

Sexual Equality and the Legacy of Catharine Beecher

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An important contemporary issue in physical education and sport relates to whether female participation and competency in physical activities should be asserted as a function of their difference from men or on the basis of their equality with men.¹ Legislation has addressed the issue, in part², but the deeper dilemma remains and has not yet been resolved by modern North American society. Women have historically been conditioned to reconcile themselves to fundamental assumptions of physical inequality (the weaker sex) and the physical education curriculum has been one of numerous institutional instruments designed to perpetuate such notions. One illustration of this is the legacy of Catharine Beecher's gymnastic system for girls which was developed in the ante-bellum years of the nineteenth century as part of a strenuous effort to closely define the differences between gender roles and promote specific physical exercises and activities for the widely perceived unique needs of the female as wife, mother and housekeeper. Indeed, the cult of motherhood, domesticity and the womanly woman which was etched indelibly into the North American educational system in the first half of the nineteenth century with the express purpose of improving women's health and fitness for motherhood can be viewed as a significant influence upon the way in which modern physical education programs have been affected by the sexual equality debate.

This paper attempts to explore the ramifications of some of the popular streams of thought in ante-bellum nineteenth century North American society upon Catharine Beecher's attitude toward females and female physical education. Further, the author conjectures that the very severity which Catharine Beecher used in defining the female role and appropriate sphere of activities perhaps helped eventually in raising group consciousness among women, which in turn has encouraged them to debate and challenge myopic definitions of "women's natural sphere" and to demand greater opportunities in physical education and sport.

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Ostensibly to improve the health of American women, Beecher's educational schemes in fact, encompassed a philosophy of action to shape a new American woman. Beecher's philosophy was provoked by widespread concern over the disorderliness of society and was articulated as perfectionist thought and new theories on child nurture blended to allow a new significance to be attached to the process of child rearing and the techniques of educational training.

Initially the paper considers how popular beliefs concerning the perceived poor state of health and deportment of American women in the 1830's and 40's triggered a number of reformers, among them Catharine Beecher, to plead for the development of appropriate exercise programs for females. It then demonstrates that Beecher was particularly influenced by the concerns of her educated, middle-class milieu over the presumed demise of the natural order and the social chaos which appeared to be a result of modernization and urbanization. The paper suggests that her analysis of the situation led her to believe that the blurring of roles resulting from rapid social change threatened orderly national development. Gender role differentiation, particularly, she concluded, was essential for the future of the race, yet ideas for accustoming females to their particular duties and responsibilities (including the need to exercise) were initially circumscribed by a puritanical religious orthodoxy which insisted that not only were children born sinners but would remain so despite personal effort unless destined to be saved. The paper discusses how perfectionist thought and new child nurture theories together ruptured fatalistic beliefs that the individual lacked control over his destiny, and spawned a transformation in attitudes toward the benefits of behavioral modification and educational training.

Two contradictory effects of Catharine Beecher's contributions to physical education for women are noted. The direct effect was in the development and reinforcement of a specialized physical education curriculum for uniquely female needs. The indirect effect was in sowing the seeds for future demands by women for equality of opportunity by providing a framework which recognizes gender as an important focus of analysis and organization.

The first serious efforts to promote organized physical education for American women took place around the 1830's and 40's and were due, in large part, to Catharine Beecher, Emma Willard, Almira Phelps and Zilpah Grant. Catharine Beecher, particularly, insisted that calisthenics and other physical activities be incorporated into the curriculum of the female seminaries with which she was associated in order to combat the poor state of health of American women.³ A popular subject among writers of the day was that the health of American women was declining to such an extent that they were rapidly becoming unfit to bear the succeeding generation.⁴ Of the 450 women whom

Catharine Beecher surveyed personally, she was only able to classify 24% as being strong, while labeling 42% delicate or diseased and 34% habitual invalids.⁵

Certainly, the fragility of women was a theme which was constantly repeated in the early years of the nineteenth century. Calhoun, investigating the American periodical literature of this period, has pointed out that frail and languishing females were an immensely popular theme in ladies' magazines.⁶ Orthodox medical personnel often used medical arguments to demonstrate female frailty. In 1839, a physician stated that,

the female sex is far more sensitive and susceptible than the male, and extremely liable to those distressing affections which, for want of some better term, have been denominated nervous, and which consist chiefly in painful afflictions of the head, heart, side and indeed of almost every part of the system.⁷

Physiologists of the 1830's were particularly worried that women who were "living unphysiologically" could only produce meek and degenerate offspring, and pleaded that girls needed more exercise to become robust mothers.* As one promoter of monitorial education, William Bentley Fowle suggested in 1825:

though I had long before noted the feeble health of my pupils and encouraged them to take more exercise . . . they wanted means and example . . . my chief difficulty was in the selection of proper exercises for females. It seemed as if the sex had been thought unworthy of an effort to improve their physical powers.

