



Project
MUSE[®]

Today's Research. Tomorrow's Inspiration.

<http://muse.jhu.edu>

The Review of Higher Education

Summer 2011, Volume 34, No. 4, pp. 555–580

Copyright © 2011 Association for the Study of Higher Education

All Rights Reserved (ISSN 0162-5748)

“Quietly Stripping the Pastels”: The Undergraduate Gender Gap

Tamara Yakaboski

The reversal of the gender gap is not new to this decade, even though the media recently has problematized it. The pattern of women outpacing men in college enrollment began in the late 1970s and early 1980s, even though the exact date is subject to interpretation and the disaggregation of U.S. census statistics. The total number of female students outpaced males in 1978 with a continued increase each year to the present date (U.S. Census, 2007, Table A–7). However, the proportion of females based on enrollment rates exceeded those of males in 1991 (Mather & Adams, 2007). With females disproportionately outpacing males in enrolling in college, females increased their participation by 27% and males by 18% between 1995 and 2005.

Some of the current concern over the increasing gender gap originated with policy papers by Thomas Mortenson (1995, 1998), a senior scholar at the Pell Institute for the Study of Opportunity in Higher Education, who sounded the alarm. The concern grew with the release of the National Center for Education Statistics’ (NCES) projection that, by 2014, the total female enrollment would increase to 58% of the 19.5 million students enrolled

TAMARA YAKABOSKI is an Assistant Professor of Higher Education and Women’s Studies in the Department of Educational Administration and Higher Education at Southern Illinois University Carbondale. The quotation in the title is from Gibbs (2008), a reading of which prompted this investigation. Address queries to Yakaboski at Pulliam 131, Mail Code 4606, 475 Clocktower Drive, Carbondale, IL 62901; telephone: (618) 536–4434; Fax (618) 453–4338; email: tamarad@siu.edu.

in higher education (Hussar, 2005, p. 8). The increase is expected to come mostly from traditional-age female students (24 or younger); while men will increase 12%, women are expected to increase by 21% (Hussar, 2005, pp. 8–9).

These statistics generated much discussion in national newspaper articles that portrayed how higher education administrators worried about a 60/40 ratio, which has led numerous researchers to examine the undergraduate enrollment gap (Baum & Goodstein, 2004; Chaplin & Klasik, 2006; Corbett, Hill, & St. Rose, 2008; Goldin, Katz, & Kuziemko, 2006; Mortenson, 2008; Whitmire, 2007, 2008). While the statistics appear straightforward, the media's accompanying rhetoric represents a value system that translates into societal implications and potential policy. Newspaper articles refer to the gender gap with statements and phrases such as "undergraduate males are becoming an endangered species" (Clayton, 2001); "boys as society's victims" (Bernstein, 2000); the "boy problem" (Gonzalez, 2008; Lewin, 2006a); "the boy crisis" (Gandy, 2006; Rivers & Chait Barnard, 2006; Warner, 2006) which all led to a call for "affirmative action for men" policies (Baum & Goodstein, 2004; Jaschik, 2005, 2006).

The media's presentation of male victimization ignores that higher education institutions continue to be historically masculine environments with "major gender asymmetries" in which women frequently are objectified (Smith, 2000, p. 226). Women exist in the professional context of academia but become the sexual objects of men, thereby displacing women's academic role while men in this same academic context operate solely in the professional or academic mode (Smith, 2000). Females are the invisible majority within higher education institutions even though they gained majority undergraduate enrollment status (Bensimon & Marshall, 2000). The institutionalized masculine environment is so pervasive that researchers, faculty, or staff often do not even acknowledge or see the "male-defined culture and its ideology" (Bensimon & Marshall, 2000, p. 140).

This article's analysis of national newspaper articles demonstrates how women enrolling in college are not given equal status and continue to experience a "backlash" (Faludi, 1991) or the continuation of "antifeminism" (Ferguson, Katrak, & Miner, 2000). The implications are serious, given the current financial crisis affecting most higher education institutions and state economies. If legislators, higher education administrators and faculty, and society in general discredit and discount women's enrollment and placement in higher education, the impact could be felt in a decline of women's studies programs and a decline in women's enrollment. The media's negative rhetoric could help fuel an increase in attempts to close down women studies programs. Early examples may be Florida Atlantic University, where petitions and fund-raising eventually saved the program; the attempt of Georgia's House Republicans to stop funding queer studies and courses (Bluestein, 2009);

or Brigham Young University's dissolving of its Women's Research Institute in January 2010, which is described as attempts to "streamline" ("Farewell Salute," 2009). The other impact might be to justify attempts to legally and formally institute affirmative action for men (Birnbaum & Yakaboski, 2011).

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objective of this feminist media discourse analysis (Altheide, 1996; Peräkylä, 2008) is to identify and analyze the rhetoric used in three national newspaper sources and to highlight the underlying power discourse. Narratives and rhetoric can either reinforce or tear apart the misogyny within society and, on a micro scale, within higher education organizations. Analysis of the prevalent narratives in the media reveals various camps or constituencies with their own agendas regarding the college enrollment gap. The importance of such analysis is that it focuses on national newspaper media discourse, which helps to shape and socially construct the public's views on the enrollment in higher education, thus illustrating that this is not just an academic issue but also has larger implications.

This analysis is made more timely due to the antifeminist backlash that has become more pervasive since the 1990s and the "increased power and capabilities of the media, including computerized information super-highways, electronic international mail networks and other access into virtual realities that can ignore, negate, or render invisible the real conditions governing people's ordinary lives" (Ferguson, Katrak, & Miner, 2000, p. 62). The proliferation and availability of national news sources instead of academic journals influence how lay citizens and government representatives view the higher education system and the successes or failures of male and female students. This impact has potential to influence elections and government appropriations for higher education.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

This article argues that women experience discrimination and that men are negatively stereotyped through the rhetoric and underlying assumptions used to discuss college enrollment. It is within these narratives and their rhetoric that power structures are located and replicated. Poststructural feminism (Weedon, 1987) is useful for analyzing the discursive construction of gender through language. Language helps to reify gender structures and hierarchy; this article thereby aims to uncover these assumptions so that the language can serve for women's empowerment. These discursive practices can establish power that preserves the status quo (Weedon, 1987).

Poststructuralism focuses its attention on "the centrality of language to human activity and culture" because it "emphasize[s] the self-undermining

and self-deconstructing character of discourse” (Peters & Burbules, 2004, p. 5). In this article, I use “language,” not with a linguistic definition, but rather as a “meaning-constituting system” (Scott, 2003, p. 379). In essence, individuals use language to make meaning of their reality, and “meaning is produced within language rather than reflected by language” (Weedon, 1987, p. 23). Poststructuralism assumes that the unconscious, hidden structures or “sociohistorical forces . . . constrain and govern our behavior” (Peters & Burbules, 2004, p. 23). This assumption bases itself in Lacan’s statement that “the unconscious is structured as a language” (Peters & Burbules, 2004, p. 23). Poststructuralism and feminism share a common historical development that Joan Scott (2003) argues is worth exploring for their shared “self-conscious critical relationship to established philosophical and political traditions” (p. 378).

