BULLYING AND HARASSMENT IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS: A CRITICAL FEMINIST ANALYSIS OF THE GAPS, OVERLAPS, AND IMPLICATIONS FROM A DECADE OF RESEARCH

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Scholarship investigating aggression between peers in school has been growing steadily since Dan Olweus published his seminal work on bullying, *Aggression in the schools: Bullies and whipping boys*, in 1978. Several studies emerged in the 1990's that replicated Olweus' work and established his terminology and methodology as the most influential in this field. The result of this dominant influence has been to establish a central body of research that is highly valid and reliable in certain areas, but one that perpetuates important omissions and silences in others. This literature review seeks to explore the knowledges presented in bullying and harassment studies in secondary schools through a critical feminist lens in order to identify the gaps in existing research. This review and critique will explore how existing gendered hierarchies in secondary schools and related aspects of social power have been examined and note those that have not been addressed in bullying and harassment studies with the goal of identifying key areas for further study.

In order to situate this critical feminist analysis of bullying and harassment studies in the context of existing knowledges, it is important to investigate three related but distinct areas of educational research: bullying, harassment, and homophobia in schools and to connect them to the concept of gendered harassment. These three fields have been selected due to their strong theoretical ties to the areas of gender and bullying in schools. Questions relating to gender and sexual orientation will be central to this critique because this research is interested in exploring the relationships between gender, sexual orientation, and harassment in schools. As this review will demonstrate, there is a dearth of academic research connecting these areas. Although the issue of homophobia may appear to be linked solely to issues of sexual orientation, this article will argue that homophobic behaviors are often closely tied to the policing of gender role performances as constructed within a heterosexual matrix(Butler, 1990) in school. This is an important level of analysis that is often ignored when studying bullying and harassment in the school environment.

Of these areas, bullying, harassment, and homophobia in secondary schools, the field of bullying research has the longest tradition and farthest reaching influences on investigations and interventions addressing aggression and the related physical and psychological harms in schools. Bullying has been recognized as a problem in schools worldwide and has been strongly influenced by Dan Olweus' work in Norway. This research has had a strong impact on school practice as evidenced by the proliferation of anti-bullying policies and programs in schools today.

The second field of inquiry, harassment, is a more recently defined phenomenon and nearly all empirical articles on this subject have been situated in the context of secondary schools. The most prevalent theme of these studies is, with few exceptions, that of (hetero)sexual harassment towards women. The third and final research area of homophobia in schools is central to this review of research. As I will demonstrate in this paper, homophobia and related forms of gendered harassment are connected to the fields of bullying and harassment but have been largely ignored in these bodies of research. The impact of this omission in the academic research will be discussed as well as suggestions on how to adapt further research to be more inclusive of the gendered dynamics of bullying and harassment in schools.

This literature review will present information from over 100 peer-reviewed journal articles and published reports to demonstrate how the current research in the field of bullying and harassment has largely ignored important influences of social power such as race, ethnicity, disability, gender and sexual orientation that are important to understand in order to reduce bullying and harassment in schools. This review will start by presenting the methodology of article selection and analysis and is followed by an examination of bullying research. This body of research will be analyzed particularly in regards to how it relates to understanding the problem of intervening in issues of gendered harassment in schools. The third section will focus on harassment studies and how they will inform and influence studies of gendered harassment. The fourth section will present relevant reports and studies related to the question of homophobia in schools. The final section presents summary conclusions and suggestions for future research.

Methods

An initial search was conducted in February 2005 of three different databases: PsycInfo, ERIC, and Wilson Social Sciences for articles from 1985 – present and was conducted again in February 2006. The following search terms and the number of articles found are demonstrated in the table below.

Search words:	items found	# included
homosexual$ and school? (data or case stud$) + youth	37	8
homophobi$ and school? + (data or case stud$)	49	18
harassment and secondary school	76	27
bullying and secondary school	111	55
Harassment and Canada and school	34	7
TOTALS	**342**	**115**
Non-academic reports		13

Table 1 - Literature search
there were some overlapping articles in categories which is why the total is greater than the actual number of articles included here

Of the 342 articles found, a preliminary round of content analysis was completed based on their abstracts in order to exclude articles that did not fit the scope of this review. The

scope of this literature review is limited to articles in refereed academic journals that address issues related to bullying, harassment, and homophobia in English-speaking secondary schools. The main reasons for exclusion were that studies were not situated in the secondary school setting, were not in peer reviewed journals, or were not conducted in an Anglophone school.

Questions guiding the analysis of selected articles:

A thorough content analysis of each article was conducted using central guiding questions. These questions focused on the following ideas: What are the common elements in existing research on bullying, sexual harassment, and homophobic harassment in secondary schools? How can existing knowledge be used to inform future research? What socio-cultural dynamics are missing from this study? Whose perspectives are central and whose are not included? A complete codebook was constructed and each article was examined using the questions listed below.

Codebook
1. Authors' names & institutional affiliation/location
2. What type of article is this? (empirical study, theoretical paper, literature review, position paper, legal/policy analysis)
3. How is bullying/harassment defined? Use the author's words to define
4. What theorists/researchers are cited in reference to bullying/harassment?
5. What theoretical frameworks do the researchers use in the paper? (list & cite)
6. Who are the research population/participants?
7. What is the ethnicity of participants?
8. What is the grade level of the participants?
9. What is the geographic location of the study?
10. What is the context of the study? (community agency, media, school)
11. What is the research question?
12. How is the data analyzed? (statistical, qualitative, etc.)
13. What data sources are used? (surveys, observations, interviews, field notes, case study, etc.)
14. What is the role of the researcher? (analysis only, participant observer, etc.)
15. What are the noted limitations ? (author's own words)
16. What are the critiques of the work?
17. How does this relate to other articles?

Once the coding was completed, excel spreadsheets of each category of article (bullying, harassment, homophobia) were printed out and color coded to identify theoretical, methodological, and geographical trends, as well as overlaps and gaps in the findings of these studies.

Bullying

Dan Olweus published his first study on the problem of bullying in Norway in an English journal in 1977 (Olweus, 1977) and has consistently set the agenda for research in this field from defining *bullying*, to structuring how researchers study the problem using student surveys, and creating interventions and evaluations of programs to reduce

bullying in schools. The impact that his work has had influencing the direction of this field of study is evidenced in how regularly his studies are cited in other research. In an analysis of 55 bullying articles published in peer reviewed journals, his work was cited in 44 of them. The 11 articles that did not refer to his work approached various aspects of the bullying question but from new positions including issues related to truancy, victimization, sexuality, law, social work, and peer counseling frameworks. The perspectives offered in the articles that do not cite Olweus are important to consider, as they offer an alternative point of view to understanding nuances of bullying in schools that have not been structured by Olweus' specific constructions and definitions of bullying and how to investigate it. This section will start with an examination of the studies that cite Olweus and will conclude with a discussion of the 11 other articles and how they can help reframe research on bullying in schools.

