

**The Secretary,
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Workplace Relations,
Parliament House,
Canberra ACT 2600**

Dear Sir/Madam,

Firstly we would like to thank the Federal Government for launching this long overdue enquiry into boys disadvantage in education. Enclosed below is our submission. Boys are being severely disadvantaged in Australian educational systems today. This means that boys self esteem is falling and they are failing to gain entrance to our universities. Just to give you some idea of how much ground boys have lost, in 1970 males comprised approx 70 per cent of tertiary enrolments. Today that figure has dropped to just 46 per cent. Females numbers have risen in the same time from 30% to 54%, a huge increase.

Something must be done. **Over the page is our list of six recommendations.** We urge the Standing Committee to carefully consider these recommendations.

Also enclosed is an index and two Appendices - they being:

Appendix A Boys Educational policy

Appendix B George Gilder on the relationship between the alleged 'glass ceiling' and men's importance to women and married life.

Please acknowledge the safe arrival of this submission.

Yours sincerely,

Alan Barron, Convenor.

1 (a) Girls ahead in education

In Australia, studies have shown boys falling well behind in the crucial area of literacy skills. An example is the Productivity Commission's Report on *Government Services 2000*, which indicates Victorian boys are twice as likely as girls to drop out of school before Year 12. More than half of university enrolments go to women, who also have a majority in the public sector. (The Age News Extra page 4, 17/6/2000)

1 (b) Author says boys disadvantaged by two decades of strident feminism

In her book *The War on Boys*, Christina Hoff Sommers attributes a widening gender gap in American education to inaction by the education establishment, which, she claims, has been captured by sex-equity experts who have discouraged policies aimed at addressing boys' disadvantage. Hoff Sommers accuses these experts of distorting research findings to promote the myth that American schools short-change girls. She says that, on the contrary, it is boys who are doing badly, and provides evidence that boys achieve lower grades than girls, are more likely to drop out or be held back, and are a full year and-a-half behind girls in their reading and writing skills. She calls for an end to the partisanship clouding the issue; "We should call for balance, objective information, fair treatment and a concerted national effort to get boys back on track.

That means we can no longer allow the partisans of girls to write the rules." Hoff Summers, writing in the May issue of *The Atlantic Monthly*, asserts that any impartial review of the facts there shows the typical boy is 1½ years behind the typical girl in reading and writing, is less committed to school and less likely to go to college.

In Britain, almost four years ago, *The Economist* summarised: "Traditionally, boys have done less well than girls before puberty, but used to catch up afterwards. What is new is that boys are no longer catching up." Surveying a multitude of factors behind the spectre of under-educated and unemployed men, *The Economist* reflected: "Many of the gains the West has made through enhancing the economic position of women will be tarnished if the male labourer is pushed to the margins." The US figures cited by Hoff Summers are telling. In 1996, 8.4 million women and 6.7 million men were enrolled in US colleges. Projected figures for 2007 are 9.2 million women and 6.9 million men. (Michael Barnard, *The Herald Sun* 4/6/00, p 47).

Has that partisanship also occurred in Australia? Yes. Bettina Arndt writing in the Melbourne AGE had this to say; "As in the US, most academics who claim expertise on gender issues in education were supporters of the highly successful '80s strategies promoting girls education. "There was a string alliance between these academics and people in bureaucracy," says Sydney University Professor of Education, Peter Cuttance. "For them, it was always a girls' issue, rather than a gender issue. That group of people weren't interested in boys' achievement. The politics of the issue was they were there to bat for girls, which they did very effectively."

(The Age News Extra page 4, 17/6/2000)

1 (c) Duplicity - why boys are losing

have achieved an average 18% higher grades than boys in the Victorian Certificate of Education. In English, the gap is more than 20%. Buckingham's paper, *The Puzzle of Boys Educational Decline*, shows that a decade ago in New South Wales, boys dominated in both the top and bottom HSC achievement bands. Now there are almost twice as many boys as girls at the bottom end and the number of males at the top is thinning fast. In the 1998 New South Wales HSC, the average mark for girls was higher than for boys in 64 out of 70 subjects. Literacy testing shows boys are not just doing badly in relation to girls, they are also doing considerably worse than they were two decades ago. Other States are believed to have experienced similar trends. Longitudinal surveys of Australian youth show that the proportion of 14-year-old boys who failed to achieve basic literacy in 1995 was 35%, up from 30% in 1975. (The equivalent figures for girls were 26% and 27%). (The Age News Extra page 4, 17/6/2000)

1 (e) The widening gender literacy gap

Melbourne University Professor of Education, Peter Hill, an expert on literacy is concerned about boys' literacy and dismisses the notion that there is no great gap between boys' and girls' literacy outcomes. He says figures are misleading as literacy tests only measure minimal tasks. "To talk about literacy in terms of basic skills is dangerous stuff," he says. He says the gap in Year 12 English between boys and girls is alarmingly large and extends right through to the highest achieving groups. According to 1998 figures in New South Wales, females outnumber males by more than 2:1 in the top quarter of the English results. Hill believes there is no question that boys' underachievement relative to girls' performance should be addressed. "Now we have a gender gap in the opposite direction that is bigger than anything in the past. We must find the reasons for the gap and attend to the problem of low achievers, of whom a majority are boys." (The Age News Extra page 4, 17/6/2000)

1 (f) Modern educational practises favour females

For too long now boys educational and emotional needs have been ignored. Educationist Diane McGuinness says that the focus on girls has become a modern obsession and has effectively disenfranchised boys. She also says that even prior to the advent of feminism, the educational system was female centred in any case as the skills that lead to early success in schools draw on female talents and favoured the female disposition, (namely: the requirement to sit still for long periods of time, stress on passivity (listening, and wrote learning). As a result she says, boys who insisted on acting like boys (asking frequent questions, who talked in class (disruptive behaviour), and their high levels of demand on teacher time, were labelled 'hyperactive'.

