

Pedagogy or a woman in a male guise

The educator’s gender

When I decided to pursue my studies in education, my mother only sighed a question – “*is it really a suitable occupation for a man?*”. Up to that time, I had never considered this subject, but with time, it became a vital problem for me, particularly in confrontations with friends who were studying other specialisations such as mining, medicine or ordnance.

Today, I think that many of the problems of teaching, particularly of education as a science, have their sources in a certain cultural vagueness of its gender, a peculiar chromosomal confusion. The materials presented here are the result not so much of detailed scientific research, but primarily as the fruits of the author’s twenty years of activity within the Polish educational environment. While preparing this material, I did however carry out a small poll among fifty nine female students of education in their fourth year of study, asking for answers to two questions:

For the professions mentioned below, which are best suited to given attributes; please arrange them in the columns provided. (Mentioned were: honesty, diligence, cordiality, intelligence, consistency, reliability, competence, empathy, dedication, patience, sociability, social activeness, intransigence, patriotism) Which professional would you prefer to marry, assuming that each earns the same amount? (Professions mentioned were: singer, architect, doctor, teacher, sailor, soldier, I.T. specialist, actor, politician, businessman, dancer, railway worker, motor mechanic, writer, footballer, policeman).

Here are the results of the poll.

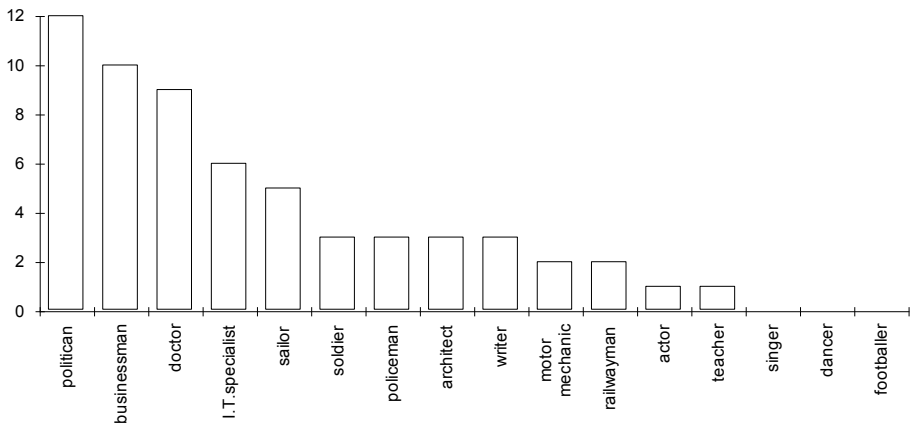
profession	attributes – % indicated													
	hon	dil	cord	intel	cons	rel	com	emp	ded	pat	soci	s-act	intr	patr
singer	-	66	11	9	65	23	79	-	-	81	69	-	-	-
architect	24	78	11	81	46	78	91	13	7	19	23	54	21	18
businessman	31	87	-	89	92	29	69	14	57	28	58	87	90	19
doctor	90	69	59	75	78	94	97	85	77	70	31	27	34	36
teacher	76	34	37	33	19	23	36	67	54	91	17	16	11	42

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sailor	-	17	18	37	90	56	94	12	67	16	59	21	19	45
soldier	47	14	11	37	64	69	71	15	87	19	59	33	89	93
I.T. spec.	67	73	-	94	87	78	97	32	45	61	-	-	41	11
actor	-	19	19	41	76	37	54	37	61	59	91	43	8	37
politician	16	11	76	96	95	15	37	39	27	19	67	94	69	79
dancer	-	86	-	21	47	32	85	15	46	43	65	9	-	-
railwayman	87	75	39	47	78	67	79	19	74	32	23	43	14	47
motor mech	16	27	34	37	45	29	57	-	37	34	-	-	-	-
writer	19	46	67	96	33	43	66	67	30	31	78	81	48	66
footballer	3	65	-	32	46	37	54	-	67	56	71	13	69	39
policeman	88	49	29	33	41	46	31	27	69	21	31	45	87	86

As can be seen from the above table, the ideal candidate for a husband is empathic, honest and reliable like a doctor, diligent as a businessman, intransigent, consequential and cordial like a politician as well as intelligent like a writer, patient as a teacher, sociable as an actor and patriotic as a soldier.

