“It often rests on the shoulders of a passionate individual”:

Exploring the discursive constructions of gender and sexuality within education settings in Aotearoa New Zealand.

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Abstract

In this thesis I explore the discursive constructions of gender and sexuality within secondary and tertiary education settings in Aotearoa New Zealand. Previous research has established teaching and education practices within Aotearoa New Zealand tend to privilege certain subjectivities (e.g., cisgender and heterosexual) and marginalise others (e.g., queer and trans). While there is a large body of research that explores sexuality education in Aotearoa New Zealand, less is known about the inclusion of gender and sexuality in other curricula. I addressed this research gap by collecting data from a range of subject areas and from students’ and educators’ perspectives.

Data was collected from four secondary schools and two tertiary institutions using group and individual interviews. These methods were chosen to gain in-depth insight into the range of experiences from each participant group. Group interviews were conducted with 32 tertiary students and individual interviews with 12 secondary students, 9 secondary educators and 7 tertiary educators. Interview questions explored gender and sexuality within teaching, and constructions of gender and sexuality circulating in the broader education environment.

Within this thesis, conceptualisations of knowledge and power were informed by post-structuralism and Foucauldian notions of discourse. Foucauldian discourse analysis was used to explore the participants’ accounts of gender and sexuality within education. Analysis was done with a specific focus on subjectivity, subjectification, available subject positions and systems of power.
Analysis resulted in three findings chapters. The first chapter demonstrates that restrictive discourses of gender and sexuality continue to be reproduced by students and educators. Reproduction of restrictive discourses results in assumptions of heterosexuality, restrictive constructions of appropriate career pursuits, and school policies which unfairly favour cisgender, heterosexual experiences. The second chapter covers discursive barriers articulated by educators. These barriers included fears about getting it wrong or having parents react negatively, and limited educators’ inclusion of diverse discourses of gender and sexuality. The third chapter explores students’ and educators’ talk about resistance to restrictive discourses of gender and sexuality. Examples of resistance include students challenging dominant constructions of gender through their school ball attire and educators revealing their queer sexuality within the classroom. These acts of resistance made diverse discourses of gender and sexuality visible within education settings. The reliance on individuals for exposure to diverse discourses of gender and sexuality means that not everyone is exposed to these discourses. Educators also raised concerns about the instability of exposure to diverse discourses when this exposure relies on an individual.

My findings demonstrate the negative effects of restrictive discourses and highlight the need for more inclusive discourses to circulate within education settings. My research suggests diverse discourses of gender and sexuality need to be incorporated into education policy and curriculum so exposure to these discourses is sustained and widespread. Educators also require support to overcome the discursive barriers that limit their willingness and ability to include more diverse discourses. The inclusion of diverse discourses at the level of the educational institution rather than the individual could help improve the educational experiences of all students.
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Articles from this research


Parts of this review article are used in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3. See Appendix A for full article.

Presentations from this research


Chapter 1: Introduction “Are we allowed to teach that?”

Not long after beginning my PhD I attended a 100 level education lecture about ways to include queer and trans content within schools. At the end of this lecture, one of the students asked a question that has remained with me over the intervening years. The student asked, “Are we allowed to include content like this on practicum?” This question highlights the importance of my PhD topic. Given that this question was asked at least three years ago there is a high probability that this student now has a teaching degree and a classroom of their own. Are they still asking these questions? Do they still have concerns around the potential repercussions of teaching content that is inclusive of diverse genders and sexualities? While this was a first-year education student, I encountered similar concerns from some of the educators I interviewed. As I collected data and spoke with an increasing number of students and educators the importance of my research topic solidified. The stories I encountered highlighted the importance of inclusive education environments and included suggestions from students and educators about effective approaches to achieve this. This chapter provides an overview of the reasons for, and importance of, my research topic. I begin by providing an overview of the motivations for conducting this research. Following this, I present the research aims and locate my research within the broader field of education research. Next, I introduce key terms used throughout the thesis. Finally, I provide an overview of each of the chapters.

Motivations for research

My initial interest in this topic began with a research project that I conducted during 2013. This was the final year of my undergraduate degree and I took a research paper where I did analysis on a qualitative research project exploring queer people’s
knowledge of HIV and rheumatoid arthritis (Graham, Treharne, Ruzibiza, & Nicolson, 2017). A reoccurring theme within this research was inadequate sexuality education for queer students. Over the following year I was a research assistant on another project about sexual health that further emphasised both queer and heterosexual students’ unsatisfactory experiences with sexuality education. These research projects suggested practices within education were not serving the needs of students, and I wanted to know more.

My own exposure to restrictive and inclusive discourses of gender and sexuality also played a role in my interest in this research topic. When I was 11, I had an undercut and was frequently mistaken for a boy. As a result of the discursive resources that were available to me at the time, I did not enjoy this experience. People’s inability to determine my gender made me feel embarrassed and like I was doing something wrong. The availability of discourses of sexuality also contributed to my interest in exploring this research topic. Discourses of heteronormativity were dominant within my high school. The availability of only these discourses led me to frame queer sexuality within a discourse of shame and secrecy. While I now label myself as a gay woman, I did not understand myself this way during my high school years. During this time my mother had recently come ‘out’ as a lesbian. The discourses that were available within my high school made me feel like it was important to hide my mother’s queer subjectivity from my peers. This silence was motivated by fears about how knowledge of her queer sexuality would impact people’s constructions of me and my sexuality.