2 Why we think an overhaul is long overdue

Let us make it clear from the start we are not opposed to social reform, or for the removal of discriminatory practices providing that such reform is an improvement, and that the majority of people concerned support such a reform. We, like the vast majority of people, hold to the equal worth and status of both sexes. We deplore the unjust treatment of women or anyone else, irrespective of gender, race, or creed.

2 (a) Some fundamental questions need to be asked

When feminism started, we like most men, thought that some corrections were needed and that when these corrections were done, things would settle down, and having created the level playing field it would now be up to women to take advantage of these new opportunities. Some women did, but still outcomes were not equal. The big mistake of feminism was blaming men, rather than acknowledging that there are innate differences which in the main cause differences in outcomes. Unfortunately policy makers meekly accepted feminist analysis which was biased and inaccurate, yet feminist policies were not only accepted in education but vigorously enforced. Having won comprehensively the 'battle of the sexes' it went to their heads. So the womyn demanded more, and these demands became more radical, more strident, and again men caved in to these demands not knowing, or even caring about their impact on boys or men. Some wanted Rome to be built in a day, some wanted it built yesterday, and when this didn't happen, they upped the ante.

(iii) Flawed methodology

The 'women's movement' (more accurately the feminist movement) has always blamed men for female under-performance when in fact they should have taken a long hard look at themselves. When affirmative action failed to produce equal outcomes within a short space of time, feminists blamed the failure of women (on achieving equal outcomes) to 'socialisation', it was men and their alleged 'structural barriers' they alleged had erected which stopped women they claimed. In other words men, the male system, anything but themselves was to blame. Feminists discounted biology as irrelevant when in fact it was vert germane to the whole issue. So again feminist demands became more strident.

Governments of all persuasions threw huge amounts of money and resources at the women 'problem' when in fact there was no serious problem to be fixed.

The women's movement has continued to grow stronger as Governments both State and Federal spend billions on women's issues but virtually nothing on men's, so is it any wonder boys are feeling like second rate citizens both in school and in the wider community (this could explain the high male suicide rate). The political power of men has waned as a result. Discrimination has become a vast grievance industry with tremendous influence and clout. Today women are no longer a disadvantaged minority, they have become the ruling elite. The level playing field is titled very much in women's favour. This makes it very difficult for men to get ahead, to develop a genuine male perspective rather than some revamped form of feminist analysis.

2 (b) *What is needed - a development of a unique masculine ideology*

The Women's movement got to where it is today because women united under one banner and worked for a common purpose. Female humans, like the females in the animal kingdom, are communal creatures, they stick

Yet on the other hand, our instincts tell us to please women and to protect them. So most men go with the flow and simply swim with the feminist tide. But this is sloppy thinking and must be weeded out of education policy.

2 (c) Education must be freed from feminist shackles

Modern education must be freed from the doctrinaire approach foisted on the educational system by radical feminist ideology. Given the complete domination of the educational system by political correctness, no wonder the sexes are confused as to what is the appropriate sex role. Many young people have trouble distinguishing between fiction and reality - despite our increased sophistication. With males making up the bulk of the unemployed and with males comprising four out of every five suicides, is this because boys/men no longer feel valued, or that they have no proper role to play any more?, and that there is no longer something unique which defines them as males (as distinct from females)?

There is a need in our view to develop a male friendly education system, even if this means developing a separate system from the feminist dominated mainstream. We must not fall into the trap of simply taking up the basic gender framework as laid down by orthodox feminism and tinker around the edges. Most gender study units which we have seen can be likened to a pantomime. In a pantomime, females dominate. A female plays the lead male role, and another female plays the lead female role. It is no surprise to us that boys feel like second-rate citizens when one looks at the present female dominated educational system and the material presented in our schools.

In South Australia, 90 per cent of all new teachers hired are women. This prompted Shadow spokesman for Education Mr Rob Lucas in 1994 to comment, "The equal opportunity movement is dominated by women concentrating on the problems of women and girls."

2 (d) Gender inclusive language

The feminine is regarded as the norm (Once 'he' and 'him' were used, then it became 'he/she' and 'him/her'. Now it's 's/he' and 'people'. Often 'she' is used as a generic term. In naming, girls are always listed before boys (or go on top). Even you place girls/women before boys/men. This may be a small detail, but as any feminist will tell you the person is political, the little things convey a mighty lot, the subtle inference being that girls take precedence over boys. If you are promoting positive boys education policies then make sure you place boys/men first, that's only logical.

Also, the use of gender inclusive language must convey to impressionable young male minds that there is something wrong with maleness because it is 'sexist' to use male terminology on its own, even if its use is

While I concur that women historically were sometimes on the receiving end (more out of omission rather than commission) given the historical context of the time, it was not just women who suffered; men did too.

