1998

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By

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Senior Project
Jepson School of Leadership Studies
University of Richmond
Richmond, Virginia
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INTRODUCTION

Are schools teaching girls to be leaders? My belief is that we must examine issues concerning our young women, their educational experiences, opportunities they are offered, people they are exposed to and their life in school. There appears to be a lack of emphasis on leadership and women. Without addressing this issue in the early stages of a young girl's development, we will continue to feed the notion that male standards are the norm. My initial question is intended to generate an in depth look at the impact of teachers, curriculum, students and the environment on the development of leadership in girls. In order to answer this question, I plan to compare and contrast both public and private schools in Richmond, Virginia. It is my hope that this study will provide thorough insights and recommendations for any school, public or private, primary, middle or high school where girls are taught.

Why girls? This question is easy to answer when one looks at the statistics, literature, and studies done on young girls, self-esteem and schools. As a young girl in school, I recall having to raise my hand and add a little “ooh and ah” in order to be chosen by my teacher. I played on an all boys basketball team in fourth grade because there was no girls’ team. I struggled to suppress my knowledge of a subject in class or in talking with peers so I would not sound like a nerd. This is not unusual or unique. It is what is happening to young girls throughout the country and it is my belief that it is within schools that the difference can be made. The American Association of University Women (AAUW) has sponsored a variety of studies to look at this phenomenon which truly deafens, paralyzes and taunts young women. Two particular studies, “How Schools Shortchange Girls” and “Girls in the Middle: Working to Succeed in School” along with
various other books I have read over my four years at Richmond, have stimulated my interest in conducting this particular research project.

From reading Barrie Thorne’s, Gender Play and Mary Pipher’s Reviving Ophelia, one can immediately sense the crisis in our schools systems in regards to young girls and their futures. These two female authors share with their readers, a variety of case studies in which girls and young women are experiencing a “lost time” in school and during their critical developmental stages. The School Library Journal states that, “Pipher brings to light a very reluctant concern: that when parents, educators, and other interested adults are not there to nurture and support a girl’s development, she is in desperate danger of drowning like Shakespeare’s tragic heroine” (Madison, 40). Thorne and Pipher both support the notion that girls are being shortchanged and need immediate attention.

Along with such lost time in schools, girls are not being properly taught to succeed and to become leaders. The AAUW Report on “Girls in the Middle” highlights some of the key issues that this project will attempt to explore such as educational institutions, girls and leadership. “What do we want for girls? Girls should be recognized by adults and taught to recognize themselves as complex individuals with an emerging vision, an ability to think critically, a sense of entitlement to giving voice and being heard and a range of choices about who they are and want to become” (AAUW, 3). These essential features of what we want our girls to become are recurrent themes throughout the literature on girls and their education. These ideas of vision, critical thinking, entitlement, a voice and decisions relate directly to the goals and curriculum of the Jepson School of Leadership.
“Girls in grades six and seven rate being popular and well-liked as more important than being perceived as competent or independent” (Simmons, 72). The AAUW report, “…presents compelling evidence that girls are not receiving the same quality or even quantity, of education as their brothers.” (5) Women constitute approximately 45% of the workforce, yet they remain in oftentimes, traditional positions for women. “Given the increase in the number and percentage of women who are single parents and the growing importance of women’s wages to total family income, the education of women is important not only for women as individuals, but also for women as mothers, family members and as effective and creative citizens of larger communities” (AAUW, 5). In 1990, AAUW conducted a nationwide survey and found that on average 69% of elementary school boys and 60% of elementary school girls reported that they were “happy the way I am.” As for high school student percentages, the boys were 46% and the girls, a shocking 29%. This means that only 1/3 of female high school students are happy with the way they are. This may have some interesting implications for future goals and questions of where is the leadership and self development skills and training necessary for these girls.

Many of the web-sites and information, I initially reviewed about girl’s schools, programs, and camps proclaimed that they were teaching leadership, providing leadership opportunities, and an environment conducive to develop young leaders. Is this truly happening? Are the results shown in class structure, curriculum, school programs, extracurricular activities and sports? Is it happening in single sex schools or in co-educational settings? And if such teaching of leadership is happening in schools, why are
there such small numbers of women in leadership roles in the business, politics, science and technology and various other fields?

As I have learned throughout my studies and from conversations with teachers, it is a common fact that girls and boys enter the educational system with equal abilities and that girls usually surpass boys in academic achievement during the primary levels. Middle school research studies suggest something much different and girls begin to hit what is commonly referred to as “the wall”. This wall, the time during adolescence when we see girls slowly decline, is what results in their decreased scores, grades, interest, participation and willingness to compete with the boys and try their hardest in everything they do. There are considerable amounts of literature, case studies and real-life stories from girls, which give excellent examples of the very issues, I wish to present in this paper. By conducting focus groups with middle school and high school girls in two different school settings, I plan to find similar themes and ideas, which relate to my literature review in order to create the set of for schools recommendations mentioned previously. This research project will not only determine if schools are teaching girls to be leaders but will serve as a leadership tool for schools to use as a reminder to properly educate, treat, nurture, and cultivate girls.

LITERATURE REVIEW

HISTORY

American education has not always been within a small schoolhouse or large university. Instead, the home was the school for children and parents were responsible for educating their children, usually with Bible teaching and stories. Shortly following
this, schools began to imitate the European lifestyle and since then there has been a continuous struggle for over two centuries to include girls equally and effectively within a school setting. The Puritans established the first schools in New England. Their Calvinist beliefs were the foundation for the school and therefore, the all-male church determined what the curriculum consisted of and what students learned and did not learn (Streitmatter, 36). Due to this factor, girls remained in the shadows of their boy counterparts who had access to books, writing tools, teachers, tutors, and the arts. Mothers taught girls while professors, tutors and teachers taught the boys. These “young men”, were educated as a means to eventually find a job and support a family, whereas girls were educated within the home and sometimes school, to learn how to cook, sew, clean, take care of children and remain faithful to their husbands.

Controversy over educating girls on the same standards and levels of those constructed for boys, revolved around issues of politics, health, religion and fear. “Establishing what was religious orthodoxy and ensuring civil behavior was man’s business; leadership was a male domain” (Tyack and Hansot, 17). During the middle of the eighteenth century, public schools were coming into existence along with private dame schools where women taught and “babysat” boys and girls. Some parents became disgusted with the poor education within these schools and began to bring their girls to schools taught by men. These teaching sessions by men, for girls, were usually during off-hours when the regular boy students were not there. Eventually this trend of girls attending boy’s schools for extra help and lessons, led to the idea of coeducation, and ever since it has remained a constant and normal quality of American education (14).
Edward D. Mansfield, a political philosopher during the 1850's proclaimed that, in regards to the government America was founded under, it was essential that girls and boys were given equal educational opportunities. Such declarations of educational equality by others including, Horace Mann, Henry Barnard and the women of the Victorian period, resulted in many opponents of coeducational school settings. Some feared what girls would do with this newfound education. “If girls gained an education similar to that of boys, would they not challenge the whole gender order of adult society?” (Tyack and Hansot, 29) In response to this, proponents of girl’s education, claimed that such educational rights, “…would simply make women more effective in their own domain.” Such comments by proponents and women’s rights advocates, clearly illustrates the ideology of that time in relation to the ideas of separate spheres for males and females. Leadership for women was not a priority of this time. Rather, allowing girls into schools was the primary focus of this crusade.

In regards to the religious undertones of the struggle for the inclusion of girls in schools, many evangelical religious movements campaigned through the country during the early nineteenth century. They believed that if women were to be considered as faithful and active as their husbands in church, then they too, should be offered that chance to be educated with the possibility of being a teacher rather than simply a mother or wife. Education was thought to make women better caretakers of their children and husbands and therefore it was never seen as a means for women to escape their appropriated sphere of being (38). For health reasons as well, there was a fear that women would damage their reproductive organs by studying too hard and attending classes filled with knowledge. Dr. Edward H. Clarke wrote a book entitled, Sex in
Education which looked at the physiological effects of study and academic life on girls. It also shifted the fear of “masculinized” schools for girls, “...to the alleged feminization of boys in coeducational classrooms taught by women teachers” (146). Despite such writings and inevitable fears in some Americans philosophers and psychologists, American education remained co-ed and many single sex private schools slowly came into being as a result of parental demands and improving economic conditions.

