

HEGEMONY AND HIERARCHY: BECOMING A TEACHER IN TORONTO, 1930-1980*

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What do we know about how and why people become teachers? As Lortie points out, "there is nothing obvious about the ways people are routed into various kinds of work in modern society."¹ In a recent interview study,² two generations of women and men who became teachers and then principals within the Toronto Board of Education between 1930 and 1980 described their experiences. This paper draws upon their accounts to discuss how gender, ethnicity, and class have been important factors which have affected not only people's decisions to enter the teaching profession but their placement within a teacher hierarchy.

Prentice has discussed how women came to occupy the lower levels of a developing hierarchy among teachers in the late nineteenth century in Canada.³ By the 1870s, women were numerically predominant within the teaching occupation, but they were also largely clustered in the lower grade levels and few of them held administrative roles such as that of school principal. As Table 1 illustrates, this differential placement of women and men within teaching has persisted throughout most of the twentieth century. To explain this phenomenon, we need to understand how school culture constructs and is constructed by those who act within it in the roles of teachers and administrators. That culture, however, exists within larger social and historical contexts which affect the ideas and actions of the individuals who have the ability to sustain and alter its elements.

Using ethnohistory, an interdisciplinary approach to the study of culture which systematically integrates anthropological techniques and procedures with historiographic methods, we can combine synchronic description and analysis with diachronic explanation to achieve what Axtell has described as the "detailed long-range plowing" of a culture⁴ and what Quantz calls "a concrete image of the subjective worlds of the members of a particular group."⁵ This form of inquiry strives to uncover the cultural or group definitions used by historical participants and the conceptions of the truth upon which they acted.

Although limited to exploration, this method provides important insights into a history of teachers which centres on teachers themselves and renders what Hoffman refers to as the "texture of the teachers' experience."⁶ While ethnographic studies of education offer that potential, all too often they have been "time-flat" in orientation. Ethnohistory, however, stresses that "the unfolding of educationally relevant behaviour is embedded in a broader historical complex of cultural problems and processes."⁷

In the collected life histories of the twenty-four women and men in this study who come from two generations of teachers working within the same school board, it is possible to identify the "alternatives that were both conceivable and possible given the time period"⁸ and to raise questions about "the sexual struc-

turing of society and particularly of the public school, within which both women and men teachers in systematic ways have plied their craft and lived their lives."⁹ The findings stress that masculinity and femininity are "not private nor solely the product of biology, but are created through the intersection of political, social and economic forces that vary over time and among cultures."¹⁰ The data also suggest that any consideration of gender must lead to a discussion of other factors such as ethnicity and class because such factors are so closely related to gender that to speak of one necessitates a consideration of the others.

Weiler distinguishes between traditional and critical educational theory by pointing out that while traditional theorists in education have taken the existing arrangement of society as a given, critical theorists have argued that society is both exploitative and oppressive but that it can be changed. Coming from a variety of philosophical and sociological traditions, theorists in the two categories can be differentiated by questioning their views of schools. Traditionalists see schools as a means of "rationally distributing individuals in what is conceived as a basically just society."¹¹ Critical theorists, on the other hand, see schools as sites of social and/or cultural reproduction, or they may stress that schools are important settings in which individuals and groups can "assert their own experience and contest or resist the ideological and material forces"¹² they encounter.

My focus is on the everyday world as described by women and men in these two consecutive teacher generations. Their autobiographic narratives inform us of how they have thematized and ordered their experiences and how they have planned their actions. Having such information offers the possibility of investigating what many feminists have argued must become a central concern of inquiry in schools, and elsewhere, that of the "actual concrete form" of material life. This is done in the recognition that

women's place as invisible or subordinate is not simply a matter of an hegemonic language and ideology, but that women *live* their relationships in the material world. The consciousness of women is not created solely by a male hegemonic ideology or language; it is grounded in actual material life. That material life includes obligations and duties which are not only different from those of men, but which male studies of social reality have left invisible.¹³

Having information from two consecutive generations allows for questions about continuity and change over time in such concrete forms of material life for women and men. Such information clearly illustrates that "the complex of gender inequality and patriarchal ideology is not a smooth functioning machine. It is a mass of tensions, contradictions and complexities that always have the potential for change."¹⁴

At the centre of much of this complexity is what Freire,¹⁵ among others, has called the subject-object dualism which is most satisfactorily explained as a

dialectical relationship. My aim is to elucidate the dialectics of gender in the lives of teachers and see in their lives how structural forces have in some sense acted upon them, and also see “their own growing consciousness of the world they have inherited and their own choices and actions to change that world.”¹⁶ I endeavour to study such complexity for both women and men and to question choices and actions which perpetuate existing “worlds” as well as those designed to alter them.

Becoming a Teacher

In the accounts of becoming a teacher given by women and men in the two generations studied in this research, three major themes were clearly enunciated. The first revolved around explanations of the decision to teach. The second included descriptions of teacher preparation and the third centred on accounts of how teaching positions were actually obtained. Each of these themes is discussed for the two cohorts¹⁷ or generations. That discussion is followed by an analysis of how gender, ethnicity, and class can be viewed as important factors in the production and reproduction of a school culture and a teacher hierarchy within which women and men have been differently located.

1. Deciding to Teach

1.1 Economic and Political Contexts

Men and women in the first cohort began teaching in Toronto in the 1930s and 1940s and their decision to teach was strongly affected by the economic conditions of the times. As Steven¹⁸ put it:

There were six hundred bodies for every job available. Students couldn't get a job anywhere so they went into teaching....I would have gone to university had my father not fallen on bad times.