And we are not just talking about life expectancy but also working conditions. **Social deprivation was more a class issue rather than a gender one.**

In any case, sex roles are not always due to socialisation, biology does play a large part in the human scheme of things. By and large male dominance in the west has led to the development of the technological scientific age in which human rights have been developed to a high degree - for both women and men. After three years of studying at university I was sick of reading about how terrible men were either explicitly or implicitly.

Male authors were just as bad as the female authors for doing this. It just would be good to read something that is male affirming and which does not take umbrage at the male dominance which confronts the student of science, history, sociology, politics or whatever field one is studying.

It's time the feminist control of academia was broken and replaced with a much more gender inclusive ideology which reflects the plurality of the community.

What is needed is a positive male perspective should endeavour to show that male dominance is natural, normative and for the most part beneficial, and not something that is simply socially constructed - nor is masculinity inherently harmful or sinful.

One of the most positive things you can do is to lobby for more male teachers in both primary and secondary levels, especially at primary level. Male achievement is linked to sex identity and the vast under-representation of men is seriously hindering the performance of boys. Boys need plenty of role models, especially role models in authority. Positive role models for boys are disappearing at the speed of light, which is the reverse of what is happening to girls.

2 (f) Bring back male subjects and female subjects

The point I am making is this. Females have an identity role built-in, men do not. (*"Finding roles for women*

comes a time when a person needs to rely on the skill of others. Everything in our universe is designed to avoid self sufficiency. There is a complementary relationship between the Sun and the planets, between land and the sea, between living creatures, between light and darkness, and between males and females. If education does seek to make students self-sufficient and self-reliant, this not only encourages conceit but effectively elevates females above males, because they can have it all -a career and children, men are only useful as inseminators.

There is no place in the feminist equal opportunity society for the family. To pretend that life is individualistic and gender neutral is one of the greatest and cruelest hoaxes of all time.

You might say well such a policy will limit girls (and boys too.) This depends on where you are coming from. But you can't have it both ways. If you are on about boys educational disadvantage, then the path you should take is clear. In our view, males, especially young males are facing an identity crisis, hence the turning to drugs and popular culture for quick fix, superficial answers.

2 (g) *Masculine psychology and sex differences*

The biggest failure of your '*Improving Boys Education*' as we see it, is that it does not appear to understand male psychology. Have you, or any other member of your team studied (male) psychology? In all due respect, you seem to have uncritically accepted feminist analysis as a 'given' and worked outward from there. Let us quote from psychologist and psychoanalyst Harold Voth:

'When laws are passed which prevent individuals having a sufficient freedom to find their best fit in the environment, we are in serious trouble. Our way of life is based on individuality, personal freedom, and the freedom to find expression of one's abilities. Personal abilities are related to sex identity; there are fundamental differences between men and women. When the process of selectivity between the individual and society is seriously interfered with by law, an eventual decline is the result, simply because people will be forced to fill positions which would be better filled by others.

The quality of maleness and femaleness is intimately woven into the overall fabric of personality. Human beings are not biologically bisexual. The human spirit is greatly impaired when childhood development does not lead to fully developed masculinity or femininity. Fully masculine men and feminine women are by definition mature, and that term implies the ability to live out one's abilities. These include the capacity to mate, live in harmony with a member of the opposite sex, and carry out the responsibilities of parenthood.

Mature people are competent and masterful; not only can they make families but they can take of hold

its place in the general scheme of things.) But you might say, 'well, that doesn't mean that women can't share leadership with men in roughly equal numbers.' As I said before, you can create an artificial situation and manipulate the situation to get any desired result. But this must mean that inevitably people will be mismatched to positions with a subsequent drop in efficiency and lead to antagonism within the ranks.

(We do not agree with affirmative action as it restricts men too severely. For example, let's say a company has 10 cadet technical traineeships. Five women and twenty men applying for these positions. The affirmative action advocate would say right, the five women are automatically appointed, and the best qualified men can have the rest. This is clearly unacceptable. An equal opportunity officer would say; 'well, 25 per cent of the applicants are female, and given that skills, abilities are equal, women should get 25 per cent of the total on offer; say at least 2, or at best 3 positions. But supposing that nine, or ten, of the best applicants are male, what then? The process of selectivity should be left to market forces to decide rather than some convoluted scheme to ensure equal outcomes. The process of selectivity is best left unfettered by artificial constraints as any company or organisation appoints the best person for the job, that's in their own best interests.

Equal outcomes if you prefer, can only be achieved by creating an artificial environment by restraining men and favouring women. This has been done in many fields including education, the workplace and politics. The female controlled (but male dominated) educational system is indifferent to boys/men at best, at worst it is openly hostile.

To put it crudely, males are the dominant sex, females the nurturing sex. This does not imply, or should be understood to mean, that one sex is better or superior to the other, or that one sex has the right to relegate the other sex to a class of serfs, or non-persons. Both sexes are of intrinsic value, equal in worth to the other, with both sexes sharing full civil and political rights.

The design of nature is for complementary sex roles. History will judge this generation most severely for its rejection of the collective wisdom of the ages in favour of an unscientific assumption (feminism) regarding sex roles. The drive to achieve equal outcomes is not so much a revolt against alleged male bias, but a retreat from common sense, a rebellion against the the purposes of nature, and is in effect waging a war against the primary and stability of family life, due democratic processes, not to mention masculinity and femininity.

