

Innocence and Experience

Paradoxes in Sexuality and Education

DEBBIE EPSTEIN, SARAH O'FLYNN
AND DAVID TELFORD

May 26, 2000. Friday

School officials here apologized today to parents who were outraged by a health survey, given to some students as young as 11, that posed specific questions about sexual orientation and behavior, drug and alcohol use and other intimate details. (*New York Times*)

July 30, 2000. Sunday

Sound the trumpet! The moral majority is on the march again. The Section 28 debate is just the latest in a long line of controversies about sexual values that have gripped Britain since the 1950s. Abortion, divorce and gay rights appeared to change the moral landscape forever. Now, it seems, the conservatives are in the ascendant once more. Is this the end of liberal progress? (*Independent on Sunday*, London)

October 14, 2000. Saturday

It's a family issue

Families should carry the burden of curbing teen pregnancies, according to Premier [of Victoria, Australia] Steve Bracks. Mr Bracks said he didn't believe condoms, the contraceptive pill or the

morning-after pill should be provided in schools. (*Herald Sun*, Melbourne)

As the extracts from newspapers in Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States quoted above show, the media across the Anglophone world is preoccupied with questions on sex education, young people, and sexuality. In the United States and Canada, a search of headlines in newspapers across the country reveal repeated articles about teenage pregnancy, 'premature' sex/uality, and gay sex among young people. Australian and New Zealand newspapers, too, reveal deep concerns about these issues. In South Africa the news of sexual violence against schoolgirls is in the papers almost daily. In the UK during 2000 several papers took part in a concerted campaign against the repeal of Section 28 of the Local Government Act 1988, which prohibited the 'promotion of homosexuality' by Local Authorities.¹ This was taken as an opportunity by some papers to mount a campaign against any move towards a greater tolerance of queer² sexualities in schools.

Our focus, in this chapter, will be on the naturalization and policing of heterosexualities,

mainly through homophobia and heterosexism, in educational institutions in late capitalist Anglophone countries (particularly Australia, Britain, Canada, New Zealand and the United States). We have drawn on the literature from all these countries but, because of our location in the UK, we have often used British events as exemplars of tendencies in several countries, while, of course, also acknowledging the extensive differences between countries.³ Our concentration on the normalization of heterosexuality here derives from a wish to, as Richard Johnson puts it, 'render heterosexuality visible to critical scrutiny and to make it, in some sense, politically accountable' (1997: 5; see also Richardson, 1996).

Our thinking, in this respect, can be seen in a direct line of descent from Adrienne Rich's influential article 'Compulsory heterosexuality and lesbian existence' (1980), in which she proposed the notion of 'compulsory heterosexuality' to explain how heterosexuality was rewarded, maintained and reproduced, while lesbianism was punished and stigmatized. In the intervening years, others have built on, adapted and taken issue with her ideas (for example, Butler, 1990; Steinberg et al., 1997). Her work has been criticized for being oversimplistic and reductive, as well as appearing almost to evacuate lesbianism of sexual desire (see, for example, Rubin and Butler 1998; Sedgwick, 1990: 36-7) and for ignoring the experiences of women of colour (Lorde, 1984).⁴ Similarly, 'compulsory heterosexuality' has been subject to the critique of being over-determining, and thus denying the agency of women. Judith Butler, for example, suggests that 'compulsory heterosexuality' is simply 'another totalizing frame' (Butler, 1990: 18; de Lauretis, 1994). And, of course, her focus on lesbianism does little to explain the position of gay men (Sedgwick, 1990: 36-7). However, the idea of 'compulsory heterosexuality' is a powerful one, which continues to be a key idea for researchers in sexuality. Indeed, Judith Butler's queer reworking of compulsory heterosexuality – in which she draws also on

the writings of Wittig (1981, 1992) – as a 'heterosexual matrix' (Butler, 1990) is one we have found particularly useful in pointing to the performance of gender and the ways that it is culturally understood through a lens that assumes attraction to and desire for the Other, who is of the opposite sex.

Epstein and Johnson (1998: 6) have argued that in the sexual, as in other domains such as 'race' (hooks, 1984), the relationship between the centre and the margins is one in which:

marginalized categories turn out to be crucial in the self-production of the 'centred' ones (white, heterosexual, middle-class and so on), a process most noticeable (in relation to sexuality) in public displays of homophobia by politicians and in the media, but also important in the daily lives of those in schools.

We follow on from this position to explore the production of (hetero)sexuality in primary/elementary, secondary/junior high school and university education. This may seem a long way from lesbian and gay (or queer) studies, which have, typically and understandably, focused on the experiences of lesbians, gay men, bisexual and transgendered people rather than on how 'straight' is produced. However, our examination of the dominant tradition in sexuality, that is heterosexuality, is built on those studies of lesbian and gay experiences (see, for example, Abelove et al., 1993; Nardi and Schneider, 1998; Plummer, 1992; Seidman, 1997) which, taken together, give rise to questions about the possibility of stability in sexual categories. We will, in this context, write about both straight and queer sexualities, examining them as relational categories that structure definitions, understandings and social dynamics of both dominant and subordinated categories.

We begin with a discussion of educational institutions and the political economy of education to contextualize our argument that education is a key site for the production of compulsory heterosexuality. This is followed by an exploration of the relationship between 'innocence' and 'experience'/'knowing' and 'not knowing' in the context of sexuality,

education and popular common sense ideas about the meaning of childhood and phases of 'growing up'. We then move into an examination of the ways in which both formal and informal curricula are (hetero)sexualized and (hetero)sexualizing. In each section, we will use examples from primary (elementary) and secondary (junior high) schooling and from university education.

HETEROSEXUAL HEGEMONIES AND MORAL MAJORITIES

Schools and universities are places where the education of, for the most part, the young takes place. This happens not only in the official spaces of curriculum and classroom, but also in the micro- and often very unofficial cultures of students, teachers and others connected with particular sites (for example, Local Education Authorities and governing bodies in the UK, School Councils in Australia and School Boards in the United States). All phases of education share certain features: some people (teachers) are meant to be passing knowledge to others (students); they are places where learning is institutionalized; they all have transient populations of students, though staff may stay for longer or shorter periods of time; and they are all places where appropriate knowledges are defined, taught, measured and examined (Foucault, 1977). There are also significant differences between the different phases. These are related to the age of the students and to notions of developmental phases. When considering sexuality in schools 'appropriate knowledge' is especially contested, particularly during the compulsory years of schooling.

The controversy surrounding the UK government's attempt between February and July 2000 to repeal Section 28 of the Local Government Act 1988 provides a clear example of this contestation. Similar politics around sexuality and school (on both sides of the divide) exist in the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand and in

some European countries. Of course, the particular negotiations that take place vary from country to country, partly as a result of different formations of 'left' and 'right', of 'moral majority' and 'sexual liberal', of the relative power of religion and of civil/secular society. Here, we take the British context as a case study of such negotiations.

In the UK, the campaign against the repeal of Section 28 by much of the press, by religious leaders and by a well-organized faction in the House of Lords, significantly influenced the new *Sex and Relationship Education Guidance for Schools* (DfEE, 2000). These guidelines arise partly from long-standing concerns about the high rate of teenage pregnancies in the UK.⁵ David Blunkett, then the Secretary of State for Education, also hoped that by producing more coherent sex and relationships education guidelines Section 28 would be seen to be redundant. The guidelines seem to borrow from practice in the USA on preventing teenage pregnancy, despite the high rate of teenage pregnancy there, and from the Netherlands in Europe, where the teenage pregnancy rate is low. At one level, they offer a profoundly anti-sex message, borrowed particularly from anti-sex campaigns in the USA. For example, the requirement for teachers to stress the reasons for delaying first sexual intercourse is mentioned explicitly several times (Introduction.5, Introduction.9, 1.7, 1.18, 2.16, 2.22, 3.5) and implied in a number of other parts of the *Guidance*. At the same time there is to be more emphasis on 'relationship education' as in the Netherlands, rather than what James Sears (1992: Introduction) has described as the 'techno-rational' approach that has pervaded sex education up to now in the USA and, we would add, the UK. The *Guidance* treads a tightrope, attempting both to stress the desirability of marriage to please the churches and those on the Right, and simultaneously expounding a more liberal view about individual sexuality in order to keep its election pledge to those lesbian and gay rights campaigners, broadly on the left:

It is up to schools to make sure that the needs of all pupils are met in their programmes. Young people, whatever their developing sexuality, need to feel that sex and relationship education is relevant to them and sensitive to their needs. The Secretary of State for Education and Employment is clear that teachers should be able to deal honestly and sensitively with sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support. (DfEE, 2000, para. 1.30)

However, in a clear reference to Section 28, the same paragraph ends with the statement that, 'There should be no direct promotion of sexual orientation'. Since the document also requires teachers to stress the preferability of 'marriage and stable family relationships', one can only assume that heterosexuality is not perceived as a sexual orientation.