Geraldine agreed that choices were limited. She recalled:

It was the Depression and we knew that jobs were not easy to get and I thought that if I had a little more education than some of the others, I might just get a job. I had made up my mind at that time that I would go into teaching and it was just a case of getting additional qualifications so that you'd have a little bit of an edge when you did come to look for a teaching job....I worked hard because I felt every lesson had to be prepared....You were to do your job and you'd better do it well or you wouldn't have one.

While such conditions limited both women and men, the data of this study reveal that they saw their options as being closely gender-linked. As Lillian put it:

There weren't many things for girls to go into then. You could go into physiotherapy and occupational therapy. There were a few going into commerce and finance. There were a few going into medicine, not many. Nursing and teaching were it.

Tables 2 and 3 illustrate statistics which support Lillian's statement. They show how strongly the labour force in this period was segregated by sex.

Comments by the men in the first cohort suggest that not only gender but also geographic location (rural or urban residence) and a preference for mental rather than manual labour affected what they saw as viable options. They concurred that for bright boys from the farm, there were few choices. Matthew recalled that

it was the depression. There were no jobs....At that time about the only avenues were banking and teaching. About one person out of our group would get a job in a bank and the rest would either teach or go to Detroit and work for Ford. That didn't appeal to me at all.

When we consider the distribution of teachers by sex in Canada, Ontario, and Toronto (Table 4) over this period, we can see a steady increase in the percentages of men in teaching after 1921. This may reflect declining opportunities for men in other fields. If we consider teachers as a percentage of the total labour force or as a percentage of the male labour force (Table 5), fairly consistent patterns emerge. Within the female labour force, however, Table 5 reveals that while over 7% of all women who worked for pay between 1911 and 1931 were teachers, that percentage dropped to 5% in 1941. This may reflect an expansion of opportunities for women in other fields.

Scrutiny of average salaries paid to men and women in teaching over this period, however, confirms the view that within the developing teacher hierarchy, as elsewhere in the Ontario labour force (Table 6), women received lower monetary rewards on average than did their male counterparts. This differential contributed to them seeing themselves and being seen by others as occupying lower positions than men in most organizational hierarchies. But the wages of women teachers continued to be higher than those which women could obtain in most other fields, and this sustained the belief that teaching was "a good job for a woman."

Men and women in the second cohort of the study began teaching in the 1950s and 1960s and, like their counterparts in the earlier generation, their decision to teach was strongly affected by the economic conditions of the times. Those conditions, however, were quite different. Rapid economic growth, increasing urbanization, and growing technology contributed to a teacher shortage during this period. As Maureen remembered it, "there were lots of opportunities for work and work of any kind." Linda recalled: "There were thirteen or fourteen pages of ads for teachers."

Tables 7 and 8 illustrate an expansion in the array of jobs available to workers but they also show that the labour market in Ontario remained strongly segregated by sex. Importantly, as Tables 9 and 10 show, more and more men began to enter teaching and teachers actually became a larger proportion of the labour force than in previous years. Part of that change no doubt was related to the growth of secondary schools, including vocational schools, and to an increase in administrative roles in schools (see Table 11). In 1940, 20.5% of the secondary staff in the Toronto Board was assigned to manage while 79.5% were designated as teachers. By 1980, 47.6% were officially recorded in the *Toronto Board of Education Yearbooks* as managers and only 52.4% were teachers.

While teaching appears to have become more of a good job for a man during this period, it was much more socially acceptable for men to become administrators and for women to work as teachers. Because salary incentives were a part of movement up the teacher hierarchy from such levels as vice-principal to principal and principal to superintendent, and because relatively few women obtained these positions, women on average continued to receive lower wages for their labour as employees of the teaching and administrative staff of schools. Why then did so many women continue to become teachers? To address this question we must consider the social contexts of these times.

1.2 Social Contexts

Women in the first cohort all agreed that teaching was a socially acceptable career choice which pleased their parents, even though many of them admitted that it had not been their first choice as an occupation. As Geraldine reveals in her comments, her decision was tempered by her perception of her class location and by her pragmatic appraisal of the labour force. She stated:

Women had a difficult time in Medicine in those days. You almost had to be the daughter of a doctor before you could hope to get anywhere in medicine. So, I decided that it wasn't a very smart move for me to make to try to become a doctor. Teaching, however, was something that women could be fairly sure of finding a job in if there were any jobs at all.

Geraldine's comments about same-sex role models in teaching were also echoed by other women in this group. She explained:

I had an aunt who was a public school teacher in the city of Toronto and she was very close to our family. She came very often to see us and so on and I liked the life that I thought she lived and the interest she had in her job. I thought, well, that is something I think I would like to do.

Men in this cohort, on the other hand, all agreed that little social acceptance had been accorded their decision to become a teacher. As Arthur recalled, one elderly

lumberman had said to him: "Any boy with red blood in his veins should be up North lumbering or mining or something."

The family backgrounds of the men and women in this cohort were very similar. They said that their fathers were labourers, clerical workers, or farmers and each of them reported that their mothers had never worked outside of the home for pay but had been housewives or farmwives. Their ethnic heritage was either English, Irish, or Scottish. Women told of courageous grandmothers who sailed alone to the New World, and men reported that economic hardships had forced their forefathers to emigrate to Canada. These descriptions along with census data on the ethnic backgrounds of teachers in these years (Table 12) suggest that in this era it was primarily the sons and daughters of Canadians from British backgrounds who saw teaching as a likely and favourable occupational opportunity. As Steven remembered it, "when I first started teaching, a foreigner in teaching was unknown."