The 44 studies that cite Olweus' work embrace his definition of bullying and apply his approach to quantifying the problem in specific contexts to varying degrees. In 32 of these studies, the approach was a survey instrument completed by students in their specific school communities: two in New Zealand (Adair, Dixon, Moore, & Sutherland, 2000; Coggan, Bennett, Hooper, & Dickinson, 2003), six in Australia (Bond, Carlin, Thomas, Rubin, & Patton, 2001; Rigby & Cox, 1996; Rigby, Cox, & Black, 1997; Rigby & Johnson, 2006; Rigby & Slee, 1993, 1999; Slee, 1995), one in Malta (Borg, 1999), thirteen in the UK (Arora, 1994; Arora & Thompson, 1987; Boulton, Bucci, & Hawker, 1999; Boulton, Trueman, & Flemington, 2002; Mynard & Stephen, 2000; Naylor & Cowie, 1999; Naylor, Cowie, & del Rey, 2001; M. Schafer, Korn, Brodbeck, Wolke, & Schulz, 2005; Mechthild Schafer et al., 2004; Sharp, 1995; Siann, Callaghan, Glissove, Lockhart, & Rawson, 1994; Whitney, Nabuzoka, & Smith, 1992; Woods & White, 2005), one in Ireland (Byrne, 1994), four in the U.S. (Hazler, Hoover, & Oliver, 1991; Land, 2003; Pelligrini & Long, 2002; Rusby, Forrester, Biglan, & Metzler, 2005) and four in Norway (Olweus, 1977, 1978, 1993, 1996).

Three studies were aimed at understanding bullying in schools from the educators' perspective: one with teachers in Malta (Borg, 1998), and two with teachers in the UK (Boulton, 1997; Sharp & Thompson, 1992). The sample of articles was limited to English speaking countries with the exception of studies authored by Olweus in Norway due to his significant impact in influencing this field of study. Of the remaining ten studies that cited Olweus, six were evaluating intervention programs and employed mixed methods (Boulton, 2005; Boulton & Flemington, 1996; Cartwright, 1995; Cowie, 1998; O'Toole & Burton, 2005; Sharp & Smith, 1991) and only two (Hepburn, 1997, 2000) used a qualitative form of inquiry to access deeper levels of understanding how bullying and power dynamics play out in the school. Hepburn's articles offer some important insights and will be discussed later in this section. The remaining two studies presented surveys of existing literature and made recommendations for schools trying to reduce bullying (Batsche & Knoff, 1994; Hoover & Juul, 1993).

These quantitative studies consistently rely on the following definition of bullying created by Olweus,

> A student is being bullied or victimized when he or she is exposed,
> repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more
> other students...it is a negative action when someone intentionally inflicts,

or attempting to inflict, injury or discomfort on another...Negative actions can be carried out by words (verbally), for instance, by threatening, taunting, teasing, and calling names. It is a negative action when somebody hits, pushes, kicks, pinches or restrains another -- by physical contact. It is also possible to carry out negative actions without the use of words or physical contact, such as by making faces or dirty gestures, intentionally excluding someone from a group, or refusing to comply with another person's wishes (1993, p. 9).

The one significant variation on this definition was offered in an Australian study by Phillip Slee: "Bullying behavior may be considered to represent the oppression of one individual by another individual or group of persons, where the behavior (psychological or physical) is typically repetitive and deliberate"(1995, p. 216). His use of the word *oppression* is unique as it implies that there are broader social forces at work that are reinforcing the power imbalance between bully and victim. Although the ramifications of using this word are not fully explored in his study, he does acknowledge how external influences of Australian macho values might impact addressing bullying in schools, "in the Australian context it is possible that the emphasis on male stereotypic values of 'toughing it out' and not 'dobbing' on your 'mates' accounts for educators [sic] reluctance to address the issue" (223).

Slee's article along with four other quantitative studies are the only ones that offer any broader understanding of social contexts, identities, and gender and how they shape and reinforce certain power dynamics within schools. Many studies reported variations by gender in their findings, but included no critical analysis of how gender might shape and impact how bullying is played out in secondary schools. The other studies that considered these social influences included a study of students with disabilities being targeted by bullies (Whitney, Nabuzoka, & Smith, 1992), an analysis of how ethnicity impacts experiences with bullying (Siann, Callaghan, Glissove, Lockhart, & Rawson, 1994), and an examination of the intersections between bullying and sexual harassment (Land, 2003). Whitney, Nabuzoka & Smith's article was the first study to emerge that noted, "at its most insidious, bullying focuses on vulnerable young people who are regarded as being different because of their ethnic origin, class, sexual inclinations, or physical or learning difficulties" (1992, p. 3). This study recognized the shortcomings of the Olweus-designed questionnaire and used individual interviews with 179 children to explore victimization patterns and found that children with special needs were more likely to be selected as victims (33%) than those without any special needs (8%) (p. 5).

A second project in the UK explicitly addressed ethnicity in its examination of bullying in London and Glasgow schools (Siann, Callaghan, Glissove, Lockhart, & Rawson, 1994). This quantitative study concluded that there were no statistically significant differences between ethnic groups in the experience or perceptions of bullying. However, the researchers did report that more ethnic minority pupils believed that ethnic minority pupils were more likely than majority pupils to experience bullying (p. 123). This may indicate that their survey instrument was not designed to identify more subtle or covert forms of bullying that involve bias. Deborah Land's research on teasing, bullying and sexual harassment is the only Olweus related study that offers a feminist critique of these behaviors and is discussed more fully in the next section.

The main weakness in the current trend of bullying studies is that they fail to explore and acknowledge the influences of larger social forces such as racism, ableism, sexism, and homophobia in understanding relationships of power and dominance in peer groups. This was also reported by Canadian researcher Gerald Walton in his analysis of bullying research and public discourse (Walton, 2005). Bullying studies recognize various forms of verbal aggression, but with few exceptions never explore the relationship they have with social biases and cultural norms. They address the issue of "name calling" but never explore what names are being used to hurt and insult students. As the harassment studies will show, many of the insults used by bullies reinforce dominant notions of white, masculine, heterosexual, able-bodied superiority. In the above articles, a few made mention of gender and how aspects of masculinity and femininity might alter how bullying is performed and experienced by each gender (Cowie, 1998; Naylor, Cowie, & del Rey, 2001; Pelligrini & Long, 2002; Slee, 1995) but only one, by Deborah Land (2003), specifically looked at issues of sexual harassment and how it related to bullying.