A teacher, on the other hand, is as sociable and as cordial but less honest than a railwayman, but more honest than an I.T. specialist, more diligent than a motor mechanic, but half as diligent as a dancer, as intelligent as a footballer or policeman, as consistent as a singer, as empathic as a writer, less inclined to dedication than an actor but more so than a dancer, more patient than a singer, as socially active as a footballer, and as patriotic as a sailor. Therefore, it cannot be a surprise that a teaching professional is not seen as a potential ideal husband. Therefore, it cannot be a suitable profession for a man.



The best candidate for a husband

The placement of the teaching profession (as a sphere from which it is worth seeking a husband) almost at the very end, preceding only the singer and dancer is significant. By way of comfort, this poll took into account only a random group of people but it is hard to accept its results as valid.

The odium of femininity, or perhaps effemination can clearly be seen in many places concerning pedagogy. For instance:

- It's very name is derived from a slave who looked after young boys. Yet no manual of the history of education states even by a reference that that slave looking after young boys probably was usually an eunuch.
- In Poland, over 70% of teachers are female.
- At universities, the methodologists of particular disciplines (chemistry, history, biology, mathematics, etc.) are most often women.
- In most television interviews and opinion polls concerning education, female opinions are preferred.
- In the last parliamentary election campaign, educational matters were raised primarily by women.

The gender of education itself

Here, we could understand, that science of education is without doubt of the female gender, that it is a woman, and therefore has no chromosomal problems. This is the true source of education and its proper roots. However we have further examples.

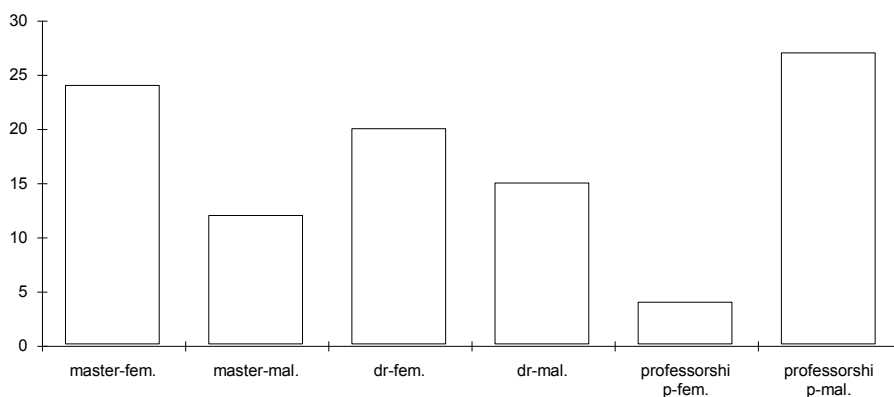
- The seeds of creativity, of creative thinking is ingrained in a person at the threshold of life, in the pre-verbal period, the stage of infancy, the first ericsonian phase. It must be noted that this is the stage of life which is totally dominated by a woman, since most men are loath to look after and are clumsy when caring for babies that are unable to communicate verbally. Let us review, Einstein, Gutenberg, Fleming, Edison, Ford and Milos are/were creative as a result of their mothers, at the appropriate time (though it must be added objectively, not always consciously) imbuing them with the conviction that the world can be changed. If not for this fundamental attribute of creativity grafted in the first months of post-natal life, all other experiences with education at the fore would give nothing to the creators.
- The lack of regard by education of one of the greatest discoveries in psychoanalysis – the discovery of childhood – draws the child and its development away from the persona of the mother, and attributes them to unspecified forces and reinforcements. By drawing attention to childhood, one draws attention to the woman, who throughout the period of childhood is particularly and unremovably in attendance. Attention is also drawn to the fact that it is women who perform the earliest care activities for children of both sexes.
- The close ties between the mother and her child will remain unshaken throughout pre-natal life, whose secrets we are constantly fathoming, and whose essence we are still unable to evaluate.