The simplistic arguments to defend the equal outcomes ideology ignores many sociological, environmental and biological factors. The way forward is not to reconstruct gender in our schools or to reconstruct society on some feminist equal outcomes fantasy. We strongly suspect that this is where the whole gender debate has gone wrong because it is being fought on the emotional, rather than the rational

Educationalists must keep in mind that the effect of small sex differences which are barely noticeable in most circumstances and for most people at the extremes is profound. The fact that men in general have more drive, ambition, single-mindedness and competitiveness ensures they always show up at the sharp end of the pyramid, whether or not some women have them in equal measure. The so-called glass ceiling is often really a glass mirror. A dogged belief in equal outcomes is ultimately profoundly reactionary and patronising and will greatly harm the outstanding achievements of our outstanding women. Therefore to try to 'equalise' the role of the sexes is to try to achieve the unachievable. As educationalist Diane McGuinness well said, **"Biology sets limits, and culture plays an enormous role within them; if this were not so, we should all be either Einsteins or ineducable."**

2 (i) Males have never been part of the consultative gender process

When equality measures were first drawn up, feminists showed men no courtesy. Boys/men were never consulted, the original policy makers had tunnel vision, and the impact on males was never considered after all, they allegedly were the bourgeoisie -the ruling class. (On SBS the other week they had a program on dads/fathering with Steve Biddolph. There were two women on the panel along with two men. Late last year the same program had a segment on the changing role of women. On the panel were five women. It's funny that. Why do men need women to help them think?) So the sisterhood in the 60's tole men to take a very long walk off a very short pier. Too bad if it disadvantaged them, and it did, as results since the early 80s testify. However, this is where boys have lost out. Both women and men are supporting initiatives for girls. When it comes to boys, then boys' education - must of necessity consider girls. Why didn't someone say that to the original framers of equality policies in the first place?

2 (j) Maternal Role is Vital to Well Being of Society

Masculine role models are important for boys wellbeing and development. They are also important for girls. Professor Peter Blitchington, of St Andrews University, believes that the maternal role is fundamental to the wellbeing of society.

"Sexual roles - mother and father, husband and wife - are not just arbitrary categories into which people are squeezed; they are broad patterns and principles of behaviour which define the optimum ways in which men and women can relate together, enjoy intimacy, and provide a context in which children can grow up healthy and strong. "The maternal role is more than just one component in this pattern of complementary roles. It is the crucial pivot - the foundation - upon which both family and society revolve. How women fill that role determines the potential happiness and fulfilment of all of us."

2 (k) Boys and the feminisation of popular culture

Men have a marketing problem. They have received heaps of bad press from a female-friendly media. Men are usually shown in a negative light - as rapists, as harassers of women, as murderers, as child molesters, as swindlers, cheats and adulterers. No wonder many young men feel bad about being male. Women get all the good press. They are reported as being intelligent and capable (no problems there) and much fuss is made when women break into traditional male areas or the "glass ceiling". This biased

broadcast of actual court room cases featuring Judge Judy. On *ER*, the twist is that the male partner Mulder (David Duchovny) is intuitive and empathetic while the woman, Scully, is coolly scientific. Maybe that's why Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson) has become a cult figure, with their Internet Web site being one of the most visited. In medical dramas' once there was *Doctor (Ben) Casey* and *Doctor Kildare*, now its Georgie Parker in *All Saints* and Christine Lahti in *Chicago Hope* and a host of female leads in *E.R.* All the chat shows were male (Phil Donahue), now its *Sally-Jessy Raphael*, *Ricki Lake* and *Ophrah Winfrey*. Most shows have female script writers although most are produced by men. The rationale for having so many women is that apart from sport, women dominate television viewing, and even the full-time housewife likes to identify with strong female leads claims Lee Burton, a media lecturer from the Victorian College of the Arts.

The feminisation of the media is, I believe having a deleterious effect on your youth. Today our young men are restless, unmotivated and apathetic. And no wonder. There are no longer the positive role models for them anymore in popular culture. One there were "*My Three Sons*", "*The Brady Bunch*", "*Leave it to Beaver*", and "*Happy Days*" to provide positive male, family friendly role models. But not any more. Sit coms now depict friends flattening together and the focus is on work and/or having a good time. It has now become unthinkable to have a family based sit com today, because it is argued society is much more pluralistic and diverse, besides, the nuclear family is only 43 per cent of the population it is fallaciously claimed. (80 per cent of families have two parents and usually the husband is regarded as the chief breadwinner.)

2 (l) Feminisation of Australian culture has led to the breakdown of family life and of boys importance to it

In an era which has witnessed the breakdown in traditional sex roles and the widespread family breakdown and divorce - when a father's example may be in precious short supply or absent altogether - who is a boy/young teenager to look up to as a male guide to his rites of passage, now that positive role models are no longer available in our popular culture? Research shows that our young men, especially boys raised without fathers, are turning to Arnold Schwarzenegger's Terminator character -and others in his mould - as role models, according to Dr Peter West, a Sydney academic. He said that sons often sought aggressive masculine role models when their fathers were absent. He said that the "search for acceptable masculinity becomes an aggressive masculinity if there is no warm body (of a human role model) tempering the hardness." Dr West said many researchers found fathers were the ghosts of families today. Fathers were largely ignored in research on parenting and neglected by academic centres in preference for women's studies.