Poststructuralism attempts to deconstruct the use of binary arguments, which only reinforce hierarchy by making one object subordinate to the other (Peters & Burbules, 2004). Deconstruction “invokes reversal and displacement” and shows “how the privileged term is held in place by the force of a dominant metaphor and not, as it might seem, by any conclusive logic” (Madison, 2005, p. 162). Poststructuralism also rejects any notion of one truth or an objective claim to truth and lived experience. It is opposed to the belief that the self is understood through analysis but rather holds that the subconscious is portrayed in language rather than the self-reflection of phenomenology. While the news sources I discuss present binary arguments to frame gender, the use of a poststructural framework allows the deconstruction of these dichotomies and presents an alternative framework.

METHOD

Media discourse analysis (Altheide, 1996; Fiske, 1994) highlights how “social life in modern society is mediated by written texts” (Peräkylä, 2008, p. 352). A feminist content analysis strategy suggests that text mediates the experience, which reflects the individual who produces the text (Reinharz, 1992). In this study, I use media articles as cultural artifacts that are naturalistic, not produced for the purpose of study, and non-interactive.

This study’s methodological framework mirrors two previous discourse analyses of the higher education news source, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Rhee and Sagaria’s (2004) critical discourse analysis of imperialism and articles on international students inductively and deductively coded the texts. Also, Allan, Gordon, and Iverson (2006) examined the power in the discourse on leadership and used deductive coding of the articles, in combination with Denzin and Lincoln’s (2000) definition of discourse analysis as a “focused examination of language, text, and meaning that emerges from the text” (Allan, Gordon, & Iverson, 2006, p. 48).

Media discourse methodology, combined with a poststructural feminist lens, allows for an analysis of narratives and the underlying social assumptions regarding the college enrollment gap. Additionally, news media is recognized as a masculine arena (Fiske, 1987, pp. 281–83; Kozol, 1995, p. 649), where the images and depictions of women and their actions are often not examined. Uncovering hidden hegemonic values is important because these common-sense assumptions directly and indirectly influence societal and institutional opinions, admission policies, recruitment, and campus climate.

Data Sources

While journalists sensationalize stories and headlines partially with the goal of selling newspapers, scholars should not leave these stories' influence on society unchecked (Bell, 1991; Zeisler, 2008). Data for this study came from articles in popular news sources: *Christian Science Monitor*, the *New York Times*, and *USA Today*. I selected these three data sources based on the criteria that they have a widespread audience (Altheide, 1996; Bell, 1991) beyond higher education specific media, such as *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. These newspapers offered both “the loudest voices and the most visible headlines” (Weaver-Hightower, 2003, p. 473) and wide distribution, presenting various perspectives on the enrollment situation. I reviewed both feature stories and opinion/editorials. In the latter category, I analyzed only newspaper-sponsored or staff-written editorials or opinion articles, not letters to the editor written by the public nor online commentary postings. My rationale for excluding them is that these features are less representative of the newspapers, although one opinion piece in the *New York Times* spurred follow-up responses in higher education news sources (Jaschik, 2006; Wilson, 2007). The article, written by Jennifer Delahunty Britz, dean of admissions and financial aid at Kenyon College, discussed her own daughter's placement on college wait-lists and how that “fat acceptance envelope is simply more elusive for today's accomplished young women” based on her own experiences at Kenyon College (2006).

These newspapers have national circulation and play a critical role in the public's formulation of opinions on the gender gap situation in higher education. I limit this article to these national newspapers, as I am interested in the national, non-academic impact. However, an extension of this project would be a comparison of the rhetoric used in higher education news sources such as *InsideHigherEd.com* and *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, which both have a more limited and targeted readership.

I developed my focus on these three news sources after completing a broader search for news stories on the undergraduate enrollment gender gap. These three emerged as the primary national news sources that regularly discussed the phenomenon. I removed local newspapers from consideration because they often relied on Associated Press articles from national sources.

While the *New York Times* and *USA Today* have readerships in the millions, the *Christian Science Monitor* is a noteworthy addition due to the fact that it does not use Associated Press stories; rather, its reporters cover stories directly, a characteristic that has implications of choice for what topics to cover (“About the Monitor,” n.d.). While the *Christian Science Monitor* does not have the same readership numbers as the *New York Times* and *USA Today*, it “boasts a fast growing readership since the end of its print newspaper in 2009 when it shifted fully online” (Cook, 2008; Sass, 2010). Despite its title, it does not represent itself as a religious news source, but it is worth noting that it continues to be owned by a church organization.

The 26 articles analyzed in this article had publication dates between July 2000 and August 2008 with one outlier written in 1998 by the *New York Times*. I primarily found them by using the Lexis Nexis search engine. Once I identified which news sources to use, I then conducted an online archival search through each of the newspaper’s databases. These three newspapers consistently had reporters who wrote stories on the college enrollment gap. The *Christian Science Monitor* had six, the *New York Times* had 12, and *USA Today* had 8 articles in this time span.

KEY DISCOURSES

National news outlets do not just present information but their reporters are instrumental in producing versions and perspectives of phenomena (Fiske, 1994). For example, when covering the gender gap story, reporters used negative buzz words such as “alarm,” “falling,” “trouble,” “unhealthy,” “concern,” “struggle,” “danger of women taking over,” “boys are flat-lining” (Gonzalez, 2004), and “victim,” to discuss the enrollment trend. The underlying narrative these words produce is that the gender gap is problematic and should be corrected. The power of this language and the resulting discourse is that it creates a binary of victims/perpetrators.

This binary created by problematizing the gender gap immediately raises questions about its origins, causation, and possible correlations. For example, in the words of William Pollack, director of the Centers for Men and Young Men, located at McLean Hospital in Belmont, Massachusetts, although it is now under expansion to other locations: “The only way to really understand girls is to understand boys” (quoted in Wilgoren, 2001, p. 8). As such quotations demonstrate, placing men and women as binary opposites limits administrators and researchers’ ability to move toward a discourse that views both group’s risks and successes separately. Without empirical research to answer these questions, reporters rely on the opinions of individuals whom they identify as close to the situation. The result is a binary that perpetuates an unproductive victim/perpetrator framework, a reliance on opinion-based

news, and a failure to focus on how to increase men's enrollment in college while maintaining women's success.

While the initial purpose of my analysis was to examine only the college level, it became apparent that reporters and interviewees contextualized these discussions within a larger framework that sometimes meant "society" and, at other times, the K–12 educational system. Because of this emergent theme, I begin by presenting the discourses with a focus on how girls' success is problematized as a boys' crisis that follows both sexes to and through college. I use this theme of blame to transition into the larger focus on what is happening and what should be done at the point of college enrollment. The overarching discourse themes that emerged from the articles are organized under: (a) who or what is to blame for this current situation; (b) the supposed implications of this gap; and (c) what can or should be done to correct this situation.

BLAME

Throughout the news articles, an overwhelming desire to blame someone or something for the alleged boy crisis and the enrollment gap surfaced as either as a K–12 pipeline problem or as due to differing behavioral explanations of boys and girls (Baum & Goodstein, 2004; Clayton, 2001; Sommers, 2000). All of this misplaced blame only serves to oversimplify the difficulties of continuing support for girls' success while bolstering boys' performance (Hulbert, 2005). The "feminized progressive education" system of K–12 appeared as the "culprit," causing boys to lag in college enrollment because schools are not "boy-friendly" (Tierney, 2006). *USA Today* claimed that educators and observers saw the propagation of a feminized curriculum in teacher education programs that spread throughout elementary and secondary schools (MacDonald, 2006). The article's stance perpetuated the idea that boys cannot learn in environments with girls.