For all of the women in this cohort, teaching developed into a career in part because they did not marry. The Toronto Board established an official policy in 1921 which required all women teachers to resign immediately upon marriage. That policy was not rescinded until 1946. As Geraldine explained it: "Men teachers were married and women teachers were unmarried....Women didn't have a full-time job and be married; that wasn't the pattern." Women and men in this group reported that at first they had seen their choice to teach as only a temporary measure. Madeline recalled that it was the only way that her mother would permit her to leave home and live on her own and Martha thought of it as part of her training as a dietician. She stated:

I was going to go back to the hospital work but you see when you are a dietician you have a lot of teaching to do and I had student nurses and I thought it would be great if I found out how to teach, so I chose to go to the Ontario College of Education thinking that I would go back to dietetic work.

Both of these women agreed that once they became teachers, however, the pay and opportunities were better than those they could find elsewhere and so they remained.

Men in the cohort agreed that for them teaching had been a form of escape. As Arthur put it: "For the bright ones from the country, teaching was about the only way out." Joseph stated: "Some lady teachers stayed on for years; most men did not." Steven remembered: "I thought I would get my math at Toronto University and still become an actuary....I just got caught up in elementary teaching."

The social acceptance of men and women as teachers appears to have changed more slowly over time than the actual participation of men in the teaching occupation. Echoes from the first cohort reverberate in many of the comments made by men in the generation who followed them. Harry stated:

My father thought it was terrible....I can remember suggesting to him that I was going to teach and that didn't go down very well at all. I think it was almost a class distinction. He said: "Why the hell, they're all women down there." Down there; I don't think it was accepted very well.

Lester explained:

I was tired of business. I wasn't that interested. It didn't give me that much of a thrill. Since jobs were available, I decided to go into teaching in 1956....I suspect that I could have made more money in some kind of other work but those jobs didn't have the security or the kinds of benefits that teaching had.

Harry remarked:

I wanted to spend my life doing what I wanted to do instead of what I was forced to do....It was the kind of life that I wanted to have and I had a feeling my father's work, that the business world turned me off. I wasn't interested in it...so that put a curtain across a whole area of things I might be in. Well, if you got a job in teaching you were pretty well set. There wasn't the worry of losing your job like our good friend lost his and almost committed suicide.

For women, however, teaching was still a career choice which not only pleased their parents but offered them a degree of security, respect, and an opportunity to express their creativity which few other fields could offer, particularly those areas where women still remained only token participants. Maureen recalled:

I worked for a year and a half and I was becoming very interested but also very bored because I was doing technical, technician type of work and I wanted to do something more challenging....Well, in chemistry we were still looked upon as second class citizens and that it was not really a career for a woman. There were the traditional roles of nursing, teaching, and secretarial work....I guess because of my dissatisfaction with the chemistry line, I went into the traditional female role....I was looking at a position that was going to have some future for me and that was going to be something that I enjoyed....I took the female route to being a teacher. It was logical and it was acceptance, in those days. I would question it today, but thirty years ago, no.

But Brenda's comment suggests that not all women saw teaching as something acceptable. She recalled:

It was not socially acceptable to become a schoolteacher. You should have gone to university and a lot of my friends were going to university, so I thought I should go to something other than Normal school but the vice-principal told my mother that I would not be successful at university and she was happy when I decided to go to Normal school.

Women in this generation, like men and women in the earlier one, admitted that at first they had seen teaching as only a temporary role. As Deborah put it, "what I really thought was that I would get a teaching certificate but not use it for a while." Linda stated: "I had not set out to make teaching a career that I would be in until I retired," and Susan recalled:

I had really planned to go to university when that year was over....I always found work interesting and easy and I could combine all kinds of things with what I was doing....even after I was married I kept on teaching because I enjoyed it.

Unlike the women of the first cohort, teaching after marriage had come to be expected for these women. They reported that for them childrearing rather than marriage was likely to spell an end to a woman teacher's career or at least interrupt it for a few years. Some of the women in this group, however, had combined teaching with mothering despite the conflicts. Deborah reported:

I used to rush home at noon to breastfeed my baby....I still did all the cooking. The children were my first priority and everything else came second. It would have been different, what I would have done, if it hadn't been for the children.

Linda recalled:

When the children woke up you just wrapped them up and put them in a chair in the dining room while you prepared and marked until they got sleepy again, close beside you....I took a year off to be with my youngest child because I felt guilty that I hadn't spent much time with him as a baby.

Men in the second cohort were unlike the women of this group in the two areas just discussed. They felt that teaching was something which could develop into a career of long-term interest to them. They also did not see marriage or childrearing as an obstacle or in any way in conflict with their plans for a career in teaching. Like men in the first generation, each of the men in this group married and had children whereas women in this cohort had varied backgrounds with regard to marital status and children.

While men and women in this group were not alike in marital status, they were very similar once again in the occupation of their parents and in ethnic backgrounds; but they were a little different from the men and women of the earlier cohort. Fathers of the later group included not only clerical workers, labourers, and farmers but also some business managers, clergymen, and doctors. Mothers had all worked for pay for some time before marriage and some mothers had acted as breadwinners in the family due to divorce or widowhood. Ethnic backgrounds also showed more variations in this group. As Table 13 shows, increasingly, the sons and daughters of those from other than British backgrounds began to enter the teaching ranks.