In her US based study, "Teasing Apart Secondary Students' Conceptualizations of Peer Teasing, Bullying and Sexual Harassment," Land highlights the absence of the connections between gender and harassment in most bullying research. Her findings are interesting in that they indicate that students consider teasing mainly as nonphysical and that, "most students included physical behaviors in their descriptions of sexual harassment, suggesting that verbal sexual behaviors, though prevalent, may not sufficiently meet their definitions"(2003, p. 158). These are important findings to consider as the students play a central role in defining what behaviors are tolerated and acceptable within a school culture. If their experiences lead them to believe that verbal sexual behaviors should be tolerated then they will silently endure and fail to report incidents of verbal harassment. Sometimes they will even begin to engage in this behavior since it is viewed as acceptable in that school. This silencing and ignoring of verbal harassment perpetuates the invisibility of this behavior and the negative impacts it has on students. This theme of silencing and ignoring certain types of aggression in schools reemerges in harassment and homophobia research.

Finally, the two qualitative studies that cited Olweus, conducted by Alexa Hepburn (1997; , 2000) in the United Kingdom, are important for several reasons. First, they are the only studies that acknowledge the importance of Olweus' work in influencing this area of research. They also introduce a new way of conceptualizing and approaching this problem. This is not said to diminish the importance of the earlier quantitative studies. These early works were important in that they gave legitimacy to investigating bullying as a problem worth studying in schools. Each of these studies were able to replicate central aspects of Olweus' work in Norway to indicate that bullying was also a problem in their countries and in their schools. But Hepburn takes the issue of bullying and moves beyond numbers, definitions, and evaluating isolated interventions. Her articles, "Teachers and secondary school bullying: a postmodern discourse analysis" and "Power lines: Derrida, discursive psychology and the management of accusations of teacher bullying" use discourse analysis to understand how teachers construct their understandings of bullying in schools. These articles offer an in-depth analysis of language and power and how it is used to understand facets of bullying in schools. Although Hepburn does not explicitly use gender as a tool of analysis, she presents a rich

and detailed perspective on how to understand the use of language in exercising power within the normalizing discourses of the school.

Of the 11 bullying studies that did not cite Olweus' work, three are of interest here as they focused specifically on issues relating to gender and sexuality. The first is a study by Vivian Ray and Robin Gregory (2001) on the experiences of children of gay and lesbian parents in Australia, the second was one by Neil Duncan (2004) on popularity and sexual competition among girls in secondary schools in the UK, and the third by Wilson, Griffin & Wren (2005) on the experiences of youth with "atypical gender identity organization". The other eight studies included an examination of truancy (Irving & Parker-Jenkins, 1995), a legal analysis of administrator liability in addressing bullying (McGrath, 2003), four bullying prevention program evaluations (Bagley & Pritchard, 1998; Naylor & Cowie, 1999; Peterson & Rigby, 1999; Price & Jones, 2001), a survey of student victimization in U.S. public schools (Nolin, Davies, & Chandler, 1996) and the experiences of Chinese students in schools in the UK(Chan, 1997). Only one of these eight included any discussion or analysis of behaviors relating to ethnicity (Chan, 1997), and none addressed race, gender, disability, or sexual orientation. The three studies that did incorporate some of this analysis are discussed below.

Ray & Gregory (2001) examined important aspects of homophobia in the school culture and how it impacted the lives of students who had gay or lesbian parents. Their findings indicate that almost half of the children in their study were targeted for bullying as a result their parents' sexual orientation (45 %). The abuse included verbal teasing and joking as well as physical and sexual violence. It was also clear that schools often had inadequate responses to homophobic language or bullying and in some cases, teachers joined in with homophobic remarks along with their students. Many of these students reported feeling unsafe at school and that they did not feel confident in teachers' abilities to deal with the issues (34). This study shows how prevalent homophobia is in schools and that the mere association with a gay or lesbian family member is enough to expose students to schoolyard bullying from peers and teachers.

Duncan (2004) explored an important dimension of bullying among girls in his article, "It's important to be nice, but it's nicer to be important: girls, popularity and sexual competition." This project investigated the sexualized element of much of the bullying that goes on between girls in secondary schools, including accusations of being a lesbian or heterosexual promiscuity. The related power dynamic to this is that in every case, the harassers were described as 'popular girls' (137). What is interesting about Duncan's use of the term 'popular' was that it is defined by his participants in a q-sort activity and the items that were most strongly associated with 'popular' were; 'is very loud', 'is very popular with boys', and 'is very fashionable'. These were all associated with high social status in the school and heterosexual attractiveness. He describes the girls' definition of popularity as "an ability to gather other girls around them and to manipulate and coerce social relations in their favour" (144). It was also identified that the factor, 'is a lesbian' as the one "least likely to be associated with being a popular girl" (146). This exploration of power and popularity among girls in secondary schools reinforces the notion of the centrality of male heterosexuality in determining social hierarchies in school. The girls' internal hierarchies were being built upon 'boy centred' ideals and they never questioned or challenged the dominance of these patriarchal, heterosexist values in their social groups.

The third study examined the experiences of eight children between 14-17 years old with "atypical gender identity organization" and their interactions with peers in school (Wilson, Griffin, & Wren, 2005). Seven of the eight participants had experienced homophobic bullying by their peers that was a result of their "cross-gender behavior" (p. 309). The authors addressed the problems these youths experienced by others confusing their gender identity and sexual orientation and acknowledged that these experiences appeared to result from transphobia. They defined transphobia as, "an underlying fear of those who appear different from the traditional norms of masculinity and femininity" (310). The students in this study experienced great amounts of stress and minimal amounts of peer support for their gender identities, and the authors concluded that this distress was caused by the reaction of others "not allowing the child to engage in their desired behaviors" (313). This study is important as it is the only one that specifically addresses issues of transgender youth, gender non-conformity and how gender identity and sexual orientation are commonly conflated.

As the analysis of the above studies has shown, bullying research has generally failed to adequately address issues related to gender, sexual orientation, and other related social oppressions. Alternatively, a more critical feminist approach to understanding social power and student behaviors in secondary schools has been attended to in many studies examining the phenomenon of harassment.

Harassment studies

As this review seeks to explore the intersections of social power and bullying in secondary schools it is important to understand what work has previously been done in this area. Although I contend that bullying and harassment are intimately linked (as do other scholars such as Duncan, 2004; Renold, 2000; Stein, 1995) too few scholars, educators and curriculum specialists address these issues simultaneously. By not integrating each others' work, they artificially create a barrier between these fields of inquiry that effectively limits the resources and approaches available to educators attempting to transform student behaviors in school. The search for articles on harassment and secondary school yielded 27 studies in peer reviewed journals that addressed these issues. As this generated a much smaller body of research, I have included all articles from peer-reviewed journals published in English regardless of the language of instruction in the school.