During the Progressive Era, with the increase in industrialization and urbanization, the domestic notions of women shifted and more women began to take clerical positions and to involve themselves outside of the home. Women were now offered the chance of higher education, economic independence, work and association outside of the home that no doubt would result in more female leadership, success and influence in society. Unfortunately though as these opportunities began to flourish, realization set in for many feminists and proponents of proper education, that schools were not adjusting to the shift in traditional roles for men and women. “Despite the fact that women constitute 42 percent of the work force in the U.S., they remain substantially under-represented in government, corporate life, and other positions of decision-making power” (Streitmatter, 5). Curriculum, books and teaching styles have remained the same and in favor of the male students and patriarchal society. Henrietta Rodman, a New York teacher in the early 1900’s, argued that, “…coeducation is one of the essentials of civilization. This mixing makes the girls brave and resourceful and the boys courteous and helpful” (243).

Co-education in the public realm of education has remained the standard in the United States. During the 1970’s gender equity became a hot topic and, “...it seemed as
if nothing could stop the growing numbers of those who saw schools as the vehicle to liberate the potential of girls” (Sadker, 35). In 1972, Title IX was passed making sex discrimination illegal in sports, health services, financial aid, athletics, the classroom setting and admissions. This federal law was instituted for schools ranging from elementary to the university level and if it was not followed, violating schools were subject to lose federal funds. Unfortunately though, efforts to enforce Title IX slowly dwindled and many realized that it was not producing the results for which it was intended. For example, advanced science classes existed for boys only, pregnant teenage girls were expelled while the fathers remained in classes, and boy’s sports programs received more than twenty times the amount of funds than girl’s programs. Schools continued to violate this federal law without anyone truly attempting to enforce it. “Between 1972 and 1991, no school lost a single dollar of federal funds because of sex discrimination” (36).

Aside from the struggling efforts to find gender equity in schools, single sex education was predominately only found in Catholic or independent and private schools. Currently, there are only three public single sex schools in the United States: The Young Women’s Leadership School in New York, the Philadelphia High School for Girls in Philadelphia and the Baltimore Western High School in Maryland. Also, California recently established a single gender academic pilot program which established all male magnet schools for at-risk boys and all female schools emphasizing math and science (See Appendix A). California’s Gov. Wilson, “...strongly advocated improving public education by giving parents more choices in preparing their children for real-world
opportunities” (www.cde.ca.gov/spbranch/Educational). This real-world ideal is oftentimes not considered in the highly structured and time-constrained school day.

Not only are schools specializing and becoming more gender equitable but also, some public schools have established single sex classes within a coeducational setting in order to allow girls a better opportunity at subjects such as math and science. This was started in Presque Isle Maine where they have been offering an all-girls Algebra I since 1989. The results are amazing, considering that the boys/girls test score gap was once a 72 point difference and is now only a difference of 16 points (www.education-world.com). The National Coalition for Girl’s Schools, which has 82 member schools internationally, including St. Catherine’s in Richmond, Virginia and those listed above, states that from a national polling of over 1,200 alumnae from 35 schools within their organization, the prominent key benefits were from their single sex education: “the quality of education, small class size, personal development and preparation for college and careers” (NCGS brochure, See Appendix). Such benefits should no doubt be a part of every school in order to properly educate girls and allow them the future they deserve. On the contrary though, according to much of the research on public school, not all schools are exhibiting such key features.

SCHOOLS

In order to see these hidden issues which affect girls, it is important to actually look at the contemporary classroom within the United States today. This is a common practice for most of the researchers who analyze gender and schools, so that their research is based on actual data and samples, which are as up-to date as possible.
Researching at these schools, requires an in-depth look at the methods of interaction and organization which are constantly reinforced to the students (Diller, 66). It is important too, to think as a child when researching in order to see through the eyes of a child and experience what they do everyday. Kathryn Pauly Morgan proposes some situations and suggests one imagines that they are a child in school. "What would you infer from the following:

1. The fact that your school has a dress code that requires boys to wear pants and forbids girls to wear pants,
2. The fact that chores in the classroom that require heavy manual labor are assigned to boys even though the biggest and strongest students are girls,
3. The fact that most teachers are female and most administrators are male,
4. The fact that guidance counselors, use different criteria for describing good male and female students (for ex. Girls= cooperative, sensitive, considerate/ Boys= adventurous, energetic, independent)" (Diller, 66-7).

Obviously, from these situations which are not too unusual, a child or parent can infer that boys are the ones to be active, strong and with the power, whereas girls are supposed to not play in their dresses, be weak and passive and are to hold no positions of authority within the school (66). Schools, parents, teachers and administrators must be aware of the messages they are sending children, especially girls.

Over the past ten years, various studies and books have presented overwhelmingly convincing data about the status of girls in schools. Myra and David Sadker, well-known researchers and workshop coordinators on this topic, strongly believe girls are "likely to be invisible members of classrooms" (Sadker, 1). As invisible members of the classroom, women also, become invisible in textbooks, classroom lectures, bulletin boards and conversation. The Sadker's book, Failing at Fairness gives numerous examples of gender-bias in schools. They make frequent remarks about a study they have conducted at their college, The American University, and many other schools, in
which they asked college students to list twenty famous women in American history not including entertainers or athletes. "Most students cannot do it. The seeds of their ignorance were sown in their earliest years of schooling" (Sadker, 7). If girls have no role-model, how are they expected to create a sense of identity and set goals and dreams for their futures?

Despite the modern-day changes in women’s roles in society, the home and the workplace, young girls still struggle with their sense of identity during adolescent school years. There are small amounts of research on this topic but there are a handful of books published during the early 1990’s which highlight specific stories, address key issues and provide basic information on difficulties girls face as they grow up. Peggy Orenstein’s book Schoolgirls in association with the AAUW report, "How Schools are Shortchanging Girls" tells of her experiences with girls in schools. As a journalist, she studied two middle schools in California and wrote about her experiences with the people and cultures that she encountered.

"The education system is supposed to provide our young people with opportunity, to encourage their intellectual growth and prepare them as citizens" (Orenstein, xvi)

She cited various statistics and quotes from the AAUW report which assert the struggle girls encounter while in school. Self-confidence, self-esteem, self-image, self-doubt and individual potential are repeated terms used by Orenstein to illustrate her concern for the gender-biased educational system and the girls she interacted with for over a year.

In one particular classroom Orenstein observed, the teacher had set up the room to reflect the idea of, “what if women were the dominant sex?” A banner spanned a wall stating, “Women are one-half the world’s people; they do two-thirds of the world’s work;
they earn one-tenth of the world’s income; they own one-hundredth of the world’s property” (247). Unfortunately too, women hold very few leadership positions in government, business, schools and other areas of the workforce and this is most likely due to women’s experiences at an early age. This display of women, includes a library devoted solely to books on and about women, posters of famous women, and a bulletin board about NOW’s (National Organization of Women) essay contest on ‘Women We Admire’. It suggests a world in which girls live in everyday, compared to what it is normal, when men are being featured in such displays as the standard. As Orenstein infers, the boys and girls in the class on this particular day, sense something different and unusual about the classroom set-up and curriculum. “Educator Emily Style has written that the curriculum should be both a window and a mirror for students, that they should be able to look into others’ worlds, but also see the experiences of their own race, gender and class reflected in what they learn” (248). The idea of a window and mirror for student’s learning can perhaps be the foreground for a more gender-equitable classroom for both boys and girls.

By looking at various techniques appropriate to making girls experience in school more rewarding, beneficial and perhaps to encourage “leadership” qualities one can immediately see what has been going on for years and what must change. “Day after day in classrooms all across the country, year after year after year, boys get substantially more air time than girls do. and millions of girls are left to feel muted. invisible and less important” (Mann, 13). The Sadker’s book quotes a study in which a researcher found that for every eight star (outstanding students according to teachers) boys in a classroom there was only one star girl (Sadker, 48). This feeling of being less important, Mann
suggests inevitably leads to an alteration in girl’s professional aspirations, dreams and abilities later in life.

To make the situation worse, imagine being a minority female in a classroom. According to the Myra and David Sadker they are the last group of students to receive attention. “The students most likely to receive teacher attention were white males; the second most likely were minority males; the third, white females; and the least likely, minority females” (Sadker, 50). They also found that Hispanic girl’s self esteem dropped drastically from 68% in elementary school to 30% in high school when responding to the statement that they always felt happy about themselves (78-79). Such findings have perhaps sparked the recent establishment of the Young Women’s Leadership School in New York City. This public single sex high school which was founded by a woman philanthropist, is predominately devoted to young, poor black girls in Harlem. Such schools, the Congress report on single-sex education suggests, will only get bigger and better. “That is, single-gender schools are most effective when they are atypical: the more that these schools remain rare and special, the more effective they will be for those minority students who select them” (US, House of Reps, 5/28/96, 5). The report also states that the most important factor is not that the child or parent is making a single-gender choice but rather a “pro-academic” choice.