2. Teacher Preparation

2.1 *Institutional Arrangements*

In the late nineteenth century, teacher preparation in Ontario, as elsewhere, became increasingly standardized. Normal schools were established and those who wished to become teachers were required to obtain teaching certificates. A range of such certificates was available depending on the degree of secondary schooling completed prior to attendance at the Normal schools, or Teachers' Colleges as they came to be called. Those who attended had to be at least sixteen years of age and were expected to have completed some secondary schooling. To teach in secondary schools in the province, a university degree plus training at the Ontario College of Education in Toronto was expected. While such requirements were sometimes waived (when suitable applicants could not be found, such as in remote rural areas), increasingly, formal teacher preparation became required. That preparation generally began for individuals with a decision about teaching in either elementary or secondary schools.

The data of this study clearly reveal that in the recent past the decision of teaching in elementary or secondary classrooms has been heavily predicated on the economic resources available to those who decided to enter teaching. Lillian remembered:

If I would have had the money to go to university, I would have gone into Commerce and Finance. As it was, my father's friend drove us to Normal school and that saved quite a bit of money. It meant that I could afford to go.

Gender, however, also played an important role because men reported that their choice to teach in elementary schools was often related to what they saw as a relatively easy route into school administration. Matthew recalled:

When I left the Director's office there was no doubt about what I was to do. I was to go into elementary teaching because the chances for promotion were very good...it was two years before I was promoted.

Women, on the other hand, did not anticipate movement into roles in school administration and they agreed that “principals were always he.”

In the teacher hierarchy, administrators ranked above teachers in terms of both prestige and pay. There was also a difference between these factors for elementary and secondary teachers, with those in secondary schools placing higher than those who worked with children of younger ages. Because relatively few women were in school administration and because they were found in larger numbers than their male colleagues in elementary rather than secondary schools, they occupied lower levels in the hierarchy on average than did men. This different placement of men and women in teaching began during their teacher preparation. It was related to the early practice of granting elementary teachers either first, second, or third-class certificates. Since salaries became linked more strongly to such credentials than to experience, it was possible for novice teachers to be paid more highly than their senior peers. Steven remembered:

The rub came from a few women who were third class, who were helping me learn to teach and they were getting \$700 and I was getting \$1600 and I heard them say: “Here I am a teacher of experience, helping you a beginner, making \$900 more than I am.” I had a very hard road to go there but I don’t feel sad about them. They rose above it and so did I, but thank God they did.

In Normal schools the people in the first cohort reported that it was a usual practice to segregate male and female students for much of the instruction. At the Ontario College of Education, where people trained for secondary school teaching, the different choices of subject specialties by men and women served as another means of segregation. Thus, the early introduction of individuals into the culture of teaching tended to reinforce norms and expectations in the wider society with regard to gender, and the appropriate placement of women and men within the teacher hierarchy was perpetuated. Men and women of the first cohort clearly indicate that anxiety about attaining a job at all tended to keep them from openly questioning such traditions.

Members of the second cohort repeatedly commented on how brief their teacher preparation had been. Those who went to the Teachers’ Colleges talked about a heavy emphasis on sports and a “lot of silly rules.” Harry recalled:

Teachers’ College was pretty grim. After being in the Air Force, it was awfully hard to come back and be treated as a kid.... Teachers’ College didn’t really help me when I was faced with my first class. The first few months of the real world were awfully exhausting and I didn’t get much help from the college on that.

Teaching jobs for this group, however, were plentiful and those with university degrees often opted to take two summer courses at the Ontario College of

Education rather than “waste” a year in teacher training. Joan explained: “I don’t think it occurred to any of us to spend a year at OCE when we had already been offered jobs.” Murray recalled: “If you had a position in September, you could go in the summer....When you finish university you are not exactly affluent and if you can start right away, then fine.”

At both Teachers’ Colleges and the Ontario College of Education, formal segregation of students by sex no longer occurred but an informal segregation based on the different choices of male and female students by grade level and subject specialty continued. The data also suggest that for those in this cohort, on-the-job training came to be accepted as necessary and even preferable to academic study, a tendency which this group remembered encountering in existing practices and cultural norms, many of which were strongly gender-based. Robert remembered: “Sports were virtually all boys’ sports....I was there every night after school. I did yard duty every day.” Maureen recalled:

It was an older staff at that school and I was the youngest person there....There were three tables in the staff room: one all-male, one all-female and one mixed. I said to the men: “I’m coming to the men’s table today and you’re going to have to stop telling your dirty jokes.” I just sat there for a day. I made life miserable for them for a while but they took it.

Women and men in this generation were much more secure than those in the earlier generation about obtaining and keeping their teaching jobs. This security, along with wider societal change regarding women’s “proper place” in society, helped to foster questioning attitudes towards long-standing gender-based cultural traditions for teachers.

3. Getting a Teaching Job

Men and women in both cohorts revealed that there were also some traditions with regard to hiring practices for teachers. Those in the first generation stated that when they initially sought a teaching post, it was unusual for a beginning teacher to get a job with the Toronto Board. The common practice was that teachers would get experience in rural areas before they tried to gain access to positions in city schools. As Geraldine put it, “usually you had to work outside for a while before Toronto would take you. They could insist on experience.” But Lillian and Agnes both started with the Toronto Board. This raises questions about whether the pattern applied to both men and women or whether it was largely a pattern for men which was assumed to be a universal pattern. The comments of the women in the first cohort are somewhat unclear about this since they indicate that women did tend to stay close to home and start in Toronto but they also show that women felt that by doing so they were “exceptions to the rule.” It could be that this rule applied primarily to men.