How true this was is difficult to determine, but a general feeling of the time was that the constitution of women could only bear a certain amount of moderate exercise. Walking was fine if pursued sedately; gardening was acceptable so long as both the sun and stooping were avoided. All children could play shuttlecock and skip with ropes, but girls were advised against such active sports as tag and follow the leader.¹⁰

Dubious about such arguments concerning women's inability to indulge in strenuous exercise, and particularly concerned about perceived needs to remedy female physical defects, a number of early female reformers initiated the task of developing appropriate physical exercises for girls and women.¹¹ Emma Willard prescribed exercises designed to improve the posture and gracefulness of her pupils at Troy Female Seminary. Her helper, Almira Phelps, elaborated upon exercises for health and beauty in her *Lectures to Young Ladies*.¹² Zilpah Grant also instituted a systematic course of calisthenics at Ipswich Seminar, but it was Catharine Beecher who considered herself to be the inventor of the system of calisthenics which became increasingly used in the 1830's and 40's. Beecher's system was adopted and modified by Diocletian Lewis after mid-century, and her system has, in many ways, con-

tinued to form attitudes toward female participation in sport and physical education.¹³

Scholars such as Kathryn Sklar who have looked closely at the life and works of Catharine Beecher suggest that her efforts on behalf of women were a curious combination of radical and conservative proposals that can best be understood against the backdrop of the society in which she lived and worked.¹⁴ Central among the concerns of her milieu, the antebellum middle-class society of the nineteenth century, were perceptions that the fabric of social order was being rent apart by rapid changes brought on by modernization. Daughter of Lyman Beecher, preacher and revivalist, Catharine Beecher grew up at a time when developing industrialization spawned urbanization and a host of social problems for which traditional forms of social control seemed totally inadequate.¹⁵ Many Jacksonians, historian David Rothman has suggested, used eighteenth century criteria of an ordered society to judge the changing scene and, as a result, defined the fluidity and mobility of society as necessarily corrupting.¹⁶ Physical and moral deterioration seemed to many observers of antebellum society to be the inevitable result of an urban chaos which could only be reversed by a dramatic surge of idealistic impulses and institutional remedies.

To women such as Beecher, the “moving and changing” scene suggested that “a revolution, a social earthquake, was in the offing” and that a collision between the peaceful home and a society bent on disaster was inevitable.¹⁷ Decrying “signs of disease in the body politic,” Beecher came to feel that by understanding the causes of the disorderliness of society in the 1820’s and 30’s, she could develop prescriptions to alleviate social distress and restore harmony to the American nation. Her analysis of the problem led her to claim that society was in turmoil since it lacked “permanent definitions of status.”¹⁸ The careful subordination of women to men, she asserted, was necessary for the harmonious development of society. Citing the duty of American women to save their country, she orchestrated the cult of motherhood as an antidote to a world gone mad with change.¹⁹ She thus advocated the development of female intellect, affections and especially, physical energy for the illustrious work of motherhood, likening the role of the mother to that of an “imperial queen.”²⁰ The resultant maternal purity would hopefully “instill morality and social probity in generations to come.”²¹

Catharine Beecher’s message to American women was by no means unique. She admitted, for example, to being strongly influenced by such writers as Alexis de Toqueville who had noted the constant care that Americans seemed to take in tracing distinct lines of action for the two sexes.²² Numerous popular advice books and essays were becoming available around the 1830’s, “advocating and reiterating women’s certain, limited role,” and journals and la-

dies' magazines were replete with advice about female etiquette, maternal responsibilities and the sexual destiny of American women.²³ Catharine's message was a powerful one, however, in that the detailed lines of action she prescribed were not only popular, practical and utilitarian, but were widely disseminated and would prove to have long-lasting consequences.²⁴