During my early university years more diverse discourses of gender and sexuality were made available to me. Exposure to these discourses allowed me to think about gender and sexuality in less restrictive ways. Reflecting on the above experiences with
the discursive resources available to me now, I feel quite differently. Exposure to more diverse discourses also made me feel more comfortable with my own subjectivities. More specifically, exposure to these discourses has made me feel comfortable with enacting my gender in a way that challenges dominant constructions. For example, I have returned to a variation of an undercut haircut and regularly wear ‘men’s’ clothing. This means my gender presentation is not typically feminine.

I include these experiences because as well as providing a key motivator for my research topic, they also contributed to my practices as a researcher (e.g., the questions I chose to ask and the way I interpreted data). The experience of gaining exposure to alternative frameworks of gender and sexuality influences my construction of diverse discourses as important. It also informs my view that young people should be exposed to these discourses. Availability of diverse discourses of gender and sexuality within lower levels of education could help young people feel more confident about both themselves and their families.

**Overview of research**

Within secondary education there is a large body of literature that documents the heteronormative assumptions within sexuality education and argues for more student centred approaches (see Abel & Fitzgerald, 2006; Allen, 2004, 2008; Diorio & Munro, 2000). In contrast, research exploring the inclusion of gender and sexuality in other secondary school subjects and within tertiary education settings is limited. At the tertiary level (both within Aotearoa New Zealand and abroad) there are only a few papers that explore the inclusion of gender and sexuality. These are also confined to particular courses like teaching (Carpenter & Lee, 2015; Lee & Carpenter, 2015; Robinson & Ferfolja, 2001) and medicine (Röndahl, 2011; Safer & Pearce, 2013; Taylor, Rapsey, &
An overview of this research indicates that there is a gap in knowledge around the inclusion of gender and sexuality within education in Aotearoa New Zealand more broadly.

My research helps to address this research gap by exploring the inclusion of gender and sexuality across a range of curriculum areas within both secondary and tertiary education settings. The aim of this research was to explore the discursive constructions of gender and sexuality within education settings in Aotearoa New Zealand. Within this aim there were three key areas of focus. The first was gaining an understanding of discursive constructions of gender and sexuality from educators’ perspectives. Educators’ perspectives are absent from much of the previous research. The exploration of educators’ perspectives allowed me to further explore why restrictive discourses of gender and sexuality continue to be reproduced within education. The second was understanding the inclusion of gender and sexuality across a range of subject areas. Previous research exploring the inclusion of gender and sexuality within Aotearoa New Zealand education has primarily explored the discourses of gender and sexuality within the sexuality education curriculum. By exploring the discursive constructions more broadly, I was able to better understand how gender and sexuality are included and constructed across a range of subjects. The final key focus was resistance to dominant discourses of gender and sexuality within education settings. Past research documents some instances of resistance to dominant constructions of gender and sexuality, but the primary focus tends to be on the reproduction of dominant ideas. By exploring resistance, my findings provide a better understanding of what facilitates resistance to restrictive discourses along with any discursive barriers faced by students and educators who do resist dominant constructions of gender and sexuality.
In this thesis I explore four key questions related to the discourses of gender and sexuality that circulate within education settings in Aotearoa New Zealand.

1. What discourses of gender and sexuality are dominant within education settings?

2. How available are diverse discourses of gender and sexuality within education settings?

3. What discursive barriers are there to the inclusion of diverse discourses of gender and sexuality within education settings?

4. How do educators include gender and sexuality in their teaching?

The specific focus on education in Aotearoa New Zealand was appropriate for three reasons. The first is, as outlined in the following chapter (Chapter 3), there are particular research gaps relating to the inclusion of gender and sexuality within education in Aotearoa New Zealand. This includes research in Aotearoa New Zealand broadly and in particular research conducted with participants from the South Island of Aotearoa New Zealand. Second, as a New Zealander living in the South Island, participants from the same region were practical to access within the time and budget limits of this project. Finally, shared experiences with my participants enhance the research. I attended both secondary and tertiary education within the South Island of New Zealand. This provided me with insider knowledge and experience of education settings like the ones I collected data from. It also meant that I shared aspects of cultural knowledge with many of the research participants. This shared cultural influence was useful for finding points of connection with participants during data collection and helped inform analysis.
Throughout this thesis I will present findings which show exposure to diverse discourses of gender and sexuality within education settings in Aotearoa New Zealand is facilitated by contact with individual students and educators. While these individuals provide important exposure to alternative and more inclusive discourses, their reach is limited. For there to be sustained and widespread inclusion of diverse discourses of gender and sexuality within education settings, changes need to be made so that inclusive discourses are embedded within school policy and curriculum.

**Key terminology**

**Queer and trans**

Within this research I use queer as an umbrella term to refer to the broad range of people who have diverse sexualities. This includes but is not restricted to people whose sexuality is bisexual, lesbian, gay, pansexual, asexual or takatāpui. There is some debate around exactly what the term queer means. It is commonly taken up by people who resist the restrictive and singular categories of gender or sexuality, and is often used within research to refer to both people who have diverse genders and sexualities (Clarke, Ellis, Peel, & Riggs, 2010). While queer can be used to refer to both gender and sexuality, within this research I have chosen to distinguish those with diverse genders from those with diverse sexualities.