- We are able to accept the fact of a father neglecting his family based on a lack of responsibility, and most often to tolerate this as a character flaw in man (similarly to baldness, tendencies to promiscuity or impotence). If a mother should do the same, then she is termed as degenerate, which would just about damn a woman for life. When finding newly-born babies on rubbish dumps, public opinion commonly blames it on the mother, and never on the father of the child. The perpetrators of the conception of the dead child remain undetected, for no-one ever looks for them.
- Two men created children as monarchs. Janusz Korczak gave power to *King Matt the First*, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry did the same to *The Little Prince*. Both characters met tragic ends to their lives (as did their authors). The men seem unable to provide a happy ending even to their own tales. A similar thing happened to William Golding with *Lord of the Flies*. That author met an even greater calamity. No woman had ever done this. It is true that women had never created neat aphorisms in the style of “childhood is not the preparation for life but is life itself” but this is because they never had to become aware of this to such a degree, enough such aphorisms run through in their bloodstream, they are simply convinced of it. For men, it may be a literary problem, for women, simply a question of cytology. Each of their cells knows what such aphorisms proclaim.
- The sensitivity of men to aggression differs from that of women. Nearly 100% of aggressive films (often known as *action cinema*) are created by men. On the other hand, nearly 100% of publications in Poland about aggression in the school is written by women.
- Emotions, which are so important in upbringing, are also attributed more to women. A mother is loved, a father respected. The father is the authority and oracle, the mother the support and refuge. The father is obeyed, the mother persuadable.
- Since a large part of Rousseau’s reputation rests on his underlying theme of his *Discours*, *Emile*, the *Social Contract* and even *La Nouvelle Heloise* – it is curious that, in real life as opposed to writing, he took so little interest in children. There is no evidence that he studied children’s behavior to verify his theories. He claimed that there was no one who enjoyed playing with children more than he did, but an anecdote about him does not prove this. The painter Delacroix relates in his “Journal” (31 May 1824) that a man told him he had seen Rousseau in the gardens of the Tuileries: ‘*A child’s ball struck the philosopher’s leg. He flew into a rage and pursued the child with his cane.*’ (Johnson, 1988)
- We undergo the deepest sleep, the deepest relaxation, that we can allow ourselves in a pose which is very similar to the foetal position (see: Bilikiewicz, 1979). Wishing to leave behind our worrying life we return to the womb, to the place where we were angelic shapes rather than citizens, therefore to the mother, and therefore to the woman.
- As was stated at the beginning – education is female at the core, it is rooted in this gender and in its attributes. Its source language is gentle and persuasive. On the other hand, education is strongly entrenched in the conviction, and even in the confidence that man is good, and only needs to be looked after with great care.

- The transvestment of education (or even the transvestisation of education) as a man is carried out in public and almost with ostentation. This is without doubt a process that has been in place for eons, which we have had time to get used to. It has gently rooted itself within our consciousness through many trivial or more important episodes.
- For instance, we know a lot about the father of the biblical prodigal son, but how painfully nothing about his mother? Didn't she suffer when her child went away? Didn't she know what the end result would be? Are we not certain that she begged her husband to be gentle with him? In this parable, the man took on the image that we usually attribute to women – which is as beautiful as it is unlikely. Unlikely, particularly in comparison to other biblical male characters who were often cruel, consistent and unmovable even in pain and death.
- The accreditation of men's educational interests is shown most often in their withdrawal to feminine attributes, through their assuming the feminine mantle. Here, gentleness and understanding have consistency and indoctrination in their make-up. The act of killing – cocooned by necessity – is raised to the rank of heroism. Compassion must be redeemed by suffering. Such thinking accompanies male education, which has given us Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, Charlemagne, William the Conqueror, Cortez, Napoleon Bonaparte, Adolf Hitler and Stalin. These are the leading products of male education. The path to their fortitude, as the path to fortitude in general, has led from the female womb through femininity up to its negation. For as long as they kept referring to their feminine attributes they were not dangerous, and quite useful from time to time. Only the rejection of the feminine mantle showed that monstrous characteristics were ripening underneath.
- Therefore, behind the education cultivated by men is a whole gamut of totally un-feminine plots and activities smuggled in. Beneath the feminine activity guises, the male world is being organised, which so far has never been a world of communication, but always one of conflict, which has never been a forgiving reality, but almost always vengeful, teaching us severe lessons, which we never want to remember though. In the world of men, not only is the woman a tool, but also femininity is one too. If education is the natural consequence of birth from a mother's womb, then what do men do, who – despite the progress in medicine – do not have any such organ? In ancient Sparta, a child was brought up by women, and then irrevocably taken over by men, who turned it into an automaton. In those times, this only happened to boys. Today, it happens to everyone.