Of particular significance to developing notions about the importance to society of incorporating physical exercise and physiological knowledge for females into the educational curriculum were changing beliefs in the ability to control behavior. The sense of chaos felt by many reformers around the 1830's was heightened by feelings of fatalism about a puritanical religious orthodoxy which stated that salvation was unattainable through personal effort. However, the introduction to America of the concept of Christian perfection brought about a change in control beliefs during the antebellum years which was of immense consequence to the future of educational reform, for it gained popularity at precisely the point at which Americans seemed most fearful for the social order. Furthermore, it stimulated the conceptualization of methods of behavioral manipulation which were to become a prime ingredient of nineteenth century educational reform efforts.

The concept of Christian perfection was introduced through Methodism, which called upon the individual to seek salvation through his own efforts. As revivalism increased in scope and tempo, people were emotionally persuaded that they could change their own and their children's condition and develop a perfect society.²⁵ The initial impulse of the perfectionist doctrine was to purify man of sin and, just as this was newly perceived as possible, so also did it seem possible for him to be purged of his bad habits. Intemperance, prison conditions, poor diet, inappropriate clothing, lack of exercise, improper sexual behavior and prostitution were all seized upon as worthy of serious reform efforts. Indeed, Ralph Waldo Emerson noted with astonishment the fertility of projects for the salvation of the world as the enthusiasm for a perfect society reached a high tide in the 1840's and 50's.²⁶

Intimately related to the new strands of perfectionist thought was a widespread feeling that traditional methods of child nurture were inadequate to cope with the conditions caused by the disruptions in cultural continuity in early nineteenth century America.²⁷ Despite the enlightened ideas of Locke, Rousseau and others, the long-standing Calvinist belief in infant depravity, which advocated submissive obedience and discipline aimed at breaking the will, had demonstrated remarkable staying power. This theory contradicted perfectionist views and disallowed the notion that education could be an instrument for social engineering.²⁸ By the 1830's, however, a transformation in attitudes toward children, their behavior and their education was becoming apparent. A growing body of experts on early education or child nurture

claimed that the corruption and disorderliness of the American home, inadequate parental guidance, and general social disorder necessitated a new approach to Christian nurture.²⁹ Catharine Beecher, Harriet Beecher Stowe and Oliver Wendell Holmes were all children of Calvinist ministers who had grown to feel and advocate that the doctrine of original sin was unspeakably cruel.³⁰ Other popular writers of the time such as Fanny Fern, Lydia Sigourney and Sarah Hale emphasized the same theme through their prolific writings on domestic matters.³¹ Increasingly, the view of the child as a willful sinner was replaced by a confidence that the character of the child could be molded “like wax to receive but like marble to hold.”³² If perfection was feasible and raw material moldable, then a new significance could be attached to the process of childrearing and educational training. Action, not only to modify but to mold behavior from the very beginning, was thus increasingly perceived in American society as a real possibility, and one requiring the development of specific and carefully controlled techniques for conditioning behavior. Consequently, experts might clarify and advise upon educational methods to condition and control so that decency and order could be established among society.

Catharine Beecher enthusiastically assigned herself the task of designing techniques to mold, from early childhood, the new American woman, the “mother of civilization” whose devotion and self-sacrifice would allow the creation of a perfect society.³³ Her campaign to reconstruct the female personality specifically included protective customs to regulate relationships between the sexes. Girls needed knowledge about physical health and hygiene as protection against urban overcrowding and the numerous types of employment with which women were becoming increasingly involved. Traditionally, she suggested, a natural order had prevailed where women performed the

labor appointed to woman in the family state [which] involves . . . exactly what is best calculated to develop every muscle most perfectly,” [and men pursued] “the labor appointed to man in cultivating the earth, in preparing the fruits, and in many mechanical pursuits [which] . . . exercise all the muscles of the body appropriately and healthfully.”³⁴

Now, industrialization had caused a new order where labor was increasingly developed along class lines. The hiring of “coarse and vulgar immigrant servants” into the home to perform women’s labor of love debilitated decent women, had demeaned their status and created doubt about the social dominance of the ‘better classes.’³⁵

The answer, Beecher felt sure, was to shore up the traditional hierarchy of roles so that men and women, servants and children might clearly know their station and responsibilities. In other words, she chose to reassert female influence in North America on the basis of their difference from men rather than on the grounds of their human equality with men. In her discussions with the

Grimké sisters she argued against the notion of political and social equality for women. "Heaven," she wrote, "has appointed to one sex the superior and to the other the subordinate station";³⁶ he was the head of the body politic, she was the heart.