I use the term trans as an umbrella term to encompass those who have diverse gender subjectivities. This includes but is not restricted to those whose gender is non-binary, trans, non-conforming or tāhine. I have chosen to separate out gender and sexuality within my research as these two groups are distinct and the practice of grouping them together (e.g., LGBTQ) has been critiqued (Ahmed, 2016; Clarke et al., 2010).
While there is overlap between these two groups (e.g., a transgender pansexual man), there are also differences. The discursive constructions of gender and sexuality might have quite different material outcomes for someone who is transgender compared to someone who is queer. For example, while discourses that included tolerance of diverse sexualities were commonly reproduced by the participants within my research, discourses which allowed subject positions outside of woman or man were not commonly addressed. While I use queer and trans to refer to each of these groups I also acknowledge that these are not homogenous groups, much in the same way as heterosexuals or women are not homogenous groups. While not homogenous, these groups do share a commonality that may influence the way they experience discursive constructions of gender and/or sexuality, much like women share a commonality that may affect the way they experience discursive constructions of femininity (Clarke et al., 2010). While I use the terms queer and trans to refer to these groups generally, when talking about an individual I use the terms they provided in their demographic questionnaire.

**Chapter overview**

In Chapter 2 I outline the theoretical frameworks that were used to conceptualise knowledge within this research. Specifically, I present an overview of post-structuralism and Foucauldian discourse analysis, explaining how they framed understandings of language, power, and policing. I also outline the role of post-structuralist feminism in providing a social justice lens which informed my focus on understanding the experiences of women and other marginalised subjectivities.

In Chapter 3, I review past research exploring the discourses of gender and sexuality within education. This chapter begins with an overview of decisions about what research was included in the review. Following this, research on the reproduction of
restrictive discourses of gender and sexuality within education is examined, along with the implications of these discourses for the broader education environment. In the third section of this chapter, research exploring frameworks for including diverse discourses is presented and critiqued.

Chapter 4 outlines the methods and procedures used to conduct my research. It begins by providing an overview of recruitment and participants. Following this I outline ethical considerations and data collection procedures. Finally, it details my approach to Foucauldian discourse analysis.

Chapters 5, 6 and 7 include my research findings. Chapter 5 is called Exploring the negative effects of restrictive discourses of gender and sexuality. Within this chapter I present analysis that uses secondary and tertiary students’ experiences to explore the effects of discourses of heteronormativity and binary constructions of gender. Specifically, I present examples to illustrate how discourses of heteronormativity reproduce unequal power dynamics which privilege heterosexual subjectivities. I also explore the restrictive discourses of gender that are reproduced within education and how these influence the types of subjects students choose to take. In the final section of this chapter I explore how constructions of sexuality and gender interact to create expectations about sexual behaviour including sexual double standards.

Chapter 6 is titled Discursive barriers faced by educators that limit the inclusion of diverse discourses of gender and sexuality. This chapter focuses on the subject position of educator. Within this chapter I explore the various discursive barriers identified by educators within my research. These discursive barriers limited their ability to include diverse discourses of gender and sexuality within their teaching. Three key areas of
discursive barriers are identified and explored including discursive constructions educators draw upon, discursive constructions students draw upon, and discursive constructions embedded within resources and curriculum. This chapter also includes educators’ suggestions for ways these barriers can be resisted.

In Chapter 7, titled *Students and educators as agents of change*, I explore the role students and educators play in resisting dominant discourses of gender and sexuality within education settings. This chapter explores how peers often prompt students to take up alternative discourses of gender and sexuality. I also present examples of educators who resist dominant constructions of heteronormativity by being ‘out’ at school. Finally, I present evidence of how subjectivity influences evaluations of the discursive constructions of gender and sexuality. In this section I show how the same discourse can be interpreted differently based on people’s understandings of politics and history.

Chapter 8, the final chapter of this thesis provides an overview of my key findings and contextualises them in terms of what is already known about gender and sexuality within education. Within this chapter I explain the strengths and weaknesses of my research methodology and design, and outline the key implications of my research findings for education practice and policy.
Chapter 2: Theoretical underpinnings

Within this chapter I explain the theories that underpin the conceptualisations of knowledge within this thesis. These theories include post-structuralism, Foucauldian discourse analysis and feminism. I begin by providing a general overview of post-structuralism. Following this I explore how power, gender, sexuality and subjectivities are constructed within post-structuralist thought. This includes an overview of the Foucauldian concepts of normalising power, disciplinary power, and policing. Finally, I explain how post-structuralist feminism informed the aims and focus of my research.

Post-structuralism

Post-structuralist thought posits that everything is socially constructed by and within texts. In the context of post-structuralism a text is anything that has the potential to be interpreted (e.g., this includes but is not restricted to books, films, cultural ceremonies and clothing) (Parker, 1992). Because the process of construction requires interpretation, all knowledge is filtered through cultural frameworks, meaning within post-structuralist thought there is no truth. This is because the process of interpretation means everything that could be considered truth is impacted by cultural interpretation, and there is no way to separate truth from interpretation (Hesse-Biber, 2007; Magnusson & Marecek, 2017; Parker, 2014).