Christian Science Monitor staff writer Marjorie Coeyman (2001) discussed how, from 1970 through the 1990s, "educators and feminists" created a new feminized curriculum, redesigned textbooks on topics boys were not interested in, and instructed teachers to stop "favoring boys in discussions." The idea that boys are disadvantaged due to cooperative learning in classrooms instead of rote learning and competition seems to do a disservice to young men while focusing on harming what works for young women.

USA Today critics also blamed a perceived feminization of education for the "boy problem." The newspaper's binary discourse framework implies that this feminized curriculum, combined with social shift toward "helping girls" injures boys by making them invisible during early school years (Gonzalez, 2004). A faulty primary and secondary educational system combined with

what various reporters in both the *New York Times* and *USA Today* articles deemed to be boys' confusion over "shifting gender roles" in society (Gandy, 2006; Gelles, 2006; Lewin, 2006a) as well as biological arguments of difference (Gonzalez, 2004). However, this position contradicted, to a certain extent, the blaming rhetoric that articulated clearly defined gender roles for both boys and girls. These rigid, traditional, White-centric roles defined boys as having "bad behavior" in the K–12 environment (Galayda, 2006). Boys were portrayed as not performing well academically because they saw it as "less cool" (Marklein, 2005, p. 1A), because they were more focused on competition, because they were "fidgety" (Gonzalez, 2004, p. 12A), or because they had "selective male laziness," while girls had "female frenzy" (Warner, 2006, p. 23). This rhetoric thereby posits that boys do not respond well to their "female teaching staffs [who] *naturally* teach in ways that connect better with girls" (Gonzalez, 2004, p. 12A; emphasis mine).

This discourse also stereotypes boys as not being expected by society to behave well or to achieve academically. The matching stereotype for girls is that they are "naturally" better at verbal skills. The result is that when colleges require essays or other types of writing tests, this expectation "puts boys at a huge handicap" (Gonzalez, 2004, p. 12A) where a more positive framing might be one of increased competitiveness on women's part—or even rewarding their academic success or merit. An example given by the *New York Times* was that males perform higher on SAT tests than their grade point averages (Lewin, 2006a) so blame enters the discourse, depending on whether the policy is to give higher value to scores or grade point since the reverse is true for females (Baum & Goodstein, 2004). Additionally, while the discourse framed boys as "fidgety," girls "tolerate boredom," which, given the allegedly feminized curriculum, theoretically privileges girls with a greater chance of success (Lewin, 1998, p. 1).

Such discourse in the media reinforces gender stereotypes and perpetuates the boy/girl binary that positions boys as active and girls as passive. The rhetoric is an effort not to solve the gender gap but to attack the success of females, since critics cannot clearly identify the causes of the recent achievement gap. Such critics refuse to see it as a result or positive consequence from women's changing role in society.

The *New York Times* articles discussed behavioral issues rooted in K–12 with links to the ongoing issue for college enrollment because "boys are as smart as girls, but they are much less fond of school," and just do not "pay attention" (Tierney, 2006), or, according to William Pollack, Director of the Centers for Men and Young Men, they have a "sense of lassitude" (quoted in Lewin, 2006a, p. 1). *New York Times* staff reporter, Tamar Lewin (2006a) introduced readers to a young student, Rick Kohn, who explained how in college he took "the path of least resistance" and enrolled in the "easiest

courses” available (p. 1). While female students might follow this same path, these newspaper articles chose to focus instead on narratives that supported negative stereotypes to explain the gap.

The college student behavioral binary displayed in the media is a gendered work ethic variation. In journalistic interviews with high school and college students and teachers, the reporters discussed different work ethics for boys and girls that impacted the amount of studying that took place, the number of extracurricular activities, and GPA (Lewin, 2006a; Wilgoren, 2001). The discussions of gendered work ethics highlight the underlying patriarchal privilege in which young women feel not only “pressure to achieve” (Lewin, 2006a, p. 1), but also know they have to perform better than men to get ahead in addition to succeeding across the board in the three areas of education, career, and family. This pressure and discourse perpetuates the notion that women have to perform as superheroes. One young undergraduate woman told the *New York Times*:

“Most college women want a high-powered career that they are passionate about. But they also want a family, and that probably means taking time off, and making dinner. I’m rushing through here, taking the most credits you can take without paying extra, because I want to do some amazing things, and establish myself as a career woman, before I settle down.” Her male classmates, she said, feel less pressure. “The men don’t seem to hustle as much. I think it’s a male entitlement thing. They think they can sit back and relax and when they graduate, they’ll still get a good job. They seem to think that if they have a firm handshake and speak properly, they’ll be fine.” (Lewin, 2006a, p. 1)

This quotation highlights society’s hegemony; if women want to have a career, then they have to be able to simultaneously maintain a domestic role, while performing a male-style career role (but at a higher level) to compete successfully. The media reinforces the superwoman syndrome by telling or showing women that they *can* have it all and perform home and work roles simultaneously (Douglas, 1995; Peril, 2006).

Women also have the memory, or the transmitted memory from previous generations of women, of how college and careers were not always an option. I believe this collective memory serves to motivate the current generation of women to excel in school, career, and family. In contrast, men in the American context have the collective memory of “male entitlement” or male privilege. News sources such as those discussed here further perpetuate the notion of male meritocracy as the norm against which women are juxtaposed. The opposition to female achievement manifests as fear, or according to the *New York Times*, comes from “people [who] remain uncomfortable with the educational and professional advances of girls and women, especially when they threaten to outdistance their male peers” (Lewin, 2008, p. 17).

IMPLICATIONS OF THE GENDER GAP

The journalists presented data showing that the gender gap is a problem with implications for society and that it assumes women's success comes at the expense of men's. The media's "facts" communicate that more women than men are enrolling in college; however, the situation is more complex than just an aggregated examination based on sex (Peter & Horn, 2005; Sax, 2008, 2009). The nuances of the gender gap show that this pattern varies by income/class and race. High-income White males are still increasing, but low-income, Hispanic and African American men are trailing (Chaplin & Klasik, 2006; Lewin, 2006b; Warner, 2006). Hudson, Aquilino, and Kienzl (2003) present statistical trends on minority participation in college. These trends hold true for traditional college-age students (under age 24), but the increase is strongest in women returning to college at mid-life (Peter & Horn, 2005; Lewin, 2006b). One *New York Times* article commented that older female students went to college to be good role models for their children (Lewin, 2006b). Contrary to the alarmists' cry presented in some of the articles, White men in the student population *are* increasing their participation in college—just not at the same rate as women (Peter & Horn, 2005). The alarming trend is not the aggregated female versus male enrollment but is found in the disaggregated data that show how females across all races and ethnicities have increased their enrollment while non-White males have not. This aggregated focus allows the newspapers to ignore sounding the alarm for minority males.

As presented in the media articles in this study, the five main implications of the gender gap emerged as: (a) dating and social life concerns, (b) the "unhealthy" environment resulting from the gender gap, (c) university or admissions concerns that it would negatively impact enrollment, (d) the feminization of higher education curriculum, and (d) economics.

Dating and Social Life

One of the most frequently cited implications and concerns for the college gender gap was the issue of dating. Twenty-four of the articles quoted college students and administrators who expressed concern about the dating environment—even more frequently than they expressed concern about the economic consequences of men who failed to obtain a college degree or even about men's academic ability and opportunity. This concern actually says less about the men and more about how the media positions women: The unequal ratio of women to men is problematized as lack of dating (and hence marriage) opportunities for women.

