementation of the Working Women's Charter and that in support of the Charter it will-
- a) give publicity to the Islington Trades Council Charter sub-committee.
 - b) donate £5 to the cost of running the sub-committee.
 - c) fully publicise the creche to encourage full attendance at union meetings by parents who are teachers.
 - d) set up a sub-committee to consider and make recommendations to a general meeting of the assoc. on:-
 - i) equal education for girls.
 - ii) equality for women teachers.
 - iii) production of unbiased teaching materials.

The aim of this sub-committee should be to encourage the full development of and equality for girls and women at work and at home.

- e) organise a meeting of Islington parents and teachers to discuss the issue of co-educational v. single sex education.

Further we demand that:-

- 1) The ILTA should provide nursery facilities for teachers in schools to be controlled by staff and parents who work in and use nurseries. In particular the nursery at Starcross School should be fully financed by the local authority.
- 2) Unmarried teachers should have automatic rights to maternity leave and that there should be no dismissal of or discrimination against unmarried mothers because of their pregnancy.
- 3) The extension and improvement of paid maternity leave for teachers to 9 months, to be taken before or after the birth according to the wishes of the mother. There is to be no loss of holiday pay.
- 4) Paternity leave should be introduced. Also men teachers should be given leave of absence so that they could look after children in illness or for longer periods without loss of pension or other rights.
- 5) The union note the difference between men and women teachers average pay (£47 to £56) and work to change the situation, especially through raising pay on the lower scales.
- 6) Better provision should be provided for part-time teachers and that they should be given and be able to retain above scale posts and should have security of tenure.

We consider that the following amendments should be made to the Charter:-

- a) insert at the beginning: "Full T. Union equality for women; equal contributions with equal benefits. Union meetings to be held in work time to enable women and men with family responsibilities to attend. Where this is not possible, creche facilities to be provided at meetings. A campaign for the unions to unionise women workers."
- b) add to No. 3 "All schools, including secondary schools, to be mixed, with an end to single sex colleges."
- c) delete from No. 6: "to suit working mothers".
- d) add at the end of No. 7: "No qualifying period of service or loss of sickness benefit. To apply to all women, married and unmarried."
- e) Add at end of No. 8: "organize against SPUC and LIFE and other anti-abortion groups".
- f) Add as no. 11 "To campaign amongst men and women to obtain general recognition of the need for both to share completely in the work & responsibilities in the home. No person should be required to carry out two full-time jobs."
- g) add at end: "to offset the insecurity of seasonal, term-time and other casual and semi-casual work, we demand work or full pay with a guarantee of re-employment and we also call for the abolition of discrimination against part-time teachers with family responsibilities".

These amendments should be submitted to the S.E. Regional Trades Council through the Islington Trades Council, but until accepted by the region the Assoc. should use the existing Charter. The Charter should be taken up at national meetings of T.U. delegates. We urge unions and trades councils to implement the Charter at national level.

The N.U.T. Conference, the Working Women's Charter and Abortion.

Many of the workshop reports refer to the fact that a motion of support for the Working Women's Charter was due to be discussed at the N.U.T. national conference at Easter. The motion was proposed by Nottingham N.U.T. and voted to 6th position out of all the motions submitted by the membership- which demonstrates the wide support the Charter has in the N.U.T.

The discussion did take place, and was easily the most heated debate to take place this year. The executive had submitted a totally feeble motion as an amendment to replace our motion. It was proposed by two male members of the executive, as all the women refused and was passed by the delegates (over $\frac{3}{4}$ of whom were male in a union that has a $\frac{3}{4}$ female membership), thus deleting all reference to the Charter. The motion we were left with is as follows-

"In support of International Women's Year, conference instructs the executive to campaign vigorously for the elimination of discrimination on grounds of sex in all areas of education, training, employment and related fields, in matters of social welfare and in the provision of 'goods, facilities and services'. Conference further instructs the Executive to prepare for conference 1976 a report of progress achieved and indicating areas of continuing discrimination".

The total inadequacy of this motion hardly needs spelling out, it is so glaring. We can, at least, make use of the fact that a motion pledging a "vigorous campaign against discrimination" has been passed as part of the motivation for taking up in the N.U.T. the campaigns we think are important in ways we think will be most effective; which in a lot of places will mean continuing work on the Charter, the National Abortion Campaign, etc.

The main factor motivating the Executive's amendment was a desire to avoid the 'controversial, divisive issue' of abortion. Mamy Brennan is an Exec. member who opposed their amendment. As she said in an excellent article in the Teacher 25/4/75, "Any campaign which ignores the central issues of free family planning and the right to free, medically safe abortion where this fails is unworthy of a union which has played such a notable part in women's development in the past".

At the present time one of the most urgent issues on which the union should be taking a stand is in opposing the James White Abortion (Amendment) Bill, which seeks to almost totally remove our already limited right to abortion. The Nottingham branch of the N.U.T. passed the following motion at a meeting of its council: "This meeting of the Council of the Nottingham Teachers Assoc. views with concern the proposed alterations to the Abortion Act 1967, as put forward in the James White Abortion (Amendment) Bill, in particular with reference to:- a) The fact that it would deny the right of teachers to give information and advice on abortion, even in the context of a sex education lesson. (Clause 5-1&3). b) The fact that it would deny abortion to a young pregnant schoolgirl unless it could be proved that her life or mental health were in grave danger". It also agreed to send 2 delegates and the banner on the National Abortion Campaign Demonstration on June 21st.

Bristol N.U.T. have also passed a motion which sounds, as reported in the press, much better than the Nottm. one. It asked the Exec. to oppose actively the J. White Amendment and said the N.U.T. should announce they were against any legislation which would restrict a woman's right to obtain an abortion. The Exec. determined to keep its head firmly buried in the sand, rejected this motion and replaced it with one saying that urgent steps be taken to seek the assistance of union M.P.s to safeguard the position of teachers undertaking sex education and pastoral care in schools.

Obviously we must put the maximum pressure on the union to change its position. Anyone in the N.U.T. interested or already active on this issue should send their name and address to Sally Hesmondhalgh, 186, Kings Cross Road, London, W.C.1X9DE (Ph: 01-278-4575).

The National Abortion Campaign was set up on March 3rd at a meeting of representatives from over 20 Women's, political and trade union organizations. The following motion was passed at the first meeting: "That a national ad hoc committee should be launched tonight with the aim of fighting restrictive legislation on abortion, on the basis of supporting a woman's right to choose whether to continue or terminate a pregnancy".

There are now branches of the N.A.C. in most towns. The National office is at 80, Railton Road, London, S.E.24.