Of course, the stress on marriage presents the DfEE with another dilemma, since large numbers of children do not live in families where they have two parents of the opposite sex who are married to each other. In order that children's own family relationships should not be devalued, teachers are instructed to preach a message of tolerance of other sexualities and to recognize the value of stable relationships as well as marriage. The *Guidance* deals with this problem in the following terms in its introduction:

As part of sex and relationship education, pupils should be taught about the nature and importance of marriage for family life and bringing up children. But the Government recognises ... that there are strong and mutually supportive relationships outside marriage. Therefore children should learn the significance of marriage and stable relationships as key building blocks of community and society. Care needs to be taken to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances. (ibid. Introduction: 4)

Perhaps the most important part of this *Guidance*, however, is that this is the first time that schools in the UK have been given a systematic national framework (as opposed to piecemeal government circulars) for sex and relationship education. Therefore there will be much greater scrutiny of how sex education is being taught, though

it is difficult to assess what the overall impact of this *Guidance* will be when it is implemented in its final form. It represents the political tensions surrounding sex education (and the limits of tolerance of lesbian, gay and bi-sexualities) in the UK, comparable to those in other industrialized Anglophone countries. It attempts a negotiation, or a settlement between these tensions, within which teachers will have to manoeuvre. For pupils in school, it clearly advocates an ideal and presumed majority subject position of non-sexual heterosexuality, where children and young people 'recognise' heterosexuality and are constituted through its discourses but also are expected not to consolidate sexual identity through sexual performances, which therefore remain subterranean and transgressive in nature. We will be returning to the issue of students' performances of sexuality later.

The past twenty years have seen the imposition of marketization and managerialism on schools (Epstein and Kenway, 1996; Gewirtz et al., 1995; Whitty, 1994) and, more recently, public sector universities. In this context, success in the educational market depends on achievement in publicly recognizable forms, like examination results – although courses in lesbian and gay, queer and/or women's studies may benefit or lose out from market driven education, with fluctuations in fashion and student demand. Competitively driven education has consequences in a number of areas, including the ways that sexualities can be and are learnt and expressed within these institutions. Investments of time and money are more likely to be spent by institutions to ensure greater publicly recognized achievement, which will in turn accrue more investment and funding, than on more controversial programmes of sex education for example. It is not just that such programmes might infringe the law as it stands both in some US states and in the UK, but also that bad publicity would have an impact on future funding. Therefore even when there are, within institutions, individuals with the power ostensibly to effect change, any

attempt to do this is a very risky business (Bickmore, 1999; Epstein, 1997c; Kaeser, 1999; Silin, 1995).

Without radically altered sex education programmes in schools, it is unlikely that more widely held heterosexist views will ever be challenged and yet it is necessary to secure that challenge first before such programmes will be allowed. This is not necessarily easy to come by given the politics current in the various countries to which this chapter refers. Nor have the 'middle way' 'social liberals' represented by Clinton/Gore in the USA and Blair in the UK been very brave in relation to sexuality as evidenced by Clinton's responses to the gays in the military affair at the beginning of his presidency and the Blair government's anxious consultation with the churches over sex education (discussed previously). In the meantime, on the Right of the political spectrum, leaders are openly homophobic. The right-wing Liberal government of Australia is not receptive to liberal (small l) ideas about sexuality and this is repeated at state level in a number of states. Western Australia, for example, has regulations similar in effect to Section 28 and in mid-2000 John Howard, the Prime Minister of Australia, moved swiftly to legislation to overturn a court judgement that allowed access by lesbians to *in vitro* fertilization. George W. Bush has expressed his opposition to any measures to improve equality for lesbians and gays in the USA, while the ex-leader of the UK Conservative Party, William Hague, in an article in the influential British tabloid, the *Daily Mail* (23 January 2000), made clear his views in favour of maintaining Section 28 (Hague, 2000). Underpinning these views was a particular definition of 'tolerance'. Mr Hague defined tolerance as 'a minority accepting and understanding the experiences and beliefs of the majority'. It is this principle that governs much policy on sex education in schools and indeed in universities as well. Foucault (1978) has documented the historical processes whereby sexuality has come to occupy the central position of a person's identity in contemporary Western society.

As Ken Plummer observes, 'Sex has become the Big Story' (Plummer, 1995). It is for this reason that sex education has become such a battleground and the need to shore up heterosexuality is perceived to be crucial to the maintenance of other key institutions.

Furthermore, schools and universities in the Anglophone countries since the 1990s have been organized around an obsession for academic achievement. In the UK, Australia, New Zealand and the USA, governments have made this a priority, believing that a more highly knowledge-based society, particularly in new technologies, will generate greater wealth. In the UK, teachers' salaries and promotions (at schools and, increasingly, at universities) are to become ever more closely wedded to the production of student results with the introduction of performance management and performance-related pay in schools. Since the late 1990s this discourse of achievement discourse has become hegemonic and it is one, as we will show, that has particular effects on the ways that sexuality is construed and constructed within secondary schools.

Despite many constraints and silences, schools and universities have spaces where sexualities are not only permitted, but even required in either formal or informal contexts. In the early years of education, the 'home corner' provides a space for children's fantasies of heterosexual family, while elementary school children need a certain 'sexual literacy' about, for example, desirable pop stars and athletes in the pursuit of friendship. In secondary schools, the 'prom' (in the American context) or school disco provide a space where, however uncomfortably, students are expected to interact, producing themselves as feminine and masculine in iconically heterosexual and exaggerated ways. The heterosexualization of this process is often unremarked and young people are seen generally within a developmental discourse of 'normal' gender development. However, the homophobia endemic in schools and directed at those young men in particular, who are alternatively

masculine, makes clear that heterosexuality is indeed compulsory.

Heterosexually successful school students often make a successful transition into the heterosexual economies of colleges and universities. The clubs and societies of UK, Australian and New Zealand universities and the fraternities and sororities of the United States and Canada are places where heterosexual credentials must be proved, for popularity depends on this. Without such heterosexual credentials, many young lesbian and gay students are likely to find themselves excluded from 'the university life', from informal networks of learning and sites of informal cultural exchange. This means they often do not know what is going on or have access to the 'in' stories. Such exclusions are painful and for young people who are already disadvantaged by locations of class or race or dis/ability, it may be impossible to sustain a gay identity, when a heterosexual one provides them with a key strategy for inclusion. In this way a rehearsal of normative heterosexual adulthood is coerced from students. Furthermore, there is a growing body of research that explores how even in elementary education heterosexuality is used as a resource by children (Epstein, 1997b; Letts IV and Sears, 1999; Renold, 2000).

It would, however, be a mistake to assume that there is no room for manoeuvre in educational institutions. As Gramsci (1995) pointed out, hegemony is never total or, in more Foucauldian terms, where there is power, there is always resistance (Foucault, 1977, 1980). Schools and colleges are also sites of cultural struggle. Power does not operate simply in one direction. In all of our research, and in the research of others, we have come across pockets of opposition to dominant forms (see, for example, Appleby, 1995; Davis, 1999; Epstein and Johnson, 1998; Griffin and Andermahr, 1997; Kehily and Nayak, 1996; Pinar, 1998; Rhoads, 1994). Often the ways in which discourses of sexuality, learning, age, class and race are configured in the micro-politics of the classroom, school or university allow for

quite powerful resistances to happen. These may in the end be disarmed by the institution but they do show that the institution is being challenged. A key strategy of the institution to retain power seems to be to allow protest but to contain it in particular areas. Speech is zoned (Steinberg, 1997); what can be said in some places, is not possible in others. Thus, in some educational locations and within some discourses it is possible to speak about sex and sexuality in progressive, even radical, terms. However, closets are often built around these locations, which both affords protection on the one hand but limits the challenge to the institution on the other. For example, in *Schooling Sexualities*, Epstein and Johnson (1998) describe how the Year 5 children (aged 9–10) in Mr Stuart's class deliberately refrained from gossiping about their teacher after he had come out to them on the grounds that, as one girl said, 'Most grown-ups are, um, grown-up about it but some aren't really.'

INNOCENT IGNORANCE AND 'APPROPRIATE' KNOWLEDGES

Young children, according to common-sense understandings, are innocent. They neither do, nor should they, know anything about sexuality. The fear is that contemporary children 'grow up too soon' or are 'not yet ready' for sexual knowledges. In the words of John Patten, who was at the time the Conservative Secretary of State for Education in the UK, children 'should not even be thinking about beginning to be understanding, never mind understanding' particular items of sexual knowledge (*Daily Mail*, 24 March 1994). This is a pervasive theme in debates about sexuality and sex education in Anglophone countries. John Patten's views are shared by the so-called 'moral majority' of the United States, by the right-wing tabloid and broadsheet press of the UK,⁶ and by some Christian and other moral traditionalist groups in Australia and New Zealand.