Gender balance for the sake of dating connects to arguments that gave women access to gender-segregated Ivy League schools during the 1960s. The *Christian Science Monitor* claimed that being co-ed was now an "expected part of campus social life" (Clayton, 2001b) and further claimed that "society"

equated equal ratios to a “well-rounded college experience” (Clayton, 2001c). Since, for many decades, higher education institutions and society did not care that women were not represented in coeducational collegiate environments, this newer rhetoric reinforces a gendered hierarchy that penalizes women’s success rather than focusing on the needs of men and education.

According to the *Christian Science Monitor*, fewer men in college translated to women having to “scrounge for dance partners” (Clayton, 2001a) or presented an “odd situation” where it was “much harder to find an unattached guy than an unattached girl” (Clayton, 2001b). One article quoted a college senior: “It’s kind of an ongoing joke how there’s 10 girls for every guy, but there’s really just 3 for every 2. I do hear girls griping that they want a boyfriend” (Clayton, 2001b). *USA Today* reporters directly linked the dating concern to marriage (Galayda, 2006; Gonzalez, 2004). According to a policy analyst interviewed by the *Christian Science Monitor*, if higher education institutions do not correct the gender gap, then “an estimated 200,000 college-educated women won’t find a college-educated man to marry” (Clayton, 2001c).

Given the history and advancements made in the women’s movement and the current push into third wave feminism, the popular media continues to position women in relationships as opposite men or relegated to romantic relationships rather than presenting stories about women without reference to male-as-norm. This is also heterosexist in assuming that relationships found in college are only between a man and a woman and that women still go to college for the purpose of finding a husband.

The “Unhealthy” Environment

All three news sources had a limited discourse regarding concerns over the “healthiness” of an environment where the majority were women (Clayton, 2001b; Gelles, 2006; Lewin, 2006a). In a *New York Times* article, the associate provost at Dickinson College commented: “When there are fewer men, the environment was not as safe for women. . . . [M]en were so highly prized that they could get away with things, some of them become sexual predators” (quoted in Lewin, 2006a, p. 1). The president of Dillard University told the *Christian Science Monitor* that having a female majority on campus would lead to more abusive behavior toward women because “men may view women more callously” (quoted in Clayton, 2001b).

The discourse of “unhealthiness” not only points to men as a danger to women but assumes, without analysis, that men cannot control or be responsible for their own actions. This type of discourse supports the blaming of rape victims rather than the perpetrator, who is presented as unable to control his behavior. Not only is this assumption damaging for women, but this rhetoric also negatively stereotypes college men as predators without ethical or moral human responsibility.

Impact on Admissions

All of the news sources reported how the gender gap would impact admissions. University officials were quoted as concerned that “too many” women would further hurt their enrollment numbers by deterring both men and women from attending and thereby negatively affecting recruitment. The language in the *New York Times* and the *Christian Science Monitor* suggested that, once the percentage of women got close to 60%, the “skew was going too far” because the message would be that that college was “not a place for men” (Lewin, 1998, p. 1) or that “it might be a real negative and start creating retention problems” (Clayton, 2001a). Combined with the dating rhetoric, this theme assumed that women did not want to be in college if men were not there (Lewin, 1998, p. 1).

Often, dating concerns were explicitly connected to enrollment and recruiting. The *Christian Science Monitor* expressed the relationship with drastic rhetoric: “The gender gap is dramatic enough to prompt both male and female students to pack up tuition dollars and transfer—or never to apply at all” (Clayton, 2001c).

Built into the enrollment argument against more than equal numbers (anything that does not mirror the population breakdown of sexes), is the hegemonic marginalization that devalues women, especially when their representation outweighs men’s. For example, the *New York Times* reported a New York University (NYU) administrator who commented that male trustees were worried that a student body comprised of 52% female students would cause NYU to be viewed as “a woman’s institution” and thereby as “a lesser institution” (Lewin, 1998, p. 1). The *Christian Science Monitor* reported that women’s colleges that have gone coed in the last few decades have done so at least partly in an attempt to counter this stigmatizing of being “lesser” institutions. Counselors at Skidmore, Connecticut College, and Vassar expressed concerns from “fathers of prospective applicants” over the “single-sex legacy,” meaning, specifically, the fact that these colleges were female dominated (Clayton, 2001d, p. 17).

A 2001 study conducted by the *Christian Science Monitor*’s staff analyzed the admissions data of 1,006 institutions and identified 259 universities and colleges that admitted men at higher rates than women with the exception of former women’s colleges (Clayton, 2001a, 2001b). Part of the admissions dilemma is that universities will lower standards to admit more men, thus penalizing better qualified female applicants who are denied admission as a result. While this situation appears to be a backlash against women, it is also a negative situation for men. An overall acceptance of lower standards for men does not improve their performance or retention in college.

Articles cited women students who expressed concern over the lack of men—a concern that gave admission officers a reason to increase the number

of men by changing policies. Two junior women reported to the *Christian Science Monitor*: “We need the guys—every one of them we can get,” and the other woman accepted men’s advantage in the admissions process: “If it means lowering standards to get more men, that’s OK, because we have to look long term . . . to start the [coed] tradition” (Clayton, 2001d, p. 17).

The perspective presented in these articles is that admissions connect the idea of percentages to a vague notion of the need for “gender balance,” which they identified as “critical to academic quality, class dynamics and social life” (Clayton, 2001a). Again, the connection is to social life and dating, but the assumption that gender balance is connected to quality is not valid. Further, the connection to class dynamics is actually counter to concerns of classroom behavioral issues when universities admit young men who are not at the same academic or maturity level of the young women. In the *Christian Science Monitor*, one professor described a freshmen seminar disrupted by men who “were getting up, walking around, writing immature notes on the blackboard” (Clayton, 2001a). Yet in the same article, the vice president for enrollment at Dickinson claimed that it was not “a matter of admitting unqualified [male] applicants” but that, prior to their practice of “affirmative action for men,” Dickinson was “denying guys that could do the work” (Clayton, 2001b).

Some faculty and administrators quoted in the media articles questioned if differential admissions policies had an impact on learning. The claim that a coed environment is essential to providing “quality” learning denies the strength of single-sex colleges and education, a position that actually counters the rhetoric used in the K–12 debate on how coeducation disadvantages boys. While the admissions officers quoted in the articles claimed that this issue was about academics as well as social issues, the media presented the issue as primarily social, rather than academic. One admissions officer at Seattle Pacific University acknowledged that the gender gap was “not having an impact in the classroom” and that “for social reasons, we would want to be more balanced” (Clayton, 2001b).

It is puzzling how the argument that a tilt in the gender balance equals “no better way to undermine a campus’s long-term success” (Clayton, 2001c) can exist side by side with the fact that the tilt results from admitting students based on academic merit—a policy that has rewarded women’s greater preparation and achievement.

Feminized Curriculum

Another implication for this gender gap is the feminization of the higher education curriculum. While the news articles portrayed K–12 as having become progressive and feminized to the detriment of boys, the articles echoed the same argument with a similar tone in expressing fear of what a higher ratio of women might mean for collegiate courses. The fear of feminization

dates back to when women first gained admission to higher education institutions during the Progressive Era (Nidiffer, 2003, p. 17). Popular media during that time “encouraged men to be more manly, athletic, and aggressive” (Nidiffer, 2003, p. 17) in response to the development of coeducation and women students’ recent academic success (Gordon, 1990).