This line of argument lay at the core of the feminist dilemma which has had long-range consequences for women in many spheres of activity, and particularly in the field of physical endeavors. In calculating whether female influence and competency should be asserted as a function of their difference from men, or on the basis of their human equality, Beecher decided upon the former. Once having formulated a strict definition of the innate differences between gender roles, Beecher was able to apply distinctions to her educational innovations which conditioned women to reconcile themselves to the fundamental assumption that inequality was necessary for the political health of the nation. By removing half of the population (females) from the political sphere and acquisitive domain (dominated by the male), competition and strife would also be reduced. Thus, the subordination of women would promote the general good and orderliness of society.³⁷ Elinor Whiting, an anti-suffragist, provided an analogy to reinforce Beecher's beliefs.

If a one-legged man should insist on being a letter carrier, we might admire his courage and perseverance, but we should urge him to choose an occupation for which he was better suited. He might say with truth that the world is hard on one-legged men: doubtless it is. But what is hardness to the one-legged man is simply justice to the two-legged man. To make special regulations in behalf of the cripples would be to create false conditions that could, in the end, result only in harm. To make special regulations in behalf of women could only have the same result.³⁸

Such was the reasoning that lay behind Catharine Beecher's educational innovations. It was precisely because women were innately different from men, and had such disparate (though complementary) goals that they needed to be nurtured with a limited and specialized curriculum. In order to widen her audience on how to help girls become healthy and how to properly fit females for their particular duties, Beecher wrote *Letters to the People on Health and Happiness* and *Physiology and Calisthenics for Schools and Families* which described for women the structure of their own bodies and discussed the importance of female exercises to wife and motherhood. Woman's maker, noted Beecher, has adapted her body to its appropriate labor. The tending of children and doing housework exercise those very muscles which are most important to womanhood, she continued, while neglecting to exercise the arms and trunk causes dangerous debility in most delicate organs.³⁹ Such debility was particularly noticeable in the spines of young girls, and it was an Englishwoman claiming to be able to cure spinal curvature who first demonstrated particular exercises to Beecher at the Hartford Female Seminary. "The whole school took lessons of her, and I added others:—the results—convinced me that far more might be done in this direction."⁴⁰

Thus a system of calisthenics was derived, not to cultivate muscle and brawn, or to enable women to realize the joys of zestful recreation in the outdoors, but to correct the female form and provide appropriate physical discipline to fit women better for women's work. The exercises, according to Beecher, were organized to:

exclude all those felt to be severe enough to involve danger . . . from excess . . . , since it is maintained that many athletic exercises suited to the stronger sex are not suited to the female constitution . . . This system is arranged on scientific principles . . . and contains, in addition, many valuable exercises . . . for the cure of disease and deformities.

For convenience, the exercises could be performed “. . . in schools of every description . . . without aid from a teacher . . . without apparatus . . . without a room set apart for the purpose . . . and with or without music.”⁴¹

Here then was technical training for women that was cheap, efficient and utilitarian—appropriate in all ways for the ethos of helping women conserve their health and strength for “the Alpha and Omega of her duty and destiny.”⁴² In utilizing calisthenics as one part of her effort in “interpreting and shaping the collective consciousness of American women”⁴³ Catharine Beecher resourcefully insinuated strict gender definitions and capabilities into a gymnastic system that became increasingly popular throughout the nineteenth century. Her calisthenics involved no immodest displays—they were part of an education suited to the needs of nineteenth century women as defined by the natural order.

The notions about role definitions and functional limitations which early North American female educators such as Beecher built into the physical education aspect of the school curriculum were elaborated and perpetuated by a steadily growing national obsession with motherhood and domestic matters during the nineteenth century. The cult of domesticity⁴⁴ which “both observed and prescribed specific behavior for women in the enactment of domestic life,”⁴⁵ epitomized both the links and the tension that existed between nineteenth century efforts to esteem female importance while at the same time containing it.