Single sex schools and classrooms as previously discussed in the previous section on “History”, have existed only in terms of private and Catholic institutions. Recently, there has been much discussion or rather controversy about single sex education and the benefits for young girls. In Judy Mann’s book, The Difference, single sex education is supported as giving girls high expectations and self-confidence necessary to be future
leaders of society. She refers to many studies done on the alumnae of all women's college and all girl’s schools to support her belief that single sex education is most important for girls. “The leadership training girls get at all-girls schools was underscored in the 1992 election year when the Women’s College Coalition found that 41 percent of the women who ran for the U.S. Senate were graduates of women’s colleges…a remarkable figure when one remembers that only 2-3% of women graduate from all-women schools. Also, it was found by the same group that, graduates of single-sex women’s colleges are six times more likely to sit on the boards of Fortune 500 companies than their counterparts from coeducational schools” (Mann, 123). With such positive outcomes, one can be quite curious and intrigued about the potential implications for a girl’s experience in single sex beginning as early as elementary or middle school?

Although Mann, highlights the benefits of single-sex education, she also addresses the traditional criticisms of this type of education. Single-sex education for both boys and girls is oftentimes considered an artificial environment which does not represent the real world in which these children will someday encounter. Despite such criticism, single sex schools stand by their studies of alumnae who mostly claim that their relations with the other sex was in no way hindered or altered. Valerie E. Lee though, has other thoughts on single sex education despite her research, which has produced supporting results for girls in a single sex setting. Lee suggests that oftentimes the reason one attends a single sex institution is because of its religious background, social atmosphere for students and parents, or because a relative has a history/connection with a particular school. She concludes that “…independent school students/parents were more likely to choose single-sex schooling for its traditional than its opportunity structure”
Also she is strongly against the popular idea of developing one's self-esteem because she feels that it, "...is developed as a byproduct of success in school, rather than a substitute for success" (142). Therefore, Lee suggests, a school should focus more so on raising children's performance and let the self-esteem go up as a result of that. Her argument and lack of a solid decision toward single or co-ed education schooling suggests an even greater idea: the idea that schools must improve from the inside first, despite anything else, in order to help children.

Lee notes that research on single sex education is limited and oftentimes biased and therefore it is difficult to conclude which she prefers for a child. She does say though, that a smaller school size and class size along with a communal setting will always be beneficial to a child whether the school is single sex or co-ed. The communal setting though, is usually only found within a girl’s school due to the fact that all of the principals and headmasters are women. "...Women exercise a more democratic and participatory management style, evidence a more personal leadership style and focus more of their efforts on their schools’ core technology than on management" (Lee in Bank, 153). Lee suggests that in stead of "wrapping Calculus in a pink ribbon", we should try to reorganize schools so that they are both highly effective and equitable. In order to do this, we must make classes smaller, especially high school, encourage more intimate relations between students and faculty, stress critical thinking, and have schools function as little communities in order to perhaps symbolize the real world (156).

*Girls and Leadership*
“Myth: leaders are born, not made.” In Leadership: Enhancing the Lessons of Experience, the authors present various myths about leadership that they intend to disclaim. In discussing the makings of a leader they state the significance of an environment on an individual’s development. “Thus, one’s environment can help to build or suppress one’s natural talents or abilities, depending on the richness of experiences the environment provides and one’s ability and desire to learn from experience” (17). Such experiences in a particular environment, for example a school which is fully aware of their potential in developing students, can provide an excellent nurturing and practice ground for an uncertain or unconfident girl. “Taking advantages of leadership opportunities on the smaller stage can help prepare you for the bigger stages of life. People can grow as leaders in the face of challenge and the forge of experience” (17).

Schools can serve as a leadership-development site for young girls who desperately need the attention and leadership skills necessary for life during and after school. Many believe that women will have a breakthrough decade soon, in terms of leadership positions, but, “…women have not been aware of this, nor have they known which career paths lead upward as opposed to those which dead-end” (Carlson, 18). Therefore, are schools addressing the issues of leadership and teaching those issues to girls in order to create female leaders later in life? One of the highlighted outcomes from the AAUW study on “Girls in the Middle” states that schools can help girls with such issues.

“Leadership opportunities bolster girls’ competence and sense of efficacy and increase their actual influence in school. School staff, programs and policies need to encourage leadership opportunities for girls from all cultures- girls employing a range of negotiating strategies. Girls’ leadership qualities need to
be re-examined in the context of race and culture" (AAUW, 88-89)

Some researchers and authors are not as critical towards the school system and treatment of girls. Many actually are willing to admit the obvious positive statistics about girls in schools. For example, one study states that "...girls receive higher grades in elementary and secondary schools and are more likely to graduate from high school than boys. More recently, it has also been true that women earn more than half of all the baccalaureate and master’s degrees awarded annually in the United States (U.S Department of Education 1993 in Bank, 11). Despite such statistics, which refer to grades and graduation degrees, issues of leadership, self-esteem, career development are not mentioned and are obviously more difficult to study and translate into a statistic. Therefore, it is important to analyze and research the literature and research that does exist on these “silent” issues in order to properly answer the proposed research question.

Before such issues, though, it is important to look at the leadership aspect of this project as it relates to girls. According to the forefront scholar and the father of leadership, James MacGregor Burns, leadership and education are one in the same. He defines leadership, “...as a tapping of existing and potential motive and power bases of followers by leaders, for purpose of achieving intended change” (Burns, 448). He then goes on to discuss education in the same manner saying that it along with the leadership definition:

“...it is not merely the shaping of values, the imparting of ‘facts’ or the teaching of skills, indispensable through these are: it is the total teaching and learning process operating in homes, schools, gangs, temples, churches, garages, streets, armies, corporations, bars and unions conducted by both teachers and learners, engaging with the total environment, and involving influence over persons’ selves and their opportunities and destinies, not simply their minds” (448).
Burns quotes Gardner shortly following this discussion on the similarities between leadership and education and he states that the nature of leadership is unknown to people and society. No one truly knows what leadership is and therefore that is why we don’t have as many leaders, or those who are leaders are not properly leading others (451). Therefore, it is essential that leadership be taught at an early age, especially to girls who oftentimes fall behind the boys and are forgotten in the school setting as potential leaders. Even boys need better leadership training in order to be more effective leaders and followers.

Leadership for girls and women, is a topic which has been discussed on and off again in journals, but never thoroughly to make a sound point or argument. Much of the literature about leadership and females attempts to discuss the advantages versus male leadership. Unfortunately though, this just continues to separate the genders and does not allow for a better understanding of gender or leadership. One important feature though of the literature I reviewed on this topic, relates directly to the nature of women and the ways in which they operate as compared to men. Helgesen in her book, about the female ways of leadership, calls women’s approach to leadership, “the ecology of leadership.” It is a type of leadership which “…encompasses the vision of society – they relate decisions to their larger effect upon the role of the family, the American education system, the environment, even world peace” (25). This vision of society and idea of being within a larger system, is something I believe we must truly teach children so that we can secure a better future. Teaching children to lead themselves and to speak well in front of other is not merely enough. We need a more moral and value based type of leadership within schools.
According to Luella Cole, in her book on the *Psychology of Adolescence*, leadership is an important feature of students in relation to social development and growth. Despite that there are oftentimes, not many student leaders, “...their influence is always large because of their position in their own society” (Cole, 373). In relation to leaders in a school setting, Cole also states that leadership is made up of a collection of traits, a few inherent and mostly all others, “...acquired or at least developed by contact with environment” (374). She mentions many qualities, which leaders tend to be superior in: scholarship, integrity, mental energy, physical agility, and a variety of interests. In a study done in 1950, “A Study of Motivational and Perceptual Factors Associated with Leadership Behavior of Young Women in a Private School” students were asked to state their choices for the chairman of a project and for a roommate using students in their school as the selection pool. After selections were made, the chosen chairmen and roommates were interviewed, and many qualities and traits of leader emerged. As Cole notes, before listing the necessary traits that may be related to leaders, “…a psychologist cannot yet definitely say which child will become a leader, but the many specific investigations at least set the limits of personality within which to look for the leaders of the next generation” (375). The study listed seven traits:

1. Capacities (inborn or acquired early in life)
2. Attainments to date (schoolwork, athletic accomplishments)
3. Appearance and manner (good voice, poise)
4. Motility (unusual degree of participation, enthusiasm for undertakings)
5. Contacts with others (self-confidence, ambition, initiative, dependability, sociability, cooperation, capacity to mix with subordinates)
6. Special intellectual qualities (judgment, insight into people and situations, diplomacy)
7. Background factors – better than average social status, income, family with leaders already in it)
These factors are not all necessary for a leader. Rather, they were all noted as a way of describing a leader who has balance and control of all seven traits, in order to lead in the most efficient and favorable manner.