Current harassment studies have focused primarily on the narrowly defined issue of (hetero)sexual harassment of females by males. Seven of these articles were presented from a legal perspective – mostly establishing the duty of school administrators and teachers to defend and protect students from harassment (McFarland, 2001; Roth, 1994; Sorenson, 1994; Wolohan, 1995). Other legal or policy analyses discussed issues related to school board liability (Howard, 2001), limitations of harassment policies (Reed, 1996) and human rights issues (Mock, 1996). The other 20 were empirical studies. Of these, nine focused on various forms of (hetero)sexual harassment in schools (Bagley, Bolitho, & Bertrand, 1997; Corbett, Gentry, & Pearson, 1993; Lahelma, 2002; Larkin, 1994; Lee, Croninger, Linn, & Chen, 1996; Miller, 1997; Roscoe, 1994; Timmerman, 2003, 2005; Uggen & Blackstone, 2004; Whitelaw, Hills, & De Rosa, 1999). These focused on multiple gender and power dynamics in schools including teacher-student (Corbett, Gentry, & Pearson, 1993; Timmerman, 2003), student-teacher(Ferfolja, 1998; Miller,

1997), and student-student(Lahelma, 2002, 2004; Larkin, 1994; Lee, Croninger, Linn, & Chen, 1996; Nishina & Juvonen, 2005; Nishina, Juvonen, & Witkow, 2005; Roscoe, 1994; Timmerman, 2003, 2005; Uggen & Blackstone, 2004; Whitelaw, Hills, & De Rosa, 1999). Four articles addressed issues of race, ethnicity, and racism (Lahelma, 2004; Lee, Croninger, Linn, & Chen, 1996; Phan, 2003; Ryan, 2003), and two articles addressed the general concept of bullying. Of these 18 empirical studies, only four (Ferfolja, 1998; Lahelma, 2002; Timmerman, 2003; Williams, Connolly, Pepler, & Craig, 2005) linked the issues of sexual harassment and homophobia and will be discussed in more detail at the end of this section. Only two studies emerged in both the searches on bullying and harassment (Naylor & Cowie, 1999; Rusby, Forrester, Biglan, & Metzler, 2005). These overlapping articles did not explicitly address the differences in these terms and seemed to use them interchangeably. This can lead to confusion and misunderstanding particularly in conducting research. These terms must be clearly defined and their differences made explicit in order to better understand these different categories of behaviors.

The definition for bullying has been established by Olweus and widely agreed upon by scholars in the field. The definition of harassment is more fluid, and can vary depending on the discipline of the researcher from narrow legal and policy definitions to broader theoretical constructions. I offer the following definition of harassment as adapted from Land (2003): any biased behavior that "negatively impacts the target or the environment." It differs from bullying in that bullying, by definition, is directed at a specific individual and can include any kind of insult or harmful behavior. Harassment, be definition, is biased in nature and can include behaviors or comments that insult or demean a social group, can be targeted at an individual or have no specific targets. The result of this behavior is to create a hostile environment that impedes the ability of individuals to work or study effectively. This definition can be accurately applied to all the studies found in this search with the exception of three studies who use the term 'peer harassment' but are not investigating any form of biased behaviors (Nishina & Juvonen, 2005; Nishina, Juvonen, & Witkow, 2005; Rusby, Forrester, Biglan, & Metzler, 2005). These scholars appear to be more situated in the bullying framework and cite Olweus and other bullying researchers as key influences in their arguments and analysis.

The first article that emerged in this search that explored female students' experiences with sexual harassment was Corbett, Gentry, & Pearson's study, "Sexual harassment in high school" (1993). This article presented the findings of a survey that asked university students to report their recollections of sexual harassment by high school teachers and marked the emergence of this field of scholarship. It was followed by June Larkin's (1994) groundbreaking research titled, "Walking through walls: The sexual harassment of high school girls". She worked collaboratively with her participants and collected data from a variety of sources including: participant journals, group discussions, and individual interviews. Her main goal was to understand young women's experiences of sexual harassment in schools and the way it interferes with their education. In addition to exploring verbal and physical harassment, she introduced the concept of "visual" harassment that included leering or "invasive watching" as well as sexual gesturing (273). These categories are important to add to investigations as they expand how we construct our understanding of behaviors that create hostile environments for students in schools. This study also confirmed the pervasiveness of such behaviors and how it had

been normalized in schools due to the frequency of incidents, responses by male peers, and the silence around it in schools (266). These are all relevant variables to consider when examining other normalized behaviors in school – particularly heterosexist ones in the cases of homophobic harassment.

In 1996, Lee, Croninger, Linn and Chen's study in the U.S. provided the first quantitative data presented in an academic journal on the frequency, severity and consequences of sexual harassment in American secondary schools. Lee and her team used survey data of a nationally representative sample of 1208 students in grades 8-11 collected by Harris Interactive for the American Association of University Women. Using a multivariate approach and causal modeling to analyze the statistics, they concluded that harassment was disruptive for all students but had more severe impacts on girls and black students due to the context of the school. They also concluded that harassed students experience academic and psychological problems particularly those who are harassed most severely.

Bagley, Bolitho, and Bertrand's (1997) later study is also interesting as it explores the impacts of sexual harassment on female students in high schools in Alberta, Canada. This team employed a quantitative approach in its survey of 1,025 adolescent women in grades 7-12. They defined sexual assault as either: "indecent exposure; physical (unwanted sexual touching through to rape); and other (mostly verbal harassment)" (362). The researchers used a variety of mental health measures to conclude that girls who reported being assaulted "often" were more likely to report emotional disorder and were more than five times as likely to have exhibited suicidal behaviors than were students who were assaulted less frequently or not at all (363). They determined that males are also subjects of sexual harassment; but rates are "much lower and the connection with mental health problems is much weaker" (365). This study helps to establish links between some of the long-term harms caused to students when they experience harassment at school. Related to this deeply embedded sexism in schools is the issue of racism. Both issues are consistently silenced and ignored in spite of the documented negative impacts of them on students. The next two studies bring these effects to light.

In Tan Phan's (2003) study, "Life in School: Narratives of Resiliency Among Vietnamese-Canadian Youths", issues of ethnicity and racism were central in the experiences of his participants. He conducted a qualitative study of eleven academically successful youth who had been born in Vietnam and had later immigrated to Canada. All of his participants came from low-income neighborhoods in Vancouver. He employed a narrative form of analysis in order to help him sort and categorize while being "explicitly attentive to societal and cultural contexts in narrative data" (557). All of the students in this study perceived racism as a common problem in the classroom and had witnessed racist acts against their Vietnamese classmates. They had felt, "silenced, marginalized, or even criminalized, while others received privileged treatment" (560). Consistently, these resilient youths refused to be defeated by the racism and developed a "resistance stance" in order to succeed (565). Much of the racism they experienced came in the form of persistent stereotyping and negative assumptions on the part of their classmates and teachers. Many White Canadians would not recognize such acts as blatantly racist. This is a complicating problem that James Ryan investigated in his 2003 study of school administrators.