9.1 per cent of Australian 4.9 million families are headed by women alone, up from 7 per cent in 1988.

This means that for many boys growing up today there are no positive role models at home or in the popular culture. The question of appropriate male influences became more of a problem when a father's contact with his children was limited or ended through family breakdown. From the age of five and three-quarters, while boys are still holding the (psychological) hand of their mothers, they are also scanning their environment and studying for the part of what it is to be masculine. The problem, say sociologists and relationship experts, is that masculine images today are all too often one dimensional and contradictory, with each one emphasising certain qualities without being the full package necessary

and while some may rejoice in the feminisation of popular culture, the truth is that the negative impact on boys/men has not been measured, and worse still, even considered as an appropriate issue for discussion. It's time producers/script writers stopped their male bashing and returned to more traditional sex role depiction.

2 (m) Need to get back to basics

We think there is far too much emphasis on gender, gender construction and gender issues generally. **Gender issues are not central to education in our view.** Of course the women's movement hones in on gender because it is part of their political agenda. For most people, including most children, education is about the imparting of knowledge, learning to read and write effectively, learning new skills and making friends, and certainly not about gender reconstruction. We do not believe that education should focus on gender issues as a core concern or seek to achieve equal outcomes. However, there is a need for sex role identification (as discussed above), but apart from this, education should not be about gender (re) construction. The reason for this is simple: 'en loco parentis'.

2 (n) En Loco Parentis - the right of parents

Teachers and academics tend to forget that they '*act in place of the parents*'. We certainly do not agree that any school should proceed with any form of gender education without the express permission of, and involvement of, the parents. While equal opportunists/femocrats may firmly believe in the urgency of their cause, they have no right to impose their views on all students.

Australia is a democracy, a pluralistic society. If parents want their children to feel comfortable with traditional sex roles and for the education system to reflect that view, this is their right. Conversely, if they want their children to have a 'non-sexist' education that also is their right. The biggest problem we have with the present education gender policies is that they reflect feminist analysis and virtually give no credence to traditional roles. Whether a teacher thinks that traditional roles are '*sexist*' or "outmoded" is beside the point. Parents do, in a pluralistic society, have the right to demand that their views be reflected in the education system. It is a serious weakness of your 'Improving Boys Education' that it does not give sufficient weight to parents' rights in this regard. Don't you agree that parents have the right to expect the educational system to reflect their values too?

2 (o) Post-modernism

Much of modern education policy works on the (arrogant) assumption that there is only one view (correct or otherwise) on gender issues, i.e, the feminist one, and that other views on gender are not worthy of consideration. The idea that truth is monolithic has been challenged by post-modernist thinkers in any case. People like Feyerabend argue that truth is relative - and not universal. Having read copious amounts of feminist inspired gender policies for schools, we get the distinct impression that there is 'no truth but feminist truth'. The heavy handed approach adopted by many States has severely disadvantaged boys as proven by their under-performance in Year 12.

We therefore are of the opinion that much about modern feminist inspired educational policies are not

3 (a) *How education is failing boys - the facts*

In today's schools boys receive no special treatment despite the fact that more boys than girls drop out from Year 12 (final year at High School). Boys are performing 12 per cent worse than girls at Year 12 levels.

At our local High School, in the years 1996 and 1997, out of 22 students who received a TER score of 90 or more, 18 were female. In response we offered a scholarship for Year 12 boys to help redress this imbalance. We wrote to the school twice about this, but they never bothered to even reply - and this from a very "conservative" school. Eventually I spoke to the Principle and he told me that it's not in keeping with departmental policy to offer a boys only scholarship. He admitted that the school had nothing planned to redress the under-representation of boys at the top levels of achievement. This situation seems fairly typical across the state, and the nation.

Male decision makers, politicians, academics, all suffering from invincible ignorance, have not understood the real agenda behind equal opportunity laws which is to disenfranchise the male role in society. They have failed to do their homework on this vital issue. As a result, men have been betrayed, sold out, and young men's futures jeopardised.

	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Completed Final Year at High School	66%	77%
School leavers who continue into higher education (1990)	32,000	39,000
Studying for Bachelor Degrees	166,409	174,189
Total percentage of total student placements at tertiary institutions		
In 1963	70	30
In 1992	48	52
In 1997	44	56
Unemployment rates for graduates	21%	14%
<i>Learning skills</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>
On a test for mastery of literacy, at age 10, the average standard acquired was	46	59
On a test for mastery of numeracy, at age 10, the average standard acquired was	73	76

3 (b) **Boys disadvantaged by 'equal outcomes'**

Boys are being outperformed substantially by girls at VCE level. Males are now only 44% of

Since 1991, RMIT and Melbourne University have offered women places above better qualified men in engineering courses. This is an accepted affirmative action practice today. Can you imagine the outrage if it were men who were made the first in line?

Since 1980 in Victoria, a State heavily into affirmative action, female numbers in engineering courses have risen 57%, in law 52%, business studies 42%, and 21% in science.

In 1990, 11,000 additional student places had been created in higher learning. Of these, 77% went to women.

In fact, in 1998, 56% of all places at Australian higher learning institutions were filled by females (up from 30% in the mid 60s).

Pressure is being applied to boys-only schools to go co-ed because girls would benefit from studying male subjects. However, feminist academics want girls-only schools to remain single sex because girls 'especially benefit from a school program designed for them'.