In a study by J. J. Cowley entitled, “High School Backgrounds of Successful Men and Women Graduates,” related to this research project, Cole discusses the difficult task of attempting to follow up with students once they leave school in relation to their leadership positions and abilities as adults. Cowley, made an attempt to create a study about leadership experience in high school as it related to leadership experience in adult life. Since small amounts to nearly no literature exists about this relationship, Cole quoted only Cowley’s quite outdated study. Despite the time period of the study, it still has many implications for my research project and the one previously mentioned. The study quoted was a follow-up study of 485 graduates of ten consecutive classes, 1927-1936 of a high school. They based adult success in leadership on the basis of, “general reputation, positions of trust, or superior positions of business or industry, ownership of business, and election to chairmanship of community undertakings”(379). “Among the 299 women studied, only 59 had occupied positions of leadership in school. Of these, 37 percent held such positions as adults. Only 2 percent of the 240 other women graduates, all non-leaders in high school, had had success as leaders in their communities” (380). This certainly seems to support the notion that some leadership can be learned or perhaps fostered in a school setting.

In a survey done during the 1950’s, researchers Doiuvan and Adelson found that:

“...the urge to be free, to be one’s own master, is almost exclusively a masculine striving... girls show no press for independence, certainly no need to confront authority or insist on the right to develop and distinguish independent beliefs and controls” (Sugar, 274).
In the 1970's this was found true again and finally, in the 90's, according to the editor, there is little difference between the sexes with respect to autonomy. Women have always taken on leadership roles since the beginning of time, it's just that no one has acknowledge or encouraged better training of it in terms of it being leadership (Williams, 9). Girls fall subject to feminine stereotypes and roles and therefore they are neglected the necessary leadership training. Leadership is not something that is taught, supported, suggested in schools. Rather it is something, as Cole suggests, that is acquired according to the setting in which one is emerged, along with their natural traits.

With the gender-role stereotyping that exists in our culture, girls must struggle and work harder than boys in order to attain the power to act or shape their future goals, dreams and aspirations. The AAUW report on “Growing Smart: What’s Working for Girls in School” states that agency, a term used in psychological literature, is the power to act, or more specifically, “…the process of translating one’s dreams into reality- by striving, overcoming obstacles, and actualizing one’s ideals” (46). This “agentic” view of life oftentimes is considered masculine because it is described as being “logical, rational, objective and competitive.” The opposite of an agentic view is a communal view, which is commonly designated for females. It is described as “intuitive, subjective, cooperative, nurturing and connected.” This communal view relates directly to Lee’s suggestions on how schools should re-organize themselves, and will become a common theme for this paper.

It has been shown that agency and communion should be important and nurtured in both sexes rather than remaining in their individual stereotypical domains of male and female. The AAUW report, notes Sandra Bem’s research on agency and it’s relation to
empowerment. Her research uses terms such as, "...assertive, independent, defends own beliefs, makes decisions easily, willing to take risks, self-reliant, acts as a leader, and willing to take stands" (46). Unfortunately though, girls are not taught to develop agency. Teachers, focus more on their communal development since that is the stereotype-created norm in society. With a focus on agency, girls can feel empowered and socialize better in schools and eventually society. "Girls who are "agents" take charge of their lives through planning and action; they don’t stand passively by and just let things happen to them" (46). With a focus on the two, agency and communion, girls could be leaders in their class and later in life. As Nasibitt and Aburdene suggest, "...women can transform the workplace by expressing not giving up their personal values" (Nasibitt and Aburdene, p. 51).

"The master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house" (Bank, 77). This quote by Audre Lorde, is commonly used in feminist writings on gender equity. It suggests that we look at the manner in which the house (male standard) is designed and eventually properly deconstruct it and rebuild it for an equal status of males and females. In Catherine Marshall’s book, *Feminist Critical Policy Analysis*, she quotes Lorde as well and notes that, "...the master’s tools must be cast aside, by bringing into question all things that were common sense, structured and assumed, from male-female difference to male norms of leadership and power" (Marshall, 2). This revolutionary thinking of gender, suggests that whenever we think or talk educational we must always think political. In an article by Marshall in a different book, *Gender Equity and Schooling*, she looks at the problems facing girls in school in a new way:

"The problem is not just that girls have not had the equal access to science careers; the problem is also a complex system whereby schools
support boys for careers that get them power and money. The problem is not just that girls learn passivity and their lower place in the societal strata by seeing female educators being controlled by men; the problem is also how that gender identity support sex abusers whose victims are mostly women (Marshall in Bank, 79).

From here, Marshall suggests that schools take on a new approach to education. They should be more collaborative, less competitive and nurture an environment dedicated to working together, building a community and taking on responsibilities for one another’s development. Marshall refers to Carol Gilligan and Nel Noddings, who both support the re-structuring of schools in order to adjust to girl’s natures and feminine tendencies.

Gilligan and Noddings discuss the values and moral make-up of schools. Since women’s moral decision-making nature is more in line with, “...community, relationship maintenance and nurturance,” and men’s is more attuned to, “…issues of competing rights and to principles of justice”, why not incorporate the two (Bank, 79). Noddings suggest that school structure themselves to be a place where the dominant value is caring and nurturance of one another, rather than efficiency or score on the SAT’s. These suggestions inevitably leads Marshall to Jane Roland Martin’s discussion on moral leadership and the need for a more critical humanist leader in society. This idea of moral leadership revolves around the three C’s which are care, concern and connection (80). Schools should, as Marshall suggests, be horizontally structured rather than the typical vertical, competitive mode of learning and relating. The horizontal organization allows for more collaborating, caring, concerning, and connecting with one another, while inevitably creating more value and moral based leaders in both students and teachers.

In creating such moral leaders, the teachers and students or, “…the leaders and led have a relationship not only of power but of mutual needs, aspirations and values” (Burns, 4). By evaluating moral leadership in schools and within feminist theories of
gender, one can immediately see a common trend. As Mann, Lee and the AAUW report all suggest, a communal society is most beneficial to all students, both boys and girls. This communal society can come about by incorporating the moral leadership ideas previously mentioned as well as a better understanding of girls' needs. Once the moral development is established within the leader and follower, an awareness of human needs and an understanding of greater social and worldly needs will develop as well. "The adolescent who can recognize, adjust to, reconcile, mediate among and cope with shifting mixes of role requirements is a person with at least a latent capacity to thrive in a variegated social and political environment and to demonstrate some potential ability for political leadership-in a pluralized, complex and open society (Burns, 99).

METHODOLOGY

In an attempt to examine the issues concerning girls and their educational experiences, three key questions were at the foundation of this research. How do girls feel about their school, their futures and themselves? What do they consider leadership to be and is it important to be a leader? Finally, how do they feel about single sex and co-ed schools and the role of schools teaching leadership to students?

Data for this research project within schools was collected using two primary methods: focus groups, and document analysis. I chose to conduct my research at two schools in the Richmond area - St. Catherine’s, an independent all-girls school and two public, co-educational schools, Tuckahoe Middle and Freeman High School. The research focused on girls in grades 6-12. Girls were the only group used in the focus
groups, not just because of the time constraints and availability, but also because they are the "key stakeholders" of this research project (Vaughan, 29).

In order to actually conduct the focus group, there were a few steps taken before the data was actually collected. I contacted the heads of the two schools within St. Catherine's first, since they were so conveniently located and fit the single-sex school model. Since only three public single-sex schools exist and basically no literature or follow-up studies has been written on them, I first decided to study a private single-sex school, St. Catherine's and a private co-ed school, The Collegiate School in Richmond. This would allow the constant variable of both schools being private. After conducting my research at St. Catherine's with both the Upper and Middle Schools, I was warned that researching at The Collegiate School would more than likely provide me with very similar results. Since both are private and in Richmond, many students have attended both during the grades of K-12, and therefore I would have no diversity in my focus group responses. Another factor in choosing another school was that Collegiate School was a very busy school and had difficulty finding time to fit me in, to meet with the necessary sample that I needed. Also they were very strict about research conducted in their school and were concerned about my results. These factors taken into consideration, directed the rest of my research towards two public schools, as I had initially intended during the proposal stages of this project.

After confirming my research dates with St. Catherine's, I began to call public schools and immediately had success with both Tuckahoe Middle School and Freeman High School, also both located in Richmond, Virginia. I set up dates and times with them to conduct my research. When talking with the various heads of schools and guidance
departments, I discussed my research topic and my impetus in studying such a topic. I also explained the Jepson School of Leadership to them and I asked them for exactly what I was looking for in conducting my research at their school. I was interested in conducting four focus groups, two in a private school and two in a public school and I wanted to hear from both middle school and high school girls. The focus groups were to last from 30-45 minutes and were to be made up of two girls from each grade. This allowed for six girls in the middle school focus groups and eight young women in the high school focus groups. Therefore, four focus groups were held with a total of 26 girls participating from four different schools. As Vaughan suggests with focus groups and children, time and size is critical to results and this was one of the factors I carefully considered. Means of collecting the data were also discussed and it was accepted that I would be using handwritten notes as well as an audio tape to record the discussion.