As has been stated, men mask themselves in female guises up to a given point. But only up to the point at which true authority and efficiency is at stake.

Among others, this can be seen in the upper echelons of educational bodies. Academic bodies demonstrate that at the highest levels, education transforms itself from a beautiful princess into a horrible toad, as if after a disastrous kiss on the nose. Let us illustrate this point with the example given below, which takes as its source the personnel status in the Department of Education Nicolaus Copernicus University in Torun/Poland (NCU).



Percentage shares of males and females in staff (Dpt. of Education Nicolaus Copernicus University in Torun)

It doesn't take great powers of observation to notice that women dominate the lower echelons (Masters degrees and Doctorates). Taken overall, 68% of all the staff in the Department of Education are women. In other words, up to this level, as everywhere: the ladies dominate education. But at the highest level, the level of independence, females fill only 17% of all Professorial and Assistant Professor posts, which demonstrates a completely reversed ratio. If we add to this, that even in the government led by H. Suchocka a non-female held the post of Minister of Education, it can be seen that authority in education, both as a science and as a profession, rests in the hands of men. Despite the fact, that this profession has a feminine pedigree and is strongly dominated by women. It is not just a case of a numerical domination, which cannot be ignored nevertheless, but the domination of gender which is based on the decisive influence that women have on the roots of changes happening in the world.

In the domain of education (both the career as well as the science) we are approaching a maelstrom which is unusually full of far-reaching consequences, because it has influence on its own identity. Here, we must put forward a hypothesis, or test statements, which in any case we will not be able to fully verify. This is because the male sector among educators will not allow any such verification.

Education is a female (with all that follows), and therefore all men that practice this profession are cynical transvestites, who, while utilising the feminine attributes of education, are in reality betraying its sources.

- Education is a woman that is regularly raped by men.
- Men who work in education have problems with their own self-identity.
- Education is the battlefield for fundamental power between men and women.
- Education is an area that is sabotaged by men aiming to usurp power.
- Education is seduced by men, who then betray it.¹

¹ This hypothesis was suggested to me by professor Maria Czerepaniak-Walczak.

If the **first** hypothesis is true, then education is merely a means, and therefore cannot be a science or search for truth. This is because a means is often adjusted to the end, because only the end which it serves is true. This also means that men who work in this profession tend to use all available resources and methods, in order to find their own place in the world. They also lack authenticity. For how can one be an authentic man in a female guise?

If the **second** hypothesis is true, then we have to deal with the extrapolation of the male need to dominate the educational sector. Nothing useful can come from this extrapolation. Rape in education is an attempt to convince by force, the aggressive enforcing of education to assert "yes, I am truly obedient to and I love all men, and what they do to me elates and excites me".

If the **third** hypothesis is true, then education is a refuge for men, who basically want to be women. Though it cannot be excluded that the reverse can also be true.

If the **fourth** hypothesis is true, then women have been losing the battle in this arena for the right to shape the world since the beginning of time. And, because victors are never judged, they themselves shed crocodile tears over the fate of the world, which they themselves shape, which brings to mind the internally opposed lament: "what an evil world this is, if it doesn't try to protect us from the Gulags and Auschwitzes which **we create**". In other words, that men prowling within the education system are primarily trying to prove that women wouldn't do any better.