Ryan (2003) explains in his introduction that racism in education is often most evident at the school level. He clarifies by stating, "it is here that the various and complex forms of racism emerge in their obvious and not so obvious guises, in the name-calling, harassment and the interpersonal conflict, in the subtle stereotyping and taken-for granted understandings and practices, and in curricular and organizational patterns" (145). The purpose of his research was to, "explore the extent to which these administrators believe racism exists in their schools and the ways in which they understand it" (146). His research consisted of two phases. First, the team conducted open-ended interviews with 35 principals from two large school districts: one urban, and one that had both urban and rural territory. With the exception of two, all were of Anglo or European heritage. In this first phase they identified common themes for the survey that was then distributed to 220 principals across Canada of which 104 were returned. Results of this survey indicated that "many principals were reluctant to acknowledge that racism occurred in their schools…and do not see racism as systemic" (149-150). They tended to minimize or justify students' uses of racist language by indicating that they didn't believe it was racially motivated. He also contends that, "most administrators are conservative in their practice. They tend to orient their actions toward supporting and conserving the system in which they work and have difficulty when it comes to challenging or changing integral parts of it" (159). These findings are important as they relate directly to how many administrators respond to incidences of gendered harassment. Just as Ryan believes that principals can have an impact on racist and anti-racist practices in their schools, they can have similar impacts on how sexist, heterosexist, and homophobic practices are challenged and transformed.

Of these 27 articles on harassment in secondary schools, only four made any specific mention of the potential links and impacts of homophobia and sexual harassment (Ferfolja, 1998; Lahelma, 2002; Timmerman, 2003; Williams, Connolly, Pepler, & Craig, 2005). Most of the articles offered a feminist critique of power and gender roles in schools, but very few pushed this line of thinking to its logical next step of understanding heterosexism and how it connects sexual harassment and homophobic harassment.

The first harassment study that addressed homophobia was conducted in Australia by Tanja Ferfolja (1998). Her study of six lesbian teachers in government high schools in Sydney includes examples of the negative impacts of the heterosexist structures of the school and the role hegemonic masculinity plays in teaching male students to disrespect women and gays and lesbians. She explains, "harassment is based on the need to maintain power through the maintenance of socially constructed gender roles…anti-lesbian harassment encompasses both [misogyny and homophobia], doubly oppressing women through its maintenance of heterosexist discourses and simultaneously assuring male power" (403). The teachers talked about their challenges facing "underhand harassment" which Ferfolja explains includes whispers, jokes, or comments about lesbianism in the teacher's presence without directing it at the teacher. Even when students were disciplined for their behavior, in none of the cases was it defined as homophobic harassment. The teachers spoke of taking stress leave, feeling sick and depressed, and "under siege" as a result of their students' behaviors. This harassment had negative long-term effects on their teaching styles and attitude towards teaching. This research shows how teachers as well as students are harmed when a school allows such harassment to continue.

The second study that included a discussion of homophobia in schools was Elina Lahelma's article, "Gendered conflicts in secondary school: Fun or enactment of power?" (2002). In her discussion of the forms of sexual harassment observed in this Finnish school, she discusses "sex-based" harassment which is enacted through terms derogatory to females such as "sissy" for boys and "slut" for girls. She goes on to explain that boys are vulnerable to being called 'homo', "because they are the *wrong* sort of boys" (302).

Timmerman's 2003 study in the Netherlands titled, "Sexual Harassment of Adolescents Perpetrated by Teachers and by Peers: An Exploration of the Dynamics of Power, Culture, and Gender in Secondary Schools" offered a unique theoretical framework for understanding this problem. She examined student-student harassment using a Culture Model that assumed that sexual harassment reflects the school culture due to the fact that it is a public phenomenon and occurs on a daily basis. She also investigated the related concerns of teacher-student harassment using a Power Model that argues that teacher-student harassment is restricted to isolated incidents and happens in secret, but is often more severe and has added negative consequences (233). Finally, she applied a third model, the Gender Model, to hypothesize that girls experience more incidents and more severe forms of sexual harassment than boys and that the great majority of perpetrators are male peers and male teachers.

In her findings she reported that the Culture Model was relevant in describing both student-student harassment as well as teacher-student harassment. This means that the culture of the school accepts the public and persistent sexual harassment of female students by teachers and peers. Male students and teachers comprised an overwhelming majority of the perpetrators. Although male and female students were both targeted, girls were the objects of more persistent and severe harassment. Timmerman did add that sexual harassment of boys, "tends to be more verbal and homophobic in nature" (242).

The fourth article examined the link between sexual orientation and psychosocial adjustment in a sample of 97 sexual minority adolescents in Canada (Williams, Connolly, Pepler, & Craig, 2005). This sample was recruited in high schools and included gay, lesbian, bisexual, and questioning youth. Through statistical analysis of eight different survey tools, the researchers concluded that sexual minority youth reported more sexual harassment, more bullying, less closeness with their mothers and less companionship with their best friends (471). These findings indicate that social support and peer victimization are important factors that contribute to emotional and behavioral difficulties and that schools and families need to work proactively to reduce these harms for the health of all youth in schools. Although this article doesn't provide any critical analysis of gender or sexual orientation, it is the only bullying or harassment study that used the Olweus bullying questionnaire to quantify the incidences and impacts of homophobic harassment in secondary schools. The fourth section of this literature review includes articles on studies that explicitly explored the prevalence and impacts of homophobia in schools.

Homophobia
Peer Reviewed articles
As the methods table indicates, there were the least amount of articles in peer-reviewed journals on the subject of homophobia that met the inclusion criteria for this literature review. The articles presented here are empirical studies that explicitly

addressed the issue of homophobia in schools. Due to the limited number of sources found using academic search engines, the search was broadened to include empirical studies conducted in K-12 schools that included reports by advocacy groups such as the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network, the American Association of University Women, and the Human Rights Watch. These studies were located using referrals from other scholars in the field, and internet searches. This search yielded thirteen additional empirical studies that provide useful information in understanding forms of bullying and harassment in schools.