In selecting the sample of girls, a purposive sampling type was used in conjunction with random sampling. The purposive sampling is the most frequently used procedure and allows for a group of subjects who are selected by a predetermined criteria in order to contribute significantly to the study (Vaughan, 58). The contact person at the school in which I set up the focus group, was responsible for having the girls ready when I arrived. Specific instructions as to how to select the girls were given and they were properly followed. I asked that they select two girls from each grade to participate, providing a variety of students which represented: both quiet and loud, very involved and not as involved, shy and outgoing, athletic and non-athletic, leaders and non-leaders, and extremely bright and average students. This criteria would allow for a well-rounded, diverse sample of the school without having to meet with more than 6-8 girls
from the school. During the focus group, those selected would only be known to me by first name, and would only be considered to have been selected due to the convenience of the date and time of the focus group. The participating schools in the study are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL</th>
<th>St. Catherine’s Upper School</th>
<th>Freeman High School</th>
<th>Tuckahoe Middle School</th>
<th>St. Catherine’s Middle School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>Total = ~ 100</td>
<td>Total = 1,447</td>
<td>Total = 1,350</td>
<td>Total = 135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty/Staff M/F Ratio</td>
<td>Total = 86</td>
<td>Total = 110</td>
<td>Total = 107</td>
<td>Total = 52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Independent, all-girls</td>
<td>Public, co-ed</td>
<td>Public, co-ed</td>
<td>Independent, all-girls</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In looking at the basics of the school, the culture and the students were crucial to the finding within my data collection. In Research in Educational Settings, the authors repeatedly reinforce the idea that “...schools each have their own cultures, value systems, norms and beliefs...and as outsiders, part of the challenge to us as researchers is to determine how the school culture operates” (Maruyama, 3). Before I began each focus group, I walked around the school, talked with secretaries, looked at bulletin boards, read about upcoming events, talked with available teachers, students and administrators and basically, tried to get a feel for the school’s culture.

Discussion of the research and data collected was done in a qualitative manner. The focus group adhered to the qualitative nature of this research and in conducting such interactions and discussions with female students, I was able to look at four key aspects of their educational setting school setting. These four aspects were the main ideas used to create the set of questions and outline I used for each focus group: (See Appendix B and C)
1. School structure- classes, teachers, single vs. co-ed

2. Programs, curriculum, clubs, sports and extracurricular activities

3. Priorities of the school - their goals, vision, brochures, web-sites, etc.

4. Leadership opportunities, programs, ideas, etc.

Focus groups with students was the primary method of collecting data. This was very important because it is from the students that the true heart and culture of a school will be displayed. Focus groups allow for a wide variety of responses from the participants. Both research and discussions generated will properly attempt to "...explain the forces causing the phenomenon in question" (Marshall, 41). Therefore, the basic approach of the focus groups in the educational setting was the most common type, the phenomenological approach. "The purpose of this approach (phenomenological) is to understand the issue or topic from the everyday knowledge and perceptions of specific respondent subgroups" (Vaughn, 25). Since I had background information on the topic and had discussed such issues in previous classes, the phenomenological approach was necessary instead of the exploratory approach in which the researcher knows very little about the topic ahead of time.

In answering the questions presented in the introduction, the focus group allowed for an everyday understanding of what we want for girls, what they are receiving and what schools are and should be doing for them. Also, the focus group was the preferred method for this research project, because using surveys and questionnaires with the students may limit their answers and force them to put something into words which they
may not relate to or wish to use. As Bickman and Rog suggest, “focus groups...allow individuals to respond in their own words using their own categorizations and perceived associations” (507). Despite the open discussion format, the focus group was not unstructured, because I as the researcher had a set of questions and an outline to guide the discussion, in order to receive results to analyze and discuss.

The format used to analyze the data was suggested by Bickman and Rog as an effective technique for a quick, cost-effective and single person analyst study. They call it the cut and sort technique in which the analyst, “…determines which segments of the transcripts are important, develops a categorization system for the topics discussed by the group, selects representative statements regarding these topics from the transcript, and develops an interpretation of what it all means” (Bickman and Rog, 516). Although it may seem as if this technique allowed for the opportunity of much subjectivity and bias, the authors suggest that despite such factors, “…it shares many of the characteristics of more sophisticated and time-consuming approaches” (516).

This technique used to analyze the data allowed for finding key ideas and common themes among the groups, as well as divergent themes. Immediately following each focus group, I summarized the big ideas and themes of the focus group so that at the end of all the groups, I would not be confusing the different groups at the different schools. After all focus groups were completed, I was able to code the responses and categorize them in a manner, which set the beginning stages of analyzing and finding results.

With a focus group format, along with the advantages come some limitations, which as a moderator one must prepare for ahead of time. Some limitations include the nature of the interactions between the group members, especially if some members may be very
quiet, others very dominant. Also, a limitation is whether or not all the girls will show up at the right place and time. The only difficulty I had with this, was that the contact person was not available when I went to Freeman High School, so the girls were expected to show up at the library on their own. This factor, more than likely, resulted in only 6 girls showing up rather than 8 girls, which should not have much of an affect on the findings. Also, the researcher/moderator, who is inexperienced, may bring many faults to the study. First, the moderator, must be aware of the open-ended nature of the responses and have a proper and concise way of interpreting the data. Also, as Bickman and Rog note, "...the 'live' and immediate nature of the interaction may lead a researcher or decision maker to place greater faith in the findings than is actually warranted" (Bickman and Rog, 509). Finally, the person conducting the focus group should be experienced and well trained in asking questions that provide no cues or hints as to what the desired responses are for the study. Also, sometimes it is important to have more than one person analyze the information to avoid any biases or tendencies to side or disagree with the responses. Due to my inexperience with focus groups, I practiced with friends and family the questions I intended to ask the participating girls. I also, thoroughly organized the questions within an outline, which was suggested by Vaughan in order to yield a well-organized and productive focus group.

Another important limitation that was considered was the type of school used to participate in this study. St. Catherine’s was an independent, single-sex school and Tuckahoe Middle and Freeman High were both public and co-ed. Although there is a considerable amount of research done on public vs. private schools, there is not much done about these schools in relation to single sex schools. This is due to the fact that
there are so few public single-sex schools in the United States. Eventually though, as intended by these schools, research will be done to judge the benefits and drawbacks of these schools. As they mentioned, when I contacted them for more information, they are waiting a good five or ten years, in order to produce sufficient and substantial studies. For this research project, though, the girls are the main source of information and it is not the tuition factor or the state-funded factor that is being considered. Rather it is the girls as individuals, students, and potential leaders in society, which are the main concerns.

Document analysis was planned to be the secondary method and it was to be used in support of in rebuttal to data collected in the focus groups. Considering that documents are an excellent source of information, it seemed appropriate to analyze the documents from the schools, which participated in this study. Documents appropriate for such analysis include: reports, records, books, brochures, catalogues, syllabi, and other material related to or published by the school. Since St. Catherine's is an independent school, they had much more information and publications about admissions and recruitment due to the fact that usually girls seek out that school, in the manner a high school graduate would choose a college. The public schools on the other hand, did not have nearly the same amount of information but rather simple brochures about general information, PTA groups and the school calendar.

As Best states in his book on Research in Education, document analysis can be used to, “describe prevailing practices or conditions” or “to evaluate bias, prejudice” in the documents. For this study, I had intended to analyze all of the documents and information provided by the schools, in a manner that will solely depend on the terms, “leadership” and “leader(s)”. In answering the question about whether or not schools are
teaching girls to be leaders, analyzing such terms within the documents the schools publish, would have allowed for some conclusions about leadership and girls. Unfortunately though, it was not appropriate to analyze only the documents from one school and not from the others. It is interesting to note though, that during my initial review and early stages of this method before I realized it was not attainable, the single-sex had numerous references to the term “leadership” just in the first few pages of their booklet. Perhaps if this was incorporated into all schools literature and publications it may become an enforced practice or study.

