

How did particular people help shape your ideas and practice?

My mother was a big influence because she had no opportunities to go to high school or further education because her father didn't believe in it and her mother didn't fight for it, she encouraged all of the girls in our family to have the best career we could get, to set us up in life.

HOD Senior Schooling (1)

The strong, independent women that I had as family and teachers were strong role models and introduced me to the right literature.

I think the way they lived their lives was more important than any skill or specific attribute.

Educator and domestic violence worker

My mother & grandmother in having us as children take active roles in undertaking volunteer work e.g. door knocks, knitting booties for babies in war torn countries.

Business & Technology Co-ordinator - Urban secondary school (1)

My mother was a strong feminist in the 70s.

Curriculum coordinator - rural secondary school (1)

- ◆ Mother - well known feminist Edna Ryan.
- ◆ Canberra Women's Liberation members.
- ◆ ACT Teachers' Federation women's caucus.
- ◆ ANU Women's Studies students and staff.

Social Policy Committee Member - National Foundation for Australian Women (1)

By challenging my beliefs and language.

Friends have made feminism out to something powerful and fun thus i continuously want to know more about it :)

Student (1)

My sister supported my controlling husband's role. She felt I had no right to leave my husband and go to uni.

Police (males) were wonderfully supportive of my during my protection orders and subsequent court appearances - I had never totally realised that the controlling behaviour was unacceptable to many in society - it was all I had known in my life until I was 30. A policeman was the first man who knew what my children and I had suffered that had believed it was wrong and told me so!

Most of the teaching staff at my school are on 'the same page' in this area - particularly the principal.

Teacher - Human Relationships Education, and Learning Support (1)

I was brought up to believe in equality and to believe in potential, but also that the male was main breadwinner and women had to be "looked after"

I responded positively to the 70's feminist movement - read widely fiction and non fiction

Had the struggles with male partners who are so threatened by women out of traditional role

There has been strong bonding with females in family and friends - mutual support and belief in ability

Principal -Band 7 (1)

- ◆ female teachers - you can do it attitude
- ◆ family - did not prescribe to traditional male/female roles or expectations in education
- ◆ professional learning groups - provide support, mentoring and modelling

Deputy Principal (1)

I was fortunate to grow up in a family where the common commitment (and indeed expectation) was for each individual to realise their personal potential. Therefore, each sibling has taken, and been supported by our parents, his/her own path and achieved a high level of practice.

Being male or female was irrelevant.

As an adult, I have a range of both female and male roles models/mentors who treat me justly.

I have also been fortunate in having some notable teachers and mentors who appreciated individuals and their potentials. These range from primary school teachers (Year 2, 5, 6, 7), high school teachers (Yr 12 zoology/biology teacher) and tertiary teachers (biology professor, postgraduate supervisors).

Teachers do make a difference for both genders, not only in knowledge and skills, but in pastoral/academic care.

Lecturer (1)

My mum always bought home new computers and played with them.

There were only 3 females in my house (my mum, sister and me) so I never thought of it as something I wasn't supposed to do.

Ph. D. student and volunteer for girls in ICT (1)

Limited options for women of my mother's generation.

Geoff Whitlam - for the opportunity of a tertiary education and, consequently, access to writers.

Eva Cox and civil society.

Project Officer (1)

I came from a male dominated family that had very old-fashioned European views. I have surrounded my self with very strong and successful women. My son has taught me a lot about giving to myself first.

Lecturer and Co-ordinator – TAFE (1)

Mainly it started when I became part of the research in the 70's about the treatment of girls in education and since then I have been influenced by many women professionally and personally - studying feminist theology and spirituality with world leaders in the field and especially when I studied in Boston and also worked with women in a spirituality centre and taught drama to homeless women in a centre for homeless women and their babies.

Chaplain (1)

By what they said and more importantly what they did - both very successful things and also "bad" things. (i.e. blatant instances of racism).

Principal –
Townsville (1)

It is hard to name one person or group. However I think the thing that makes any one person help 'shape' my ideas or practice concerning issues of gender justice is their ability to help me to be open to new ideas, feedback, constructive criticism and critical reflection. It's a scary thing indeed to look at one's faults and weaknesses, or the faults and weaknesses in a program or practice, so the person who can help you to feel safe and brave to face them is a valuable mentor indeed. I am fortunate to have many of them in my personal and professional life.