Post-structuralist theory has implications for conceptualisations of what is commonly referred to as identity. Post-structuralist theory challenges the notion of essentialist thinking and the existence of underlying stable categories (Hesse-Biber, 2007; Magnusson & Marecek, 2017; Parker, 2014). Therefore, within post-structuralist thought
there are no stable identities, instead there are subjectivities. Subjectivity allows for the fact that concepts which are seen as making up a person’s identity are constantly being discursively constructed. The discursive constructions that constitute concepts of self are constantly changing, meaning so is the self (Hesse-Biber, 2007; Magnusson & Marecek, 2017; Parker, 2014). People are also subject to what Butler calls subjectification (Butler, 1997). Subjectification refers to how, because people are constructed by discourses, they can be constrained by the way they are discursively constructed by others. Even when individuals attempt to subvert a particular discursive construction, they are still influenced by the power embedded within it (Butler, 1997; Davies, 2006). This is because others continue to discursively construct them within the discourses they attempt to subvert. Subversion is also a contradictory act of both disruption and reproduction. To be able to disrupt something we must first acknowledge the power that it has over us, so in a sense we legitimate that power (Butler, 1997; Davies, 2006). I deployed subjectivity and subversion during the analysis process to explore how students and educators were able to simultaneously resist and be constrained by the discourses that circulate within education settings.

Drawing upon a post-structuralist framework I treated participants’ talk as an interpretation of their experience which has been influenced by and interpreted through the cultural frameworks available to them (Hesse-Biber, 2007; Magnusson & Marecek, 2017; Parker, 2014). I then analysed these interpretations of experience, drawing upon and influenced by the cultural frameworks that were available to me. My findings are therefore a representation of experience, which has been filtered through two systems of interpretation (the participants’ and my own). Further, you as a reader are also drawing upon cultural frameworks to interpret my interpretation of the participants’
interpretations. Each of us (you, the participants and I) may have been exposed to and have drawn upon quite different cultural frameworks. Understanding which cultural frameworks are available to each interpreter allows us to better understand how the initial experience has been filtered. Post-structuralist feminism provides a tool to make these cultural frameworks visible (Hesse-Biber, 2007; Magnusson & Marecek, 2017).

The focus on subjectivity and reflexivity within post-structuralist feminism ensures that the researchers’ cultural influences are made visible (Hesse-Biber, 2007; Magnusson & Marecek, 2017). This provides research consumers with information about the lens or lenses the researcher used to frame their analytic interpretation (Hesse-Biber, 2007; Magnusson & Marecek, 2017). Within Chapter 1, I outlined the role my past experiences with gender and sexuality had on my interest in this research topic. Alongside being a gay, cisgender woman I am also the youngest of three children, a psychology graduate, a New Zealand European, someone who has travelled to more than 10 different countries and someone who grew up during the 1990s. Each of these subjectivities or experiences has influenced the cultural frameworks which are available to me and in turn influenced my analysis.

**Foucauldian discourse analysis**

The key analytic tool used within this research was Foucauldian discourse analysis. Discourse is a common approach to exploring understandings of gender and sexuality (Allen, 2007; Peel, 2001; Smith, Nairn, & Sandretto, 2016). Discourse analysis provides a framework to explore how others understand the world and gain insight into the dominant discourses that circulate within a population (Foucault, 1977; Parker, 2014). Foucauldian discourse analysis is used throughout this research to inform understandings of language, power, gender and sexuality.
A post-structuralist discursive framework focuses on the use of language. Within this framework language is not viewed as a neutral communicator of knowledge, instead Foucault constructs language as a practice that communicates particular discourses (Foucault, 1969). Foucault defines discourses as “practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak” (Foucault, 1969, p. 49). Linking back to my conceptualisation of post-structuralism, discourses are the language frameworks through which interpretations of ideas or experiences are communicated. Foucault’s (1969) definition of discourses also emphasises the active and constructive role of language. When we talk about something our words communicate meaning about how that object should be viewed. For example, discourses of heteronormativity construct heterosexuality as a normal natural sexuality while queer sexualities are constructed as non-normative (Peel, 2001). Every time a person draws upon the discourse of heteronormativity, they reproduce heterosexuality and queer sexualities in this way. While there are multiple discursive constructions for any one object, some of these discursive constructions are more available than others (Augoustinos, 2017; Foucault, 1969; Parker, 1992, 2014; Willig, 2008). Those discursive constructions which are readily available are called dominant discourses. The continued reproduction of dominant discourses means that the objects within them are repeatedly constructed in the same way. These constructions therefore come to be seen as truths, rather than a particular way to talk about an object (Augoustinos, 2017; Foucault, 1969; Parker, 1992, 2014; Willig, 2008).

**Foucauldian conceptualisations of power.** The reproduction of particular discourses also reproduces particular hierarchies of power. Within Foucauldian discourse analysis, power is a relationship that is reproduced within language and behaviour (Augoustinos, 2017; Foucault, 1977; Parker, 2014; Willig, 2008). By drawing upon a
particular discourse some objects are constructed as powerful and others as powerless. While these constructions are not objective reflections of reality, they become real to those who are exposed to them (Foucault, 1977; Parker, 2014). Foucault’s notions of normalising power and disciplinary power were particularly relevant to this research.

Normalising power is the power embedded within mundane everyday routines and speech. The discursive reproduction of ideas and behaviours makes these ideas and behaviours seem normal and this normality is solidified through repetition (Foucault, 1977; Parker, 2014). The ubiquitous nature of normalising power makes it seem unquestionable, therefore, it is continually maintained (Foucault, 1977; Parker, 2014). Drawing upon this conceptualisation of power, I viewed participants’ talk as a discursive system of meaning that reinforced certain power dynamics between those whose genders and sexualities are normalised and those whose genders and sexualities are marginalised.