Although an actual document analysis was not conducted, I did review the websites and mission statements of all schools. Although none of the public school’s statements proclaimed “leadership” or “leader” in their terminology, Tuckahoe Middle School, had a unique approach. Their school philosophy is as follows: “If you give a man a fish, he can eat for a day; if you teach a man to fish, he can feed himself for life.” One of the school’s goals is to, “…prepare each student to assume much of her responsibility for his/her true learning” (www.co.henrico.va.us/schools). Such responsibility and preparation for life, relate back to Cole’s list of seven traits found in potential leaders. Such traits within children if fostered and such practices if continued in schools, will inevitably lead to an incorporation of leadership and eventual collaborative learning with leadership. This will eventually and hopefully become mainstream in all schools, enabling children to not only fish and feed himself for life, but to help others fish and feed for life.
FINDINGS & ANALYSIS

The data collected for the focus groups, consisted of handwritten notes and transcripts of audio tapes. After all of the information was collected, there were 23 pages of handwritten notes and 26 pages of transcribed notes, for a total of 49 pages of data. As discussed in the previous section, the data was collected, reviewed, coded and categorized in order to allow for analysis. In looking at the data, the questions used during the focus group were broken down into four categories: school and classes, leadership opportunities and future engagements, leadership in general and finally, women in the world today as related to schools and leadership. These categories allowed for a manner in which to code and present the findings in accordance with the research question.

Before discussing findings from the focus groups, let me describe the set-up and atmosphere of the schools. St. Catherine's Upper and Middle Schools are situated on approximately 13 acres of land in Richmond, Virginia. Each school has a separate building, which is surrounded by large, old homes, brick buildings, well-kept, landscape and it truly resembles a mini-college. The girls are not required to wear uniforms, so their sense of identity and independence is encouraged even that much more. The hallways are decorated with student’s artwork, colorful bulletin boards, photographs and such. Tuckahoe Middle School is located as well on a large amount of property with many fields for sports and activities. The building inside was bright, and beautifully decorated with murals and large paintings on the walls displaying their school colors and mascot. Freeman High School is located only a block or so from Tuckahoe and it is quite
Freeman High School, realized that in her AP English class they had not yet discussed women writers. These examples were not just present in the co-ed school. In St. Catherine's many of the girls, claimed that just because it was a single sex school did not suggest that all of their classes were women's studies oriented. Rather, both the Upper and Middle School girls suggested that they learned about people and society rather than men and women. One girl believed that in learning about leaders, "...they (the students) learned about them as people, rather than as split genders."

My initial review of the data, presented quite similar results in regards to all four schools. Leadership opportunities existed in only three major areas: sports, government associations and clubs. The only school, which provided another fourth structured means of leadership, was St. Catherine's Middle School who had recently instituted a "committee" program in which each student was part of a committee, which met once every two weeks. These committees included, leadership, critical thinking, environmental concerns, art, multicultural, school life and many others. As the head of the school, Mrs. Wilkins explained, it was something new, which allowed for more student interaction, participation and leadership opportunities for the girls who sometimes feel lost in middle school, even in a single sex setting. Aside from programs, it seemed as if St. Catherine's Upper School was the next to institute leadership potential activities or programs, especially their Career Day, which almost every girl at the school mentioned, even in the Middle School. Career Day is a day in which alumnae return from St. Catherine's and discuss their jobs, careers or life decisions. It is a chance for girls to meet female role models, leaders in the community and for them to be introduced to new fields of work or study they may not have considered.
This defining and understanding of leadership was a key factor in my research and before moving on should be thoroughly analyzed in order to get a better picture of each school. The following table presents the findings about this factor in relation to the school and girls who participated:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL</th>
<th>St. Catherine's Upper School</th>
<th>St. Catherine's Middle School</th>
<th>Tuckahoe Middle School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Qualities of a leader:</td>
<td>Strong sense of who you are, confidence, open-minded, you think in new ways, creativity, honesty, loud/really quiet, stick to your ideas, able to do a lot in short time period, well-rounded person</td>
<td>Ability to develop others, responsibility, get things done to help others, assistance for those who need help, honest, bossy and passive together, take control of situation</td>
<td>Be yourself, self-esteem, self confidence, you're not afraid to speak up, make a difference, hard worker (do a lot) honesty, integrity, good personality, your own morals and values, trust, creativity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After organizing the data, which were direct quotes from the girls in each focus group, it is interesting to note the similarities between the four groups as well as the striking differences. All four groups felt that honesty and a voice, whether it is loud or quiet, opinionated or passive, were important features of being a leader. Another similarity between the four was the idea of getting something done and they all seemed to suggest the idea of being able to get it done quickly. One girl suggested that a leader is always a hard-worker, because, “...they are able to take on a lot of responsibility, do a lot of projects, go many places and talk to a lot of people.” This idea of a leader was quite common in the middle schools in terms of our discussion on leadership and leaders in society. They seemed to define leadership and leaders in relation to elected offices such as the president or the governor. Both middle schools also generated a discussion on politics and corrupt politicians whereas, neither high school did.
Perhaps the most striking finding, in response to the question, what are the qualities of a leader, are the terms which are bolded in the table above. The single-sex schools used frequent terms such as you, self, your, person, and own. On the other hand, the co-ed schools used terms such as others, those, large groups, followers, people and situation. Even in looking at other answers about their school and classes, the girls at St. Catherine's were very attuned to the individual and the importance of being a self-leader before helping others. This was very true not only in the Middle School but also for the Upper School. One Upper School girl stated that, "...it is important not to feel inferior to others, to have a good sense of who you are, what you want and where you want to go in life, or after school." Another girl in the Middle School suggest that, "...our school almost stresses self-esteem and self-confidence too much, especially when that woman, Piper or Pipher came to talk to the whole school, about her book, Reviving Ophelia... even the elementary school had to hear her speak."

The co-ed schools had quite different responses that were more directly related to the relationship between a leader and follower(s). They focused on the importance of being able to communicate, help, encourage and transform others as a person in a leadership position. Many suggested at the Tuckahoe Middle School, that it was very good to be both a leader and a follower in different situations:

"I think you should be both so that people don't see you as being too in control or too not interested in what is going on. It is kind of like the party thing that they have, Democrats and Republicans, you choose a side to be on. But then what if you don't want to be on that party's side, I just don't understand, but I guess they tell you which one to be on so that it can help others and people in your state and stuff" (Tuck. Mid 7th grader).
Many of the girls at Freeman High School as well, felt that leadership was essentially the ability to develop others and they were confident that this was the answer I was interested in. One girl stated that, "...I am a leader because when my friends are doing bad stuff, I tell them and help them so that they don't do it again and they appreciate me for being their friend." Another girl was quick though to suggest that when receiving help from others, it is important to make sure they follow the right person. "It is important to get things done but if you follow the wrong person you can do something wrong, and I guess it goes the other way, because you can follow someone and do something right."

Another interesting feature of the data, was the responses to the question, what would you like to accomplish or be in the future? Many of the girls at all four schools gave me an unusual, confused look when I asked this question. It was as if I should have already known that they have no clue what they want to do. I felt that this was an important question to ask though in determining whether or not schools were teaching girls to be leaders because this was their future plans and goals. The findings are presented in the following table in order to compare and contrast the four schools:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOLS</th>
<th>St. Catherine's Upper School</th>
<th>Freeman High School</th>
<th>St. Catherine's Middle School</th>
<th>Tuckahoe Middle School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Future accomplishment and/or plans</td>
<td>All had a specific response: teacher, 2 doctors, nurse, lawyer, WNBA player, teacher, veterinarian,</td>
<td>Only 1/6 did not know. Others: journalist, actress, veterinarian, child care manager, mom</td>
<td>3/8 did not know. Others: cardiologist, computer programmer, 2 teachers, nurse</td>
<td>All had an idea. Mom, marine biologist, ldsp. role in politics, artist (?), lawyer, psychologist, cosmetologist</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These findings although not consistent with one another in terms of the single sex and co-ed schools, presents good information about the girls as they perceive themselves later in
life. All of the girls at all schools, stated that they wanted to attend college immediately after high school. This is a feature St. Catherine's actually prides themselves in, considering that 100% of their graduates attend college. During the focus groups, I feel that I may have pressured the girls into responding with a specific answer, not because of the manner in which I asked the question, but because the girls felt pressure by others to give an answer rather than say, "I don't know. This was especially true in Tuckahoe Middle School, where all the girls had responses but when I asked them why, they were unsure. One girl even stated that she wanted to be maybe be an artist because she wasn't sure if she was good enough, and if not that then maybe a doctor or lawyer. This response was definitely due to the pressure of other girl's responses in the room.