In sport since 1986, thanks to affirmative action, primary schools can only have two sections - mixed teams or girls-only teams. Boys-only teams are forbidden.

In 1987, the Education Department of N.S.W. decreed that the female participation rate must be increased in hiring and promotion, particularly in appointments to senior management positions. Victoria and South Australia have similar policies.

Private Companies such as Caltex, IBM and Hewlett-Packard have special education schemes/scholarships for women. Hewlett-Packard, for example, offers five \$800 scholarships to females to enter computer studies. Males need not apply.

Affirmative action is taking its toll. As, little by little, women and girls receive a little help here, a little help there, men and boys are being gradually squeezed out.

At age 8, the Australian Bureau of Statistics reports, girls out-perform boys in school. A national survey in 1996 found third grade girls had a median score 9 per cent higher than boys for reading, and 18 per cent higher for writing. By year 12, NSW figures show, girls now average 8 per cent more marks than boys -although there are still narrowly, more boys than girls in the top 500.(The Age 4/6/98 A8-9)

Recent figures show that there are now some 27,000 students in Victorian boy's schools (down 9,000 in the past decade), and 34,500 in girls school (down 5,000 in the past decade). There is an additional 138,500 students in co-educational schools, making a total of 200,000 students in Victorian private schools, an increase of 20,000 in the past decade. (The Age 16/6/98 A6).

3 (c) Professor- women are no longer a disadvantaged group

education on 12.7% (down from 25% in '85), followed by engineering on 6.2% (down from 7% in '85), and lastly law 4% (up from 2.2% in '83). (The Age 16/4/98. A17).

3 (d) Why men and boys face an uphill battle

One could strongly argue that women are the ruling elite not just in education, in government particularly but also in employment. Collectively there must be a veritable army of equal opportunity officers across this nation. Each company of over 100 employees (some 10,585 nationally) must have its own Equal Opportunity (EO) officer who must report directly to the CEO and then to the Federal Government's Affirmative Action Agency as to what they are doing to increase the female participation rate.

Then each state primary and high school, university and TAFE college in the land has its own EO officer(s) as does each state and federal government department, as well as each union and the ACTU and other peak bodies such as the Victorian Chamber of Commerce - all have their "women's officer". It's hard to put a figure on the total but we estimate the 10,585 figure could be almost doubled to 17-18,000. So women are well funded and have all these people dedicated to helping their cause. Male numbers in the Public Service have dropped from 70% in 15 years to just 54% today thanks to reverse discrimination policies. So is it any wonder that employment opportunities for boys and men have dried up? Men are being left behind and marginalised - hopefully your committee can see this?

The reality is women are not longer a disadvantaged "minority". As indicated earlier, women now have a phalanx, a vast army of equal opportunity officers and tens of millions being spent on them. A couple of equity offers with a budget of \$200,000 may not mean much in isolation but taken together with other equity policies with their attendant officers (who are not isolated in reality but all interconnected in some way) has created a vast infrastructure which constantly and persistently focuses on just the female half of the population. The trickle has become a tsunami (tidal wave) demolishing all before it. This is why we say women have the political power and despite the veneer of male dominance, men have effectively disenfranchised themselves. Does the committee really think it is fair for governments to spend millions on girls and women and nothing on boys and men?

3 (e) Report highlights boys disadvantage in education

A recent report by Jeremy Ludowyke entitled: *Improving the school performance of Boys'*, found that overseas and local studies have highlighted a generally consistent range of issues including; the under achievement of certain groups of boys across a range of indicators, a continuing traditional gendered patterns of subject selection, an over-representation of boys in learning support programs, the over-representation of boys in school discipline statistics and high levels of bullying/harassment, increasing evidence of disengagement from schooling and anti-learning youth culture, increasing rates of suicide, and substance abuse and risk taking behaviours.

The report said that with the introduction of the 2 year Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) reliance on external examinations and placed emphasis on student centred learning meant that by 1995 girls were outscoring boys in almost every VCE study. Nationally, the number of girls completing secondary

In many schools students can go right through primary school without ever encountering a male teacher. Dr Erica Fydenberg, an educationalist psychologist at Melbourne University, said children needed a balanced exposure to both men and women. About 40 per cent of children were at some time in single parent, mostly single-mother, families. Many children had no male role models at school. Dr Fydenberg also said that male primary school teachers, and those that judge them, are experiencing role confusion common throughout society.

Lecturer Tom Hill from Deakin University said, "I believe that where there have been more male role models there has been a reduction in learning difficulties among boys."

According to trainee teacher Digby Jackson, many question why he as a male, wants to teach. Suspicions about young men being around young children abounded and many male teachers had their motives questioned by people perhaps only half-joking about child molesting.

(The Age 7/9/96 A3).

3 (g) Boys and men facing huge challengers in the future - are males becoming redundant?

Women were increasing likely to focus on their careers while their male partners took prime responsibility for their children, according to Professor Peter McDonald, from the Australian National University. He was speaking at a civil marriage celebrants conference held in Melbourne in 1998.

Professor McDonald, a leading family studies academic, claims that modern couples will often make the economically rational decision to focus on her career rather than his, if a choice has to be made. He said it was arguable that young women these days were better prepared for the future labor market than their male counterparts and emphasised that the trend towards equal pay, education levels and workplace representation was evident in people under 30. He attributed society's departure from the 1950s model of the man as sole breadwinner to social and legislative change.