The eighteen articles published in peer-reviewed journals included four quantitative studies, four mixed methods studies, and eight qualitative studies. Most were aimed at describing the problem of homophobic harassment in schools and the impacts on targeted students. Of these articles, five studies were conducted in the U.S. (D'Augelli, Pilkington, & Hershberger, 2002; Klein, 2006; Parks, 2001; Sears, 1991; Stoudt, 2006) six in the U.K. (Adams, Cox, & Dunstan, 2004; Chambers, Tincknell, & Van Loon, 2004; Chambers, van Loon, & Tincknell, 2004; Phoenix, Frosh, & Pattman, 2003; Renold, 2000, 2002), and two in Canada (D'Augelli, Pilkington, & Hershberger, 2002; Smith & Smith, 1998). The remaining five articles addressed: intervention programs (Peters, 2003; Szlacha, 2003), legal and policy issues in the U.S. (Faulkner & Lindsey, 2004; Fineran, 2002), a review of the literature (Thompson & Johnson, 2003), and youth violence in Europe (Junger-Tas, 1996). The common thread in these studies was the recognition that homophobia is prevalent in schools and that it has a variety of negative impacts on students. Related to this is the lack of clear policies addressing homophobia or consistent intervention by school personnel to stop homophobic behaviors. I will now focus on the five studies that explore the multiple dimensions of gender and sexual orientation and how they influence students' experiences in school in greater detail (Phoenix, Frosh, & Pattman, 2003; Renold, 2000, 2002; Smith & Smith, 1998; Stoudt, 2006).

The first of these studies was George Smith's 1998 article, "The ideology of 'fag': The school experience of gay students." Using institutional ethnography, Smith explores how speech (graffiti, verbal abuse, antigay activities, etc.) informs the experience of gay teenagers in school. He concludes that, "the social relations of heterosexuality and patriarchy dominate public space, being gay is never spoken of positively (in these informants' experiences)" (309). His use of discourse analysis and the way it influences how gay students construct their understandings of their school settings illustrates how language shapes our experiences. He describes how the institution of the school "often gives tacit approval" (321) for anti-gay activities as well as how gender relations are experienced within the heterosexist context of the school. This study offers a detailed description of how homophobia is used as a tool of aggression and how schools consistently ignore and allow the persistence of this form of harassment.

Emma Renold's ethnographies conducted in primary schools in the UK discuss similar concepts outlined by Smith. In her two articles, "'Coming Out': Gender, (Hetero)sexuality and the Primary School" (2000) and "Presumed Innocence: (Hetero)sexual, heterosexist and homophobic harassment among primary school girls and boys" (2002), she explores similar practices and their impacts on all students in the final year of primary school. Her studies are the first to explicitly link homophobia and (hetero)sexual harassment in primary schools and explore how they influence young

students' construction of their gender and sexual identities. She writes that her participants revealed, "how homophobic performances are more about gender than sexual practices and are a means of regulating and policing the boundaries of hegemonic heterosexual masculinities" (2000, p. 322). In her later article she explains that these practices, "provide ways of resecuring gender dichotomies, creating and maintaining dominant masculinities and passive subordinate femininities, and policing heterosexual hierarchies" (2002, p. 429). She also discovered variations in how this policing differed for boys and girls. "Girls who transgressed dominant femininities were not homosexualized. Derogatory terms such as 'dyke' and 'lesbo' had not entered the verbal repertoires of pupils from the two research schools. They were, however, masculinized and called 'boys' and were routinely labeled 'weird'" (2004, p. 431).

The fourth study to examine the intersections of homophobia and gender issues was Phoenix, Frosh & Pattman's (2003) "Producing Contradictory Masculine Subject Positions: Narratives of Threat, Homophobia and Bullying in 11-14 Year Old Boys". This study, also conducted in the UK, was aimed at understanding masculinity and how it related to bullying and homophobia through group discussions and individual interviews. This approach helped them to understand "the ways in which the participants experienced themselves and constructed their identities as young men in talk" (181). They concluded that their participants constructed masculinity as, "synonymous with 'toughness,' physical aggression and homophobia and antithetical to femininity and compliance with teachers" (184-185). They also found that their participants constructed different versions of themselves in the group interviews than in the individual ones – they tended to be more "stereotypically boyish" when surrounded by their peers (187). Phoenix, Frosh & Pattman also point at the connections between homophobia and misogyny. This link is important to understand as it lies at the heart of the concept of gendered harassment, or any behavior that acts to police traditional gender norms. They explain that, "boys labeled as gay were seen as possessing the same characteristics that were denigrated in girls. Hence, homophobia was intertwined with misogyny" (188).

This study was also interesting because it explicitly examined the links between racialized identities and gender and sexuality. Asian boys who were constructed as "not powerful or sexually attractive" or Turkish boys who "work hard and spend all their time together" were targets for homophobic name-calling. In contrast, black boys were less likely to be called "gay" and were seen as "strongly heterosexual" and "super masculine" (190, 191). Finally, the conclusion of this article offers an insight that can inform future examinations of bullying and harassment in schools. The authors write that, "Boys in this study reported that teachers in the schools in which we worked did not define homophobic name calling as bullying and so did not impose sanctions on those who engaged in it" (193). This analysis of how boys position themselves and experience their identities in schools provides useful insight to this research on how educators see and respond to gendered harassment in schools.

The fifth and final study provided a similar analysis of hegemonic masculinity in a U.S. high school. Brett Stoudt's (2006) article, "You're either in or you're out: School violence, peer discipline, and the (re)production of hegemonic masculinity," examined practices of hazing, teasing and bullying at an all-boys private school. Stoudt reported on the prevalence of misogynistic and homophobic discourses in the school to reproduce and affirm the dominance of hegemonic masculinity: "It becomes so embedded in the daily

school experience that many students no longer make the connection between calling someone a 'pussy' or 'homo' and insulting a particular group of people" (Stoudt, 2006, p. 280). His mixed method study of 148 mostly white, upper-middle class students led him to conclude that "the teaching and reinforcing of hegemonic masculine values are part of Rockport's (not so) hidden curriculum, a form of symbolic violence that helps to perpetuate patriarchal dominance"(Stoudt, 2006, p. 285). It is important to note the role that masculinity plays in these examinations of school-based homophobia. Without a deeper understanding of how gendered behaviors shape students experiences in schools, attempts to reduce homophobia in school will experience minimal success.

In 2003, Laura Szlacha published the first article that evaluated the effectiveness of the only statewide initiative in the U.S. (Massachusetts) to address homophobia in schools. This study identified key factors that improve the "sexual diversity climate" in schools for all students. The three major recommendations of this program were: a) having a clear school policy that included sexual orientation in its non-discrimination statement, b) staff training on issues related to homophobia and sexual orientation, and c) having a student Gay-Straight Alliance. This last recommendation, "is the aspect most strongly associated with positive sexual diversity climates"(p. 73). Unfortunately, the reported implementation levels of the Safe Schools Program were quite low. Although this program was initiated in 1993, by 1998 only 21% of the schools had implemented all three recommendations (64). This indicates that even when there is strong policy support and institutional resources allocated for anti-homophobia programs, there is much resistance on the part of the educators who are responsible for implementing it. Now the discussion will move to fourteen non peer-reviewed empirical studies and explore how their findings are important to consider in constructing this review of literature related to gendered harassment.