As for St. Catherine's Middle School, the girls had specific reasons for why they chose such a response. For example, one girl stated that she wanted to be a cardiologist, because in sixth grade a cardiologist came into their science class and gave a presentation. She continued to say, "...that she was never so interested or amazed at the ways the human heart works and how the doctor worked with the heart in order to help others." Some other girls in the Upper School gave very specific plans probably because they are graduating within a year or two. One girl stated that she wanted to attend William and Mary and double major in English and Education and then become a professor. Another girl, who plays basketball, stated that she wanted to try to make the WNBA (Women's National Basketball Association) and after that become an architect. Overall, it seemed as if many girls knew what they wanted to do, but had nothing to support it, such as a story, experience or encounter with that job or career, etc. This is a quality, which I believe is essential when teaching girls to be leaders, because it allows
them a reason, a belief or an experience to relate to their goals in life. Such a foundation for one’s goals, will only encourage and enforce them once they actually begin to come true.

Another factor, which seemed prominent in all focus groups, was the role boys play in relation to girl’s experiences in school. Every group mentioned “boys goofing off”, at least twice and it was within the public school groups, that this was an important feature of school life. Despite the fact that girls are not oftentimes leaders in society, from the statistics presented by the groups about government, it seems as if girls dominate the SCA (Student Council Association) at both schools. At the Tuckahoe SCA, the girls are involved four times as much as the boys. Many of the girls, believed that boys are just not interested in having more structure in their day and they would rather play sports, rough around and fight with one another than serve as an SCA officer or representative. Many girls in St. Catherine’s also discussed the boys despite their lack of interaction with them. They were very adamant about not having boys as a distraction in the classroom. One girl said that by not having boys in the class more work is done and girls, “…don’t have to be afraid to have a boy shoot them down when they make a comment in class.”

This idea of boys interfering in the classroom and distracting the girls turned into a discussion on co-ed vs. single sex schools. All of the girls at St. Catherine’s were obviously very supportive of their schools environment, as were the girls at both Tuckahoe and Freeman. It was clear that the girls at Tuckahoe are very proud of their school and some claimed that despite, “…those studies about girls in all girls schools doing better,” girls do very well at their school when they ignore the boys and focus on
their studies. Girls at Freeman, said they could not imagine going to school with all girls and that the boys added a variety to their learning, which was important when entering the real-world. When I asked the St. Catherine's girls about not having that variety in the classroom, they did not seem to miss it or even realize what it would do to their learning. Rather, they were more concerned with their individual talents, learning and development from which they believed St. Catherine's was giving them. "We are more mature, and move faster at this age, and we can cover more material without the boys in the classroom."

As Morgan noted in Diller in the literature review, different situations within schools infer that boys are strong and girls are weak. One girl in Tuckahoe clearly gave an example of this and many of the other girls agreed that it is a frequent occurrence. "When teachers need to carry something they always ask the boys, and if a girl raises her hand, she says, 'No, I need two strong boys' and that kind of makes me mad, because a lot of girls at this age, some of them are stronger than boys (laughter)." Some other girls at Tuckahoe also felt that boys were able to goof around and joke with the teacher and get away with not getting in trouble. They said that if a girl had done the same thing, the teacher would not tolerate such behavior and rather, would put the girl on their bad side. These discrepancies were noted quite frequently in Tuckahoe but not as much in Freeman, where many girls felt that girls rather than boys got away with more things. This was due to the fact that girls tend to "suck up and kiss up to the teacher" in order to get better grades and make friends with the teacher. Whereas, the boys at Freeman, the girls stated, where uninterested in having better relations with their teachers and rather were more into themselves as friends and enemies.
Overall, the findings were surprisingly and unfortunately quite similar to the many findings in the literature I reviewed for this project. Teachers calling on boys to carry heavy stuff, the lack of women in history books, and the distraction of rowdy boys in the classroom, all are examples of such findings. The most concise findings, which were applicable to analyze have been presented in the table format and by direct quotes. These findings show that at St. Catherine's the focus is on developing the individual whereas in the co-ed schools (Tuckahoe and Freeman) the focus is on developing students as good citizens, who are well-rounded and willing to help others. This difference can be due to numerous factors including curriculum, teaching styles and the culture of the school. In conclusion, I have found that although the findings state such features of the school, I think it is important to look at how the schools can incorporate both styles of learning.

CONCLUSION

Schools are making slow improvements towards incorporating new styles of learning, and educating. Whether or not they are teaching girls to be leaders is difficult to answer, since many schools are not calling what they do leadership training. Burns comments on this by saying that the reason leaders aren't leading is because, "...many of us don't know the faintest concept of what leadership is all about" (Burns, 451). What is leadership is truly the question to this entire project along with how can we learn to let it help us to be better people for a better world? These questions should dominate the culture within schools and allow for the inclusion of leadership on a very elementary yet effective level.
If we don't even know what leadership is and what it can do, can it essentially be taught to young girls in a school which already considers them second-class citizens? Cole suggests that leadership can be learned, "...provided one has the right kinds of ability in the first place" (Cole, 380). Such abilities should be taught at an early age starting in kindergarten and then continued thorough the school years. Cole even suggests that an actual class be devoted to leadership for young students, so it can, "...give help in the understanding of themselves, in the understanding of other people's motivations, and in the solving of interpersonal problems; and it can provide contact with and observation of leaders in the community" (380). As we have seen at the Jepson School of Leadership over the past six years, and as I have seen over my past four years, leadership can be taught. Whether it is by theory, literature, art, current events, speakers, movies, presentations, out of the class projects, internships, or service, leadership exists everywhere and it is time we spread the word to schools with students of all ages. But first, we must be sure leadership is defined properly in a fashion which is most applicable to the educational setting as it relates to the real-world

Leadership is a collection of morals, values, personalities, service, leaders, followers, students, teachers, parents, children, and goals. It is evident in some classes and some activities, but it is not the main focus within schools nor do students even know about it or what it can do for individuals and groups. It should be incorporated in a manner, which does not make it stand out from the crowd of other topics, as an unusual, or special topic, like women are in the special sections of history books. Rather, leadership should be incorporated in all classes and in all fields in a collaborative manner which relates to many subjects and issues, in order to create more leaders.
Leadership can provide for everyone in an educational setting and can create a community affect within schools, which Lee and Marshall consistently suggest. By creating such a community, where relationships are important, people value one another and their work, and where everyone is working towards improvement and success, a school would no doubt create better leaders in teachers and new leaders in students. We must incorporate into our schools a more communal approach along with the three C’s of care, concern and connection. Unfortunately though we cannot just “add leadership and stir”, like many philosophers, politicians and researchers believe you should do with women’s studies when they suggest, “just add women and stir.” It must be a gradual change in schools and one which is highly accepted by all introducing it. Children must learn that school is a community for them to flourish in, not just a place to go to everyday.

By introducing these traditional values of society which are predominately considered feminine, a school will be able to address the needs of both boys and girls, while attempting to transform them into future leaders of society. At Freeman High School, a girl in the focus group approached me at the end and said, “. . .you know, I never really thought about it, leadership is a weird concept but it really would help us if we learned about it and how to use it...it sure would help me more than Geometry.” So, yes, a school can teach girls to be leaders, not only because it can be taught but because girls want to be taught. The better question is when are they going to start doing it.

The following is a list of recommendations I created from the information collected during the literature review and on-site focus groups at the schools.
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ALL SCHOOLS:

TEACHING GIRLS TO BE LEADERS

♦ Conduct a Career Day at your school and have alumni and community leaders come in for the day to talk to students about their careers, decisions and goals in life.

♦ Establish a committee program in which each student is part of a committee such as Arts, Science, Sports, Service, Critical Thinking, History or Leadership - provide as many leadership opportunities whether it be in government, sports, clubs or within class.

♦ Make every month and every day women's studies month – make women a part of the classroom and school as if they were men or rather the standard.

♦ Teach students about stereotypes and gender roles at an early age. Use movies, books and other resources in order to keep it creative.

♦ Begin a mentoring program for girls whether it is elementary, middle or high school – mentors can always benefit a young girl who is unsure and nervous during her developmental stages.

♦ Encourage girls to participate in sports and be sure that your school is abiding by the rules and regulations set by Title IX. Support your girl athletes: ask about their game, attend their games and encourage them to do well.

♦ Make math and science fun for girls and destroy the Barbie stereotype, that girls hate math. Rather, teach them new ways to explore these subjects. Hold a Mathematics and Technology Fair in which the girls coordinate and participate in.

♦ Teach the history of the women's rights movement, talk about notable female leaders both past and present and encourage book reports or other projects on women when the opportunity allows.