In contrast, feminists, sex educators and others have long argued that not only is 'childhood innocence' an excuse for keeping young children ignorant but it is dangerous to the children (cf. Silin, 1995). Stevi Jackson, writing in the early 1980s (1982), pointed out that the notion of childhood innocence was a way of keeping children ignorant and thereby both denying them access to power and justifying their powerlessness. Children, she suggested, are not allowed to deny adults the right to touch or kiss them in situations that are not perceived by other adults as abusive. How many young children have been told to 'kiss x or y goodbye' when they would rather not do so?⁷ Similarly, she pointed out, women are more likely to be touched by men without invitation than vice versa, employees are more likely to be touched by employers, and so on. Jenny Kitzinger (1988; 1990) took this argument further, calling for a critique of the way that the concept of 'childhood innocence' is used in the treatment (by the media, for example) of child sexual abuse. She argued that this supposed 'innocence' itself constituted a form of eroticization of children, making it titillating and exciting. On the other hand, she suggested, children who have been sexually abused lose their innocence (since they are no longer ignorant) and become fair game, legitimate victims of abusers. Thus, an eight-year-old girl can be described by a High Court judge as being 'no angel' and men who abuse can get off with extremely light sentences on the grounds that the knowing child tempted them and led them on.

Of course, as Stevi Jackson argues, the ideology of childhood innocence is profoundly gendered. It is little *girls* who are simultaneously (hetero)sexualized and meant to retain their innocence. Writing about a television documentary on little girls who take part in beauty pageants, Jackson says:

The little girl [in the beauty pageant] is just acting out a more stylized version of the usual little girl performance – and in one sense knows nothing about sexuality while in another knows a great deal. She is probably ignorant about the

mechanics of heterosexual sex, yet she knows that being attractive, flirtatious and cute wins a positive response from adults – and little girls know this even if they don't enter beauty contests. (1999: 139)

While we would agree with Jackson that the sexualization of young children is highly gendered, it is important to remember that little boys are also inscribed within discourses of heterosexuality. The extreme femininity of little girls may construct them as hetero/sex objects, but little boys are required to prove that they are 'real boys' in ways that mark them as masculine, even macho, and therefore (by definition) heterosexual. Furthermore, as Valerie Walkerdine has argued, the eroticization of little girls is profoundly classed (and we would add racialized) as well as gendered (Walkerdine, 1997). Corruption, degradation and immorality are not far away from perceptions of the working-class child or child of colour, particularly when they are girls. Such children are perceived as giving in too easily to temptation and become sexualized in femininity or 'violenced' in masculinity. Thus any child not brought up in a white, middle-class, heterosexual family is potentially sullied and defiled by their surroundings, ultimately because of their failure to be normatively middle class.

We would also agree with the claims made by Kitzinger and by Jackson that discourses of childhood innocence are profoundly damaging to children (girls and boys). The moral traditionalist claim that knowing about sexuality constitutes the corruption of children is, moreover, profoundly anti-educational. As Jonathan Silin so powerfully argues:

Unlike some, I do not want to protect children from pain during a romanticized period of innocence, nor do I see children as a way to purchase immortality. Rather I want to argue that too much of the contemporary curriculum brings a deathly silence to the being of childhood and not enough of it speaks to the things that really matter in children's lives or in the lives of those who care for them. I want to argue that the curriculum has too often become an injunction to desist rather than an invitation to explore our life worlds. The

curriculum remains lifeless as long as it is cut off from the roots and connections that feed it. (1995: 40)

Silin is writing, here, about death and dying, specifically from AIDS. However, much the same could be said about sexuality, and, indeed, Silin supports this view in his important book.

The desire to preserve 'childhood innocence' is one which we would recast as an attempt to enforce 'childhood ignorance' and which seems to represent the triumph of hope over experience. Children in primary/elementary schools in late capitalist countries, at least, are already knowledgeable about and interested in sexuality in a whole host of different ways. Indeed, we would argue that primary schools are suffused with sexuality in ways which are recognizably similar to the sexual cultures of secondary schools and universities, but that also differ from them in significant ways. Even the youngest children constantly use the discourses of heterosexuality which abound in playgrounds and classrooms as a resource that they can draw on in the making and breaking of friendships, in the investments they make in different versions of themselves as girls and boys, and in their relationships with adults. Emma Renold (2000), for example, describes how girls in primary schools talk very explicitly about the heterosexual attractiveness or otherwise of their classmates and how this enters into the social dynamics of the peer group (see also Connolly, 1995a; Epstein, 1995a; Epstein, 1997a; Epstein et al., 2001 a).

Questions of innocence/ignorance and (being) knowing about sexuality are played out somewhat differently in secondary schools. As children move from the primary/elementary phase, into secondary/junior high schools, there is an expectation that they will be beginning to find out, to know more about sex and sexuality. Young people, at this stage, are expected to know about sexuality, but sexual activity is undesirable. There are particular fears, here, about the rates of teenage pregnancy, on the one hand, and of the seduction, even corruption,

of young men by predatory gay men on the other.

While not wanting to downplay the real sexual vulnerability of some young women, it is worth considering how far those who become pregnant do so because it constitutes specifically an oppositional version of success to school-based success, structured around desire (as against a 'different' version of success because of limited options outside school). It also often puts them beyond schooling, or modifies the meaning of schooling by allowing young women to assert their adulthood. This seems especially true of those young women in secondary schools who specifically state a desire to get pregnant. Thus, young women who gain sexual knowledge (as evidenced by the pregnancies) are no longer innocent, are excluded from gaining school-based knowledge and kept ignorant. Indeed, in the UK, the Social Exclusion Unit's report into *Teenage Pregnancy* (SEU, 1999) specifically comments on the fact that pregnancy seems to signify the end of education for many young women. The government's commitment in this document, to keeping young mothers at school, has yet to be tested in practice. However, the document itself draws attention to the fact that UK schools seem to find it particularly difficult to accommodate continued academic achievement with an active student sexuality and/or parenting roles:

Attention to ensuring a pregnant teenager continues to receive education is often very weak, and the Unit heard innumerable examples of pregnant girls pushed out of school on grounds of pregnancy or 'health and safety'. This is particularly damaging while educational provision for those out of school remains so poor: an example of a 13 year old receiving only 6 hours education a week from 20 weeks was not at all untypical and for many teenagers this is the beginning of permanent detachment from education. (SEU, 1999: para. 8.22)

Yet in some ways this has to be the case. It is no good promising the rewards of adulthood for a developed heterosexuality and then telling those of whom this is overtly

true, that they still have to go to school. As Bullen, Kenway and Hey observe:

There is much about youthful gender identities and relationships and gendered labour and sexual market(s) that eludes New Labour. With regard to teenage mothers, it tackles their so-called social exclusion without recognising how for some young women social exclusion is multi-dimensional. Indeed, for some, to be excluded from the labour market and to be economically dependent on the state are not the worst possible risk scenarios. In contrast, exclusion from heterosexual forms of teenage desirability and relationships is understood as a high-risk scenario (Hey 1997) and teenage pregnancy cannot be addressed if such matters are ignored or trivialised. (2000: 449)

The ways in which allowable knowledges about sexuality are inflected by class, dis/ability, embodiment and ethnicity are revealed strikingly in the case of Helen, a year 9 (13–14 years) student of Greek Cypriot origin who was admitted to a girls' state comprehensive school in the UK. She had cerebral palsy. The school had admitted other students with cerebral palsy and so this in itself was not new. In fact her disability⁸ was at the mild end of the cerebral palsy spectrum. Within about 12 weeks however, towards the middle of the spring term 1999, this student had been permanently excluded (that is, expelled). A variety of reasons were given but the main one was that she had been found masturbating⁹ in the toilets.

The fact that Helen was constituted as disabled within the school, both physically and in terms of her ability to learn had an important impact on the perception of her sexuality and the status it was accorded. Had Helen's educational attainment been higher, she would probably not have been excluded – to permanently exclude a high achieving student does not make good economic sense in the educational market place. Conversely, student sexuality is also often seen as constitutive of 'ability' with the 'over-sexed', underachieving working-class girl the one who becomes pregnant and drops out of school. Helen's learning

disability meant that she should not be sexual but also paradoxically the presence of her sexual behaviour appeared to constitute the 'severity' of her learning disability.