The *New York Times* reported that female dominance is evidenced by “female authors being added to the reading lists” as well as the creation of women’s studies majors at some colleges (Lewin, 2006a, p. 1). Perhaps it is partially this fear that prompts speech against women’s studies departments, which is currently grounded in economic justifications. Women’s studies departments received institutional support when the number of women increased on campuses (Lewin, 2006a); but now that women are the majority, it seems a reasonable argument that these programs are even more needed to serve the larger female constituency.

Liberal arts colleges and degrees now not only enroll a majority of women but have the reputation of being for women. Catharine Stimpson, graduate dean at New York University, told the *New York Times* that “there may be a bias against the liberal arts, a feeling that real men don’t speak French, that in the 20th century these are women’s topics and men do economics and engineering” (quoted in Lewin, 1998, p. 1). This perception contradicts Baum and Goodstein’s (2004) finding that historically female liberal arts colleges admit more men than women. However, the media’s discourse is based not on research but rather on gendered assumptions that stereotype both men and women.

The Economic Impact

Even though men continue to earn more than women in the workplace (Francis, 2007; Gonzalez, 2004; Lewin, 2008; Marklein, 2005; Mead, 2006), the media expressed concern that more women with college degrees will result in a negative impact on men’s economic standing. The economic concern discourse focused on the decline of manufacturing and blue-collar jobs, historically dominated by men, and how those positions required lower verbal skills, which “c[a]me more naturally to girls” (Gonzalez, 2004, p. 12A).

Tom Mortenson, senior scholar at the Pell Institute for the Study of Opportunity in Higher Education, reported to the *New York Times* that this decrease spelled trouble for “boys whose ‘educational attainment is not keeping up with the demands of the economy’” (quoted in Lewin, 2006a, p. 1). However, writer Tamar Lewin pointed out in the same article that this opinion countered the documented fact that men “earn more money and wield more power than women” and that men who graduated from college “make more money than girls . . . right out of college.” This trend gives men a false consciousness of contributing to their own oppression and allows them to “take education less seriously” because “in the early years, young men

don't see the wage benefit. They can sell their strength and make money" (Lewin, 2006a, p. 1).

USA Today expressed concern that, if men do not get bachelor's degrees, then "they won't get a chance to use their natural competitive skills in the marketplace" (Gonzalez, 2004, p. 12A). This argument is based on the biological binary assumption that men are *naturally* competitive while women are naturally not, even though, women's increased academic and career success demonstrates that competitiveness is not naturally exclusive to men nor are they the only ones entitled to marketplace and economic success. Two writers for *USA Today* connected "the nation's ability to compete" (Gelles, 2006) with the alleged decline in men's opportunities and the decline of blue-collar jobs (Galayda, 2006). On the other hand, Kim Gandy (2006), the President of National Organization for Women, responded to the "boy-crisis alarm [being] about competition" because "too many men have a problem seeing women as equals, and would just as soon not have to compete. We see this in employment discrimination, sexual harassment, rape, and all forms of violence against women."

The counter argument is that, since women continue to lag behind men in pay, college degrees are an economic necessity for women because college graduation is the only point when men and women's salaries are close for comparable positions (Gandy, 2006). In addition, during the early years of employment, career interruptions due to childbirth affect women's pay and promotions as the American work culture continues to penalize motherhood even though the social culture promotes it.

CORRECTIONS TO THE GENDER GAP

Throughout the news articles, reporters and interviewees discussed three main actions to correct the gender gap and imbalance: (a) formal or informal affirmative action for men; (b) making marketing materials more "male friendly;" and (c) the addition or increase of sports programs, specifically football.

Affirmative Action

For the majority of higher education institutions and their administrators presented in these articles, affirmative action for men was an informal policy of giving preference to male applicants. One of the ways that these informal policies played out was in admitting higher percentages of male applicants. All three news sources reported schools with policies that give additional points to men at the admissions stage (Clayton, 2001a, 2001b; Gonzalez, 2004; Lewin, 2006a; Marklein, 2005; Rackow, 2006) and recruit them more aggressively. The *New York Times* reported that colleges "scrape the bottom of the barrel to get a boy candidate" (Wilgoren, 2001, p. 8). According to

the *USA Today*, if there was a tie between a male and a female applicant, the admissions committees would offer it to the male (Marklein, 2005).

John Lind, admissions officer at Southwestern University in Texas, told the *Christian Science Monitor*:

If we have a male applicant who has not interviewed, we will be more aggressive on interviewing that student, somehow. If a woman is in the same situation, we may not aggressively pursue her if she has not pursued us first herself. Some may say that's not nice, but we have to pursue the objectives of the institution. (Clayton, 2001a)

The "coed mission" is used to justify these formal and informal policies even when institutions admitted that enrolling larger numbers of male applicants resulted in not enrolling the strongest candidates. Lind also commented that Southwestern did not set "a higher standard for women." Rather, if the school enrolled more than 60% women, then "it might be a real negative [situation] and start creating retention problems" even though he admitted, "We could possibly enroll an entire class of women—our pool of women applicants is that strong," he says. "We could not enroll a whole class of men, because we don't have enough strong male candidates" (Clayton, 2001a). Another way that admissions officers informally gave men preference was by giving greater weight to SAT scores, which benefited men more than women, who tended to be stronger in their writing scores (Clayton, 2001b) as discussed earlier.

The administrators interviewed for these news articles justified "affirmative action for men" by differentiating it from legal affirmative action and Title IX. For example, Robert Massa, the Vice President for Enrollment at Dickinson College, explained how such policies for men were not affirmative action "in the legal sense" and that "admissions to a liberal arts college is more art than science, a matter of crafting a class with diverse strengths" (Lewin, 2006a, p. 1). Unfortunately, the greatest "strength" is the achievement of gender balance in the freshmen class. Based on Dickinson's new informal policy, Massa reported that the college had increased its percentage of male students from 43% in 2000 to 50% in just six years.

A federal judge ordered the University of Georgia (*Johnson v. Board of Regents*, 2000) to stop awarding bonus points to male applicants during the admissions process (Baum & Goodstein, 2004; Carnevale, 1999; Clayton, 2001a; Marklein, 2005). The justification used by a university administrator had been: "We just wanted to stop the trend before it became something bad" (Clayton, 2001a). The trend he meant was that men then made up 45% of the student body. The judge ruled this admissions process illegal and stated: "The desire to 'help out' men who are not earning baccalaureate degrees in the same numbers as women is far from persuasive" (Birnbbaum & Yakaboski, 2011; Clayton, 2001a).

Some colleges and universities used affirmative action-like policies reserved for racial minorities to support awarding more points to male applicants, including those with lower test scores and in decisions involving athletes. The admissions officers interviewed by newspapers argued that using sex to decide admissions was just another facet of having a diverse student body. The breadth of these policies is unknown as many admissions officers and higher education administrators are unwilling to discuss them in public or on record. Whether these policies violate the Civil Rights Act of 1964 or Title IX remains to be seen and elicits further investigation; but based on a legal analysis, it is doubtful that affirmative action for men would be supported by a federal court (Birnbaum & Yakaboski, 2011). In December 2009, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights approved the investigation of 19 colleges for gender-based admissions violations (Ashburn, 2009; Terris, 2009). This commission continues to collect and analyze data but reports that data for most schools are incomplete and that four schools have outright refused to comply (Kowarski, 2010).