"Women do not have the security of being dependent on their husband's earnings: he may lose his job, they may divorce, he may never exist. She, in many cases, will have a higher earning capacity than him and a more stable career path" Professor McDonald said.

Professor McDonald said the percentage of women aged 25 to 34 employed full-time increased from 27 per cent in 1972 to 41 per cent in 1996, while the percentage of same-aged men in full-time employment dropped from 95 per cent to 81 per cent over that period.

"A new sense of economic insecurity has emerged which puts pressure on existing relationships and leads to greater caution in making new, long-term commitments," he said. "Young people, especially girls, have sought to deal with this insecurity through higher levels of education." (The Age 16/7/98 A5).

Unfortunately, education has been too quick to implement feminist styled reforms which have destroyed carefully constructed social conventions which were designed to achieve some balance between men and women and between individual rights and responsibilities. Therefore men must not be nonchalant when it comes to surrendering traditional mores. We must not sell our birthright for a mess of porridge. It is easy -too easy to swim with the tide and to succumb to populist demands for equality.

Remember, we are not tinkering at the edges with regards feminist 'reform' in education, but the wholesale restructuring of society which has the potential to severely disrupt our way of life, especially for boys/men. Feminism threatens to undermine the civilising social conventions built up over centuries which has made us a great nation, and so it behoves men to proceed with caution.

situation must not be allowed to continue.

	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
<i>Total percentage in full/part time work in 1971</i>	68.3	31.7
.....in 1980	63.0	37.0
.....in 1992	57.5	42.5
.....in 1997	57.0	43.0
<i>Full time public servants in Australia</i>		
.....in 1952	116,944	33,599
.....in 1991	75,657	61,385
	(Down 41,287)	(Up 27,786)

(Note: In 1971, young people comprised 17% of government department recruitments. Today, this figure is down to 2%). Since 1982, more than 1.5 million jobs have been created in Australia. Women have taken 65% of those jobs, men just 33%

3 (J) Recommended books

Could we refer some books to you for your perusal (not in any order): Professor Daniel Amneus, *The Garbage Generation*, Warren Farrell's *The Myth of Male Power*, David Thomas, *Not Guilty -In Defence of the Modern Man*. Also George Gilder's *Men and Marriage, Wealth and Poverty*, and *Sexual Suicide*, are all good reads, and should be read by all policy makers.

In his book, *The Garbage Generation*, Professor Amneus shows that equality for women is not new, nor is it progressive. Says Amneus, short of total annihilation, there can be no more fundamental change in society than the one taking place to men today.

This change has no name. Unemployment for men and male suicide rates are high (4 times that of the female rate). Crime, delinquency, drugs, sexual anarchy, affirmative action for women, high rates of marriage breakdown and divorce are perceived as separate problems or not as problems at all but "progress" - the price society has to pay to "liberate" women.

Modern society has indicated via its equality laws, tax system and the divorce courts that it no longer believes in the family unit as the basic building block of civilised society. Instead of there being a balance of power and sharing of responsibilities between men and women in marriage (which patriarchy implemented) society now believes women should have a dual role - that of nurturer and breadwinner.

This means men effectively have no clearly defined role in modern matriarchal society. In the brave new world of equal opportunist feminism, men have become superfluous to women, society and, worse still, to their own families. Amneus says it took countless hundreds of years for society to evolve to that place where in a civilised society men would share equally with women in family responsibilities. Men

Emancipation has turned out for us (Soviet) women to be a much harder oppression than before. True love and true family life are not possible, because love is possible only between a man and a woman and not between hermaphrodites.'

Natalya Malachovskaya's Soviet brand of feminism is moving entirely in the opposite direction to that of the West's feminist mafia - rather than confound the principle of equal but different, it seeks to assert it. Women in the USSR's 'equal' society, she complains, are not allowed to develop as women. They cannot 'learn to have compassion or tenderness and because they cannot create they destroy.'

It is tempting to think that equal opportunities in its latest version will collide with human nature once too often and then just go away. A collective cry of 'enough' will arise and, magically, girls will no longer be made to feel foolish about wanting children, men will no longer have to worry about 'offending' their dates, and freedom and rationality will return to the occupational marketplace.

This hope might seem to be bolstered by the failure of egalitarian zealotry in Sweden, Israel, USA, and Russia to alter the basic structure of society. Unfortunately says professor Michael Levin, "such hope is undermined by the extent to which feminist ideology has already won the day in Australia. No teacher or public speaker dares use 'he'. Critics must apologise before praising books, movies, or ideas that deviate

from the party line. Feminist doctrine now shapes to an unprecedented degree the rights and duties that govern institutional and social life. Once in place, hiring quotas, textbook censorship, court jurisdiction over private association, and all the other travesties of liberalism to which Australians have become numb are likely to stay in place, long after they will clearly be seen to have failed to achieve the unachievable."

Appendix A: Policy Statement on the Education of Boys

Present equity policies rather than fostering mutual respect and admiration between the sexes cause mistrust on the female side and resentment on the male side as boys can clearly see that females now are the centre of the universe. But given that every State in the land has its equal opportunity policies we, of necessity, have to make a response.