Reports

The earliest published report that began documenting incidents of homophobic harassment in schools and its impacts on the targeted students was the groundbreaking study, "Hostile Hallways" conducted by Harris and Associates for the American Association of University Women (1993). This was a study aimed at understanding the prevalence of sexual harassment in schools that included a question that asked if participants had ever been called gay or lesbian in school. This was the first quantitative data available on the prevalence of this problem. What is interesting about this study is that is was followed up eight years later (Harris Interactive, 2001) and they found that the one form of harassment that had increased since the previous study was calling another student gay or lesbian. Boys reported this occurred twice as often, and girls three times as often as they had a decade earlier, whereas most other forms of harassment had remained constant or decreased (21). This study also showed that harassment was occurring in public spaces in the presence of adults. The three most common sites where harassment was reported were: hallway (64%), classroom (56%), and gym or playing field or pool area (43%). This contradicts many bullying studies that indicate bullying happens where there is minimal adult supervision and shows that forms of sexual harassment may be more public and widely accepted in schools.

In 1995, the first study that made central the issue of homophobia in schools was published by the Safe Schools Coalition of Washington, U.S.A. (Reis, 1995). This was

important work as it provided data for advocates who were working to improve the learning environment for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender youth. They documented 50 different incidences of anti-gay harassment ranging from name-calling to beatings and rape (15). This study also confirmed several of the findings from the AAUW study including: harassment is usually a public event, most harassers are fellow students, most harassers are male, and in most cases adults do not take appropriate actions against the offender(s) (20). Adults responsible for ensuring a safe learning environment for students are consistently shown in these studies to fall far short of this duty and we need to better understand why this happens.

Following Reis' groundbreaking study, several similar reports were issued four years later in 1999: the Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network's (GLSEN) first National School Climate Survey (GLSEN, 1999), as well as two more studies from the Safe Schools Coalition of Washington: a meta-analysis of eight population based studies representing the experiences of 83,000 youth (Reis & Saewyc, 1999), and a follow up study on incidents in Washington schools (Reis, 1999). These three studies added to the understanding of the negative impacts of homophobic harassment in schools. The meta-analysis of several large-scale population based studies highlighted the fact that gay, lesbian, and bisexual students were at higher risk for several dangerous behaviors as compared to their heterosexual peers. GLB youth were over four times more likely to have attempted suicide, were three times more likely to have been injured or threatened with a weapon at school, and were three times more likely to miss school because of feeling unsafe (Reis & Saewyc, 1999, p. 9). Reis' (1999) follow-up study provided greater detail by conducting in-depth interviews and having larger number of participants than the original study. This report explored how adults' inaction impacted targeted students. She explains:

> These cases of apparent neglect by adults were very troubling to respondents. They spoke about months of verbal violence and public humiliation by peers that preceded a young person's resorting to fists or dropping out of school, or, in one instance, committing suicide. In each instance, adults had multiple opportunities to put a stop to the very public abuse of a child or teen and failed to do so (20).

GLSEN's first study also highlighted the problem of adults failing to intervene effectively. Every two years they have conducted follow up studies (GLSEN, 2001; Kosciw, 2004; Kosciw & Diaz, 2006) and the most recent report shows that 64% of GLBT students report being verbally harassed at school. 83% also reported that faculty or staff rarely or never intervened when present and homophobic remarks were made (Kosciw & Diaz, 2006, p. 4). This lack of intervention by educators in incidents of verbal harassment is a recurring theme in studies on sexual and homophobic harassment. In order to reduce incidences of bullying and harassment in school, the problem of ignoring, and therefore accepting, certain forms of aggression needs to be addressed.

In 2001, Human Rights Watch published a study called, "Hatred in the Hallways: Violence and Discrimination against Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Students in U.S. Schools," that critiqued U.S. schools and the federal government for violating its obligations under international law to provide protection from discrimination. This

national qualitative study exposed the prevalence of the problem in U.S. schools and is the first one to explicitly address the related issue of students targeted for gender non-conforming behaviors. The authors asserted that:

> It quickly became obvious from our research that the abuse of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth is predicated on the belief that girls and boys must strictly adhere to rigid rules of conduct, dress, and appearances based on their sex. For boys, that means they must be athletic, strong, sexist, and hide their emotions. For girls, that means they must be attentive to and flirtatious with boys and must accept a subordinate status to boys. Regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, youth who violate these rules are punished by their peers and too often by adults (Bochenek & Brown, p. 49).

This report also noted the repetitive "official inaction" by teachers and administrators (81). Participants repeatedly told stories of teachers and administrators ignoring their reports of harassment and being blamed for bringing it on themselves. Students also reported harassment and anti-gay jokes from these adults (83). Although this study theorized why professional educators would act in such a way, teachers were not interviewed as part of this project.

Many of these early studies, with the exception of the AAUW studies (Harris Interactive, 2001; Louis Harris & Associates, 1993) and the Oregon Safe Schools Meta-Analysis of youth studies, (Reis & Saewyc 1999), focused primarily on youth who identified as gay, lesbian, or bisexual and therefore missed the experiences of students who did not identify as such; including youth who were "closeted", those currently questioning their sexual orientation, transgender, and heterosexual youth. In the past five years, more studies have emerged that have a more diverse participant pool. In 2002, The National Mental Health Association conducted a phone survey with 760 randomly selected youth ages 12-17 to determine their experience with and opinions about anti-gay bullying in their schools. They found that if a student was identified as "gay" they were perceived to be twice as vulnerable to bullying as students who were "fat" or "dress differently" and were more than three times more likely to be targeted than students with disabilities, or for one's racial identity (2002, p. 2).

Another later study conducted by the California Safe Schools Coalition had a large random sample of students (n=230,000) and its attention to issues of homophobia and gender non-conformity, as well as its exploration of how teacher responses affect students' experiences in school was innovative. This report supported the findings of earlier studies on the prevalence and negative impacts of sexual and homophobic harassment in schools and added to them by exploring the related pervasiveness and impacts of students who are targeted for being "not as masculine as other boys" or "not as feminine as other girls." In this respect, it is the first study to identify and include all aspects of gendered harassment: sexual, homophobic, and for gender non-conformity. In regards to teacher response, students reported that teachers or staff were "unlikely to intervene" to stop bias-motivated comments, particularly related to sexual orientation and gender presentation (California Safe Schools Coalition, 2004, p. 14). The most encouraging finding from this study is the fact that where students see teachers stop

negative comments and slurs based on sexual orientation, they report less name-calling and stronger feelings of school safety (19). These are important findings as they demonstrate the impact that effective intervention can have on the experiences of students in schools.