Urban boards usually paid higher salaries than rural boards and men and women in the first cohort considered it prestigious to work for the Toronto Board. Jerry commented: "I was ambitious to get on the staff of the Toronto Board....They had the best pay and I wouldn't have to teach all the grades." Joseph remembered: "I could see absolutely no future in the rural board. I didn't want to be a country school teacher for the rest of my life."

The members of the first cohort also reported that it was common to use connections to get a teaching job. Geraldine remembered: "I met the daughter of the principal at summer school....I think she must have put in a word with her father." Lillian reported: "There was this girl looking for a job and her family owed the doctor a lot of money and he was the Chairman of the Board of Education and she got the job." Local boys and girls usually had the best chance of getting hired in both rural and urban settings. Arthur recalled: "Now I guess when I got my job Dad was known all over....Our name was well regarded and so I got my job. I met the trustees, and I was a local boy in one sense." Joseph stated: "I got my job within five miles of my home. It wasn't the school I went to, but people knew me and knew my parents."

Women in the first cohort (who had all grown up in urban areas) remembered that because they wanted to stay "close to home," they tried to get jobs in schools nearby or they worked as supply teachers for the Toronto Board until a permanent teaching post was available. Agnes recalled: "I was thrilled to get the job in Toronto because I wondered if I'd be sent away from home and of course, I'd only been away from home once." Lillian said: "I did thirty days of occasional work that first year. The pay for an occasional was four dollars a day with fifteen cents a day for relief. There was no unemployment insurance in those days." Men in the first cohort taught in rural schools close to their homes or in remote rural schools which they described as "too rough" for women teachers.

Thus the evidence suggests that men and women in the first cohort were assigned to different types of schools. All of the women worked in multi-grade schools where they were a junior member on staff and all the men began teaching in rural schools where they taught all the grades and were responsible for the running of the school. Matthew recalled: "I got a job teaching in a little continuation school....I taught there for a year, all the grades nine to twelve." Jerry stated: "I was hired sight unseen in Northern Peterborough....I taught all the grades from one to eight. It was a standard rural school in the bush, the rocks and the Shield."

There were differences too in the living arrangements of the men and women in the first cohort as they started to teach and in the ways they remembered using their wages. The women tended to remain in their parents' household, to contribute to that household and to use their income for clothes and such luxuries as trips. Although the women stated that their salaries were lower than those paid to men (even though they had the same qualifications), women said that the money they made was more than what most other women were making at that time. Lillian explained: "I always lived at home....One hundred dollars a month

was great. My sister didn't make that much....I took my first trip overseas in 1938 because my aunt was going." Geraldine had enjoyed her accommodations when she first taught:

I couldn't have afforded an apartment....You were just lucky to have a job....I boarded and the other boarders were roughly my age. There were five of us around the table and it was a very congenial group....Our lives were less complicated in those days. You know, there were hardly even any radios.

All the men in the first cohort left their parents' households when they started to teach. They boarded or set up their own household and used their money to support that household. Sometimes they also financed further education for themselves. They remembered that they were unable to afford many luxuries despite the fact that their salaries were higher than those paid to women teachers. Three of the men mentioned having saved to buy a car (an expense they saw as a necessity) and they all reported that they could have made more money in almost any other field, except perhaps in farming. In contrast to Geraldine's comments, Jerry spoke about how dissatisfied he was with his situation as he began teaching. He remembered: "Working in the country was a shock.... You did your thing as best you could....I didn't drink or smoke....I saved for a car to get the hell out of that place."

These data suggest that in the 1930s and 1940s hiring practices within the Toronto Board were somewhat different for women than they were for men. It also appears that patterns for men were considered the norm for all teachers, even though high percentages of those who were hired during the period were women. The data also show clear differences in perceptions held by candidates and hiring bodies about what were appropriate types of posts for women and men. The end results of such perceptions were that women were more likely, under the Toronto Board, to have taught in large multi-grade schools where several teachers worked under the management of a school principal who was usually a man. Men were more likely to have gained some experience in smaller rural schools in which they had management duties before they came to teach for the Toronto Board. What this meant was that men were actually in a more favourable position than women with regard to previous experiences that could be deemed important to their movement into management roles in schools.

The data also suggest that men's ambitions to further their studies and advance to principalships were spurred on by their dissatisfaction with their roles as teachers. Women, on the other hand, saw their own economic needs differently than did their male colleagues or those in positions to promote them and they reported that their positions as classroom teachers were quite satisfying to them and they felt little need for change.

According to those in the second cohort, only students with the best teaching marks could hope to work for the Toronto Board. Mary recalled:

There was no teacher shortage and it was a known fact that only the top five per cent of students from teachers' college would actually find jobs in the city of Toronto, only those with a straight A average. Everybody else would go to the country schools....There were still country schools in North York.

Harry explained: "These people who had been teaching in the war years here, there hadn't been much new blood come into the schools, so you had a situation where there were a lot of elderly teachers in a school." But things changed when a teacher shortage developed in the 1950s and 1960s. Joan remembered: "We went down to Toronto in March or April and we walked into this incredible meat market. We were given jobs and walked out again." Murray recalled:

Back then when there were all kinds of teaching jobs, they had what was called by the people involved the cattle auction. An ad came out in *The Globe and Mail*, thousands of positions, and everybody went down to 155 College Street on a Saturday....You were interviewed and you were told: "Here's a promise of a position provided you finish your degree."