School Program Coordinator - Prevention of sexual assault (1)

I read widely, and am fortunate to have strong women in family and among friends...so feel that I belong to various groups who share my ideals.

Professor and Dean, Faculty of Education (1)

My father was my most influential person.

He always encouraged me and expected that I could achieve things.

Executive Director Schools (1)

I think the most powerful aspect would be when professional women come together and discuss frankly their experiences and what they or others have or are doing has had the biggest impact.

Reading literature has also been very beneficial, as it provides was to identify, problem solve and whys in which to communicate.

My ideas were supported by a group of friends who study meditation together. Discussions of basic Buddhist philosophies supported my decisions to help through Amnesty.

Lecturer (1)

My father was oppressive. My first boyfriend was violent. The court system showed no justice to victims of domestic violence. My dear old mate Colleen introduced me to Feminism in the 1980's. My Uni tutors at enabled me to use language to expose injustice and support others.

Secondary teacher (1)

Lecturer (1)

My mother educated herself to Masters level after having married and produced three daughters and despite having a husband who never saw the value of education!

She basically raised us to believe in ourselves and in our capacities for study and leadership. All four of her daughters are now holders of at least a Masters degree and all four of us hold senior leadership roles in our professions. She's remarkable.

Additionally, I was educated by Loreto Sisters, who were remarkable academics and proactive in encouraging young women to think beyond the conventional professions. (Teaching and nursing!) Whilst I became a teacher eventually, I actually studied music as my first degree because of this influence.

Senior Educational Consultant (1)

- ◆ I have had some strong role models in my own family but also developed professional relationships and friendships that have opened my mind and shaped my life.
- ◆ There have been some excellent books, *Damned Whores and God's Police*, *Revolution from Within* that were available and of course now even more literature is.
- ◆ Bronwyn Davies (?) did some excellent research with *Frogs and Snails and Feminist Tales*.

Facilitator, National Professional Standards Project (1)

I teach Human Relationships Education to all year levels, and believe that educating both boys and girls in this vital area helps improve communication between the sexes in the short and long term. In addition to this, our school teaches Philosophy to all year levels, again, this gives all students a voice, and the chance to be heard, more so than in traditional classes. I despair at the thought that many children may gain their values from their favourite TV show - The Simpsons!

Teacher - Human Relationships Education, and Learning Support (1)

(Editors note: could this not also apply to men and women in our education systems?)

I've long been a member of a union, a political party and women's networks. I am a prolific reader and have benefited from personal associations with strong feminists like Dale Spender.

I have taught gender studies at CQU to undergraduate students.

Deputy Regional Director (1)

I had wonderful female role models as teachers. My Year 1 teacher and her jelly bean jar, was responsible for actually getting under my house (gently) and persuading me that school wasn't actually a hostile place, but a place of welcoming. I'll never forget her! Other powerful influences were female teachers in my High School life who went above and beyond to inspire my love of English and Performing Arts through a myriad of extra-curricular activities. These women became the early influences which inspired me to become an educator. Currently, I count some REDs in the 2 regions I have been Principal in as people who continue to amaze and support me on my learning journey. I know that these women will continually provide support, and 'I praise the bridge that carried me over.'

Secondary School Principal (1)

I was lucky to work with a number of people of both genders who held strong views about gender equity.

I have parents who fostered independence and a view that most things were possible.....

Education Officer Curriculum - Publications and Special Projects (1)

My Mum and Dad, extended family and the people we mixed with never gave preference to my brother or myself in opportunities to access education, make life choices, participate in discussions in any field, be involved in political activity/ membership, career choice or sport participation.

Deputy Principal – rural (1)

I have a very independent and strong female role model in my mother. Gender was never discussed in my household, but similarly I was never told that certain jobs, careers or pathways were for males only. I was told that I could do anything I wanted if I put my mind to it, and I always believed this.

Similarly my teacher that i looked up to in high school was a very high achieving gifted woman, who again encouraged me to do anything I wished. So I have always thought that the sky was the limit.

University flagged the issues that gender can create. Especially when i worked as a scientist. This is an extremely male dominated field and in this role I did feel that certain members within the scientific community looked down on women academically and saw them as sex objects.

Senior policy officer (1)

1. Leading Social Change project. (2009). The Association of Women Educators. www.awe.asn.au
2. Piecing it Together: Understanding the Construction of Gender Training Module. (1996). Education Queensland.