Foucault also conceptualised disciplinary power, which is the power that operates within the organisation of society (Foucault, 1977). Foucault explains this power using the metaphor of the panopticon prison design. The panopticon design centres around a guard tower. All prisoners are visible to this tower, but the content of this tower is not visible to the prisoners. This creates the perpetual possibility of surveillance and the prisoners are therefore in a constant state of possible supervision by authority. Foucault explains that this state of possible supervision leads to the prisoner effectively becoming their own guard, and self-surveillance becomes part of the prisoners’ normal routine (Foucault, 1977). Disciplinary power can be found in a range of institutions including schools (Anderson & Grinberg, 1998; Driver, 1985). Within schools there are a range of practices that are used to control large numbers of students (e.g., lines, uniforms, designated mealtimes) (Graham, Treharne, & Nairn, 2017). Within the concept of
disciplinary power these organisational practices, and the meanings embedded within them, are internalised and students maintain this order without the need for authority (in this case teachers) (Anderson & Grinberg, 1998; Foucault, 1977; Graham, Treharne, & Nairn, 2017). These disciplinary practices are also embedded with normalising power that construct some practices (e.g., women wearing skirts) as normal while constructing others as non-normative (e.g., men wearing skirts) (DaCosta, 2006; Dussel, 2004; Gereluk, 2007). Drawing upon this theory within my research I constructed schools as institutions with a range of practices in relation to gender and sexuality. I explored how these practices reproduced power relationships and normalised certain behaviours while marginalising others.

**Policing.** The power relationships reproduced by normalising and disciplinary power can lead to policing. Policing occurs when individuals draw upon the normative ideas within particular discourses and use these ideas to evaluate others’ behaviour (Foucault, 1977). Policing of gender and sexuality can be further explained using Butler’s heterosexual matrix (published in Butler, 1999; and explained by Riggs & Treharne, 2017; Smith et al., 2016; Tredway, 2014). The heterosexual matrix focuses on the relationship between sex (assigned at birth) gender and sexuality. Drawing upon Foucauldian notions of power, Butler (1999) explains how the dominance of biological and binary discourses to frame gender and sexuality result in some subjectivities becoming more intelligible than others. For example, a cisgender heterosexual woman is easily recognised and understood by society (i.e., intelligible) due to having a sex (assigned at birth) that aligns with her gender and sexual/romantic attraction to men. Other subjectivities, for example a transgender pansexual man, are not easily recognised and understood (i.e., unintelligible) because they do not follow linear connections
between sex (assigned at birth), gender and sexuality. When people act in ways that are perceived as not aligning with their gender it disrupts the way their sex (assigned at birth), gender and sexuality are interpreted. This may result in the individual being policed as a way to point out their unintelligible behaviour and get them to perform their gender in a way more in line with societal expectations (Butler, 1999, 2004). For example, young men are often policed with terms like gay and fag when their gender performance is seen as being too feminine (Chambers, Tincknell, & Loon, 2004; Pascoe, 2005; Sexton, 2012). I used Butler’s heterosexual matrix along with Foucauldian notions of policing to frame my understanding of participants’ descriptions of the discursive constructions of gender and sexuality that circulate within their education settings. The types of policing that participants described provided information about the types of social expectations that circulate within education along with who is and is not constructed within these norms.

Resistance. The presence of dominant discourses also creates the opportunity for resistance to these ideas. Within this thesis I use the word resistance to refer to language and behaviours that disrupt dominant discourses by providing an alternative construction of a particular object (Foucault, 1969, 1977; Parker, 1992; Willig, 2008). Disruption of the discourse also disrupts the power embedded within the discourse. As such, resisting dominant discourses provides a way to weaken the natural status of beliefs within dominant discourses and draws attention to the possibility of alternative conceptualisations (Foucault, 1969, 1977). The continued resistance to dominant ideas results in the continual weakening of the natural status of dominant discourses. So, continual resistance can eventually result in destabilising the dominant discourse so that an alternative discourse becomes the dominant idea (Foucault, 1969, 1977; Parker, 1992; Willig, 2008). Within my thesis I dedicate a chapter to the exploration of resistance
because, as outlined above, resistance to dominant constructions of gender and sexuality present important opportunities for change by providing access to alternative constructions of objects.

*Post-structuralist feminism.* Foucault’s work exploring the history of concepts like sexuality (see Foucault, 1990) drew attention to the exclusionary practices of discourses (Peters & Besley, 2014). A post-structuralist feminist framework provided tools to inform how inclusion and exclusion were constructed within my research. Post-structuralist feminist research focuses on social justice, marginalised populations and the ability to prompt change (Hesse-Biber, 2007; Magnusson & Marecek, 2017). Drawing upon this research framework informed the way I chose to explore gender and sexuality within education. I framed my exploration within a discourse of social justice and centred my inquiry on understanding how constructions of gender and sexuality influence the lives of women and other marginalised genders and sexualities. Ultimately, I embarked on this research with the feminist goal of producing research findings that include recommendations that have the potential to inform positive societal change.

Within the context of my research, positive change is constructed as change that disrupts restrictive discursive constructions within education settings and makes inclusive discourses of gender and sexuality more available. In this way I fit within Davie’s construction of a feminist.

To be a feminist, or a feminist theorist is itself to engage in the very act of choosing to speak, of discovering the possibility of authority, of using that speaking, that authority, to bring about fundamental changes in the possible ways of being that are available to oneself and others (Davies, 1991, p.52)

Drawing upon Davies’ construction I took up the subject position of feminist researcher. The change I wished to bring about was the increased availability of inclusive discourses
of gender and sexuality for myself and others (in particular students). By taking up the role of feminist researcher particular discursive resources were available to me. These discursive resources allowed me to speak with authority and provided tools to bring about change. My research findings represent an attempt to prompt this change by making visible the restrictive behavioural frameworks of gender and sexuality which are currently available within education settings.