Furthermore, disabled people are meant to be, for the most part, asexual. As Shakespeare et al. point out: 'Just as children are assumed to have no sexuality, so disabled people are similarly denied the capacity for sexual feeling. Where disabled people are seen as sexual, this is in terms of deviant sexuality, for example, inappropriate sexual display or masturbation', (1996: 10). However, as Epstein (1996) has shown, this assumption of asexuality is, in practice within the presumption that it will be a heterosexual version of asexuality.

Helen's case also suggests not only that heterosexual hegemony is maintained through the active suppression of female sexual desire (Fine, 1988) but that the manifestations of such desire must therefore also have a transgressive potential to be exploited by students in school and against schooling. This is a point emphasized in the work of Mary Kehily and Anoop Nayak (Kehily and Nayak 1996; Kehily and Nayak 1997; Nayak and Kehily 1997). The final consequences of such transgressions are often, though not always, less than empowering. However, such events and their ever-present possibility mean that students' sexual knowledges and expression constitute a source of considerable anxiety to the institution, which is obliged to look for ways of containing or expelling the transgressive meanings that can be attached to student expressions of sexuality – often before it considers the welfare of the student concerned.

For many, possibly most, young people who leave school to go into higher education, college or university provides a space within which they can deepen and widen their sexual experience. Universities and colleges are the places within the educational system where (hetero)sex stops being taboo and enters the realm of the expected. Young people are no longer expected to be innocent/ignorant about sexuality, but either

to have or to gain sexual knowledge and experience during their courses. There is an assumption, among most heterosexual young people and their families, that this is the place and period during which potentially long-term partners, even spouses, will be found. Similarly, the majority of queer young people who have elected to go into higher education want to further the interrogation of their sexual-selves. They presume that their college or university will provide an environment that is *more* supportive of sexual difference than they have previously experienced because of the relaxation of heteronormative attitudes experienced in their previous homes and secondary schools. The 'dynamics of their closets' (Sedgwick, 1990; Smith et al., 1998) and the borders that their environments have placed around their desires are likely to be well known to them. Nevertheless the queer young person frequently anticipates that higher education will provide a social and sexual intersection, enabling them to expand their personal ties and networks within a freer cultural environment. They may view university or college as offering the potential for sexual emancipation, personal liberation, and the opportunity of being treated as an equal in a heterocentric world.

However, when students arrive at university, they are likely to discover that social permission to be sexual is tenuous for those who do not conform to the prescriptions of normative heterosexuality. Heterosexual expectations of straight friends and family, as well as the governances of the hidden or micro curriculum continue to police the boundaries of their lives (Stevens and Walker, 1996). The thread of heteronormativity that has woven its way through their primary and secondary schools is there too in college, feeding the hidden anti-queer discourses of higher education. We have shown, above, how sexuality – especially in non-normative form – is both prohibited and pervasive in primary and secondary schools. In universities, by contrast, there are likely to be discussions of lesbian and gay themes (and maybe even bisexual and transgender

ones) generally, a broader awareness and understanding of sexual differences and even a tacit official approval on the macro level. This is likely to show itself in a number of ways: first, in inclusion of references to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered identities in references to minority or disadvantaged groups, particularly in the social sciences; secondly, in the existence of courses that are specifically about lesbian, gay and/or queer themes, particularly within literary studies; and thirdly, in the intellectual work of openly queer academics (for example, Seidman, 1995; 1997). There are, also within the university sector, a number of out academics, some of them very famous, working specifically in the field of sexuality¹⁰.

Nevertheless, the same heterosexism that pursued queer pupils through primary and secondary school lies just under the surfaces of higher education. Consequently, many non-heterosexual students, particularly those who occupy 'sexual margins', feel that they have little choice other than to distance themselves from mainstream university life and *do* their sexuality elsewhere.

For those attending college or university in or near large urban centres *doing* one's (homo)sexuality elsewhere means, for the most part, in the commercial 'gay scene' near to where their college or university is located. In more isolated university settings, however, queer young people can experience something akin to a 'siege mentality' where they are sequestered and/or rely predominantly on chance contacts they make within the university, via the Internet, or through queer groups often established as part of the Students' Union. However, such recognition is always risky. For example, the University of Georgetown in Washington, DC, has attempted to disallow the existence of a lesbian and gay society, a move that was found to be unlawful in a court challenge (Lorenz, 2000). Similarly, at the same university, a queer studies course taught within English was pilloried in the press (Inglebretson and Edward, 2000). In both urban and rural settings, therefore, the

university or college is a site of and for heterosexuality, where an often-narrow heterosexuality is performed and where gender and sexual differences are marginalized. The halls of residence, the student bar or other social spaces are often threateningly straight (McNaron, 1991; Taulke-Johnson and Rivers, 1998). This is when queer students realize that they may have cast off the heterosexism of their secondary school only to rediscover, somewhat ominously, that the same heterocentric agenda exists within the now constricting confines of higher education.

Furthermore, in these economic rationalist times, it is increasingly difficult for young people to leave the family home in order to go to university. This has a particular impact on students identifying as queer, who might previously have found a space on the commercial gay scene away from home. For these young people, continued financial dependence on their parents, and/or living in the parental home, makes coming out problematic. It holds young people in a state of *economic childhood* beyond the years of legal minority, giving economic power to compulsory heterosexuality by making young queers nervous of coming out to their parents in case this leads to the end of their studies as well as to disruption of their familial relationships (which is frequently feared by those thinking of coming out within families).

TEACHING AND LEARNING (HETERO)SEXUALITIES

All educational institutions, at whatever phase, have both formal and informal curricula. The formal comprises what is overtly taught, the content of the curriculum. The informal, or hidden, curriculum is much harder to pin down, since it consists of almost everything else. Although, for the sake of clarity, we are dividing the formal and the informal, in practice they are intertwined and bleed into each other. Formal

and hidden curricula are formed and understood in relation to each other. No formal teaching can take place outside the context of the hidden curriculum and the hidden curriculum draws on aspects of the taught curriculum. Social relations, forms of pedagogy, curriculum content, micro-cultural processes and dynamics, even the life histories of students and staff, all contribute to the learning and teaching that goes on within educational sites. Sometimes the hidden curriculum can be at odds with what is apparently being taught. Thus, teaching from a post-modern or queer perspective in sexualities courses in universities may be in tension with the discursive practices outlined above, which make non-normative versions of sexuality at the very least uncomfortable.

The Formal Curriculum

Overt teaching about sexuality in primary/elementary schools is to be found only in formal sex education classes as part of the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) curriculum. In middle/secondary/high schools, sex education will continue to be part of PSHE but there may also be some work around sexuality in the syllabi of various subject areas, particularly English, Drama and Social Studies (or Sociology). At university, sexuality may be studied overtly in a number of curriculum areas including sociology and cultural studies, psychology, medical sciences, gender or women's studies – and, of course, Lesbian and Gay Studies. In primary and secondary schools, sex education in the UK, the USA, Australia and New Zealand has historically been focused on reproduction with one's heterosexuality assumed – the sexuality of default. The secondary English curriculum may be used to explore all kinds of sexual dilemmas from heterosexual teenage passion in *Romeo and Juliet*, love, lust and adultery in a range of poetry and novels and may even, though unusually, explore same sex attraction and love (Harris, 1990). At

universities, particularly in social sciences and literary studies, there may also be courses in lesbian and gay studies, or queer theory, although these may be more prevalent in the United States than elsewhere. Furthermore, as Sheila Jeffreys points out, in her elite Australian university:

I teach a lesbian and gay politics course with the support of my department of Political Science at the University of Melbourne. My course is called 'The Politics of Sex Reform Movements' because the students pointed out that the title that included the words lesbian and gay might impede their chances of employment. The very fact that my course has to be closeted in this way suggests some of the political difficulties of such teaching. My course and my department are exceptional in Australia. Departments of Political Science often contain no teaching about women or feminism, let alone lesbians. (1997: 142)

The extent of specific teaching about sexuality, however, is limited both in time and content. In UK primary schools, for example, children in Year 5 (aged 9–10) are likely to have four or five lessons in sex education, which is likely to be based on the biological. In Ontario, Canada, animal reproduction is included in the grade three Health and Physical Education curriculum, while puberty and human reproduction are taught in grades 5 and 6 (Bickmore, 1999). In general, teachers in this phase are nervous about sex education. They are in a difficult place, here. Often primary school teachers, who teach across the curriculum, have little or no training in how to do sex education. Furthermore, they are likely to be legitimately anxious about the reactions of some parents and, worse, of the popular press, if they stray into territory considered by moral traditionalists to be too risky (even risqué).

Cahill and Theilheimer (1998) ask why it should be harder to imagine children in kindergarten classes acting out events at Stonewall in June 1969, when a group of gay people fought back against police harassment, than to imagine them playing at being Rosa Parks or Martin Luther King during events in Montgomery, Alabama, at the start of the Civil Rights Movement.