Some modern feminists note that an emphasis upon women's obligations in the domestic sphere is usually antithetical to the general progress of women.⁴⁶ In challenging the traditional social definition of women as mothers and homemakers, they suggest that “it is crucial that male and female roles not be frozen—women in the family and men outside of it.”⁴⁷ Once this occurs, then the fundamentally biological conception of women is perpetuated by the prolonged and undue emphasis upon only one facet of the potential female role.⁴⁸ This ideology, in turn, colors curriculum development in such areas as health

and physical education and delimits female aspirations and opportunities for success in sport and physical activities.⁴⁹

Seen from another perspective, the discussion can be approached in Hegelian manner. Using Hegel's dialectical viewpoint that each process contains within itself the seeds of its own contradiction, social change can be considered as a result of the struggle between opposites, leading to eventual transformation or synthesis. The particular view of woman's sphere popularized by Beecher in the nineteenth century held within it the radical contradictions which were temporarily resolved by her critical life-style prescriptions and practical activities for women. Modern feminists are quick to note these contradictions and perhaps owe the nineteenth century educator a debt for highlighting a potentially fruitful debate. On the one hand, the attitudes which informed the development of Beecher's system of calisthenics have certainly lingered, sustained by a continued emphasis upon gender differences and they still impinge upon the organization of physical education curricula and the societal view of female capabilities. On the other hand there have been significant gains for women who have learned to examine their options in sport and physical education, find them severely limited, and successfully demand equal participation with men. Beecher's contribution to the sexual equality debate in physical education, one could suggest, might be seen as a firm spoke in the moving wheel of qualitative evolution toward a more egalitarian society.

As Cott has noted, apparently dissimilar aims in fact reflected a multi-faceted advance toward "shattering the hierarchy of sex," thus viewing one of the major historical consequences of defining the parameters of a woman's sphere as the raising of solidarity and group consciousness among women.⁵⁰ This, in turn, may have helped encourage eventual demands for greater elasticity of female opportunity since once classified by sex, rather than that by wealth or position, women could join to protest the more constraining ramifications of that classification.

Notes

1. M. Ann Hall, "Sport and Physical Activity in the Lives of Canadian Women," in R. S. Gruneau and J. G. Albinson (eds), *Canadian Sport Sociological Perspectives* (Ontario: Addison-Wesley, 1976), pp. 170-200.

2. Title IX, for example, is a section of the Education Amendments Act passed by the U.S. Congress in 1972 forbidding sex discrimination in any educational institution receiving federal funds. Though the effects of Title IX are slow in appearing, the legislation is a visible expression of a process of change and is indicative of a developing notion that gender roles may be increasingly dysfunctional in complex societies. See M. Kay Martin and B. Voorhies, *Female of the Species* (New York: Columbia University Press), 1975, and Patricia Vertinsky, "Female Activism Through Sport From a Cross-National Perspective," *Arena Review*, forthcoming.

3. Carroll Smith Rosenberg notes that historians of education have written of developments in secondary education . . . as if girls' academies . . . never existed. This discussion attempts to show that the curriculum

developed for some of the early nineteenth century academies and female seminaries reflected some important ideologies (possibly defensive, but nonetheless powerful) which have colored subsequent program development for girls and women. "The New Woman and the New History," *Feminist Studies*, 3 (Fall, 1975), 187-197.