Is the desire for equal numbers of men and women enough to admit men at higher rates or add points to their admissions applications, especially if this policy results in denying admission to better-qualified women applicants? As already pointed out, no one considered implementing these policies for women prior to the 1960s when men dominated the college campus.

“Male Friendly” Marketing

Admission officers recognized that one way to affect its applicant pool was by changing recruiting and marketing strategies. In previous decades, recruitment brochures emphasized photographs of women and minority students; however, now they more frequently feature White stereotypically masculine images; or as college admissions officers describe it, their colleges have revised marketing materials to be more “male friendly” (Clayton, 2001b). The changes included an increased number of photographs showing more men, sports, and male-dominated fields such as the hard sciences and engineering (Clayton, 2001b; Lewin, 2006a). For example, Knox College reported to the *Christian Science Monitor* that it “removed some pictures of women and minorities from its marketing materials in favor of more pictures featuring action shots of White males” (Clayton, 2001c).

Colors also changed in marketing and recruiting materials from pastels to primaries. Baylor University changed its recruitment brochure based on “what’s a feminine look, and what’s a masculine look” because they “had a picture of a library with a lot of stained glass, and people said that was kind of a feminine cover. Now [Baylor is] using a picture of the quadrangle” (Lewin, 1998, p. 1). Seattle Pacific University changed its colors from pastels to “more masculine forest greens and burgundies” (Clayton, 2001b).

Fordham University reported tailoring its recruitment letters to recipients based on sex. John Buckley, the dean of admissions, explained to the *New York Times* how “for women, the messages we’re stressing are small classes, personal attention, and access to professors. For men, we’re talking about internships and intercollegiate sports” (quoted in Lewin, 1998, p. 1). Similarly, a source at Southwestern’s admissions office told the *Christian Science Monitor* that it has mailings specifically slanted toward male applicants and will often also telephone them (Clayton, 2001b).

An Emphasis on Sports

In addition to increasing the number of photos of sports in the recruitment marketing materials, some smaller colleges have added or expanded sports programs to entice men into enrolling (Clayton, 2001b; Francis, 2007; Pennington, 2006). According to the *New York Times*, 2005 saw Division I schools dropping athletic programs, yet 50 smaller colleges and universities added a football program (Pennington, 2006, p. 1). For example, Shenandoah University, a small school with a majority of women students, added a football team to “attract men” (Pennington, 2006, p. 1). JoAnne Boyle, President at Seton Hill University, another small university that was historically a women’s school, explained that its new football program could not only recruit the player but that the player would bring “a few of his male friends, maybe his sister and his sister’s boyfriend, too” (Pennington, 2006, p. 1). Seton Hill’s plan worked. In 2006, it admitted more men than women for the first year since 2002 when it went coed.

At these small colleges, they kept “the dream alive” of continuing to play football after high school, according to Shenandoah’s coach. For one of its football players, having a football team kept the dream alive for “guys who just like to hit somebody” (Pennington, 2006, p. 1). Administrators reported that it is a way to encourage men to enroll in college and then “kind of trick them into seeing that getting an education is the real benefit” (Pennington, 2006, p. 1).

These recruitment trends in sports reinforce previous research findings that selective liberal arts colleges give admissions preference to athletes (Baum & Goodstein, 2004; Shulman & Bowen 2001).

DISCUSSION

From a feminist standpoint, the narratives and rhetoric used in the reviewed newspaper articles penalize women for their success in enrolling in higher education, while also stereotyping men. Feminist poststructural theory examines the structural and societal power. Researchers can use this theory to reconceptualize the enrollment gap to combat the subtle backlash against women, affirmative action, and Title IX. The discourse on the trend

of women's enrollment at the expense of men's enrollment reinforces an established binary system that relies on the hegemonic patriarchal structure. This hegemonic binary system reinforces a number of dualisms: men/women; sports/academic; lazy/hard worker; play/study; competition/collaboration; and active/passive. These binaries place men at the center with women and their actions and behaviors continually referenced as off center or as recognizable and definable because of their difference from men. Such dualities not only harm the women in the system but also the men. The system reinforces and reproduces stereotypical gendered roles while establishing lower expectations for men and installing higher, often unachievable ones, for women.

These binaries portrayed in the media discourse demonstrate society's belief that women are "naturally" mothers or nurturing. The focus on dating and marriage concerns assumes, without analysis, that men and women administrators, students, faculty, and reporters all view the new gender gap as undesirable because it is somehow "unnatural." In examining how these binaries are represented and reinforced in the media discourse, the new binary is that of men as victims who occupy the center of the discourse. What does it mean when a privileged group presents itself as an oppressed minority? Given the established binary system, this discourse actually allows men to continue occupying their privileged place. For women and minorities (the former genuine minorities), being a minority meant the need to prove their merit through greater effort and determination. However, with men occupying the position of oppressed minority, the discourse does not focus on constructing higher expectations for them; rather, through power and privilege structures, the discourse encourages stereotypical gendered performance and behavior that opposes women's merit-based opportunity.

Opinions on the college enrollment situation vary. Some see the college gender gap as a success, and others see it as a crisis. Feminists see the gender gap as a great success due in part to the legal requirements of compliance with Title IX and affirmative action. For boy-advocates, like the non-profit Boys Project, the gender gap sets off alarmist rhetoric that the improved enrollment and degree achievement of women is creating a "boy crisis." The polarity of this phenomenon is an opportunity for further research as well as discussions of policy implications and recommendations.

Poststructural feminism theory provides an opportunity to step away from positioning men and women against each other or in contrast to each other, the social disadvantages of which should be obvious. Furthermore, an additional disadvantage of the oppositional approach of binary rhetoric of biological differences ignores intersex students. The media's discussion and explanation of the gap as based on heterosexist definitions of gender erases the presence of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall, we as a society should reward and share in the success of girls and women's educational achievement. We should focus on how the educational system could promote and encourage higher academic performance for boys and men without suggesting a need to cut off access for women. Educators at all levels need to develop successful strategies to improve male academic performance but not at the expense of the gains that females have made. Linda Sax (2008) in her book on the gender gap in college suggests maximizing potential for both men and women rather viewing the gender gap as a zero-sum game or arguing that the success of one gender occurs at the expense of the other. She recommends focusing less on absolute numbers and more on the gendered characteristics and experiences of college—specifically, how collegiate stress impacts each gender and differences in involvement and engagement characteristics. Once understood, these differences can help recruit and retain both sexes. In line with Sax's argument is my recommendation that educators and researchers need to focus less on the gender gap and more on the race and class gap that continues to be a concern in college enrollment.

As researchers, administrators, and consumers of media, we need to continue a critical examination of what and how the national news reports higher education trends so that we can facilitate productive dialogue with our policymakers and students. It is critical that researchers and higher education administrators take up the challenge to put research into the public's view. In the current economic climate, newspapers are cutting dedicated education correspondents (and staff in general) who have the background on such topics as the gender gap. The *Chronicle of Higher Education* recently commented that the media's downsizing trend results in erosions in content and traditional journalistic standards, the decline of investigative in-depth reporting, and the rise of opinion pieces over non-biased stories to reinforce already held beliefs ("Academe and the Decline," 2009).