In this chapter I outlined theories that informed the approaches to knowledge within this thesis. Specifically, I outlined how post-structuralism formed the foundation of my approach to knowledge, Foucauldian discourse analysis framed my understandings of language and power, and post-structuralist feminism informed my social justice approach. The remainder of this thesis reflects these approaches to knowledge as I present research that focuses on the way language and power operate within education, including how particular constructions of gender and sexuality are normalised or policed.
Chapter 3: Literature review

In this chapter I review research that explores the inclusion of gender and sexuality within education settings. My review of this body of literature identified two key areas of research. The first is research focusing on restrictive discourses of gender and sexuality. This research explores how restrictive discourses of heteronormativity and cisnormativity are reproduced within classroom settings and education environments. Much of this research highlights the restrictive constructions of masculinity and femininity within these discourses, and the negative experiences of students who act outside of these restrictive expectations. Overall, this body of research identifies the problems with restrictive discourses of gender and sexuality within education settings. The second body of research is smaller and explores resistance to restrictive discourses of gender and sexuality. This research includes frameworks and pedagogical approaches that can be used to effectively challenge restrictive discourses within education settings. Overall, the research within this group provides examples and critiques of approaches to including discourses of diversity within education.

This review is divided into three key sections. In the first section I outline decisions about what research is included within this review. The second section presents research that documents the restrictive discourses within education settings and the approaches to gender and sexuality that inform them. The third and final section explores research documenting the various ways that the restrictive discourses, laid out within section two, are challenged within education settings. Within this section I present effective approaches for including diverse discourses of gender and sexuality within
education, along with educators’ reflections on the strengths and challenges of these approaches.

**Decisions about inclusion**

There is a broad body of research exploring discourses of gender and sexuality within education and I could not include all of this research, so I have been selective in the literature I included within this review. I focus on research that is most relevant to the specific topic (gender and sexuality in secondary and tertiary education) and the cultural context (Aotearoa New Zealand). While it was not possible to refine my search only to research conducted within the context of Aotearoa New Zealand (as not enough is available), I have where possible focused on findings from research conducted in Aotearoa New Zealand (Allen, 2007b; Carpenter & Lee, 2015; D. Lee & Carpenter, 2015; Painter, 2008; Quinlivan, 2018; Sexton, 2012a; Taylor et al., 2018). The rest of the research primarily comes from other English-speaking countries (e.g., Australia (Robinson & Ferfolja, 2001; Ullman & Ferfolja, 2016), Canada (Ingrey, 2012; Pomerantz, 2007), UK (Chambers, Loon, & Tincknell, 2004; Chambers, Tincknell, & Loon, 2004; Clarke, 2018) and USA (de Jong, 2014; Mayo, 2013; Sausa, 2005)). These countries share some similarities with Aotearoa New Zealand, but they also have distinct differences in terms of culture, laws and educational structure. For example, Aotearoa New Zealand has a nationwide education system that enforces a nationwide curriculum for all subjects, including sex education (which is particularly relevant for this thesis) (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2015a). Within the USA, schools are governed by boards from individual cities and states. These school boards have control over decisions about teaching content and curriculum. Local governance of aspects of education results in variability in content and laws across states (Tucker, 2013). Differences between
countries means research from other locations might have quite different findings compared to research conducted in Aotearoa New Zealand. Therefore, the reliance on research outside of Aotearoa New Zealand, to achieve a background understanding of gender and sexuality within education, indicates the importance of conducting more research within the context of Aotearoa New Zealand. My exploration of gender and sexuality within this thesis adds to the limited body of research conducted in Aotearoa New Zealand (Allen, 2004a, 2007b; Quinlivan, 2006, 2018; Sexton, 2012a; L. Smith et al., 2016a; Taylor et al., 2018). My research does this by exploring discursive constructions of gender and sexuality using data from students and educators from secondary and tertiary education settings in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Another consideration for this review was the time period that should be covered to appropriately identify what is known about gender and sexuality within education, along with gaps that exist. I use a review written by Jackson (2004) to guide my own review of the research. Jackson’s review covers research about young New Zealanders’ sexuality published between 1975 and 2002. Within the paper Jackson identified gaps in research knowledge by reviewing research and consulting key stakeholders including researchers, educators and service providers. Findings show that the majority of research published within New Zealand between 1975 and 2002 was quantitative and focused on young people’s sexual behaviour. Jackson suggested the need for research using qualitative methods, including educators’ and parents’ perspectives, and exploring young people’s understandings of sexuality. The stakeholders within Jackson’s research saw a particular need for the inclusion of young men and students from rural locations. As a result of Jackson’s thorough review of the research landscape of Aotearoa New Zealand prior to 2002, I primarily focus on research published since 2002. After presenting my
review of the research I will return to the gaps identified by Jackson (2004) and indicate how these gaps have been addressed by research conducted in the following years.