4. Thomas Woody, *A History of Women's Education in the United States*, Vol. 1. (New York: Octagon Books, 1929), p. 405. For an interesting viewpoint on this topic see Carol Smith Rosenberg and Charles Rosenberg, "The Female Animal: Medical and Biological Views of Woman and Her Role in Nineteenth Century America," *The Journal of American History*, 40 (September, 1973), 333-339. See also Catharine Beecher, *The Evils Suffered by American Women and American Children: The Causes and Remedy* (New York: Harper and Bros., 1846); Mrs. A. J. Graves, *Woman in America* (New York: Harper and Bros., 1843); and W. A. Alcott, *The Young Mother* (Boston: Light and Stearns, 1836).
5. Robert E. Riegel, *American Women: A Story of Social Change* (New Jersey: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1970), p.41.
6. Arthur W. Calhoun, *A Social History of the American Family from Colonial Times to the Present* (Cleveland: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1917), p. 213.
7. Marshall Hall, *Commentaries on Some of the More Important of the Diseases of Females* (Boston: C. C. Little and J. Brown, 1839), p. 2.
8. Amariah Brigham, *Remarks on the Influence of Mental Cultivation and Mental Excitement* (Boston: Marsh, Capen and Lyon, 1833), p. 16.
9. William Bentley Fowle, in the "Medical Intelligeneer," quoted in *American Journal of Education*, (1826), pp. 698-9.
10. *Etiquette for Ladies: With Hints on the Preservation, Improvement and Display of Female Beauty* (Philadelphia: Lindsay and Blakeston, 1848).
11. Barbara M. Cross (ed.), *The Educated Woman in America: Selected Writings of Catherine Beecher, Margaret Fuller and M. Carey Thomas* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1965), p. 66.
12. Almira Phelps, *Lectures to Young Ladies* (New York: Leavitt and Lord, 1833), pp. 49-65.
13. One example is the current popularity of rhythmic for school girls which strongly reflects both the form and the philosophy of Dio Lewis's System of New Gymnastics. See my article on "Rhythmic, a Sort of Physical Jubilee: A New Look at the Contributions of Dio Lewis." *Canadian Journal of History of Sport and Physical Education*, 9 (May, 1978), 31-42.
14. Kathryn Kish Sklar, *Catharine Beecher: A Study in American Domesticity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), p. 266.
15. Rowland Berthoff, *An Unsettled People: Social Order and Disorder in American History* (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), p. 127.
16. David J. Rothman, *The Discovery of the Asylum: Social Order and Disorder in the New Republic* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1971), pp. 67-71.
17. Catharine E. Beecher, *Treatise on Domestic Economy, For the Use of Young Ladies at Home and at School*, Rev. Edition. (New York: Harper and Bros., 1847), p. 175.
18. Kathryn Kish Sklar, *Catharine Beecher*, p. 157.
19. Catharine E. Beecher, *The Duty of American Women to Their Country* (New York: Harper and Bros., 1845), p. 210.
20. Catharine E. Beecher, *The Evils Suffered by American Women*, p. II.
21. Mary P. Ryan, *Womanhood in America: From Colonial to Present Times* (New York: Franklin Watts Pubs., 1975), p. 146.
22. Alexis de Toqueville, *Democracy in America* (ed. Phillips Bradley) (New York: Vintage Books, 1945).
23. Nancy F. Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), p. 8.
24. Sklar notes that it was initially through the *Treatise on Domestic Economy* (1841), published by Harper and Brothers, that Beecher was able to exploit wide public enthusiasm for her views and find an effective means to disseminate nationally her ideas on American women. Reprinted 14 times, the *Treatise* was joined in popularity by *Letters to the People on Health and Happiness* (1855), and a wide range of other writings in book, pamphlet and article form including fiction as well as non-fiction. Many of Beecher's ideas were also quoted or reprinted in a varied assortment of educational journals, ladies magazines and religious tracts.
25. Robert Bremner, *From the Depths: The Discovery of Poverty in the United States* (New York: New York University Press, 1959). Timothy Smith, *Revivalism and Social Reform in Mid-Nineteenth Century America* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1957).