Men and women in the second cohort gained their first teaching jobs in multi-grade urban schools where they were junior staff members. Members of this cohort (all from urban backgrounds) reported that they wanted to work in city schools. Maureen put it this way: "Because we did our teaching in Toronto schools and being a Toronto person, I never considered working anywhere but for the Toronto Board." William said: "I had lived in the city and city kids had a backwoods idea about what the farm was like. You tried to get a job in the city." People in this cohort stated that the norm or general rule was that Toronto supplied its own teachers and thus, it was now anyone from outside Toronto who was the exception to the rule. One man and one woman in Cohort 2 fell into that category.

Living arrangements for men and women in the second cohort were described as being more similar. Three of the women and one man reported that they lived with their parents when they first started teaching and the rest said that they set up their own household, either with friends, or with a spouse and children. Men continued to make more money as beginning teachers than women,¹⁹ but everyone agreed that teachers' salaries had improved over time.

Women in the second cohort who lived in their parents' household made similar comments about how they used their wages to those which women made in the first cohort, but none of the women in Cohort 2 lived "at home" for all of their work lives as had the women of the first group. Men and women in the second cohort said that they used their wages to help support their household and they also had enough money to buy such things as cars, fur coats, or trips. Only those who were the single breadwinner (this included both men and women) reported that their beginning wage as a teacher was less than adequate. All the

men in the second cohort pointed out, however, that teaching did not provide them with as high a salary as they could have made in most other jobs. As William put it, "I could have made more money on the railroad after grade ten." Women, on the other hand, continued to state that teaching provided about the highest wage they could obtain without investing more time or money in preparation.

Hiring practices in the Toronto Board changed. In the 1930s and 1940s, most teachers, particularly men, had to "pay their dues" in rural areas before they could hope to teach in Toronto. Also, "subjective" assessments of candidates were commonplace and local boys and girls often had an advantage in getting teaching posts. Women teachers were routinely paid lower salaries than men. By the 1950s and 1960s, it was increasingly difficult for the Toronto Board to maintain these hiring practices. The board was under pressure from parents to provide qualified teachers despite a teacher shortage across the province and it had to compete for good teachers with the growing suburban boards in the Toronto area. Also, following *The Teaching Profession Act* of 1944, teachers' federations were guaranteed automatic membership as all Ontario teachers were required by law to belong to one of the federations. Assisted by increased membership and funds, the federations were better able to apply pressure for salary improvements and for the use of credentials rather than personal characteristics in hiring practices. In response to these pressures, the Toronto Board began relying more heavily on "objective" qualifications in order to screen candidates for teaching jobs. This shift was important because it paved the way for teachers' later arguments for equitable treatment regardless of such characteristics as ethnicity, race, or sex. Also, women were able to insist that salaries be based on qualifications and experience and that men should not automatically receive a higher teaching salary.

Summary

In examining the three themes of deciding to teach, teacher preparation, and getting a teaching post, it is evident that, for women and men in both of the cohorts studied, perceptions of material circumstances were strongly related to gender. The coping strategies these individuals employed and their efforts to alter existing patterns were constrained by their beliefs about what was appropriate for members of their gender group and were affected by their views of themselves in relation to dominant class and ethnic groups in the wider society and within the culture of teachers. Such views and beliefs, however, were not only the result of a hegemonic language and ideology, but they were also related to historical contexts and the material conditions of people's lives.

By comparing the experiences of women and men in these two generations of teachers under the Toronto Board, we can see both consistencies and changes. For men, their placement in the teacher hierarchy remained fairly constant as relatively few men ended their teaching careers without having attained some type of administrative role. For women, however, even though relatively few females became school administrators, changes occurred during this time period

which ostensibly increased the strength of their arguments that exclusion from these roles was inefficient for the organization and unjust to them as individuals.

No longer forced to retire upon marriage and increasingly finding themselves able to continue teaching even after childbirth, women could see themselves and be seen by others as more competitive with men for positions which offered prestige and monetary rewards. As more women took on major wage-earning responsibilities in their households, their needs for such attainments also became more visible. Most telling of all perhaps was the assertion by women in both groups that only when they felt secure in keeping their jobs were they disposed to argue for improvements and changes in the organization.

Thus, it seems that if we are to understand adequately why people choose to become teachers and how they come to occupy possible roles within the teaching occupation, we must continue to explore the complex relationships between such factors as gender, class, and ethnicity in the process whereby individuals and groups struggle to comprehend the world they have inherited and strive to change it.

Table 1*

Toronto Principals by Sex: 1930-1980

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of Principals (Elementary)</i>	<i>Males</i>		<i>Females</i>	
		<i>No.</i>	<i>(%)</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>(%)</i>
1930	82	75	91.5	7	8.5
1940	88	84	95.5	4	4.5
1950	88	84	95.5	4	4.5
1960	90	83	92.2	7	7.8
1970	180	97	89.8	11	10.2
1980	105	90	85.7	15	14.3

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of Principals (Secondary)</i>	<i>Males</i>		<i>Females</i>	
		<i>No.</i>	<i>(%)</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>(%)</i>
1930	19	17	89.5	2	10.5
1940	18	16	89.0	2	11.0
1950	18	16	89.0	2	11.0
1960	18	16	89.0	2	11.0
1970	26	23	88.5	3	11.5
1980	31	27	87.1	4	12.9

*All statistics in this table were calculated from the raw data listed in *The Toronto Board of Education Yearbooks, 1930-1980*.