They point out that children are part of multigenerational families 'in which elders, the child her- or himself, and/or the child's future offspring may be gay' (Cahill and Theilheimer, 1998: 40). But, as most readers would recognize, it is almost impossible to imagine the Stonewall scenario being played out (and in a positive way!) in schools, particularly during the early years and elementary phases. While citizenship education may, in theory, have the potential to create a space for such a play, there is no evidence that this has been the case in those places that have adopted it (for example, parts of the USA and Victoria in Australia). Furthermore, if discourses of desire are missing, as Michelie Fine (1988) argues, or forcibly expelled, as Epstein and Johnson (1998) suggest, at the secondary phase, how much further are they from the realms of the sayable in primary classrooms?

The formal sex education curriculum of secondary schools is much more likely to focus on the dangers of sex and desire, especially on the 'evils' of HIV transmission, rather than the social context of sexuality. In most secondary schools, such discussion as there is in the official spaces of schooling will be in terms of conception, contraception and the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, especially HIV, all within an assumed heterosexual norm. At the same time, the advent of the HIV/AIDS pandemic has meant that, in many countries, sex education has assumed a new urgency over the last two decades. Most recently, in South Africa (and notwithstanding President Mbeki's statement, just prior to the July 2000 AIDS conference held in Durban, that HIV does not necessarily lead to AIDS), the government and donor agencies have begun to spend enormous sums in the attempt to develop a sex education curriculum that will reduce the rate of transmission among young people. Nevertheless, the findings reported by Hillier et al. (1999: 71) are typical in this respect: 'In the formal classroom curriculum, an assumption that students were heterosexual meant that safe sex and sexuality issues were dealt with only in the context

of heterosexuality.' The curriculum spaces in schools (as opposed to universities) that are most likely to allow possibilities for exploring queer sexualities are English and Drama, and Sociology. English teaching, in the UK, the USA and Australia has a tradition of commitment to exploring social justice issues as well as working in the affective domain through literature and drama and there have been moves by the American National Council for Teachers of English, to take on questions of sexuality (Misson, 1999; Spurlin, 2000). School sociology courses may well include something about sexuality under the heading of gender and/or deviance – where exploration of queer sexualities are still most likely to be found.

As discussed earlier, many students imagine university/college to be a freer sexual environment, than school. For many heterosexual students, this may well prove to be the case. For those who do not conform heterosexually, higher education may provide a site of possibility for coming out, particularly where high school has seemed to be an impossible location. Indeed, the literature is uni-vocal in suggesting that attitudes within the academy have changed from the days when there was complete silence in the curricula and the administrations actively campaigned against activists (see, for example, D'Emilio, 1992; Tierney, 1993; 1997; Tierney and Rhoads, 1993). The pace and spread of change, however, vary considerably. John D'Emilio concludes that 'for the most part, the 1970s was a decade characterised by organisation and networking. The 1980s have witnessed the production and sharing of knowledge. I expect that the 1990s will be the time when we see significant movement toward the institutionalisation of queer studies in higher education'. (1992: 169) It is interesting to compare D'Emilio's prediction made at the start of the last decade with what we have witnessed within institutions of Western academia. While some of the changes have been significant – and the publication of books like this one is an example of that – they have not been uniform. At best, the development of

queer studies courses, in their various forms, and the inclusion of queer studies within non-specialist courses has been patchy (Tierney, 1997).

There is little doubt that distinct heterosexual biases continue to exist and are embedded in the curricula and pedagogical practices in universities. There appear to be two projects for which writers in the field are calling. First, pleas for the implementation of curricula that are more inclusive of queer issues, one that is supported by more tolerant/aware pedagogical practices (Lopez and Chism, 1993; Piernik, 1992). This requires a redesign of the existing heterocentric curricula and the modification of the pedagogical practices of many university teachers to incorporate the specific learning needs of non-heterosexual students. The second project is a corollary of the first, and produces demands to 'educate' straight students about negative effects of their heterosexist attitudes (Wallick, 1995) and to disrupt heteronormativity (Britzman, 1995). McCord and Herzog (1991) suggest that programmes that help students understand that discrimination and abuse are not justifiable responses can also help to expose latent/blatant heterosexist attitudes amongst straight students. As Linda Eyre points out, however, there are inherent dangers and contradictions in this and similar approaches: 'Pedagogical practices explicitly intended to challenge the heteronormativity and heterosexism ... [and] ... work towards social change risk reproducing the very aspects of injustice that they seek to rectify' (1993: 191, 195). Some of the approaches employed in teaching may *harm* the success of curricula and pedagogical practices that aim to be queer inclusive and/or disruptive of normative heterosexuality. These include what Eyre (1993) describes as the 'add-on' approach, the 'homosexual' guest speaker, and workshops on heterosexism. There are, perhaps, dangers in further isolating straight students from pro-queered perspectives through some mismanaged attempts to incorporate Queer Theory into the mainstream curricula because many heterosexual students have

limited reference points from which to engage with queer themes or, as Deborah Britzman argues, because those in dominant, unmarked groups, often feel they have an entitlement to maintain their ignorance (1995: 159). Parallels can be drawn, here, between debates about whether feminism and 'multiculturalism' should be 'mainstreamed', taking their place within, for example, core courses in sociology, or whether they should be taught in separate classes labelled, variously, 'women's studies', 'gender studies', 'African-American studies', and so on (see, for example, Coate, 2000, and Nardi in this volume).

The Hidden Curriculum

There is no possibility of predicting exactly how queer curricula may be read by straight (or even queer) students. The way students make sense of any formal curriculum is dependent on a complex combination of their own personal biographies and social positions and the hidden curricula of the institutions in which they are educated. Therefore, 'to boldly go' where no straight writing course/history class etc. has thought of itself going before, could cause a backlash of heterosexism that can abandon queer students to feel further marginalized, and further entrench straight students' heterocentric attitudes. The fact that 'a few' straight students are offended is not the real concern. Rather, of greater consequence is the missed opportunity to advance the political project of troubling and disrupting heteronormativity. We are not arguing, of course, that curricula should not be queered. Rather, we would suggest that the unpredictability of response, our inability to know who the addressee of any curriculum or pedagogy 'really' is (Ellsworth, 1997), must be taken into account and acknowledged.

Children and young people bring all kinds of different experiences in relation to sexuality to school and college and these, along with the particular local cultures of the institution, form an important part of the hidden curriculum of sexuality.

As we have argued above, and as the work of Emma Renold (1999; 2000) shows, sexuality pervades primary school playgrounds and classrooms and children draw on it as a resource for constructing themselves as boys and as girls. This takes a variety of forms from imaginative games involving heterosexual family life and talk about 'dating', 'dumping' and 'going out' (Epstein, 1997b) to name-calling and abuse of those who, for whatever reason do not 'fit' as properly masculine or feminine (but perhaps particularly masculine) (Boldt, 1996; Connell, 1989; Connolly, 1995b).

Children's play and talk are profoundly heterosexualized and form an important part of any hidden curriculum. As Bronwyn Davies shows:

Heterosexuality is continually constructed in the children's talk as they separate and heighten the difference between themselves as male and female. So pervasive is this construction that even the most simple initiative on a girl's part, such as asking a boy for a pencil, can be overlaid with compromising (hetero)sexual meanings. The boys, in contrast are not compromised by (hetero)sexuality. (1993: 123)

But it is, of course, not only the children's play that produces heterosexuality within the hidden curriculum of primary schools, but forms of organization, the assumptions and expectations of teachers that children will live in heterosexual families and the heteronormativity of various books and other resources (VanEvery and Wallis, 2000).

Similar processes are at work in secondary schools and universities. In secondary schools, the dominating discourses of 'standards' and 'achievement', discussed above, have a huge impact on the hidden curriculum. In schools 'ability' is measured in relation to age and educational attainment. It is strongly inflected by psychological developmental discourse, which in turn has a preoccupation with sexual development. Walkerdine (1990) has explored the implications for women and girls of a male-centred discourse 'of the rational, independent, autonomous child as a quasi-natural phenomenon who progresses

through a universalized developmental sequence towards the possibility of rational argument' (1990: 29). In this context, the functionalist logics of the hidden sexuality curriculum demand there should be a smooth progression, with an emergent heterosexuality appearing in the later years of compulsory school but not fully developed until the end of compulsory schooling. In this logic gay sexuality is often recuperated as a stage, an immature sexuality, on the way to fully-fledged heterosexuality. Its more radical meanings are then contained within the heterosexual hegemony of the school. David Denborough argues: 'If sex is upheld as a symbol of adulthood, and adulthood is seen to represent control over one's own life and an end to constant domination, then it makes sense that young people speak of and participate in sex in order to make claims to adult identity. Sexuality comes to represent freedom' (1996: 3). Denborough's analysis needs refining in fact, as it is only *heterosexuality* that is invested with meanings of adulthood in schools. The promise of adulthood is a key strategy of heterosexism in schools.