♦ Avoid the stereotype that only boys like computers. Suggest some great Web sites designed for just girls. Here are some suggestions:

  American Girl Online:  www.americangirl.com/ag/ag.cgi
  Expect the Best from a Girl:  www.academic.org/
  Girl Tech:  www.girltech.com/index_home.html
Works Cited


Rose, Jennifer in “Welcome to the White House, Ms. President. Creative Classroom. March/April, 1998: pg. 76-82


*Also available at: http://www.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/cgi?dbname=gao&docid=f.he96122.txt


http://www.education-world.com/a_curr/024.shtml
http://www.cdc.gov/spbranch/Educational_Options/sga.refs.htm
Fact Sheet

Single Gender Academies Pilot Program

The Specialized Programs Branch of the California Department of Education is responsible for administering the Single Gender Academies Pilot Program established by the enactment of Assembly Bill 3488 (Chapter 204, Statutes of 1996).

Background

The Single Gender Academies Pilot Program Act added Sections 58520 to 58524, inclusive, to the Education Code and provided funding to enable the Superintendent of Public Instruction to allocate $500,000 to each of ten districts that apply and are selected to participate in the pilot program.

Governor Wilson in his 1996 "State of the State" speech proposed establishing all-male academies as magnet schools for at-risk boys and all-female schools focused on math and science. The governor strongly advocated improving public education by giving parents more choices in preparing their children for real-world opportunities. Single gender academies were viewed as a way to provide local school districts with another option for meeting the unique educational needs of their communities and providing parents with another choice in selecting the best educational environment for their children.

The intent of the Legislature, as stated in Education Code (EC) Section 58520, is "that single gender academies operated according to the provisions specified in the legislation shall be tailored to the differing needs and learning styles of boys and girls as a group" [emphasis added]. Further, the intent is "that if a particular program or curriculum is available to one gender, it shall also be available to those pupils of the other gender who would benefit from the particular program or curriculum." The section on intent concludes with the requirement that single gender academies be operated so as to offer:

- Diversity in educational opportunity.
- Equal opportunities at both boys' and girls' academies.
- Equal funding and facilities at both boys' and girls' academies.

Purposes

Increasing diversity of choice for participants in California's public schools is the primary purpose for establishing single gender pilot academies. Clearly, however, experience with single gender approaches in non-public schools has shown benefits that go beyond diversity. They include the following:

- Student academic outcomes are enhanced.
- Desired personal characteristics such as self-efficacy, are demonstrated.
- Academic settings with small classes isolated from negative community surroundings are facilitative.
- Faculty expressly selected to serve the needs of reluctant learners foster increased student attendance.
- Participating students express satisfaction with academies and their environment.

Characteristics of Single Gender Programs

Most single gender programs emphasize one or more of the following:
Focus on same-gender role models and bonding.
Improvement of students' transition to adulthood.
Improvement of self esteem and overcoming negative images and stereotypes.
• Strengthening parent and community involvement.
• Providing a safe haven for participants.

Research on Single Gender Education

Summaries of research on single gender educational programs indicate that:

They seem to reduce dropouts.

There is improvement in general academic performance among urban males, and in achievement in math and science among females.

Single gender educational settings are believed to reduce the distraction boys and girls create for each other, particularly during the middle-grade years.

The effectiveness of single gender programs may be due more to students' and parents' motivation, commitment, and small class size than to the fact that they enroll only boys or girls.

Some research has been reported on single gender education in public settings that may be helpful to district administrators, school board members, parents and staff as they consider whether to establish single gender academies in their districts. The Department is conducting an ongoing search for these reports and will provide information at its web site on all the references located. The information can be accessed at http://www.cde.ca.gov/Educational_Options/sgaRefs.htm

Academies--A Description:

The dictionary definition of "academy" is "a school for special instruction." In California, educators are familiar, for example, with Partnership Academies developed pursuant to Education Code Section 54690 and the following sections, and some specialized and magnet schools and programs that have been called "academies."

An academy does not necessarily have to be on a separate site, and may be a "school within a school" (SWAS) located at a coeducational site so long as the full curriculum is offered to the academy students in a single gender environment. An academy may also be a school of any other configuration that a school district may establish pursuant to its general authority as specified under Education Code Section 35160.

Scope and Funding of Pilot Program

The Pilot Program will provide each of not more than ten school districts or county offices of education that choose to compete for the developmental funding, with a grant of $500,000 ($250,000 for each of a pair of academies) for the first year of operation. It is possible that the first year's funding will be followed by a similar grant for a second year.

Single gender academies must meet the requirements for funding based on ADA in order to be eligible for state apportionments for operations. An academy established as an alternative education magnet school
pursuant to Education Code Section 58500 et seq. must be funded at the same level as other schools of its type, per Section 58507.

Districts applying for grants to establish single gender academies will be encouraged to employ funding mechanisms and generate the organizational support needed to perpetuate the academies when state funding is withdrawn after a maximum of two years. This would provide parents with an ongoing educational option designed to meet their children's unique educational needs and provide other benefits such as increased retention and safe, orderly campuses.

**Potential Applicants**

Any county office of education or school district having middle schools, intermediate schools, junior high or high schools may compete for pilot project grant funding.

**Timeline for Awarding Grants**

All school districts and county offices of education in California were invited to submit applications for grants to establish single gender academies by Monday, June 16, 1997. The Department of Education, through the Educational Options Office, provided application materials, met with potential applicants, received and reviewed applications and awarded grants on the following timeline between March 21 and June 23, 1997:

- March 24
  Distribution of Invitation to Submit Letters of Interest in the Single Gender Academies Pilot Program

- April 15
  Distribution of Requests for Application to all districts that have submitted a Letter of Interest

- April 18
  Final date for receipt of Letters of Interest

- April 23
  Applicants Briefing Meeting in Sacramento for representatives of all county offices and districts that have submitted a Letter of Interest. A Memorandum from General Counsel will be provided.

- June 16
  Receipt of completed applications at the Educational Options Office by 4:00 P.M

  August 25 - December 18, 1997
  Announcement of grant awards

**Timeline for Operation of Pilot Program**

County offices and districts awarded grants should expect to operate their single gender academies for two school years, followed by a six-month period to analyze and prepare the required report of results. Major segments of the timeline and the work to be accomplished in each are as follows:

- July 1, 1997 to June 30, 1998 - First year of pilot program
July 1, 1998 to June 30, 1999 - Second year of pilot program

July 1, 1999 to December 31, 1999 - Preparation of reports on the "relative success" of single gender academies as required by Education Code Section 58523

- On or before January 1, 2000 - Submission of final reports

**Additional Information**

The Specialized Programs Branch, through the Career Development and Workforce Preparation Division and the Educational Options Office, will provide ongoing technical assistance to districts throughout the Single Gender Academies Pilot Program.

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For more information about the Single Gender Academies Pilot Program, please contact:

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Reference List - Single gender schools research focused

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Web Page Created by: Janet Canning

Last uploaded on Saturday, January 31 1998
Overview of Focus Group

I. Introduction
   A. Welcome
   B. Explain research project, thank everyone for attending
   C. Statements of purpose of the interview
   D. Guidelines to follow during the interview

II. Warm-up
   A. Set the tone
   B. See participants at ease
   C. Allow for any initial questions

III. Classification of Terms
   A. Establish the knowledge base of key terms through questions
      1. Leadership – and any other terms which relate
      2. Women’s Studies – girls
      3. Middle School – grade breakdown 6-8, 6-9 (pre-high school)
   B. Provide definitions of key terms and any other questionable terms

IV. Establish Easy and Non-Threatening Questions
   A. Initial questions should be general
      1. Discuss class, studies, teachers, programs, school setting etc

V. Establish More Difficult, Leading Questions
   A. Following questions should be more in-depth, more personal perhaps
      1. Discuss leadership, self-esteem, confidence, choices, thinking, etc.

VI. Wrap-up
   A. Identify and organize the major themes from the participant’s responses
   B. Allow for them to ask any questions or make any final comments
   C. Express thanks and explain next step for my research

Adapted from Focus Group Interview in Education and Psychology by Sharon Vaughn, Jeanne Shay Schumm and Jane Sinagub 1996
FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

1. Tell me about your school, classes, etc.? Teachers, are they all women?

2. Have you learned about women leaders, read about women in class textbooks, learned about women in science classes?

3. How are your math and science classes oriented and conducted?

4. Tell me about your sports programs, activities, and clubs? And whether or not they are offered to girls, if girls participate, etc?

5. What would you like to accomplish or be in the future?

6. Have you ever run for class elections? What type of student does?

7. What opportunities have you been offered at this school to be a leader?

8. What makes a leader? Qualities of a leader?

9. What is leadership to you?

10. Who do you consider a leader?

11. Do you consider yourself a leader? Now or later?

12. Do you think it is important to consider or to be considered as a leader? As a woman?

13. Do you feel you are being taught to be a leader?

14. How does being in a school with all girls/boys and girls feel to you? What do you think it would be like to be in the other type school?

15. What do you think of women in the world today?

16. Why do you feel that there are so few women in leadership positions?
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

APPENDIX