The effort to have a more direct link between research and policy is visible in the recent movement by the Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE) and InsideHigherEd.com to publish Learning Briefs on current higher education research. (See, for example, the fall 2009 ASHE newsletter, <http://www.ashe.ws/images/ASHE%202009%20Fall%20Newsletter.pdf>.) While such efforts are one example of broadening academe's impact, they still fall short in reaching an audience not already attuned to education news and policy. Instead, scholars must stretch the reach of higher education scholarship and foster critical analysis of the media's messages.

REFERENCES

- About the Monitor. (n.d.) *Christian Science Monitor* website. Retrieved on February 23, 2009, from <http://www.csmonitor.com/About/The-Monitor-difference>.
- Academe and the decline of news media. (2009, November 15). *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved on February 23, 2009, from <http://chronicle.com/article/Academe-the-Dcline-of/49120/>.
- Allan, E. J., Gordon, S. P., & Iverson, S. V. (2006). Re/thinking practices of power: The discursive framing of leadership in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. *The Review of Higher Education*, 30(1), 41–68.
- Altheide, D. L. (1996). *Qualitative media analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Ashburn, E. (2009, November 1). U.S. civil rights panel to determine if men get preference in college admissions. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved on February 23, 2009, from <http://chronicle.com/article/US-Civil-Rights-Panel-to/49011/>.
- Baum, S., & Goodstein, E. (2004). Gender imbalance in college admissions: Does it lead to preference for men in the admissions process? *Economics of Education Review*, 24, 665–675.
- Bell, A. (1991). *The language of news media*. Oxford, England: Blackwell.
- Bensimon, E. M., & Marshall, C. (2000). Policy analysis for postsecondary education: Feminist and critical perspectives. In J. Glazer-Raymo, B. K. Townsend, & B. Ropers-Huilman (Eds.), *Women in higher education: A feminist perspective* (pp. 133–147). ASHE Reader Series. Boston: Pearson Custom Publishing.
- Bernstein, R. (2000, July 31). Boys, not girls, as society's victims. *The New York Times*, Sec. E, p. 6, col. 4.
- Birnbaum, M. G., & Yakaboski, T. (2011). The legal and policy implications of male-benefiting admissions policies at public institutions: Can it ever be considered affirmative action for men? *Journal of Student Affairs Practice and Research*, 48(1), 23–46.
- Bluestein, G. (2009, February 6). Steamy sex courses fire GOP's ire. *Athens Banner-Herald*. Retrieved on February 23, 2009, from http://www.onlineathens.com/stories/020709/gen_385535247.shtml.
- Britz, J. D. (2006, March 23). To all the girls I've rejected. *The New York Times*. Retrieved on February 23, 2009, from http://www.nytimes.com/2006/03/23/opinion/23britz.html?_r=1&emc=eta1&oref=slogin.
- Carnevale, D. (1999, September 3). Lawsuit prompts U. of Georgia to end admissions preferences for male applicants. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved on February 23, 2009, from <http://chronicle.com/article/Lawsuit-Prompts-U-of-Georgia/14981>.
- Chaplin, D., & Klasik, D. (2006). *Gender gaps in college and high school graduation by race, combining public and private schools*. Education Working Paper Archive. Retrieved on February 25, 2009, from <http://www.uark.edu/ua/der/EWPA/Research/Accountability/1790.html>.
- Clayton, M. (2001a, May 22). Admissions officers walk a fine line in gender-balancing act. *The Christian Science Monitor*. Retrieved on February 23, 2009, from <http://www.csmonitor.com/2001/0522/p11s1.html>.

- Clayton, M. (2001b, May 22). Gender gap is far from academic for colleges. *The Christian Science Monitor*. Retrieved on February 23, 2009, from <http://www.csmonitor.com/2001/0522/p15s1.html>.
- Clayton, M. (2001c, May 22). Overview: The gender equation. *The Christian Science Monitor*. Retrieved on February 23, 2009, from <http://www.csmonitor.com/2001/0522/p11s2.html>.
- Clayton, M. (2001d, May 29). Making room for men's gains where women once reigned. *The Christian Science Monitor*, p. 17. Retrieved on February 23, 2009, from <http://www.csmonitor.com/2001/0529/p17s1.html>.
- Coeyman, M. (2001, May 29). Where the gender gap gets its start. *The Christian Science Monitor*. Retrieved on February 23, 2009, from <http://www.csmonitor.com/2001/0529/p20s1.html>.
- Cook, D. (2008, October 29). Monitor shifts from print to Web-based strategy. *The Christian Science Monitor*. Retrieved on March 4, 2011, from <http://www.csmonitor.com/USA/2008/1029/p25s01-usgn.html>.
- Corbett, C., Hill, C., & St. Rose, A. (2008). *Where the girls are: The facts about gender equity in education*. Washington, DC: AAUW (American Association of University Women).
- Denzin, N., & Lincoln, Y. (Eds.). (2000). *Handbook of qualitative research*, 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Douglas, S. J. (1995). *Where the girls are: Growing up female with the mass media*. New York: Three Rivers Press.
- Faludi, S. (1991). *Backlash: The undeclared war against American women*. New York, Crown: Three Rivers Press.
- A farewell salute to the Women's Research Institute of Brigham Young University. (2009). *SquareTwo*, 2(3). Retrieved on February 23, 2009, from <http://squatwo.org/Sq2ArticleWRIFarewell.html>.
- Ferguson, M., Katrak, K. H., & Miner, V. (2000). Feminism and antifeminism: From civil rights to culture wars. In J. Glazer-Raymo, B. K. Townsend, & B. Ropers-Huilman (Eds.), *Women in higher education: A feminist perspective* (pp. 53–71). ASHE Reader Series. Boston: Pearson Custom Publishing.
- Fiske, J. (1987). *Television culture*. London: Routledge.
- Fiske, J. (1994). *Media matters: Everyday culture and political change*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Francis, D. R. (2007, July 24). Gender bias in college admissions. *The Christian Science Monitor*, p. 8.
- Galayda, J. (2006, May 29). More women graduate. Why? *USA Today*. Retrieved on February 23, 2009, from http://www.usatoday.com/news/opinion/editorials/2006-05-29-our-view_x.htm.
- Gandy, K. (2006, October 13). Opposing view: There is no "boy crisis." *USA Today*. Retrieved on February 23, 2009, from http://blogs.usatoday.com/oped/2006/10/post_15.html.
- Gelles, K. (2006, July 12). Our view: Fewer men on campus. *USA Today*. Retrieved on February 23, 2009, from http://blogs.usatoday.com/oped/2006/07/our_view_fewer_.html.

- Gibbs, N. (2008, April 3). Affirmative action for boys. *Time*. Retrieved on February 23, 2009, from <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1727693,00.html>.
- Goldin, C., Katz, L. F., & Kuziemko, I. (2006). The homecoming of American college women: The reversal of the college gender gap. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 20(4), 133–156.
- Gonzalez, A. (2004, December 2). Pay closer attention: Boys are struggling academically. *USA Today*, p. 12A.
- Gonzalez, A. (2008, May 21). Our view on gender and education: Yes, university women, there is a boy problem. *USA Today*. Retrieved on February 23, 2009, from <http://blogs.usatoday.com/oped/2008/05/our-view-on-gen.html>.
- Gordon, L. D. (1990). *Gender and higher education in the Progressive Era*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Hudson, L., Aquilino, S., & Kienzl, G. (2003). *Postsecondary participation rates by sex and race/ethnicity: 1974–2003* (NCES 2003–005). U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. Retrieved on February 23, 2009, from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2005028>.
- Hulbert, A. (2005, April 3). Boy problems. *The New York Times*, sec. 6, p. 13.
- Hussar, W. J. (2005). *Projections of education statistics to 2014*. National Center for Education Statistics Report (NCES #2005074). Retrieved on February 23, 2009, from <http://nces.ed.gov/Pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2005074>. This report includes educational projections.
- Jaschik, S. (2005, June 3). Gender gap at flagships. *Inside Higher Ed*. Retrieved on February 23, 2009, from <http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2005/06/03/gender>.
- Jaschik, S. (2006, March 27). Affirmative action for men. *Inside Higher Ed*. Retrieved on February 23, 2009, from <http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2006/03/27/admit>.
- Johnson v. Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia*. (2001). 106 F. Supp. 2d 1362 (S.D. Ga. 2000).
- Kowarski, I. (2010, August 1). Civil-right commission may not name colleges in admissions report. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved on March 4, 2011, from <http://chronicle.com/article/Civil-Rights-Commission-May/123737/>.
- Kozol, W. (1995). Fracturing domesticity: Media, nationalism, and the question of feminist influence. *Signs*, 20(3), 646–667.
- Lewin, T. (1998, December 6). American colleges begin to ask, where have all the men gone? *The New York Times*, Sec. 1, p. 1.
- Lewin, T. (2006a, July 9). At colleges, women are leaving men in the dust. *The New York Times*. Retrieved on March 4, 2011, from <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/07/09/education/09college.html>.
- Lewin, T. (2006b, July 12). A more nuanced look at men, women, and college. *The New York Times*, p. B8.
- Lewin, T. (2008, May 20). Girls' gains have not cost boys, report says. *The New York Times*, p. A17.

- MacDonald, H. (2006, May 29). Not another class of victims. *USA Today*. Retrieved on February 23, 2009, from www.usatoday.com/news/opinion/editorials/2006-05-29-opposing-view_x.htm.
- Madison, D. S. (2005). *Critical ethnography: Method, ethics, and performance*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Marklein, M. B. (2005). College gender gap widens: 57% are women. *USA Today*, p. 1A.
- Mather, M., & Adams, D. (2007). *The crossover in female-male college enrollment rates*. Retrieved on January 21, 2011, from Population Reference Bureau website: <https://www.prb.org/Articles/2007/CrossoverinFemaleMaleCollegeEnrollmentRates.aspx>.
- Mead, S. (2006, June 11). Gender gap isn't biggest woe. *USA Today*. Retrieved February 23, 2009, from http://www.usatoday.com/news/opinion/editorials/2006-07-11-oppose_x.htm.
- Mortenson, T. (1995). *What's wrong with the guys? Postsecondary education opportunity #39*. Iowa City, IA: Mortenson Research Letter.
- Mortenson, T. (1998). *Where are the guys? Postsecondary education opportunity #76*. Iowa City, IA: Mortenson Research Letter.
- Mortenson, T. (2008, June 6). Where the boys were: Women outnumber them in colleges and the work force, and too many men are failing to keep up. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, p. A30.
- Nidiffer, N. (2003). From whence they came: The contexts, challenges, and courage of early women administrators in higher education. In B. Ropers-Huilman (Ed.), *Gendered futures in higher education* (pp. 15–34). Albany: SUNY Press.
- Pennington, B. (2006, July 10). The new gender divide: Small colleges, short of men, embrace football. *The New York Times*. Retrieved on February 23, 2009, from <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/07/10/education/10football.html?emc=eta1>.
- Peräkylä, A. (2008). Analyzing talk and text. In N. K. Denzin, & Y. S. Lincoln, (Eds.), *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials* (pp. 351–374). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Peril, L. (2006). *College girls: Bluestockings, sex kittens, and co-ed, then and now*. New York: W. W. Norton & Co.
- Peter, K., & Horn, L. (2005). *Gender differences in participation and completion of undergraduate education and how they have changed over time*. (NCES 2005–169). U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.
- Peters, M. A., & Burbules, N. C. (2004). *Poststructuralism and educational research*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Rackow, L. (2006, March 27). Affirmative action for college men? *The New York Times*, p. A18.
- Reinharz, S. (1992). *Feminist methods in social research*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Rhee, J. E., & Sagaria, M. A. D. (2004). International students: Constructions of imperialism in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. *The Review of Higher Education*, 28(1), 77–96.

- Rivers, C., & Chait Barnard, R. (2006, April 9). The myth of "the boy crisis." *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from February 23, 2009, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/04/07/AR2006040702025.html>.
- Sass, E. (2010, April 15). "Christian Science Monitor" thrives as weekly. *MediaDailyNews*. Retrieved March 4, 2011, from http://www.mediapost.com/publications/?fa=Articles.showArticle&art_aid=126253.
- Sax, L. J. (2008). *The gender gap in college: Maximizing the developmental potential of women and men*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Sax, L. J. (2009, September 26). Her college experience is not his. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, p. A32.
- Scott, J. W. (2003). Deconstructing equality-versus-difference: Or, the uses of post-structuralist theory for feminism. In C. R. McCann, & S. K. Kim (Eds.), *Feminist theory reader: Local and global perspectives* (pp. 378–390). New York: Routledge.
- Shulman, J., & Bowen, W. (2001). *The game of life: College sports and educational values*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
- Smith, D. (2000). Texts and repression: Hazards for feminists in the academy. In J. Glazer-Raymo, B. K. Townsend, & B. Ropers-Huilman (Eds.), *Women in higher education: A feminist perspective* (pp. 221–237). ASHE Reader Series. Boston: Pearson Custom Publishing.
- Sommers, C. H. (2000, May). The war against boys. *The Atlantic Monthly*. Retrieved on February 23, 2009, from <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200005/war-against-boys>.
- Terris, B. (2009, December 16). Civil rights panel names 19 colleges it will investigate for gender bias in admissions. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved on February 23, 2009, from <http://chronicle.com/article/Civil-Rights-Panel-Names-19/62613/>.
- Tierney, J. (2006, March 25). On campus, a good man is hard to find. *The New York Times*. Retrieved on February 23, 2009, from http://select.nytimes.com/2006/03/25/opinion/25tierney.html?_r=1.
- Warner, J. (2006, July 12). What girls ought to learn from boys in "crisis." *The New York Times*, p. A23.
- Weaver-Hightower, M. (2003). The "boy turn" in research on gender and education. *Review of Educational Research*, 73(4), 471–498.
- Weedon, C. (1987). *Feminist practice and poststructuralist theory*. Oxford, England: Blackwell.
- Whitmire, R. (2007, July 20). The latest way to discriminate against women. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, p. B16. Retrieved on February 23, 2009, from <http://chronicle.com/weekly/v53/i46/46b01601.htm>.
- Whitmire, R. (2008, July 28). A tough time to be a girl: Gender imbalance on campuses. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved on February 23, 2009, from <http://chronicle.com/temp/email2.php?id=KWVZfbvhvydMhqdkW8JkBk8zsPwkqdtZ>.
- Wilgoren, J. (2001, March 5). Girls rule: Girls outperform boys in high school and in college enrollment rates. *The New York Times*, p. 8.
- Wilson, R. (2007, January 26). The new gender divide. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, p. 36.

- U.S. Census (2007). *School enrollment* [Data files]. Retrieved on February 23, 2009, from <http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/school.html>.
- Zeisler, A. (2008). *Feminism and pop culture*. Berkeley, CA: Seal.