Two key aspects of the hidden curriculum of secondary schools – Cartesian rationality and emphatic masculinities – may make it possible for gay male student identities to exist publicly within these spaces. They must, however, be presented in ways that are recognizable within school contexts, that is, in terms of 'rational argument' and/or as hegemonically masculine 'real boys', for example through being good at team games like rugby or football (Epstein, 1997a). In terms of the Cartesian rational, it is perhaps the case that defences of gay male sexuality become realistically possible in the later years of secondary education when intellect is re-valourised as a form of masculinity (Redman and Mac an Ghaill, 1997) and also significantly when the 'Macho lads' are likely to drop out of school. Furthermore, such rationality may only work for the white, middle-class gay young man (and then only partially) for, as Mac an Ghaill shows, gay young men from ethnic minorities are

particularly liable to be subject to a combination of bodily desire (for their 'blackness') and disgust (with their gayness) by their teachers and peers (Mac an Ghaill, 1994).

Universities, perhaps even more than schools, are characterized by appeals to the rational. It is unusual for writers about higher education to consider the hidden curriculum of universities (see, however, Epstein, 1995b). Here, the importance of rational thinking, the economics of higher education (for example, are students forced to live with parents because of cost?) and the politics and relationships of students and staff all play a part in forming the framework for university education.

These relationships include: family, ethnic and cultural background, religion, the importance of primary and secondary school, political ideology, socio-economic status, friends (heterosexual and queer), the wider 'gay scene' and issues of gender non-conformity (Lottes and Kuriloff, 1992; 1994; Nora et al., 1996; Waldner-Haugrud and Magruder, 1996). Another important part of the hidden curriculum for queer students is involvement with LGBT or queer social/political groups and other political activities. Similarly, as Nina Wakeford (this volume) shows, new information technologies may provide opportunities for the expression and support of deviant sexualities. Personal ties and social networks can also lend support to the young person by providing a means of escaping from the heteronormative expectations of family and peers and afford a discursive space in which to build a sexual identity (Rhoads, 1994). But, overwhelmingly, the hidden curriculum is produced by a straight, often threatening, environment in which, according to Evans and D'Augelli (1996: 215), queer students in US universities reported that:

- 75 per cent experienced verbal abuse.
- 25 per cent were threatened with violence at least once.
- 22 per cent were chased or followed and 5 per cent had been spat on.
- 17 per cent have had personal property damaged.

- 64 per cent feared for their personal safety on campus.
- Most hid their sexual identity from their roommates or other students.

Significantly, 'nearly all expected the "average" lesbian or gay man to be harassed on campus' (Evans and D'Augelli, 1996: 215). Most of these incidents were not reported to the university authorities and many queer students made changes to their daily routines to avoid hardships. Many gay or bisexual men in Evans and D'Augelli's study feared for their personal safety and those fears were based on previous experience of personal violence or attacks to property. We would argue that these experiences are not only relevant for non-heterosexual students, but for many who do identify as heterosexual. The often violent policing of queer sexualities also constitute a means through which heterosexual masculinities and femininities are regulated, particularly those that are, in some way, non-normative (for example, gentle boys/young men, assertive girls/young women, celibate students of either gender). Indeed, it is worth asking whether the attacks on apparently queer students by apparently straight ones is a way of dissociating oneself from any aspersions on one's sexuality.

CONCLUSION

We have suggested, in this chapter, that childhood is highly regulated through discourses of innocence and experience and that this shapes education in profound ways. Compulsory heterosexuality for children and young people is, to a large extent, written through assumptions of and demands for innocence (ignorance?). We have traced the ways that these discourses are expressed at different stages in education and in different educational sites. We have suggested, furthermore, that what happens in education is tightly bound up with the organization and regulation of the heterosexual family. Myths

of happy heterosexuality abound at every stage from the play house of the nursery school to the dating games of secondary/junior high schools and universities. The particular ways that this happens are, of course, nuanced by local, institutional micro-cultures but are also shaped by the exigencies of more global political economies of education.

Where Foucault (1980) suggests that power and knowledge are inextricably entwined, what we have argued is that knowledge in educational settings is constructed as heterosexual. The paradox is that educational institutions are charged with the production and passing on of knowledge, but, at the same time, young people and children are only supposed to gain particular knowledges, especially where sexuality is concerned. This means that young people can sometimes use their sexual knowledges as forms of resistance to the demands and discourses of schooling/university and at others, they can use them to access networks of power and popularity, and even academic achievement.

Much research in the field of sexuality and education to date has focused on the dual questions of the victimization of young lesbian, gay and bisexual people, and the development of sexual identities. In this context, it is often difficult to write without setting up binaries and, indeed, our own chapter has divided queer and straight, formal and informal curricula. What is needed, at this point, are ways of interrogating the structures of education that recognize and explore both the fluidities and fixities of educational institutions. Here, careful attention must be paid to the ways that people (young and old) do sexuality through gender, ethnicity, class and the body and vice versa. Rather than assuming that young people bring their sexuality to school with them, and investigating how educational institutions respond to that, we would suggest that explorations of how institutions themselves produce and constrain sexualities are likely to be generative in future research.

NOTES

1 Section 28 infamously prohibits Local Authorities (that is, local government) from 'promoting homosexuality', labelling same-sex relationships as being 'pretended family relationships'. When the Thatcher government in 1988 passed it, there were protests in the UK and nearly all the 'western democracies'. The Blair Government was finally defeated in the House of Lords on the repeal of Section 28 at the end of July 2000. It seems unlikely that a further attempt to repeal the Section will be made before the next general election in Britain.

2 We recognize that terminology is always contested, and not everyone likes the term 'queer', which can be seen as derogatory. However, we will use it in this chapter for two reasons. First, we find the litany of identities, 'lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, transsexual' awkward to use, breaking the flow of writing. Secondly, 'queer' suggests something more of the fluidity of sexual identities, which we would argue exists among both heterosexual and non-heterosexual people. While we are probably more materialist in our analysis than many queer theorists, we are certainly indebted to queer theory for much of it.

3 This chapter is based on (and, in part, quotes from) our significantly longer and fuller review of the literature for the American Educational Research Association's *Review of Research in Education* (Epstein et al. 2001b). For an excellent review of the literature on sexuality and education from the United States see Tierney and Dilley (1998).

4 Elspeth Probyn, however, points out that Rich's project is to 'combine the specificity of individual female bodies with a larger feminist politics' (Probyn, 1990: 177) and, in particular, that she is very specific about her own white, Jewish lesbian body.

5 Between 1977 and 1996 the USA had much the highest rate of live births per thousand women between the ages of fifteen and nineteen in comparable countries. It was followed by (in order) New Zealand, the UK, Canada and Australia. New Zealand is the only one of these countries to show a significant reduction in the rate of teenage pregnancies over this period (SEU, 1999).

6 Unlike geographically larger countries, the UK has a large number of national daily papers. The tabloids tend to be more scandalous and read by much larger numbers than the more 'highbrow' broadsheets. Right wing tabloids include the *Sun* (owned by Rupert Murdoch), with the largest readership of any national daily newspaper, and the *Daily Mail* (which has traditionally been closely associated with the Right of the Conservative Party). Right-wing broadsheets include *The Times* (also a Murdoch paper) and the *Telegraph*.

7 It may be that this is less likely to happen in quite so overt a form now. However, given the power differential between children and adults, it is not easy for children to feel empowered to refuse a kiss proffered by an adult, especially one with whom they have close relationships.

The difficulty is that denying children the physical expression of affection is likely to be damaging in a different way. Thus programmes that purport to teach children how to refuse 'bad touches' and distinguish between 'good' and 'bad' ways of touching and cuddling present significant difficulties. We would like to thank Rebecca Boden for pointing this out to us.

8 The language to use when talking about 'dis/ability' is a minefield and is different in different countries. We agree with the argument that dis/ability is socially constructed and thus use the term 'dis/ability' when talking about the general case, to indicate social construction. In talking about Helen, specifically, however, we talk of her 'disability'. The use of 'disabled person' or 'person with a disability' is also contested. We have followed the use in Shakespeare et al. of 'disabled person'.

9 Of course, as Foucault notes, masturbation is a key perversion in the history of sexuality (Foucault, 1978; see, also Sedgwick, 1994 particularly the article or on 'Jane Austen and the Masturbating Girl').

10 One should not, however, underestimate the difficulties that such high profile outness may bring. See, for example, Valentine (1998).