Finally, the 2005 study, "From teasing to torment: School climate in America" conducted by Harris Interactive for GLSEN used a nationally representative sample of students (N=3450) and teachers (n= 1011) to explore their experiences with and attitudes towards school harassment. This study found that LGBT students are three times as likely as non-LGBT students to feel not safe at school (22% vs. 7%), and that public school students were less likely to feel very safe at their school than private or parochial school students (44% vs. 81%) (8). This was also the first study to ask teachers the reasons for which they don't intervene. The top three reasons were: unable to reach/identify student(s) (14%), remarks made in joking manner/no intention to hurt (9%), and another teacher/admin. had already intervened (9%) (39).

This study also examined the intersecting variables of race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and class and how these impacted students' perceptions and experiences in school. The frequency of such harassment was ranked in the following order based on student responses to the question "how often are students bullied, called names, or harassed for the following reasons?": 1) way they look or body size (39%), 2) people think they are gay, lesbian, or bisexual (33%), 3) how masculine or feminine they are (28%), 4)their ability at school (16%), 5) their race/ethnicity (14%), 6)their family does not have a lot of money (13%), and 7) their religion (8%). When broken down by race/ethnicity the data show the black and latino students are more likely to report harassment occurs very often/often on all measures except religion. When broken down by sexual orientation, GLBT identified students are more likely to report harassment under each category occurs "very often/often" (28). These data are important as they indicate that members of marginalized groups are more likely report experiencing multiple forms of harassment and at higher levels than other students.

The last report for analysis in this paper was completed in 2005 by a research team headed by Tara Goldstein at the University of Toronto. Her team compiled a report for the Toronto District School Board called, "Challenging Homophobia and Heterosexism in Elementary and High Schools: A Research Report to the Toronto District School Board." In this report, they investigated the process of developing an anti-homophobia equity policy at the TDSB as well as how several schools began to implement this policy. Important findings included in this report addressed the constraints and conflicts that professionals had working on anti-homophobia initiatives. Goldstein, Collins, and Halder identified the following obstacles to this type of equity work: time restrictions, limits on language peer educators could use, lack of ongoing institutional support and follow up to anti-homophobia education, fear of being reprimanded for conducting anti-homophobia education, fear of being harassed or threatened by parents, colleagues and school administration, fear of not being able to respond to student queries about homosexuality, conflicts between educators' commitment to equity and personal religious beliefs, and issues with students not being prepared for an anti-homophobia workshop so they entered hostile and unreceptive (p. 4). These factors are important to understand and explore at greater depth in future research projects. This study provides a detailed

analysis of one Canadian school board's policy and lessons that other school boards can take from the TDSB's initiatives.

One new area of investigation worth noting that emerged in the latest GLSEN National School Climate Survey was that of cyber-bullying. This was the only document in this entire literature review that included any mention of the use of new technologies to bully and harass classmates. In this report cyber-bullying was defined as "using an electronic medium, such as emails or text messages, to threaten or harm others" (Kosciw & Diaz, 2006, p. 27). According to their research, 41% of LGBT students had experienced this type of harassment in the past year. This is four times higher than the national average of 9% reported in a recent large scale study conducted at the University of New Hampshire (Wolak, Mitchell, & Finkelhor, 2006, p. 10). This area of bullying research is highly relevant to issues of gendered harassment as Shariff & Gouin (2006) argue that cyberspace is becoming an increasingly hostile environment particularly for young women who are targets for sexual harassment online. Further, they explain that schools are often "reluctant to carry out their responsibilities to protect and educate students in inclusive electronic discourse" (21). The emergence of new virtual spaces such as discussion groups, blogs, Instant Messaging programs and social websites such as Friendster, Facebook, and MySpace have created new arenas in which youth interact and inevitably harass (Jenkins & Boyd, 2006). This does not necessarily mean that this is outside the realm of educators' interventions. Danah Boyd, a Ph.D. candidate at the University of California, Berkeley, argues that the visibility and public forum of internet interactions can actually "provide a window through which teen mentors can help combat [bullying, sexual teasing, and other peer-to-peer harassment]" (Jenkins & Boyd, 2006, p. 5). This related field of study is an important one for educators and researchers to consider as youth interactions spill out of the school yard and into cyberspace.

Conclusion

There has been a significant amount of research related to the issue of bullying, but less so regarding gendered harassment in schools. The bulk of the bullying and harassment studies discussed here do not consider the work done by scholars in parallel fields which has resulted in studies that do not fully apply or build on the findings of earlier research. The majority of bullying and harassment studies have focused on either quantifying or qualifying the problem from the students' perspective. This has been an important first step in order to bring attention this problem in schools. Bullying research has been conducted for over 30 years and has identified and quantified bullying, as well as evaluated education and intervention programs for effectiveness. These studies miss an important aspect of life in schools since they have not considered the impacts of race, ethnicity, disability, class, gender, sex, and sexual orientation on the power dynamics present in bully-victim relationships. Although a few of these studies explore how boys and girls bully differently, these studies overwhelmingly ignore the larger socio-cultural influences of sex, gender, and sexual orientation on students' lives and how students exercise power within their school communities and peer relationships.

On the other hand, many of the harassment studies are framed with a feminist lens and have a central focus on power dynamics organized along gender lines, but most frequently are constructed along the male-female heterosexual matrix. The inability of these studies to acknowledge or even mention acts of homophobic harassment or the

influences of race and ethnicity on these behaviors is disheartening and exemplifies the white heterosexual bias embedded in much research.

The most recent wave of research related to gendered hierarchies and harassment in schools, studies on homophobia, did not emerge in academic journals until quite recently. The studies that clearly explore issues of gender, sexuality, and power in schools were primarily conducted by independent advocacy groups such as: Human Rights Watch, the American Association of University Women, the California Safe Schools Coalition, and the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network who strive to make their findings widely accessible in a timely manner. This could be one of the main reasons why they do not seek to publish their research in academic journals. Readers of refereed academic journals comprise a very small audience in relation to the population of students, parents, community activists and educators who are involved in school communities. These reports are the ones that have documented the problem over time and have provided the foundation for this investigation of gendered harassment in schools. These studies have created a detailed picture of the obstacles faced by students who are targets for frequent harassment based on their perceived or actual sexual orientation and gender expression. Since the majority of research conducted on homophobia and heterosexism has not been published in academic journals it is under utilized in University-based research projects. Conversely, the reports that focus on homophobic harassment tend not to refer to any existing studies on bullying and lose valuable insights as a result. It is my hope to better integrate these areas of study and make explicit the connections that a few other researchers such as Neil Duncan and Emma Renold have begun to explore. Future studies exploring how teachers see and respond to acts of homophobia, sexism, and transphobia will build on the work of these earlier researchers with a view to challenging and contributing to the ongoing conversation on how to make schools safer and more equitable for all.

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