If the **fifth** hypothesis is true, then really every book, every word, every thesis uttered by male authors on matters of education lacks the ring of truth. They are simply carriers of a single great hidden agenda, which differs from (and is basically contrary to) officially declared aims. Not much intelligence is required to notice that the criticism of schools and educational systems is a particularly popular source of inspiration and academic career for certain members of academic bodies. Therefore if these members are mainly male (particularly at the highest level of academic initiation) then, bearing in mind that the Polish education system is 75% female, it can be seen that the 25% overpowers the rest with their merciless criticism. This is a typical situation in a world which is organised by males: a few *macho* types who possess more or less legally acquired tommy-guns (for what else can a professorship be in this context) terrorise the inclined to submission, though much more numerous remainder. Surely without reason to do so. Jean Jacques Rousseau states in *Emile*: "The ambition, greed, tyranny and erroneous expectations of fathers, as well as their neglected and brutal reserve produce damage a hundredfold greater than the mothers' instinctive tenderness".

If the **sixth** hypothesis is true, then it may explain why so many men, after beginning a career in academic education (the career-enhancing marriage to an unattractive woman syndrome) dally with its more attractive cousins (e.g. sociology or psychology).

Therefore, if none of the above hypotheses is true, and I am assuming that many of my readers will think so, then it means that everything is morally clean and essentially clear. If any of the above hypotheses is true, then it means that we are treading on dangerous ground. It means that the gender situation in education has not been totally clarified, and that solutions should be sought in the works of pathologists in sexual development.

As I believe that each of the above hypotheses carries some truth in it, then below I shall attempt to re-state my position in medical terms, without transgressing beyond the bounds (or so I hope) of a proper metaphor. I will leave the final evaluation of my conclusions, however, to my readers and their critical appreciation.

The Educational Klinefelter's syndrome?

We cannot exclude the possibility that education suffers from Klinefelter's syndrome.² The source of this is an unexplained chromosomal state. This means that a female cariotype can be found within people who have a male phenotype (often really very male), which means that they are female at their very core, although they try to keep this stifled, hidden and camouflaged by spectacularly masculine behaviour.

As I have tried to demonstrate, education, by having its beginning in the womb of a woman, never frees itself from femininity. Initiation and socialisation are the domain of women. It is they who determine the cluster of guiding principles in the recesses of such processes, for as long as they are not colonised by men who dictate their organisation, methodology, valuation and reward. If this was to be a natural course of events, then we would have to admit that it is normal in nature to change sex with maturity, that having been born as a girl we will die as a man, or conversely. But this is absolute nonsense. It doesn't happen in nature.

The unexplained gender situation causes not only disturbances of a physical and physiological nature, but above all, dislocates the working of the elements which cause gender identity and which affect the mentality of the individual. We can speculate a little by transferring the metaphor of gender onto education.

If, in its deepest identity, education is female, then its finally masculine results are, or may be an attempt at self-definition as an activity that is masculine throughout, and therefore a thing that is resolute, effective, and maybe even heroic. Men working in education try to make of it an assignment worthy of men's attention. Because the true assignment of any male is the attainment of a female — education appears to be the ideal terrain for this. This is because they are struggling for the attainment of many females at once: this struggle in the end they usually win (ministries, professorships), and by doing so they easily take on the guise of a boar, bull or stallion. The male colonisation of education is the creation within oneself of Thermopylae, Waterloo or Wembley Stadium, those so needed fields of victory, triumph or heroic defeat. This is the struggle for the cultural progenesis of the world, in which strife and victory will always be prized higher than compromise and communication. This is the world in which Rambo is given points at the outset for his family origins, and *The Strongwoman* is a documentation of gullibility in a bygone era.

It doesn't even matter any more if women as educators are more masculine, or if men who are educators are basically trying to mask their own yearnings for the world of tender harmony by thinking up (to cover their tracks, perhaps?) the war in Bosnia. Either way, it is education that suffers.

² K. Boczkowski (1971) states: "Klinefelter's syndrome is characterised by small testicles, lack of sperm generation and an increase in gonadotropin production; gynaecomasty can also be found in some patients".

Z. Kwieciński (1997) asked the question: “what does the contemporary school reproduce?” Well, if the school is — like the whole educational system — infected by Klinefelter’s syndrome and has an unexplained situation in its deepest self-identity, then it reproduces nothing. For the most serious consequence of this disease is congenital **sterility**.

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