REFERENCES

- Abelove, Henry, Barale, Michèle Aina, and Halperin, David M. (1993) *The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader*. London: Routledge.
- Appleby, Yvon (1995) 'Voices from the heart-land: lesbian women and education', unpublished PhD, University of Sheffield.
- Bickmore, Kathy (1999) 'Why discuss sexuality in elementary school?', in William J. Letts IV and James T. Sears (eds), *Queering Elementary Education: Advancing the Dialogue about Sexualities and Schooling*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Boldt, Gail M. (1996) 'Sexist and heterosexist responses to gender bending in an elementary classroom', *Curriculum Inquiry*, 26 (2): 113-31.
- Britzman, Deborah P. (1995) 'Is there a queer pedagogy? Or, stop reading straight', *Educational Theory*, 45 (2): 151-61.
- Bullen, Elizabeth, Kenway, Jane, and Hey, Valerie (2000) 'New Labour, social exclusion and educational risk management: the case of "Gymslip Mums"', *British Educational Research Journal*, 26: 441-56.
- Butler, Judith (1990) *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York and London: Routledge.
- Cahill, Betsy J. and Theilheimer, Rachel (1998) 'Stonewall in the housekeeping area: gay and lesbian issues in the early childhood classroom', in William J. Letts IV and James T. Sears (eds), *Queering Elementary Education: Advancing the Dialogue about*

- Sexualities and Schooling*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Coate, Kelly (2000) *The History of Women's Studies as an Academic Subject Area in Higher Education in the UK: 1970-1995*. Unpublished PhD, Institute of Education, University of London.
- Connell, R.W. (1989) 'Cool guys, swots and wimps: the interplay of masculinity and education', *Oxford Review of Education*, 13 (3): 291-303.
- Connolly, Paul (1995a) 'Boys will be boys? Racism, sexuality, and the construction of masculine identities amongst infant boys', in Janet Holland, Maud Blair and Sue Sheldon (eds), *Debates and Issues in Feminist Research and Pedagogy*. Cleveland, Philadelphia and Adelaide: Multilingual Matters Ltd in association with the Open University.
- Connolly, Paul (1995b) 'Racism, masculine peer-group relations and the schooling of African/Caribbean infant boys', *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 16: 72-92.
- Davies, Bronwyn (1993) *Shards of Glass: Children Reading and Writing Beyond Gendered Identities*. St. Leonard, NSW: Allen and Unwin.
- Davis, James Earl (1999) 'Forbidden fruit: black males' constructions of transgressive sexualities in middle school', in William J. Letts IV and James T. Sears (eds), *Queering Elementary Education: Advancing the Dialogue about Sexualities and Schooling*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield. pp. 49-59.
- de Lauretis, Theresa (1994) *The Practice of Love: Lesbian Sexuality and Perverse Desire*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- D'Emilio, John (1992) *Making Trouble: Essays on Gay History, Politics and the University*. New York: Routledge.
- Denborough, David (1996) 'Power and partnership? Challenging the sexual construction of schooling', in Louise Laskey and Catherine Beavis (eds), *Schooling and Sexualities*. Geelong: Deakin Centre for Education and Change, Deakin University.
- DfEE (2000) *Sex and Relationship Education Guidance For Schools*. London: Department for Education and Employment.
- Ellsworth, Elizabeth (1997) *Teaching Positions: Difference, Pedagogy, and the Power of Address*. New York and London: Teachers College Press.
- Epstein, Debbie (1995a) "'Girls don't do bricks.'" Gender and sexuality in the primary classroom', in John Siraj-Blatchford and Iram Siraj-Blatchford (eds), *Educating the Whole Child: Cross-Curricular Skills, Themes and Dimensions*. Buckingham: Open University Press. pp. 56-69.
- Epstein, Debbie (1995b) 'In our (New) Right minds: the hidden curriculum in higher education', in Louise Morley and Val Walsh (eds), *Feminist Academics: Creative Agents for Change*. London: Taylor and Francis.
- Epstein, Debbie (1996) 'Keeping them in their place: hetero/sexist harassment, gender and the enforcement of heterosexuality', in Janet Holland and Lisa Adkins (eds), *Sex, Sensibility and the Gendered Body*. Basingstoke: Macmillan. pp. 202-21.
- Epstein, Debbie (1997a) 'Boyz' own stories: masculinities and sexualities in schools', *Gender and Education*, 9 (1): 105-115.
- Epstein, Debbie (1997b) 'Cultures of schooling/cultures of sexuality', *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 1: 37-53.
- Epstein, Debbie (1997c) 'What's in a ban? Jane Brown, Romeo and Juliet and the popular media', in Deborah Lynn Steinberg, Debbie Epstein and Richard Johnson (eds), *Border Patrols: Policing the Boundaries of Heterosexuality*. London: Cassell. pp. 183-203.
- Epstein, Debbie and Johnson, Richard (1998) *Schooling Sexualities*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Epstein, Debbie and Kenway, Jane (1996) 'Discourse: studies in the cultural politics of education', Special Issue. *Feminist Perspectives on the Marketisation of Education*, 17 (3).
- Epstein, Debbie, Kehily, Mary Jane, Mac an Ghaill, Mairtin, and Redman, Peter (2001 a). 'Girls and boys come out to play: making masculinities and femininities in school', *Men and Masculinities: Disciplining and Punishing Masculinities*, 4 (2): 158-72.
- Epstein, Debbie, O'Flynn, Sarah and Telford, David (2001 b) "'Othering education 2001": sexualities, silences and schooling', in Walter Secada (ed.), *Review of Research in Education*, Vol. 26. Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association. pp. 127-81.
- Evans, N. and D'Augelli, Anthony (1996) 'Lesbians, gay men and bisexual people in college', in R. Savin-Williams and K. Cohen (eds), *The Lives of Lesbians, Gays and Bisexuals*. Orlando, FL: Harcourt Brace College Publishers.
- Eyre, L. (1993) 'Compulsory heterosexuality in a university classroom', *Canadian Journal of Education*, 18 (3): 273-84.
- Fine, Michelle (1988) 'Sexuality, schooling and adolescent females: the missing discourse of desire', *Harvard Educational Review*, 58 (1): 29-53.
- Foucault, Michel (1977) *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Trans. Alan Sheridan. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Foucault, Michel (1978) *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1, An Introduction*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Foucault, Michel (1980) *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*. Hemel Hempstead: Harvester.
- Gewirtz, Sharon, Ball, Stephen and Bowe, Richard (1995) *Markets, Choice and Equity in Education*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Gramsci, Antonio (1995) *Antonio Gramsci: Further Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. Edited and translated by Derek Boothman. London: Lawrence and Wishart.
- Griffin, Gabriele and Andermahr, Sonya (1997) *Straight Studies Modified: Lesbian Interventions in the Academy*. London: Cassell.