Table 2
 Percentages in the Female Labour Force by Selected
 Occupational Groupings, Ontario 1911-41

<i>Year</i>	<i>Service</i>	<i>Professional & Technical</i>	<i>Clerical</i>	<i>Labourers</i>	<i>Other</i>
1911	33.6	n/a	11.3	n/a	55.1
1921	23.4	n/a	22.4	n/a	54.2
1931	30.0	15.6	22.1	1.4	30.9
1941	29.3	13.4	23.6	1.5	32.2

n/a = not available
 Source: Canada Census

Table 3
 Percentages in the Male Labour Force by Selected
 Occupational Groupings, Ontario 1911-41

<i>Year</i>	<i>Agriculture</i>	<i>Professional & Technical</i>	<i>Clerical</i>	<i>Labourers</i>	<i>Other</i>
1911	36.0	n/a	3.3	14.0	44.1
1921	31.0	n/a	5.5	13.0	47.9
1931	27.0	4.3	4.9	13.4	46.0
1941	23.0	5.3	6.8	8.1	51.9

n/a = not available
 Source: Canada Census

Table 4
 Teachers by Sex: Canada, Ontario, and Toronto, 1911-41

<i>Year</i>	<i>Canada</i> %		<i>Ontario</i> %		<i>Toronto</i> %	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
1911	19	81	21	79	24	76
1921	18	82	18	82	24	76
1931	22	78	23	77	31	69
1941	25	75	29	71	31	69

Table 5

Ontario Teachers as a Percentage of the Total Labour Force,
the Male Labour Force, and the Female Labour Force
in the Province, 1911-41

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total Labour Force</i>	<i>Male Labour Force</i>	<i>Female Labour Force</i>
1911	1.4	.4	7.2
1921	1.6	.3	7.4
1931	1.8	.5	7.3
1941	1.6	.6	5.5

Table 6

Male/Female Salary Differentials for Selected
Occupational Groupings, Ontario 1921 and 1931

<i>Year</i>	<i>Occupational Group</i>	<i>Average Weekly Salary</i>		
		<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Differential</i>
1921	Hairdressers	\$22.40	\$15.37	\$ 7.03
	Cooks	20.08	9.53	10.55
	Salesmen/women	23.00	12.11	10.89
	Telegraph operators	30.38	19.22	11.15
	Waiters/waitresses	14.76	9.08	5.68
	Teachers - school	33.07	19.37	13.70
1931	Operatives, boots and shoes	\$18.21	\$11.28	\$ 6.93
	Office clerks	24.66	18.27	6.39
	Salesmen/women	24.46	12.35	12.11
	Telegraph operators	31.25	23.97	7.28
	Waiters/waitresses	15.52	8.80	6.72
	Weavers	17.18	11.51	5.67
	Teachers - school	39.51	23.55	15.96

Table 7

Percentages in the Female Labour Force by Selected Occupational Groupings, Ontario 1941 to 1971

<i>Year</i>	<i>Service</i>	<i>Professional & Technical</i>	<i>Clerical</i>	<i>Labourers</i>	<i>Other</i>
1941	29.3	13.4	23.6	1.5	32.2
1951	17.6	12.1	32.7	2.2	35.4
1961	21.3	13.7	32.8	1.4	30.8
1971	15.8	16.3	32.7	1.2	34.0

Table 8

Percentages in the Male Labour Force by Selected Occupational Groupings, Ontario 1941 to 1971

<i>Year</i>	<i>Agriculture</i>	<i>Professional & Technical</i>	<i>Clerical</i>	<i>Labourers</i>	<i>Other</i>
1941	23.0	5.3	6.8	8.1	51.9
1951	13.0	6.1	7.3	8.2	58.4
1961	8.8	8.4	7.6	6.6	60.0
1971	4.8	11.7	7.2	6.5	62.2

Table 9

Teachers by Sex: Canada, Ontario, and Toronto, 1951-71

<i>Year</i>	<i>Canada</i>		<i>Ontario</i>		<i>Toronto</i>	
	<i>%</i>		<i>%</i>		<i>%</i>	
	<i>M</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>F</i>
1951	28	73	30	70	38	62
1961	29	71	32	68	37	63
1971	34	66	35	65	33	67

Table 10

Ontario Teachers as a Percentage of the Total Labour Force,
the Male Labour Force, and the Female Labour Force
in the Province, 1951-71

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total Labour Force</i>	<i>Male Labour Force</i>	<i>Female Labour Force</i>
1951	1.6	.5	4.6
1961	2.3	1.0	5.3
1971	3.0	1.6	5.4

Table 11

Distribution of Administrative Roles in Toronto
Secondary Schools 1940-80

<i>Year</i>	<i>Non-Admin. Staff</i>	<i>Admin. Staff</i>	<i>%Admin</i>	<i>Prin.</i>	<i>V.P.</i>	<i>D.Head</i>	<i>A.D.H.</i>
1940	687	141	20.5	18	6	117	0
1950	673	191	28.4	18	19	154	0
1960	774	266	34.4	18	19	184	45
1970	1616	649	40.2	26	49	296	274
1980	1467	699	47.6	31	48	328	292

Source: *Toronto Board of Education Yearbooks, 1940-80*

Table 12
 Percentages of Men and Women in the Labour Force
 and in Teaching by Selected Ethnic Origins,
 Ontario 1931 and 1941