**Restrictive discourses of gender and sexuality**

This section explores restrictive discourses of gender and sexuality within both secondary and tertiary education settings. Within this section there are four key subsections. First, I review research that explores the various restrictive constructions of gender and sexuality within secondary education teaching and curriculum followed by and exploration of the discursive approaches that might help maintain these restrictive constructions. I then move on to present research exploring the restrictive constructions of gender and sexuality within tertiary education teaching and curriculum and the discursive approaches that contribute to these discourses. After presenting information about teaching and curriculum I present research the documents the impact of these restrictive constructions on education environments more broadly. This includes exploration of the reproduction of restrictive discourses within school spaces and interactions with peers. The section covering institutional culture begins with a focus on secondary education followed by research exploring the institutional culture of tertiary education settings.

**Teaching and curriculum**

Content about gender and sexuality within secondary education is often only taught within sexuality education (In this thesis, I use the contemporary term sexuality education, although from 1985 until 1999 it was referred to as sex education). This confinement of gender and sexuality within sexuality education allows gender and sexuality to be framed within biological discourses (Gooder, 2010). It also means that
research from secondary education primarily focuses on restrictive discourses within the sexuality education curriculum, as this is where the most content on gender and sexuality is included (Allen, 2004a, 2007b; Elliott, 2003). While there is research that explores gender and sexuality within other school curricula (e.g., Schmeichel, Janis, & McAnulty, 2016; Stevens & Martell, 2016), this tends to explore the way dominant discourses can be challenged within these subjects, therefore this research is presented in the section titled individual and community approaches to diversity.

To understand the current approaches to sexuality education within New Zealand it is important to understand some of the history of sexuality education. Sexuality education was formally introduced to Aotearoa New Zealand in 1985 and was influenced by the divided political climate of the time (Gooder, 2010; Jackson & Weatherall, 2010). At the time sexuality education was implemented there were two competing societal discourses about sex and its place within education (Gooder, 2010). The first discourse framed sex and sexuality within conservative moral discourses. New Zealanders who drew upon this discourse believed sexuality education was the role of parents and church leaders. They also thought any sexuality education that did happen should be framed within a moral discourse with an emphasis on marriage and family (Gooder, 2010; Jackson & Weatherall, 2010). The second discourse was a liberal discourse of sex. People who drew upon liberal discourses thought sexuality education should be included within schools in Aotearoa New Zealand. They believed that teaching should acknowledge the broader context of sex and sexuality, including ideas about relationships and sexual desire (Gooder, 2010; Jackson & Weatherall, 2010). During the 1980s there were also concerns about the rise of teenage pregnancy and STIs including HIV which had been recently discovered (Gooder, 2010).
The outcome of this political context was the development of a sexuality education curriculum that aligned with the Government’s health goals of reducing STIs and teenage pregnancy and avoided aligning with the dominant discourses (conservative-moral or liberal) circulating during this time. This was achieved by framing sexuality education through a biological lens (Gooder, 2010; Jackson & Weatherall, 2010). Since its introduction the sexuality education curriculum (see New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1999) and guidelines (see New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2015b) have been updated. These updated documents include diverse discourses of gender and sexuality, although the extent to which they enact social justice approaches has been critiqued (Fitzpatrick, 2018; Garland-Levett, 2016). Despite changes to the sexuality education curriculum, research shows that teaching within many schools in Aotearoa New Zealand continues to focus on mainly essentialist biological notions of gender and sexuality (Allen, 2004a, 2004b, 2007b; Diorio, 1985; Diorio & Munro, 2000; Elliott, 2003).

Sexuality education within Aotearoa New Zealand tends to be framed within a discourse of prevention, which focuses on preventing STIs and teenage pregnancy (Abel & Fitzgerald, 2006; Allen, 2004a; Diorio, 1985; Elliott, 2003). Researchers have documented problematic constructions with sexuality education when it is framed only within a discourse of prevention (Allen, 2004a, 2004b, 2007b; Diorio, 1985; Diorio & Munro, 2000; Elliott, 2003). By focusing on the prevention of pregnancy and STIs sexuality education constructs sex as occurring between heterosexual and cisgender women and men (Abel & Fitzgerald, 2006; Allen, 2006a, 2007b). The construction of normative sex as ‘safe’, heterosexual and penetrative serves to construct sex that falls outside of this definition as non-normative (Allen, 2007b). The restrictive construction of
sex as penetrative means that certain sexual acts (e.g., fellatio, cunnilingus and mutual masturbation) may not be included in students’ understandings of what counts as sex (Abel & Fitzgerald, 2006; Diorio, 1985).

Diorio (1985) identified an ironic conflict between the heteronormative construction of sex as penetrative and the aims of prevention discourses. Sex is something that many young people want to engage in. When sex is constructed as penetrative and heterosexual, engaging in sex puts young people at a high risk of the outcomes prevention models aim to reduce. Constructing sex in more inclusive ways (e.g., including acts like oral sex and mutual masturbation) would create subject positions where young people were defined as sexually active, but at lower risk of STIs and pregnancy than they are when sex is constructed only as penetrative (Diorio, 1985). While Diorio’s review of sexuality education was written decades ago, this critique of prevention discourses remains relevant as restrictive constructions of sex continue to circulate within education settings (Abel & Fitzgerald, 2006; Allen, 2007b).