Gender-issues-in-education is an extremely delicate area and caution must be exercised in implementing such policies, as there is no way of gauging their long-term positive or deleterious effects on students. (It will be individuals and their parents, and not the teachers, who will have to sort through problems created by such policies in the long term).

We suggest:

equal opportunity and start to delve into social engineering. It is not acceptable in our view for schools to assume a social engineering role.)

- * There is a need to have subjects which allow gender identification, i.e: Woodwork/metalwork for boys and Home economics for girls. We reject the notion that all subjects should be gender inclusive.
- * Education must reflect the plurality of the school community. The social significance of traditional sex roles should not be neglected or under-sold. Sex roles should be seen as complementary and not competitive. Boys and girls should be encouraged to see each other in a positive light and not dwell on negative assumptions that in the future a relationship might go sour thus necessitating financial independence for both sexes. (We reject the notion that 'a career is an economic and social imperative' for girls. The simple fact is that in any free enterprise economy there are not enough jobs for all adult males and females and to give the impression - even insist - that working is normative for both sexes for most of their adult lives is to invite social anarchy and dislocation.)
- * Education policies should give recognition that the interests of boys and girls are sometimes different. (Not all the time, obviously). There is a need to allow boys to do masculine things, to work off some of that high energy level they possess, and not take umbrage if they dominate certain subject areas. Girls, too, have special needs and these also should be recognised. It is a complete fallacy to treat boys and girls as gender-neutral persons because there is not such thing as a 'gender-neutral' person.
- * Schooling is to be based on the understanding that gender is not a determinant of capacity to learn so boys and girls, men and women, are to be valued equally as persons of equal worth. This does not necessarily mean identical treatment in school organisation and administration as needs vary *Appendix A: Policy Statement on the Education of Boys* (continued)

in scope and intensity.
- * The true purpose of education is to teach students the three R's: reading, writing and 'rithmetic, and to impart knowledge and prepare students to live in a diverse pluralistic society. Education is about providing equal access and not social engineering or to provide equitable outcomes.
- * Schools should provide a high quality education for boys and girls, set standards of excellence and offer challenging environments which are supportive of both sexes and which realise that one sex does not have a monopoly on virtue nor the other sex on vice.
- * Schooling as an aspect of society is to reflect the entitlement of all persons, including boys and men, in their own right, to personal respect, to a caring environment and to participation in and influence over decisions which affect their lives.

Appendix B

The Equal opportunity glass ceiling and the Family

George Gilder, US author, has some interesting comments to make on this subject.

"In a competitive economy, nearly all high-level jobs demand singular gifts, special experience, high ambition, bold willingness to take risks. For a particular slot there is usually not a broad selection of people available. Though many people don't want to face it, it is the heavily patriarchal societies of Japan and other Asian countries that the West will be competing against more and more in most businesses.

Yet the women continue to complain and sue. They want to be allotted positions at the top. But if men and women are different (which they are) there is no reason on earth to expect them to show up in comparable numbers in high-ranking jobs. There is no reason to believe that the male advantage in execution roles is an effect of discrimination. In fact, the differences between men and women overwhelmingly favour men in the positions beyond the glass ceiling.

Although there are many contrary claims and myths, anthropologists have yet to document a society in which men do not dominate the 'top' jobs and do not tend to rule in male-female relations. As Steven Goldberg has demonstrated in 'The Inevitability of Patriarchy', and as even Margaret Mead admitted, there has never existed a documented matriarchy. In other words, the glass ceiling is not a cultural peculiarity of the United States (and Australia), reversible by legislation.

This difference alone would be enough to explain the different numbers of men and women beyond the glass ceiling. But marriageability is just the beginning of it. After marriage, the woman has a deep biological instinct to have children and to care for them and has a deeply respectable role as mother.

On the other hand, many surveys show that a man who stays home and cares for the children wins the respect neither of his wife nor of other men. According to the sociological data, couples who switch roles for any extended period are 'extremely unhappy and prone to divorce'.

Another key point is that men with the most earnings capacity exploit it most effectively, working longer hours and more resourcefully the more credentials they possess. By contrast, the more education and credentials a married woman possesses, the less likely she is to work full-time all year at a highly demanding and remunerative job.

Women, that is, may seek education and credentials in order to work less rather than to work more. Female physicians, for example, see 38 per cent fewer patients on average than male physicians; female lawyers see fewer clients than male lawyers; female professors write fewer books and research papers than male professors.

This is in no way culpable. It springs from an entirely commendable desire on the part of women to gain more time with their families. The fact that more men than women succeed, therefore, is not difficult to explain. What needs to be explained is the pervasive bitterness and resentment shown by many women at these obvious manifestations of the facts of life.

The reason, though, is clear when you think about it. All the established institutions in society today - in education, politics, the media, and the professions - tell women that they should be doing better in the job market. They know that they neither can nor want to make the efforts and sacrifices that men routinely make in order to reach the top echelons. But rather than admitting that feminism overall is a profoundly wrongheaded and unnatural theory of life, many women prefer to denounce the society. Rather than conceding that they are less apt for workplace success, many women prefer to blame discrimination", says Gilder. (News Weekly 27/3/1993, pages 16-17).

There are innate differences between the sexes. Hence the differing career expectations between men and women (men and women are equal but different). It just might be that the so-called 'sexual imbalance' in the workforce, in education or wherever, is due more to ineradicable social and biological factors rather than alleged discriminatory attitudes.