- Hague, William (2000) 'Mr Blair shows nothing but contempt for parents,' *Daily Mail*, 23 January: 10.
- Harris, Simon (1990) *Lesbian and Gay Issues in the English Classroom: The Importance of Being Honest*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Hey, Valerie (1997) *The Company She Keeps: An Ethnography of Girls' Friendships*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Hillier, Lynne, Harrison, Lyn, and Dempsey, Deborah (1999) 'Whatever happened to duty of care? Same-sex attracted young people's stories of schooling and violence', *Melbourne Studies in Education*, 40 (2): 59-74.
- hooks, bell (1984) *Feminist Theory from Margin to Center*. Boston, MA: South End Press.
- Inglebreton S.J., Edward, J. (2000) 'When the cave is a closet: pedagogies of the (re)pressed', in William Spurlin (ed.), *Lesbian and Gay Studies and the Teaching of English: Positions, Pedagogies and Popular Culture*. Urbana, IL: NCTE.
- Jackson, Stevi (1982) *Childhood and Sexuality*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Jackson, Stevi (1999) *Heterosexuality in Question*. London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: Sage.
- Jeffreys, Sheila (1997) 'Revolting lesbians in the politics department', in Gabriele Griffin and Sonya Andermahr (eds), *Straight Studies Modified: Lesbian Interventions in the Academy*. London: Cassell.
- Johnson, Richard (1997) 'Contested borders, contingent lives: an introduction', in Deborah Lynn Steinberg, Debbie Epstein and Richard Johnson (eds), *Border Patrols: Policing the Boundaries of Heterosexuality*. London: Cassell.
- Kaaser, Gigi (1999) 'Love makes a family: controversy in two Massachusetts towns', in William J. Letts IV and James T. Sears (eds), *Queering Elementary Education: Advancing the Dialogue about Sexualities and Schooling*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Kehily, Mary Jane and Nayak, Anoop (1996) "'The Christmas Kiss": sexuality, story-telling and schooling', *Curriculum Studies: The Sexual Politics of Education*, 4 (2): 211-28.
- Kehily, Mary Jane and Nayak, Anoop (1997) "'Lads and Laughter": humour and the production of heterosexual hierarchies', *Gender and Education: Special Issue: Masculinities in Education*, Christine Griffin and Sue Lees (eds), 9 (1): 69-88.
- Kitzinger, Jenny (1988) 'Defending innocence: ideologies of childhood', *Feminist Review. Special Issue: Family Secrets, Child Sexual Abuse*, 28: 77-87.
- Kitzinger, Jenny (1990) "'Who are you kidding?'" Children, power and sexual assault', in Alison James and Alan Prout (eds), *Constructing and Reconstructing Childhood*. London: Falmer Press.
- Letts IV, William J. and Sears, James T. (1999) *Queering Elementary Education*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Lopez, G. and Chism, N. (1993) 'Classroom concerns of gay and lesbian students: the invisible minority', *College Teaching*, 41 (3): 97-103.
- Lorde, Audre (1984) *Sister Outsider*. Freedom, CA: Crossing Press.
- Lorenz, Jay Kent (2000) 'Blame it on the weatherman: popular culture and pedagogical praxis in the lesbian and gay studies classroom', in William Spurlin (ed.), *Lesbian and Gay Studies and the Teaching of English: Positions, Pedagogies and Cultural Politics*. Urbana, IL: NCTE.
- Lottes, I. and Kuriloff, P. (1992) 'The effects of gender, race, religion, and political orientation on the sex role attitudes of college freshmen', *Adolescence*, 27 (107): 675-88.
- Lottes, I. and Kuriloff, P. (1994) 'The impact of college experience on political and social attitudes', *Sex Roles*, 31 (1-2): 31-54.
- Mac an Ghail, Mairtin (1994) *The Making of Men: Masculinities, Sexualities and Schooling*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- McCord, David M. and Herzog, Harold A. (1991) 'What undergraduates want to know about homosexuality', *Teaching of Psychology*, 18 (4): 243-44.
- McNaron, T. (1991) 'Making life more liveable for gays and lesbians on campus', *Educational Record*, 72 (1): 19-22.
- Misson, Ray (1999) 'The closet and the classroom: strategies of heterosexist discourse', *Melbourne Studies in Education*, 40 (2): 75-88.
- Nardi, Peter M. and Schneider, Beth E. (1998) *Social Perspectives in Lesbian and Gay Studies: A Reader*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Nayak, Anoop and Kehily, Mary (1997) 'Masculinities and schooling: why are young men so homophobic?', in Deborah Lynn Steinberg, Debbie Epstein and Richard Johnson (eds), *Border Patrols: Policing the Boundaries of Heterosexuality*. London: Cassell.
- Nora, A. Cabrera, A. Hagedorn, L. and Pascarella, E. (1996) 'Differential impacts of academic and social experiences on college-related behavioural outcomes across different ethnic and gender groups at four-year institutions', *Research in Higher Education*, 37 (4): 427-51.
- Piernik, T. (1992) 'Lesbian, gay, and bisexual students - radically or invisibly at risk', *Campus Activities Programming*, 25 (6): 47-51.
- Pinar, William F. (1998) *Queer Theory in Education*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Plummer, Ken (1992) *Modern Homosexualities: Fragments of Lesbian and Gay Experience*. London: Routledge.
- Plummer, Ken (1995) *Telling Sexual Stories: Power, Change and Social Worlds*. London: Routledge.
- Probyn, Elspeth (1990) 'Travels in the postmodern: making sense of the local', in Linda J. Nicholson (ed.), *Feminism/Postmodernism*. London and New York: Routledge.

- Redman, Peter and Mac an Ghaill, Mairtin (1997) 'Educating Peter: the making of a history man', in Deborah Lynn Steinberg, Debbie Epstein and Richard Johnson (eds), *Border Patrols: Policing the Boundaries of Heterosexuality*. London: Cassell. pp. 162-82.
- Renold, Emma (1999) 'Presumed innocence: an ethnographic exploration into the construction of sexual and gender identities in the primary school', unpublished PhD, University of Wales, Cardiff.
- Renold, Emma (2000) "'Coming Out": gender, (hetero)sexuality and the primary school', *Gender and Education*, 12 (3): 309-26.
- Rhoads, Robert A. (1994) *Coming Out in College: The Struggle for a Queer Identity*. Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey.
- Rich, Adrienne (1980) 'Compulsory heterosexuality and lesbian existence', *Signs*, 54 (4): 631-60.
- Richardson, Diane (1996) 'Heterosexuality and social theory', in Diane Richardson (ed.), *Theorising Heterosexuality*. Buckingham: Open University Press. pp. 1-20.
- Rubin, Gayle and Butler, Judith (1998) 'Sexual traffic', in Mandy Merck, Naomi Segal and Elizabeth Wright (eds), *Coming out of Feminism?*, Oxford: Blackwell.
- Sears, James T. (1992) *Sexuality and the Curriculum: The Politics and Practices of Sexuality Education*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky (1990) *Epistemology of the Closet*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky (1994) *Tendencies*. London: Routledge.
- Seidman, Steven (1995) 'Deconstructing queer theory or the under-theorisation of the social and the ethical', in Linda Nicholson and Steven Seidman (eds), *Social Postmodernism: Beyond Identity Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Seidman, Steven (1997) *Difference Troubles: Queering Social Theory and Sexual Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- SEU (1999) *Teenage Pregnancy*. London: Social Exclusion Unit.
- Shakespeare, Tom, Gillespie-Sells, Kathleen and Davies, D. (1996) *The Sexual Politics of Disability*. London: Cassell.
- Silin, Jonathan G. (1995) *Sex, Death and the Education of Children: Our Passion for Ignorance in the Age of AIDS*. New York and London: Teachers College Press.
- Smith, G., Kippax, S. and Chapple, M. (1998) 'Secrecy, disclosure and closet dynamics', *Journal of Homosexuality*, 35 (2): 53-73.
- Spurlin, William J. (2000) *Lesbian and Gay Studies and the Teaching of English: Positions, Pedagogies and Cultural Politics*. Urbana, IL: NCTE.
- Steinberg, Deborah Lynn (1997) 'All roads lead to ... problems with discipline', in Joyce E. Canaan and Debbie Epstein (eds), *A Question of Discipline: Pedagogy, Power and the Teaching of Cultural Studies*. Boulder, CO: Westview.
- Steinberg, Deborah Lynn, Epstein, Debbie, and Johnson, Richard (1997) *Border Patrols: Policing the Boundaries of Heterosexuality*. London: Cassell.
- Stevens, C. and Walker, B. (1996) 'How residential college students adjust socially and emotionally to first year university', *Higher Education Research and Development*, 15 (2): 201-21.
- Taulke-Johnson, Richard A and Rivers, Ian (1998) *Providing a Safe Environment for Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Students Living in University Accommodation*. Department of Psychology, University of Luton.
- Tierney, William, G. and Rhoads, Robert (1993) 'Enhancing academic communities for lesbian, gay, and bisexual faculty', *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, 53: 43-50.
- Tierney, William G. (1993) 'Academic freedom and the parameters of knowledge', *Harvard Educational Review*, 63 (2): 143-60.
- Tierney, William G. (1997) *Academic Outlaws: Queer Theory and Cultural Studies in the Academy*. London and Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Tierney, William G. and Dilley, Patrick (1998) 'Constructing knowledge: educational research and gay and lesbian studies', in William J. Pinar (ed.), *Queer Theory in Education*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. pp. 49-71.
- Valentine, Gill (1998) "'Sticks and stones may break my bones": A personal geography of harassment' *Antipode* 30 (4): 305-32.
- Waldner-Haugrud, L. and Magruder, B. (1996) 'Homosexual identity expression among lesbian and gay adolescents: an analysis of perceived structural associations', *Youth & Society*, 27: 312-33.
- Walkerdine, Valerie (1990) *Schoolgirl Fictions*. London: Verso.
- Walkerdine, Valerie (1997) *Daddy's Girls*. Basingstoke: Macmillan.
- Wallis, Amy and VanEvery, Jo (2000) 'Sexuality in the primary school', *Sexualities*, 3 (4): 409-424.
- Wallick, M. (1995) 'Influence of a freshman-year panel presentation on medical students' attitudes toward homosexuality', *Academic Medicine*, 70 (9): 839-41.
- Whitty, Geoff (1994) 'Consumer rights versus citizens' rights in contemporary society', *Education, Democracy and Reform*. Auckland: University of Auckland.
- Wittig, Monique (1981) 'One is not born a woman', *Feminist Issues*, 1 (2): 47-54.
- Wittig, Monique (1992) *The Straight Mind and Other Essays*. Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf.