A Freirian Approach to Anti-Sexist Education for Men:
Toward a Pedagogy of the "Oppressor"

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. . . The situation of oppression is a dehumanized and dehumanizing totality affecting both the oppressors and those whom they oppress. . . . To surmount the situation of oppression, men [sic] must first critically recognize its causes, so that through transforming action they can create a new situation, one which makes possible the pursuit of a fuller humanity.
    —Paulo Freire

How can we engage men in the study of gender issues and of men and masculinity in ways that can help them to critically examine traditional gender roles, power relations, and institutional structures, and to consider alternatives, without having them feel attacked and threatened in ways that lead to defensiveness and resistance? How in general can we help people to grow and change in regard to such issues without subjecting them to coercion, indoctrination, or other forms of political correctness? How can we do these things in a student-centered way that at once raises issues of social justice and also involves learners in genuine inquiry and collaborative construction of knowledge in regard to issues of real and meaningful concern? These are the questions or problems to which this paper responds. In so doing, it also addresses three of the key questions raised by the organizers of this conference: How do we understand transformative learning? Transformation for what? Transformation from what to what?"

This paper draws on my ongoing efforts, in an evolving series of university-based courses, to help men to learn about what it means to "be male" in our society to day, how those meanings have been constructed, and how they might like to reconstruct those meanings, both within their own consciousness and within their social context. Elsewhere (Schapiro, 1985, 1999), I have described in some detail this ongoing project and the development of the theory and practice involved. What I would like to do here is to summarize the highlights of this work as it draws, implements and integrates principles from Freire's education for critical consciousness, human relations training groups (T-groups) and anti-oppression education (recently called social justice education). The integration and adaptation of these three approaches to transformative education has broad implications for engaging members of other more privileged social groups in a similar process of learning, action, and change.

In describing this model, I suggest a set of general principles that could serve as the basis for a "pedagogy of the oppressor"—a necessary corollary to Freire's pedagogy of the oppressed—a pedagogy that is designed to help those in more privileged positions in society to recognize their stake in working toward a more just and humane world, and to join with "the oppressed" to create a world in which we all can be more free and more fulfilled as human beings; a world, in

Freire's words, "in which it is easier to love." In what follows, I will first of all give a brief overview of the course goals and methodology as it has evolved, describe the pedagogical theories on which the design is based and their adaptation to the goals at hand, outline an integrated model for a pedagogy for men's consciousness raising, illustrate the impact of this course on some of the men who have experienced it, and finally, discuss some of what I have learned over the years in doing this work.

The course has been described to students as follows. (Schapiro, 1999)

On Being Male: Men and Masculinity in Contemporary Society
Objectives: To increase the extent to which participants:
- *Understand the impact of male socialization on psychological development, interpersonal behavior, and social attitudes.*
- *Recognize some of the costs and benefits of that socialization.*
- *Understand the basic dynamics of sexism at individual, cultural, and institutional levels.*
- *Explore and experiment with alternative ways of being male through which we can be more complete and whole and less hurtful to ourselves and others.*
- *Make more conscious and informed choices in our lives about what it means or should mean to be a man, and to be able to help others to do the same, intrapersonally, interpersonally and institutionally.*

Course Structure and Methodology
This course will be run as a structured consciousness raising group in which, in a nonthreatening and supportive atmosphere, we will learn about masculinity by exploring together our experience of being men, or of being women in relation to men. Class time will involve a combination of discussion, structured experiential activities, and possible films and guest speakers. The processes through which we communicate and develop as a group will also be treated as an important source of learning. Journal writing and a series of learning papers will serve to stimulate and supplement the personal reflection and sharing through which we expect most of our learning to come. Weekly readings will be used to stimulate discussion and provide a theoretical framework from which to analyze our experience. Outside of class, participants will be asked to plan, engage in, and evaluate a self-designed action project aimed at personal and/or social change in regard to the issues addressed in the course.

TENTATIVE GENERAL OUTLINE (The specific content and order of topics may vary, depending on the interests of the group.)
Session 1: Introduction
-- Who we are, goals and expectations, hopes and fears
Sessions 2, 3: Growing Up Male
-- Stereotypes. role models, fathers and sons, personal histories, learning to deal with emotions
Session 4: The Dynamics of oppression
-- Sex roles, sexism, dominant-subordinate roles
Sessions 5, 6, 7: Men and Women
-- Patterns and games, power, intimacy, dependency, sexualiity, violence against women
Session 8: Male sexuality
--Physical and emotional intimacy, heterosexuality, homosexuality, pornography
Sessions 9, 10, 11: Men and Men
--Fathers and sons, male friendships, male bonding, effects of competition and homophobia
Session 12: Men, Class, and Race
--Men and work, classism, racism
Session 13: New Directions
-- Personal and social change
Session 14: Closure
-- Where do we go from here?

The main topics explored in the course, their sequence, and the specific questions and problems explored within each have varied with the needs and interests of each group with which its been conducted. However, a basic logic of the course has been consistent, based on Borton's "What? So what? Now what?" principle of sequencing (1970), that provides one useful overlay for looking at the logical flow of the course as a whole. "What, so what, and now what" are colloquial expressions for what Borton identified as three basic information processing functions: the sensing or perceiving function through which information is gathered (what?), the transforming or conceptualizing function through which generalizations are made and patterns of meaning are found in the information that has been gathered (so what?), the acting function through which decisions are made about how to act on the new information and patterns that have been discovered (now what?). In this group study, the basic "information" that is being processed is the concept of masculinity of the participants, with all of its implications for their male role behavior and attitudes about sexism. Through the logic of the "what/so what/now what" sequence, group members are given the opportunity to identify what that concept is, to analyze how the actualization of that concept affects them and others, and to begin to develop and to put into practice a new concept of masculinity. As we shall see, this process is consistent with Paolo Freire's education for critical consciousness.

In working to develop this pedagogy and course design, I have drawn on and integrated principles and practices from the three educational approaches noted above. The principles underlying those approaches will be described in the pages that follow, leading to the articulation of an integrated model that draws on each of the three in a synthesis of education for personal growth and social change. The synthesis creates a model of a pedagogy for liberation that can potentially be adapted and applied to help motivate the more privileged members of society from various social groups tojoin with the less privileged or oppressed in working toward the creation of a new social order that is more just and more fulfilling for all. After reviewing these principles and explaining the development of the model, I will revisit this course design to explain how it puts that model into practice.

Laboratory, Inter-group and Human Relations Training

The T-group, or basic human relations training group, can be broadly defined as a small learning group that brings people together for the purpose of learning about themselves, about their

impact on others, and about group dynamics and development through the process of analyzing their own behavior as it occurs in the group. (Benne, Bradford, and Gibb, in Cooper 1971). Within that broad definition, such groups vary in the extent to which they concentrate on learnings about the self, interpersonal relationships, group and organizational processes, or intergroup conflict resolution.

Many theorists have described the kind of change and learning that goes on in a T-group as a form of re-education and re-socialization. (Lewin 1948; Bennis 1962; Dennis 1975; Sargent and Kravetz 1977; Shepherd 1970). In a paper entitled, "Conduct, Knowledge and the Acceptance of New Values, " (1945) Lewin presented perhaps the first formulation of the general principles of the re-education process, a formulation that is still very useful today. Those ten principles are based upon the assumption that effective re-education affects a person in three ways. It changes one's cognitive structure"—ideas, facts, beliefs, one's "valences and values" and one's "motoric action"—behavior. The whole person must be involved in the process.

Lewin described three phases within this change process: unfreezing (disequilibrium), changing (finding a new equilibrium), and refreezing (restabilizing). I will use this model, which has been amplified by many theorists, to try to understand and explain the theory of how people in T-groups change and become re-socialized, because such a process is fundamental to the change process involved in the pedagogy that I am describing in this paper.

Unfreezing can be conceived of as an experience of "being shook up" or shaken out of one's present complacency and equilibrium, an experience that must precede any new learning. When a person's present equilibrium of personal constructs and behaviors is upset or altered, he or she will experience a felt need for change. The unfreezing process must involve a *combination of heightened anxiety* (the motivation to change) and *reduction of threat* (which allows for an openness to change rather than a defensive rigidity.)

Changing involves the development of new behaviors, attitudes, and ideas that will enable the members if the group to re-establish an equilibrium. As they join the attempt to resolve the dilemmas with which the group confronts them, people search for behaviors that will be effective in making the group into the kind of community in which their needs can be met. Group members discover a discrepancy between their back home behaviors and those behaviors that seem most effective in the group and search for more effective behaviors to emulate, behaviors which may be exhibited by other group members or by the trainers. People will then try out

these new behaviors to the extent that they feel safe to do so. Such experimentation is often much safer in the group than outside the group because of the accepting atmosphere and reduction in the fear of disapproval and rejection. It is often much easier to try out new behaviors in a group of relative strangers than in an ongoing relationship that may be disrupted or even destroyed by the change.

Refreezing—stabilizing and integrating the new behaviors and perspectives into one's personality and life systems—must occur if the changes that people experiment with in the group are to be long-lasting. In Lewin's terms, the field must become relatively secure against change. In these terms, it appears that there are really two fields that must reach a new equilibrium; our internal field (composed of our personality, attitudes, and beliefs) and our external field (our social context). Schein and Bennis (1965) provide a framework that breaks down the refreezing process into two such components, the personal and the relational. For personal refreezing to occur, the changes must somehow fit or be consistent with the rest of one's personality and attitude systems. If there is not a good fit, either refreezing will not occur or another attitude or behavior will have to change in order to accomodate the first change. It is in this internal refreezing process that the introduction of new cognitive frameworks or ways of thinking may help people to make sense of their experience and to refreeze their new behaviors and attitudes into a new consistent framework. Similarly, relational refreezing, which involves integrating the new patterns into one's significant relationships, will occur only when these significant others in some way confirm or validate the changes. If that confirmation does not occur in at least one supportive environment it will be very difficult to sustain the new repertoire of interpersonal competencies and attitudes.

From this discussion of how people learn and change in such groups, we can discern the basic principles of this model for training and education, presented here in terms of two primary aspects: the structure and *leader behaviors*, which together comprise the *teaching principles* of this approach; and the sequence of behavioral and affective *objectives for the participants*. For the sake of clarity and to make the sequential nature of the approach apparent, the teaching principles and learning objectives will be presented in outline form for each phase of the learning process -unfreezing, changing, and refreezing. (see chart 1)

It is important to note that the T-group was created essentially by and for men to help them increase their sensitivity, self-awareness, and interpersonal competence. As such, it has, in

Rossabeth M. Kanter's words, "long been viewed as a particularly effective method to help men develop new behavioral repertoires and self-insights counterbalancing the stereotypical tendencies of the male role" (Kanter 1979, 72). Indeed, most of the basic T-group principles, such as discussing the processes of group interaction and engaging in self-disclosure and feedback, run counter to traditional male norms. Where the male role emphasizes instrumental leadership (a task and power orientation), T-group norms and the female role emphasize expression of feelings, support for others, and a process orientation. This is not to suggest, however, that men tend to reject all of their "masculine" behaviors and take on all "feminine" ones, but that they have an opportunity in the group to develop and experiment with a more balanced repertoire of interpersonal skills. Indeed, in looking to the group for models of alternative behavior, they may notice that it is people who are most androgynous who are the most effective group members. (Bem 1976; Sargent 1979, 1980).

CHART 1: MODEL OF T-GROUP EDUCATION

Teaching Principles (including structure and leader behaviors)	Sequence of Participant Objective (behavioral and affective)
Unfreezing	
Deroutinization--to be achieved through a lack of clear structure or leader direction, leading to ambiguity about tasks and roles.	Generate behaviors for analysis and learning
Here and Now Focus--an emphasis on learning from what people are experiencing in the group.	Experience feelings of heightened anxiety.
A supportive climate/atmosphere of safety and freedom--to be established through modeling by the trainers of empathetic listening and other caring responses.	Experience feelings of dissonance and disconfirmation in regard to some typical behaviors and attitudes.
Norms Encouraging Self-Disclosure and Feedback-- in regard to feelings about self and others, to be established through modeling by the trainers, and attempts to elicit that behavior from others.	Engage in self-disclosure of feelings about the group, self, and others.
	Experience feedback in regard to one's impact on others and on the group process.
Changing	
Norm of Experimentation with New Behavior--to be modeled and encouraged by the trainer.	Experiment with new behavior.
Opportunity to Plan and Make Application of Learnings to Back Home Situation	Continued self-disclosure and feedback.
Provide Cognitive Maps--theories, explanations, concepts with which to interpret new experience.	Continued practice and application of new behaviors.
Refreezing (may not be planned for in typical T-group, and may need to occur outside the group after it is over)	Integration of new behaviors and attitudes into personality and attitude structure.
	Integration of new patterns of behavior into ongoing relationships and organizational/ institutional context.
support in ongoing relationships and from organizational/institutional context	

The T-group approach in and of itself can thus potentially help men to become more aware of and to begin to move beyond some of the intrapersonal and interpersonal constraints of traditional male patterns of behavior. But it is only outside of the basic T-group experience, in the "refreezing" process, that there is the potential to stimulate an increased awareness of sexism and of anti-sexist activism. The teaching principles involved in that contextual refreezing process can potentially include: providing new cognitive maps that offer an analysis of sexism; providing opportunities to plan and make outside applications; identifying support in ongoing relationships and from the organizational/ institutional context. The next two approaches to be reviewed, Freirian education and anti-oppression education, provide the means through which the sorts of personal changes engendered by the T-group can be linked to the critical examination and transformation of the social realities in which we are immersed.

Freire's Education for Critical Consciousness

Paulo Freire developed a method for teaching illiterate peasants how to read, and in the process how to transform themselves and their world. In describing the methodology he used in this work Freire (1970, 1971, 1973) described the principles of a general "pedagogy of the oppressed'," a pedagogy whose goal is not to teach people how to read and to become literate in the traditional sense of the word, but also to help people to develop what has been called "social literacy" (Alschuler 1981); the ability to join with others in collectively naming, analyzing, and changing the social reality in which they are submerged. In Freire's words, that social literacy develops through what he called "conscientization—the process through which men [*sic*] , not as recipients, but as knowing subjects, achieve a deepening awareness of both the sociocultural reality that shapes their lives and of their capacity to transform that reality" (Freire 1979, 27)

The principles of Freire's pedagogy can therefore be applied not only to teaching reading, as Freire did in Brazil before he was exiled in 1964, and as he later did in Chile, but to the educational process in general. Several North American educators (Giroux 1981; Alschuler 1980; Shor 1980, 1992; hooks 1994) have attempted to apply it in a variety of other contexts, including, for example, the organization of community action groups, teaching English in a community college, and helping students, teachers, and administrators in urban schools to collectively solve their "discipline" problems.

Freire's pedagogy is based on his belief in the value of human development and in the right of people to personal and collective self-determination. "Man's vocation," he says [using male-dominant language], "is to become more fully human" (1970, 4). His pedagogy is fundamentally aimed at helping people to pursue that end. For him, the essential quality of our humanness relates to our ability to become conscious of our own consciousness and to develop our power and ability, in collaboration with others, to rename and recreate the social world in which we live and act. As Alschuler explained Freire's position, "the more we consider the world, criticize it, and transform it the more human we are . . . since that is the essential quality of humanness." (1980, 93)

Because for Freire the essence of being human is thus related to choice, intentionality, and self-determination, that which denies or limits choice and self-determination he considers to be oppressive and/or dehumanizing. Those limits can be on both our powers of reflection and thought -- (through myths, mystification, and false consciousness that we internalize in our minds, which then limit us); and on our power to act – (through coercion, regulation, violence, and the structure of society).

Although in these terms, the truly oppressed in any society are limited in both of these ways (internally and externally) even the oppressors—those who objectively benefit from the socioeconomic structure and existing power relations—are themselves limited and dehumanized by having to live in a society in which it is difficult to love, to engage in dialogue, and to relate to people as equals; a society in which they too internalize rigid and false images of themselves and the oppressed. As Freire puts it, "no one can be authentically human while preventing others from doing so." (1970, 42). Full humanization for anyone is therefore possible, according to Freire, only in a context, a society, in which the oppressor/oppressed contradiction has been overcome.

A pedagogy whose goal is to promote and facilitate people's "vocation of becoming more fully human" must therefore help them to overcome the limitations on their powers of thought and their powers of action, to help them create a world in which such humanization is possible - "a world in which it is easier to love." It is with such goals in mind that Freire developed a pedagogy aimed at helping people to develop their consciousness and ability to create such a world, an "education for critical consciousness."

With a "critical transforming consciousness," in which people are able to understand the systemic causes of their problems and the underlying structure of society, as the goal of his pedagogy, Freire described two other phases of consciousness that he observed in the people with whom he was working. In the magical-conforming phase people see their situation as either unoppressive and nonproblematic or as an unchangeable fact of existence. Therefore, they conform to the situation. In the naive-reforming phase people believe that problems are caused by bad individuals, not by faults in the system. They therefore blame other individuals or themselves for the problems they experience. Freire's pedagogy attempts to help people to move from a magical to a naive to a critical phase of consciousness.

Freire's methodology for engaging people in such a process is based on a dialogical relationship between teachers and students who collectively attempt to solve problems. This approach stands in contrast to what he described as the "banking form of education" in which the knowledge, ideas, and beliefs that are to be transmitted to students are predetermined and the role of the teacher is to deposit that knowledge into students' minds. Dialogic education, in contrast, is based on democratic social relations between teacher and students, and on respect for and faith in what students can potentially be. Through this dialogical process students can realize that knowledge is not something to be handed down from on high, but is something that people can find and create by themselves in their struggle to understand and change their world. Such dialogue can help people to free up their powers of reflection, powers which they can then apply to naming, analyzing, and trying to change their world as they struggle to overcome the limitations on their powers of action. It is through that struggle to understand and solve the problems that confront them that people's liberated consciousness can develop into a critical transforming consciousness. Within such a dialogical relationship, it is the role of the teacher or leader to engage students in such a problem-solving process through what Freire calls problem-posing or problematization of education. The role of the leader in that dialogue is not only to listen and facilitate discussion, but also to actively present his or her view of reality and to help students to examine and to act on their own reality. From the point of view of the leader/facilitator, that methodology can be broken down into five phases: 1 investigation, 2 codifying, 3 problem-posing, 4 dialogue/decoding, and 5 action. These steps, which will be explained below, are carried out in the context of a learning group that is composed of people who have in common some aspect of their social existence.

As the codifications are presented, the problems are posed, and the alternatives are envisioned, the group engages in a process of *dialogue* through which people de-code the codifications in a manner that leads them to a deeper understanding of the causes or roots of the situation and a realization of their collective power to rename the reality and to act to change it. It is through the collaborative dialogical process of identifying problems, analyzing them, *and taking action to solve them, reflecting on that action, and acting again*, that people engage in the sort of praxis that is at the heart of Freire's pedagogy, and through which he believed they can develop critical consciousness. As a group engages in such praxis and as its member develop the ability to engage themselves in critically conscious thought and action, the teacher or *leader can wither away*, allowing the group to lead itself.

Chart 2 below summarizes these basic principles of Freire's approach, including the suggested structure, leader behaviors, and sequence of participant objectives.

CHART 2: MODEL OF FREIRE'S EDUCATION FOR CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

Teaching Principles	Sequence of Participant Objectives (behavioral and affective)
Dialogue	
Demonstrate and create norms of non-judgmental listening and unconditional acceptance.	Feel affirmed and accepted.
Share authority and power.	Become aware of human power and rights.
Problematize	Become aware of self as a person in the process of becoming.
Investigate life of the people; identify themes and limit situations.	Become aware of what is dehumanizing in a situation.
Abstract situations by codifying them.	
Problematize the limit-situations by presenting codifications and posing questions, based on a reality to be produced**,** directing people's attention to the problem side of a situation, helping them to decode the codification.	See the inner structure of reality, the contradictions, Envision a different situation. Envision alternative routes to that vision.
Action-Praxis	
Dialogue with the group about possible courses of action.	Take action to achieve that vision.
If appropriate, join group in acting to solve the problems.	Reflect on/analyze results and experience of acting.
Wither away, turning over leadership to the group itself.	Experience change. Feel hope in the possibility of internal and external change.

When we consider the applicability of Freire's pedagogy to the goals of this project for anti-sexist education with men, there are really two aspects of that pedagogy to consider: the *process*—which is based on dialogue, democratic social relations, and praxis; and the *content*— what people dialogue and problem-solve about, which is based on the limits they experience to their human growth and development. The effects of that educational process would appear to be just as applicable to men as to women. The effects of the content are more problematic.

The process of Freire's pedagogy, which gives people an experience of dialogically, democratically, and collaboratively naming, analyzing, and acting on their social reality, can make two contributions to the development of critical consciousness. 1) It can help people to realize that knowledge and social reality (including social rules and social institutions such as gender roles and male-dominated institutions), are not absolute and given, but are historical creations, which people have the collective power to rename and recreate. 2) It can serve the "announcing" function of giving people an experience in a more fulfilling and affirming social reality and a sense of the kind of human relationships and kind of society that they could struggle to create. Because everyone in the society, oppressors as well as oppressed, is socialized to believe that the present social reality is essentially unchangeable—that is, that it is the only and the best one possible—these emancipatory effects of Freire's process can and should be experienced by members of both social groups.

Since the content of Freire's approach is based on the particular limit-situation, or aspects of social reality, that block an individual's or group's ability to be self-determining and to fulfill their human potential, the power of Freire's pedagogy to help men to develop critical consciousness (awareness and activism) about the nature of sexism must be based on the extent to which the solutions to that which limits or dehumanizes men in their roles as men are related to the oppression of women. In other words, to what extent must men's liberation from those limitations be based on women's liberation?

This is a complex question, but it seems safe to conclude that some limits that men experience are related to sexism and women's oppression and some are not, or some limits are more directly related than others. Some limits that men may feel and talk about may in fact be caused in the short term by women's liberation and empowerment as men lose some of their privileges, freedom, and opportunity to pursue their self-interest that those privileges made

possible. On the other hand, those limits that men experience through the constraints of the traditional male gender role can be traced directly to sexism and women's oppression, and as Freire himself has pointed out (1970, 25), there is the dehumanization which all oppressors experience when they are in dominant/ subordinate relationships and treat others in dehumanizing ways.

Because some of the limit-situations that confront men as men are much more directly related to women's oppression than others, it would seem to make sense for the Freirian educator to:

- focus, if possible, on the more directly related limit-situations

- be careful about helping men to see the less direct connections in regard to other limit situations by codifying and presenting those limits in appropriate ways, including limits that involve class and race

- avoid focusing on limit situations whose solutions would appear on the surface to require more rather than less oppression of women

A discussion of some specific examples will make these points clearer. One area in which many men feel limited and dehumanized as a direct result of women's oppression involves the difficulty of having equal, authentic, and satisfying relationships between men and women. Because problem-posing and problem-solving around these issues would lead men most directly to see the need to overcome the contradiction between oppressors and oppressed limits and themes in regard to this issue are probably the most appropriate and most promising to be worked with, and it would make sense to help men to get in touch with and identify the limitations they feel in this area. Many other limits that men experience are based on gender roles, which, as described above, involve various prescriptions about the personality traits and social roles men should have, or on problems in relationships between men and men. On a superficial level, it can often appear that many of these limits can be resolved by a simple "change of heart" or personality without necessarily impacting on women's oppression. When we work with men who are most concerned about these kinds of limits, it is therefore important to help them to identify the connections between those limits and roles, on the one hand, and sexist and heterosexist ideologies and the social structures that support them, on the other. Although men are not oppressed as men, many are oppressed as members of other subordinate groups, for example as working class men, gay men, and men of color. It can make sense, if men in a group are concerned about their oppression in these areas, to begin with these generative

themes, but then to continue to present codifications or analyses of these limits that can help men to see their connection to sexism and patriarchy, just as it is also important to see, in the other direction, the connection of sexism to racism, classism, and heterosexism.

To conclude, all of the key principles of Freire's approach are clearly very applicable and useful in helping men to develop more awareness and activism about sexism if the limit-situations focused on are those related to the oppression of women, or if a special effort is made to help men see the connections of other limits to sexism. The most relevant principles (with key provisions or qualifications in parentheses) are:

- set norms for dialogue (nonjudgmental listening, unconditional acceptance)
- identify themes and limit-situations (related to sexism and oppression of women)
- codify limit-situations (showing connection to sexism and oppression of women)
- problematize -- present limits as problems to be solved
- praxis -- plan actions, act, reflect, act.

These principles, with their emphasis on the development of awareness and activism, can be used effectively in tandem with those of the T-group, which can help men become more autonomous and androgynous. The third approach that I have drawn on in developing this pedagogy, anti-oppression education, provides a framework into which these other two approaches can be integrated.

Anti-Oppression Education

Anti-oppression education (AOE) involves the integration and application to issues of oppression of teaching principles that are derived from various streams of progressive educational thought and practice, including humanistic education and human relations training, psychological education and cognitive develop-mental theory, and feminist, multicultural, and Freirian approaches to consciousness raising and critical pedagogy. In blending these streams together, AOE is able to "attend to specific psychological issues of the learner as they encounter the educational process" and to "utilize a developmental frame of reference for determining outcomes and instructional procedures." (Bell and Weinstein 1982, 13). In the recently published book, *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice: A Sourcebook for Teachers and Trainers* (Adams, Bell, and Griffin, 1997) Adams describes the basic principles of this approach, which she and her co-editors call "social justice education," as follows:

- *Balance the emotional and cognitive components of the learning process*: Teaching that pays attention to personal safety, classroom norms, and guidelines for group behavior.
- *Acknowledge and support the personal (the individual student's experience) while illuminating the systemic (the interactions among social groups)*: Teaching that calls attention to the here-and-now of the classroom setting and grounds the systemic or abstract in an accumulation of concrete, real-life examples.
- *Attend to social relations within the classroom*: Teaching that helps students name behaviors that emerge in groups dynamics, understand group process, and improve interpersonal communications, without blaming or judging each other.
- *Utilize reflection and experience as tools for student-centered learning*: Teaching that begins from the student's world view and experience as the starting point for dialogue or problem-posing.
- *Value awareness, personal growth, and change as outcomes of learning*: Teaching that balances different learning styles and is explicitly organized around goals of social awareness, knowledge, and social action, although proportions of these three goals change in relation to student interest and readiness. (42-43)

As it works toward these goals, AOE utilizes a combination of structured experiences whose goal is to stimulate disequilibrium and cognitive dissonance by introducing new cognitive organizers or frames of reference that can resolve the contradictions. As such, the approach is similar to the work of other educators who see the need for individual and social change and have applied various principles of humanistic education and human relations training to oppression issues. See, for example, the work of Katz (1978), Schneidiwind (1975, Schneidiwind and Davidson (1983, 1998), Sargent (1977), Carney and Mcmahon (1977) and Derman-Sparks and Phillips (1997). In so doing, this approach also provides a useful framework for integrating principles from the laboratory training and Freirian approaches discussed above.

The anti-oppression pedagogy is designed for use with members of all social groups, dominant as well as subordinant, and in that sense should be applicable to work with men about the issue of sexism. The learning theory upon which AOE is based reflects the belief that the change process involved in reaching the goal of "learning attitudes and behaviors more congruent with our democratic ideals" (Weinstein and Bell, 1983, 1) is analogous to the change process involved in moving to a higher stage of cognitive development, as described in various forms by Piaget (1926), Loevinger (1976), Selman (1980), Kegan (1983) and Weinstein and Alschuler (1984), all of whom describe stages of develop-ment in making sense of experience. That is not to say, however, that the changes promoted by the AOE approach are equivalent to or are dependent on cognitive development, only that they involve a similar change process.

Therefore, what Weinstein and Bell describe as the cognitive developmental conditions for learning apply to their approach to consciousness raising as well. Those conditions are:

> Growth takes place as a consequence of a dialectical interaction between the organism and the environment. . . .Development proceeds as a consequence of contradictions, which challenge present modes of perception. . . .Growth involves exposure to more adequate means of making sense of reality (8-9).

In providing a context for that interaction, in raising those contradictions, and in providing that exposure, AOE attempts to provide those conditions.

In order to provide a framework for describing the various elements of this approach, Weinstein and Bell adopt Kegan's three-phase formulation of how developmental change is experienced and can be facilitated. According to Kegan, that process involves a movement through phases of *defending*, during which people feel embedded in a present equilibrium and try to fend off or deny stimuli that cause disequilibrium; *surrendering*, during which one allows the contradictions to enter one's consciousness, which brings on feelings of anxiety, loss, and disequilibrium; and *reintegration*, in which a new balance is reached that is based on a new way of making meaning of one's experience.

According to Kegan, each of these phases requires a certain kind of facilitating environment: *confirmation*, which involves "holding on" to someone, giving them the feelings of safety and validation that they can lean on as they allow themselves to experience disequilibrium; *contradiction*, which presents the individual with disconfirming information and experiences; and *continuity*, which facilitates staying put or reintegration as it provides an ongoing, stable, consistent system of beliefs and interpersonal relationships. Weinstein and Bell (1983) describe various strategies and principles that can be used in the context of this approach to create each of the facilitating environments, and in so doing facilitate the desired learning and change:

Confirmation: The learning process must begin with the creation of a "holding" or confirming environment, an environment in which participants experience feelings of safety, trust, and affirmation that will allow them to begin to engage in self-analysis and self-disclosure as they articulate and consciously examine their understanding of the issue. The goal here is to create an environment in which individuals can explore where they currently are on the issue. Only when we accept people where they are, and help them to articulate and become conscious

of their current position can we help people to engage in a process of critically examining that position

Contradiction: The purpose of the contradicting environment is to facilitate the interaction of participants with each other and with new information and perspectives through which they can broaden their knowledge and awareness about the issue, gain experience in taking the perspective of other people and other groups, and as a result, experience feelings of contradiction, dissonance, and disequilibrium. As "the environment gradually shifts from a focus on confirmation to a focus on contradictions," activities are introduced which are "designed to unbalance and challenge people and to explore contradictions in their previous way of thinking about oppression" (28). The suggested general sequence of steps involved in each activity or encounter include: *the introduction of new information or cognitive organizers* -- concepts or ideas which give people an organized way to examine the issue; *an encounter or structured activity*, which might be a role play, guided fantasy, lecture, film, discussion, etc.; *processing* the activity through personal reflection and analysis; *discussion and dialogue* around questions, thoughts, and feelings generated by the activity. Depending on the nature of the encounters, which are designed to engage learners on the affective as well as cognitive levels, participants may recognize contradictions in their previous ways of thinking and/or acting in regard to the issue and also may be exposed to different ways of thinking and acting that they find more satisfying. In this contradicting environment then, the crucial change and learning take place.

Continuity: Finally, an environment must be created that can facilitate continuity and reintegration by providing participants with opportunities to synthesize and summarize their learnings and to plan ways of integrating their new awareness and behavior into their daily lives. With such goals in mind, suggested activities include writing summaries of relevant learning, the creation of support groups, and the development of plans for taking future action outside of the learning group. Through such a process, people are encouraged to make connections between awareness and action, and to become "engaged in an ongoing process of transforming themselves and their social environment" (18. The basic teaching principles (structure and leader behaviors) and sequence of participant objectives of AOE are summarized in the chart 3 below.

Unlike Freire's education for critical consciousness (which was explicitly designed for use with members of oppressed groups) and unlike T-groups (which were not designed with issues of oppression in mind at all) the AOE model described above is designed to be used with members

of any social group to raise their consciousness about oppression issues. In that sense, it is indeed applicable for helping men to learn about sexism. T-group education and Freirian pedagogy, both of which include (using different terms) phases of confirmation, contradiction, and continuity, can also be fit into the AOE framework, with various strategies drawn from each approach for creating confirming, contradicting, and reintegrating environments applied in the appropriate phase. What this AOE model offers that supplements the other approaches is both the clarity and generic nature of the design and specific principles for successfully integrating cognitive, affective, personal, and political education.

CHART 3: MODEL OF ANTI-OPPRESSION EDUCATION

Teaching Principles	Sequence of Participant Objectives
Confirmation	
Sharing of agenda/objectives	Feel comfortable and safe
Introductions	
Comfortable setting	Articulate and consciously examine one's current
Sharing of fears/expectations	understanding of the issue
Warm-up/interaction	
Contradiction	
Present advance organizers, information, definitions.	Stretch and broaden one's scope of knowledge
Activity (role play, guided fantasy, film, discussion..)	about the issue.
Personal processing of activity, with focus on	
personal reactions and learnings.	Experience taking on the perspective of another
Discussion/dialogue—sharing resources,	person and social group culture.
perspectives, etc.	
Synthesis— provide avenues for resolution	Experience contradiction about the present way of
of contradictions at more "reality-based" levels of	making meaning about the issue, including feelings
thought and action	of disequilibrium and cognitive dissonance.
Continuity	
Synthesis	Resolve the contradictions with the
Wrap-up/summarizing—by participants and leaders.	adoption of a new way of making meaning
Feedback (i.e., responses to the design of the	about the issue
learning experience and to each other)	
Support groups (for use in the workshop and after.	Become engaged in transforming oneself
Reading (to provide for continued synthesis).	and one's environment in pro-active ways.

A Pedagogy for Men's Consciousness Raising: An Integrated Approach

The approaches reviewed above provide the building blocks that I have used to outline an integrated pedagogy that is theoretically capable of helping men to become both "liberated" and anti-sexist." From the T-group approach come principles for helping men to become aware of the limitations of some of their traditional "male" personality traits and to develop a more androgynous repertoire of interpersonal skills. When they increase their understanding of the roots of these attitudes and behaviors, men can develop more ability to freely and autonomously

choose whether or not they wish to follow the script that has been written for them. Freire's education for critical consciousness offers principles that can be used to help men to identify the factors in the social/economic/ political environment that limit their growth and development, to see the connection of those limits to the oppression of women, and hence to motivate them to act against personal and institutional sexism. Anti-oppression education offers strategies for helping men to recognize the contradictions between their current attitudes and behaviors and the democratic principles of equality and social justice. When men's awareness of the effects of sexism on women and on men themselves is increased, it can help motivate them to take anti-sexist actions.

This integrated pedagogical model makes use of frameworks found within the learning theories of two of the approaches. Anti-oppression education offers a broad framework for conceptualizing the consciousness raising process based on the phases of confirmation, contradiction, and continuation and on teaching strategies to provide the appropriate learning environment for each phase. The learning/change theory that underlies the T-group approach (Lewin's model of unfreezing, changing, and refreezing) can be used to integrate the participant objectives of all of the approaches.

The chart below provides a simple schematic representation of the relationship between these facilitating environments and participant objectives:

Facilitating Environment	*Participant Objectives*
(from AOE model)	(from T-group model)
confirmation	unfreezing
	(feeling safe, feeling anxiety)
contradiction	changing
continuity	refreezing

I have found that further differentiating this model in regard to the relationship between the environment and the objectives can make it even more clear and precise. Unfreezing must involve a combination of a feeling of safety and a feeling of heightened anxiety and disequilibrium. Because different kinds of environmental factors or teaching principles elicit those different categories of feelings, it will be useful to subdivide the unfreezing category into two. That change will make the objectives more parallel with the environmental factors. A confirming environment will lead to feelings of safety and confirmation, and a contradicting environment will lead to feelings of dissonance and anxiety.

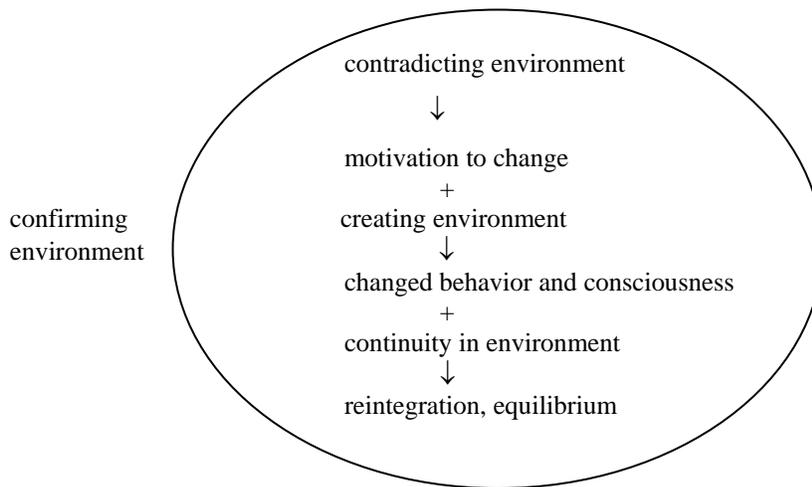Confirmation $\rightarrow$ Feelings of Safety

Contradiction $\rightarrow$ Feelings of Dissonance and Anxiety

On the other side of the equation, what is described as the contradicting environment really seems to be performing two discrete functions: creating disequilibrium and dissonance in regard to current behaviors and ways of making meaning, and offering means of resolving those contradictions and reaching a new equilibrium. That latter function can be facilitated through the creation of what I would call a creating environment, in which people are exposed to or themselves discover alternative behaviors and ways of thinking about the issue. The cognitive developmental learning theory from which this framework is adopted points out that development or movement to a new stage is facilitated by exposure to higher levels of reasoning or meaning making. Once people see the inadequacy of their present system of beliefs and behaviors, they must see or develop alternatives if they are going to change instead of retreat into a defensive rigidity and shut out or deny the disconfirming information or experiences. It therefore seems useful to include the provision or development of such alternatives as a fourth category of facilitating environment. A more differentiated framework would look like this:

Facilitating environment:			*Participant Objectives:*
confirmation	(unfreezing)	$\longrightarrow$	feeling safe and affirmed
contradiction	(unfreezing)	$\longrightarrow$	anxiety, disequilibrium
creation	(changing)	$\longrightarrow$	changed behavior, attitudes, and consciousness
continuity	(refreezing)	$\longrightarrow$	reintegration, equilibrium

Although this model appears to be sequential and closed-ended, the change process is probably more cyclical and open-ended; all four kinds of facilitating environments exist to some extent at the same time, and change occurs all of the time. If we picture the change process as occurring within an environment that is always in some ways confirming, a schema of a more cyclical change process might look like that pictured below. To put this schema into words, within a confirming environment, which can lead to an openness to change, a contradicting environment will create the motivation to change, which, if one is aware of alternatives and options, will lead to change itself. In an environment that offers continuity, some of those changes might lead to reintegration and equilibrium, while other changes will themselves lead to new experiences and new information that might lead to new contradictions and the motivation to change, which could, as the cycle continues, lead to more change. Such a cycle of action for

change leading to the discovery of new contradictions, leading to more action for change, is another way of conceptualizing Freire's concept of "praxis": action—reflection—action.

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        contradicting environment
                  ↓
          motivation to change
                  +
          creating environment
                  ↓
      changed behavior and consciousness
                  +
         continuity in environment
                  ↓
        reintegration, equilibrium
```

confirming environment

Within this broad framework or schema, it is the application of particular teaching principles in the creation of each sort of facilitating environment that can create conditions that are conducive to the particular objectives of this pedagogy. The various teaching principles applied in creating the contradicting and creating environments in particular will determine the particular changes that will result from the process. It is important to remember that if this pedagogy is to lead to the personality changes involved in increased androgyny, as well as the changes in attitude, consciousness, and behavior that are involved in increased awareness and activism, then contradicting and creating must occur in regard to interpersonal behavior and to ways of making meaning about sexism.

The model below therefore includes teaching principles drawn from the three approaches reviewed, designed to facilitate changes in those aspects of men's identity and to help men to see the connections between them. Chart 4 presents the basic principles and objectives of this pedagogy, outlining the teaching principles to be used to create each sort of learning environment. These principles and strategies have been described more fully elsewhere (Schapiro, 1999).

Like the more schematic model of change outlined earlier in this discussion, this model for men's consciousness raising may appear to be necessarily sequential and closed-ended, but the change process is probably never that tidy. In fact, all four kinds of facilitating environments may need to be present throughout the learning experience as participants cycle and recycle

through the change process in different ways. A course or learning experience may have sequential phases during which confirmation, contradiction, creation, or continuity are most emphasized, but within that overall process, each class session or meeting may in and of itself need to involve the same cycle.

CHART 4: MODEL OF A PEDAGOGY FOR MEN'S CONSCIOUSNESS RAISING

Learning Environment/Teaching Principles	Participant Objectives
1.*Confirmation* a) Set norms for creating a nonjudgmental dialogical communication process. b) Set norms that make the personal experiencing of learners the basic content of discussion. c) Structure activities that build trust and dialogue and facilitate personal sharing.	1. *Unfreezing, Part 1:* Feeling safe and affirmed a) Feel comfortable, safe, affirmed, and accepted. b) Open up and share personal feelings and experiences regarding: (1) the here and now experience in the group; and (2) there and then experiences in the past and outside of the group relating to masculinity, gender roles, and sexism.
2. *Contradiction* a) Process interpersonal behavior in the group. b) Present new information, definitions, and cognitive organizers about gender roles and sexism. c) Structure activities through which participants encounter contradictions in their present behavior and consciousness. d) Problematize—pose limits to men's growth and development as problems to be analyzed and solved. e) Praxis—engage participants in action to transform themselves and their society, and in reflection on that action.	2. *Unfreezing, Part 2*: Feeling anxiety and disequilibrium. a) Experience feedback about ones effect on others and the group process. b) Feel heightened anxiety, dissonance, and disequilibrium about some stereotypically male interpersonal behaviors. c) Recognize connections between some of those dissonant behaviors and male socialization. d) Stretch and broaden one's scope of knowledge about gender roles and sexism. e) Recognize some of the dehumanizing effects on self and others of gender roles and sexism. f) Experience feelings of dissonance and disequilibrium regarding one's current way of making meaning about gender roles and sexism.
3. *Creation* a) Model alternative interpersonal behaviors. b) Dialogue/discussion involving an analysis of the causes of limits and problems, and envisioning of alternatives and solutions. c) Present alternative cognitive maps d) Provide structure for planning actions for personal and social changes	3. *Changing* a) Recognize interpersonal effectiveness of a more androgynous range of behavior. b) Recognize some of the socio-economic-political causes of some of the limits that one experiences as a man, and the connection of those limits to gender roles and sexism. c) Recognize or envision alternative personal behaviors and alternative forms of social organization. d) Experience more satisfying and fulfilling ways of being with other men. e) Recognize and adopt a new cognitive map about these issues that resolves the disequilibrium one was experiencing. f) Engage in praxis—action-reflection-action—in trying to change oneself and one's environment, in and out of the group.
4.*Continuity* a) Summarize and synthesize. b) Support groups. c) Encourage continued praxis. d) Gradual disengagement by the leader.	4. *Refreezing* a) Integration of new behaviors and consciousness into relational system.

Chart 5 presents on overview of the course design in which this model was applied, outlining a) the what so what now what sequencing of questions and problems, both within the overall design and within each session; b) the basic questions and problems posed within each session, which, in Freire's terms can lead to the sort of dialogue, decoding, and analysis that can lead to the development of critical consciousness; and c) the primary learning environments (based on the confirmation, contradiction, creation, and continuity model described above). The overview is presented as a generic model that can and should change in response to the particular interests, problems, and questions of concerns of those in the group. It is at that point when the men in the group, in response to the sorts of broad questions posed above, engage with specific concerns and questions regarding significant issues and limits in their own lives, that the real process of change and learning can occur. Therefore, the detailed session-by-session course experience will vary significantly in response. For a detailed description of an early version of this course design see Schapiro (1985); for a detailed course design on sexism for mixed gender groups see Goodman and Schapiro (1997).

CHART 5: COURSE OVERVIEW

SESSION/TOPICS	QUESTIONS/PROBLEMS	ENVIRONMENT
Phase I: What?	What is this course about?	Confirming
1. Introduction	Who is in the group?	
		Confirming
2. Growing up male, I	What messages did I/we learn about how to be a man?	Contradicting
3. Growing up male, II	How did those messages affect us?	Confirming
		Contradicting
4. Men, emotions, and self-disclosure	What messages did we learn about feelings? How do those affect you/us?	Confirming
		Contradicting
Phase II: So What?		
5. The dynamics of oppression	What are the dynamics of oppression?	Confirming
		Contradicting
	What have been the problems/limits in your own	
6. Man-woman relationships and the dynamics of oppression	relationships with women? How do gender roles affect m/w relationships, your relationships? How do issues of power/ dominance/ subordinance affect m/w relationships, your relationships?	Confirming Contradicting Creating
7. Violence against women	Why are men violent against women? What can we do about it?	Confirming Contradicting Creating
8. Male sexuality	How do issues of dominance/ subordinance affect your sexuality? Male sexuality? What is the relationship for you and other men between sexuality and intimacy? What would you like to change about how you express your sexuality?	Confirming Contradicting Creating
9. Men relating to men, I	What are the barriers to close male-male relationships? How are those affecting us in the group?	Confirming Contradicting Creating
10. Men relating to men, II	How can we overcome those barriers, in general and in the group?	Confirming Contradicting

11. Men, class and race	How do classism and racism affect you,us other men? How do they relate to/ support sexism?	Creating
Phase III: Now What? 12. Personal change	What changes would you like to make, are you making in your way of being a man, relating to men and women, dealing with sexism, etc.?	Confirming Contradicting Creating
13. Social change	What social changes would make those personal changes more possible and overcome the various problems/limits identified above.	Confirming Contradicting Creating Continuing
14. Closure	What did you/we learn?	

Men in Transition: Experiences of Change

The pedagogical model and course design as presented above may be theoretically sound, but the real test has come as that theory and model have been put into practice, and again and again, revised in response. The strongest evidence of success has come in the words of the participants themselves, as they have reflected, both during and at the end of the experience, on what they have gained from it. In their words, which I have excerpted below from some of their self-evaluations and reflection papers, I think we can hear a transformation process at work, a process that connects the personal and the political.

M: There is an issue that is of crucial importance to the way I view myself, and deal with others that I am just barely now starting to recognize and deal with. That issue is homophobia. Six months ago I would have said that I was not homophobic. . . . That was only part right, some of it was a lie. I was lying to myself, because I was afraid to face the possibility that I might have a homosexual side. As I said, I was just starting to deal with that now, and I don't have very many answers, mostly, I just have a lot of questions. . . . In order to free myself of these feelings, I need to first face the possibility that I may be attracted to some men.

C: Probably the most important thing that happened as a result of this study, however, was my examination of my family as a dysfunctional system. This arose directly from the suggestion to examine my relationship with my father and ask myself what did I not get that I needed as a child. Once again, I see all of the issues in my life connecting and my emotional work being facilitated by my learning experiences. . . ..
. . . If we begin now to resist domination, competition and traditional capitalist-defined success in our lives, if we refuse to oppress women on a personal level, if we remember our father's suffering while we raise our sons and remember our mother's oppression as we raise our daughters, if we learn to connect with and feel our own pain and share that pain with other men who feel the same pain, if we talk to other men at work, at the bus stop, at the bar and at the game about these issues, if we refuse to work for companies that oppress minorities and refuse to buy products that exploit third world labor, and if we are public about our efforts and encourage our peers to follow our model, then, in the generations that follow, our social environment will change for the better.

K: One of the most important portions of this group study was to learn the fundamental concepts of power, dominance, subordination, hierarchy and patriarchy, socialization and internalization. I believe that understanding the fundamentals of all relationships is the basis for analyzing the roots of problems and promoting change both within ourselves and in society and roots of problems and promoting change. . . . Another very important result I have seen is the way I have improved my discourse and conversations with women. I was able to almost completely absorb the concepts of emotional empathy, sympathy and compassion and have watched my conversations with women grow to new heights. . . . I think that one of the most important ways that I could change how I express my masculinity is to be a better communicator in a clear and precise way. . . . As a person I feel that I have become

more compassionate and empathetic toward myself and others. This empathy and compassion has helped me in many ways to struggle with my own sadness and feelings of guilt and powerlessness caused by letting go or changing my traditional masculine role. . . . hope that I can be an agent for change socially by educating not only other men about masculinity but my own children and students that I educate as well.

T: At the beginning of the semester I was asking myself why men could not emote or be expressive of affection physically. Now the question has changed to, with the information that I now possess, what can I do about this?. . . Being in this class has given me a new understanding of the male condition in society today, and this understanding has given me an idea as to how we can break out of the cycle of oppression. Men oppress women, but we also oppress ourselves. We compete, and in competition we find ourselves as males. If we can manage to diffuse the feelings of competition and the need for emotional deadness we will be better able to relate to each other, and thus be able to better relate to women and other oppressed groups. But to do this we will have to change our entire idea of how children should be raised. . . .

C: Upon reflection, three major concepts or ideas stand out as most important to me. First, the impact which male socialization has had on me personally and other men in general. Second, the idea that gender is an artificial product of society and not wholly determined by sex. Third, the limits of masculinity that exist within the context of a hierarchical and capitalist society. . . . I have never thought of myself as very "masculine," but I understand now that indeed I am masculine and that many of my interpersonal difficulties have their roots in this masculinity. Second, I have a deeper understanding of the need to radically reconstruct the environment in which boys grow up in order to achieve a society that is free of sexism and homophobia. . . . I have learned that a vast amount of what society considers masculine and feminine is not a result of sex but rather culturally imposed models. . . .. By learning to reject those aspects of "masculinity" that have been harmful to me and others and to embrace those aspects of "femininity" that will further my emotional and spiritual growth, I am developing relationships in entirely new directions. I have become more expressive with emotions and am learning to listen to people without judgement or feeling the need to "fix" situations. . . . I have discovered that there are definite limits to gender and masculinity within the context of our present society. . . . As much as personal growth is needed, without radically altering society's institutions or economic system gender can be transformed only so far. Therefore, in order to achieve a non-sexist and non-homophobic society, we must affect a systematic change that reaches to the roots of oppression: capitalism and hierarchy. . . . After all has been said, the single most important thing that I have gained through this study is a new lens through which I can view society, myself, and my relationships. This lens is that of masculinity. . . .

We can hear in these men's words their movement away from confronting and acknowledging their personal limitations and constraints, to seeing the connections of those limits to systems, structures, and forms of consciousness, and their engagement in working at once toward personal and social change. The connections are there; it is our role as critical progressive educators to help people to discover and unravel those connections for themselves, and to do so in ways in which they can find a personal stake and a personal motivation to change. I believe that people have an inner drive to be whole, to relate to others in authentic and meaningful ways, to live in relationships based on mutuality, honesty, trust and collaboration rather than on exploitation, deceit, competition, dominance, and subordinance. As we help others and ourselves to uncover the connections between our personal dilemmas and frustrations and the systems of oppression in which we live, we lay the groundwork for the sorts of personal and social transformation that can help us all live more satisfying and meaningful lives. As Freire has taught us, no one is free while others are oppressed.

As I reflect on my personal learning through this experience, I realize that this work has helped me come to some important realizations along the way. One of the things that my students have helped me to learn is the need to move away from normative concepts of "masculinity" based on the white middle-class heterosexual experience. In earlier iterations of this course, most of the readings and discussion were based around that normative concept of masculinity, and even though our purpose was to critique that concept, I came to realize how that very notion was marginalizing to gay men, men of color, and others outside of that dominant paradigm, including those who consider themselves to be transgender. Broadening my own concept of the norms of masculinity and the masculine experience; recognizing that there is not one masculinity to critique and transform, but many masculinities, has helped me to broaden and deepen my own sense of what I am and can be as a man and a person. Working to help other men to reflect on and transform their understanding of gender, to become more whole, and more able and willing to confront social injustice, has kept me doing all of that for myself. I have allowed myself, in Freire's words, to enter into dialogue which, "as a democratic relationship…is the opportunity I have to open myself up to others' thinking…" (1994, 119) and to the possibility of being transformed in the process. For that, I am grateful.

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