		<i>Teachers</i>			<i>Labour Force</i>		
		M	F	T	M	F	T
1931	British	84.0	85.0	85.0	73.0	79.0	74.0
	French	6.0	8.0	8.0	7.7	6.8	7.5
	German and Austrian	4.0	3.6	3.8	4.6	1.1	4.6
	Dutch	1.9	1.4	1.5	1.8	1.3	1.7
	E. European	.3	.3	.3	1.5	3.3	1.8
	Hebrew	2.5	.2	.7	1.7	2.0	1.8
	Italian	.1	.2	.1	1.4	.8	1.8
	Scandin.	.1	.2	.2	.8	.5	.7
	Asian	n/a	n/a	n/a	.8	.4	.7
	1941	British	84.0	82.0	83.0	71.0	76.0
French		5.7	9.9	9.0	8.8	8.0	8.6
German		3.8	3.8	5.0	5.0	4.0	4.9
Dutch		2.2	1.8	1.9	2.0	4.0	1.9
E. European		.6	.5	.5	4.0	2.9	3.6
Jewish		1.9	.3	.8	2.0	2.2	2.0
Italian		.3	.3	.3	1.7	1.4	1.6
Scandin.		.4	.3	.3	.9	.6	.8
Asian		.1	.1	.1	.6	.2	.5
Indian		.1	.1	.1	.8	.4	.7

M = % of all males in teaching or the labour force
 F = % of all females in teaching or the labour force
 T = % of all members in teaching or the labour force
 n/a = not available

Table 13
 Percentages of Men and Women in the Labour Force
 and in Teaching by Selected Ethnic Origins,
 Ontario 1961 and 1971

		<i>Teachers</i>			<i>Labour Force</i>		
		M	F	T	M	F	T
1961	British	70.5	72.0	71.0	58.0	61.0	59.0
	French	7.8	9.9	9.0	9.3	8.0	9.1
	German	5.6	5.6	5.6	6.8	7.0	5.0
	Neth.	3.0	1.9	2.4	3.1	2.3	2.9
	E. Europe	4.0	3.3	3.6	6.5	6.1	6.4
	Jewish	.7	.7	.7	1.1	.9	1.0
	Italian	1.5	1.1	1.3	4.8	4.1	4.6
	Scand.	1.0	.8	.9	1.1	1.0	1.1
	Asian	.5	.4	.5	.7	.6	.7
	Indian	.2	.2	.2	.4	.3	.4
Other Eur	6.3	3.8	4.6	5.5	5.4	5.5	
1971	British	66.2	66.3	66.0	58.0	60.5	58.9
	French	7.2	10.1	9.1	9.0	8.3	8.7
	German	6.8	6.0	6.3	6.7	6.5	6.6
	Neth.	2.4	2.0	2.1	2.8	2.2	2.6
	E. Europe	4.1	3.8	3.9	5.3	4.4	4.4
	Jewish	1.8	2.4	2.2	1.9	1.9	1.9
	Italian	2.7	2.4	2.5	6.4	5.2	5.9
	Scand.	.9	.9	.9	.9	.8	.8
	Asian	2.0	1.2	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.6
	Indian	.1	.2	.2	.5	.4	.5
Other Eur.	3.9	3.7	3.8	7.0	6.7	6.9	

NOTES

- * An earlier version of this paper was presented at the Canadian History of Education Association/Association canadienne d'histoire de l'éducation Fifth Biennial Conference, October 1988.
1. Dan Lortie, *Schoolteacher: A Sociological Study* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), 25.
 2. This study is my doctoral dissertation research, entitled "Naming the Experience: Women, Men and Their Changing Work Lives as Teachers and Principals" (Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, 1987).
 3. Alison Prentice, "The Feminization of Teaching," in *The Neglected Majority*, ed. Susan Trofimenkoff and Alison Prentice (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1977).
 4. James Axtell, "Ethnohistory: A Historian's Viewpoint," *Ethnohistory* 26, 1 (1979).
 5. Richard Quantz, "Ethnohistory in Education," paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, 1981.
 6. Nancy Hoffman, *Woman's True Profession: Voices from the History of Teaching* (New York: Feminist Press, 1981).
 7. John Puckett, "Doing Educational Ethnohistory: A Consideration of Method from a Study of Foxfire," paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, 1988.
 8. Richard Quantz, "Conceptual and Methodological Bases of Oral History," paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, 1983.
 9. David Tyack and Myra Strober, "Jobs and Gender: A History of the Structuring of Educational Employment by Sex," in *Educational Policy and Management: Sex Differentials*, ed. Patricia Schmuck and Richard Carlson (Eugene: Academic Press, 1981).
 10. Carol Vance, "Toward a Conversation about Sex in Feminism: A Modest Proposal," *Signs* 10, 1 (1979): 127.
 11. Kathleen Weiler, *Women Teaching for Change* (Massachusetts: Bergin & Garvey, 1988), 5.
 12. *Ibid.*, 11.
 13. *Ibid.*, 61.
 14. S. Kessler, R. Ashenden, R. Connell and G. Dowsett, "Gender relations in secondary schooling," *Sociology of Education* 58, 1 (1985): 34-48.
 15. P. Freire, *The Politics of Education* (New York: Bergin & Garvey, 1985).
 16. Weiler, *Women Teaching for Change*, 73.
 17. The word cohort is used here to describe a group of people who have shared some common temporal demographic experience. For further explanation see Haupt and Kane, *Population Handbook* (Washington: Population Reference Bureau, 1978).
 18. Pseudonyms are used to protect the confidentiality of those who participated in the interviews.
 19. In the Toronto Board, beginning salaries for males and females were officially equalized in 1949 but they were based on qualifications. Since more men who entered teaching had university degrees, as a group their salaries were higher.