26. Stewart A. Holbrook, *Dreamers of the American Dream* (New York: Hawthorn Books Inc., 1969), p. 37.
27. Robert H. Mennell, "Juvenile Delinquency in Perspective. Essay Review." *History of Education Quarterly*, 13 (Fall 1973), 275.
28. Gerald L. Gutek, *A History of the Western Educational Experience* (New York: Random House, 1972).
29. W. A. Alcott, *The Young Mother* (Boston: Light and Stearns, 1836); Mrs. A. J. Graves, *Women in America* (New York: Harper and Bros., 1843); Robert Sunley, "Early Nineteenth Century American Literature on Child Rearing," in Margaret Mead and Martha Wolfenstein (eds) *Childhood and Contemporary Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955).
30. Gail Thain Parker, "Sex, Sentiment and Oliver Wendell Holmes," *Women's Studies*, 1 (1972) 50.
31. Sarah J. Hale. "Woman," *Ladies Magazine*, 3 (October 1830) pp. 441-444. Lydia H. Sigourney, *Letters to Mothers* (Hartford: Hudson and Skinner, 1843). Bernard Wisly, *The Child and the Republic: The Dawn of Modern American Child Nurture* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1968). Ann Douglas Wood, in her examination of many of the works of these female writers during the ante-bellum period, has remarked that the sentimental themes of such works all dealt, although in a disguised way, with a power struggle between the sexes, by asserting the richness and resourcefulness of womanhood. By extolling the virtues of the female role, these writers also asserted the right to guide their offspring, and logically could not accept the rigidity of a doctrine of original sin, imposed one could suggest, by an unyielding and rigid father figure and depriving women of their opportunity to use tenderness and resourcefulness in child rearing. "The Literature of Impoverishment," *Women's Studies*, 1 (1972), 6- 15.
32. James M. Mathews, "The Religious Influence of Mothers," *The National Preacher*, 10 (1847) pp. 307- 312.
33. Catharine E. Beecher, *The Duty of American Women to Their Country* (New York: Harper and Bros., 1845), p. 210.
34. Catharine E. Beecher, *Letters to the People on Health and Happiness* (New York: Harper and Bros., 1855), pp. 161, 183-184.
35. Catharine E. Beecher, *Suggestions Respecting Improvements in Education* (Hartford: Packard and Butler, 1829), p. 53.
36. Catharine E. Beecher, *An Essay on Slavery and Abolitionism with Reference to the Duty of American Females* (Philadelphia: Henry Perkins, 1837) p. 106.
37. Catharine E. Beecher, *Treatise on Domestic Economy for the Use of Young Ladies at Home and at School*, Rev. ed. (New York: Harper and Bros., 1847), p. 26.
38. Elinor Whiting, *Woman's Work and Wages* (pamphlet). Massachusetts Association Opposed to Further Extension of the Suffrage of Women, ND. The analogy between the female and the incomplete man has been used far more recently. In 1969, Paul Weiss, Professor of Philosophy at Yale, suggested that, "one way of dealing with disparities between the athletic promise and achievement of men and women is to view women as truncated males . . . permitted to engage in such sports as men do—but in foreshortened versions." Paul Weiss, *Sport: A Philosophical Inquiry* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1969), p. 215.
39. Catharine E. Beecher, *Physiology and Calisthenics for Schools and Families* (New York: Harper and Bros., 1856). Catharine E. Beecher, *Educational Reminiscences and Suggestions* (New York: J. B. Ford and Co., 1874), p. 128.
40. Catharine E. Beecher, *Educational Reminiscences and Suggestions*, p. 46.
41. Catharine E. Beecher, *Physiology and Calisthenics*, pp. 69- 71.
42. Woman's Rights Advocate, No. 1 (Salem, Ohio, 1852), quoted by Andrew Sinclair, *The Better Half—The Emancipation of the American Woman* (London: Lowe and Brydone Publishers, 1965) p. 99.
43. Kathryn Kish Sklar, *Catharine Beecher*, p. 132.
44. Aileen Kraditor, *Means and Ends in American Abolitionism: Garrison and His Critics on Strategy and Tactics, 1834- 1850* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1967).
45. Nancy F. Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood*, P. 2.
46. For recent discussions about this dilemma, particularly the sexual division of labor, see Alice Rossi, "A Biosocial Perspective in Parenting," *Daedalus*, (Spring, 1977), 1- 31.
47. As Wini Breines et al. suggest in "Social Biology, Family Studies and Anti-Feminist Backlash," *Feminist Studies*, 4 (February 1978), 43-49, Rossi's perspective militates against the feminist effort to challenge women's traditional social definition as mothers.

48. Rosalind Rosenberg suggests that “the popular conception of womanhood has always been fundamentally biological.” In the nineteenth century, Darwinism came to offer “a modern version of Aristotle’s defence on biological grounds of existing social institutions and roles. . . .” Paradoxically, Darwinism provided the biological affirmation of female uniqueness that anti-feminists needed to oppose change and that feminists relied on to defuse the threat of change. “In Search of Women’s Nature, 1850-1920,” *Feminist Studies*, 3 (Fall 1975), 142-153.

49. The powerful influence of political and social attitudes upon curriculum development have been documented over a lengthy period by W. Pilder, “The Concept of Utility in Curriculum Discourse: 1918-1967.” (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation: Ohio State University, 1968). As Kate Millett further points out “educational institutions—accept a cultural programming toward the generally operative division between ‘masculine’ and ‘feminine’ subject matter.” *Sexual Politics* (New York: Avon Books, 1979) p. 67.

50. Nancy F. Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood*, p. 205.