Within sexuality education, sex that is not heterosexual is often framed negatively. An example of this negative framing is gay sexuality being framed within a discourse of risk in relation to HIV (Abel & Fitzgerald, 2006; Allen, 2006a; Graham, Treharne, Ruzibiza, et al., 2017). Students in one study conducted in Aotearoa New Zealand noted that educators tend to purposefully delay content on diverse sexualities until the end of a lesson. This means there is no time for students to ask questions or for the topic to be expanded on further (Allen, 2006a). The silence around queer sexualities can result in queer students not having access to information relevant to their sexual health (Graham, Treharne, Ruzibiza, et al., 2017). Negative constructions of queer sex and sexualities can also negatively impact queer students’ mental health (Lucassen et al., 2014; Wyss, 2004).
along with the way they are treated by their peers (Chambers, Tincknell, et al., 2004; Meyer, 2008b; Preston, 2016). Mental health and peer treatment will be covered in more detail in the section on institutional culture.

Sexuality education also contains restrictive constructions of gender. Discourses of reproductive functionality within sexuality education construct women’s bodies only in relation to their reproductive ability (Diorio & Munro, 2000; Elliott, 2003; Elliott, Dixon, & Adair, 1998). Women’s bodies are often constructed as passive subjects to which things are done (Diorio & Munro, 2000; Elliott, 2003; Elliott et al., 1998). Reproductive functionality and passivity are emphasised when the vagina is constructed only in relation to its function as an entrance to receive a penis, or as an exit to give birth to a child (Diorio & Munro, 2000; Elliott, 2003). The absence of the clitoris from representations of female anatomy further reinforces the reproductive framing of women’s bodies (Diorio & Munro, 2000; Elliott, 2003). The omission of the clitoris can be interpreted as reinforcing the discourse of functionality because the clitoris is not integral for reproduction, while the vagina (which is depicted) is. The clitoris is connected to female pleasure, so its absence can also be seen as silencing female desire and pleasure (I expand on this below). The presentation of discourses of reproductive functionality alongside discourses of prevention present young women with a confusing contradiction. In the same breath young women are told of their reproductive imperative and reminded of the societal sanctions that govern appropriate and inappropriate pregnancy. The negative construction of teenage pregnancy within sexuality education has been critiqued (Allen, 2007b; Hindin-Miller & Hibbert, 2015).

Framing sexuality education within reproductive discourses results in the absence of talk about desire or pleasure. The absence of desire within sexuality education was
identified by Fine in the 1980s (Fine, 1988). Since then many researchers have written about the absence of desire, or proposed discursive frameworks that would enable the inclusion of desire in education (Allen, 2004a, 2006b; Allen & Carmody, 2012; Diorio & Munro, 2000; Elliott, 2003). Like other aspects of sexuality education, the absence of desire is gendered. Sexuality education often refers to male desire by including the normative construction of wet dreams and male masturbation (Elliott, 2003). In contrast desire for women tends to be completely absent (Allen, 2004a, 2006b; Allen & Carmody, 2012; Diorio & Munro, 2000; Elliott, 2003; Fine, 1988; Hanbury & Eastham, 2016; Sundaram & Sauntson, 2016). Gendered constructions of desire can have a range of negative effects, for example, it can create a sexual double standard. Research conducted in two secondary schools in England provide evidence for the types of double standards that can occur when young people do not have access to discourses of female pleasure. Young women within this research indicated that while young men bragged about masturbation, young women’s pleasure was so stigmatised that female masturbation was used as a taunt to harass young women (Sundaram & Sauntson, 2016).

Silence around desire and framing women within discourses of functionality and passivity contributes to problematic gendered constructions of (hetero)sexuality (Gavey, 2005; Kaestle & Allen, 2011). Women’s (hetero)sexuality tends to be constructed as completely passive, in contrast to men’s active (hetero)sexuality (Elliott, 2003; Gavey, 2005). These constructions have implications for what is perceived as normal treatment of women within sexual relationships. For example, a women’s reluctance to engage in sex might be read as a normal part of female passivity, leading men to view convincing women to have sex as a normal part of engaging in (hetero)sexual activity. When young women do not have access to discourses of desire it also normalises women tolerating
rather than enjoying sexual activity. As such, constructing (hetero)sexuality within an active/passive binary belongs to a set of beliefs that help to maintain a culture where sexual assault and harassment is normalised (Gavey, 2005). Silence around women’s desire also has implications for those women who display sexual desire. Women who are seen as enacting an active sexuality are often harassed with labels of slut and whore (Hird & Jackson, 2001; L. Smith, 2012; Sundaram & Sauntson, 2016).

A popular solution to overcoming the problematic aspects of discourses of prevention is to frame sexuality education within a discourse of desire (Allen, 2004a, 2006b; Allen & Carmody, 2012; Diorio & Munro, 2000; Elliott, 2003; Fine, 1988). Framing sex within a discourse of desire would normalise a range of sexualities and sexual activities (Allen, 2007b; Allen & Carmody, 2012). The discourse of desire would also challenge the binary construction of active male sexuality and passive female sexuality because within this discourse active desire is normalised for all genders (Allen, 2007b; Allen & Carmody, 2012). While the discourse of desire could overcome some of the problematic constructions within discourses of prevention, the discourse of desire can also result in the reproduction of restrictive ideas (Allen, 2012). Discourses of desire can be restrictive when desire is restricted to marriage, constructed as the only reason to engage in sex, or orgasm is seen as the required outcome of sex (Allen, 2012). Overall sexuality education researchers generally agree that sexuality education needs to be more inclusive; but exactly how to do this has yet to be established.

Students’ constructions of sexuality education. Students want content within sexuality education to be more relevant to their lives (Abel & Fitzgerald, 2006; Allen, 2004b, 2005b, 2006b). The heterosexual monogamous framing of sex within sexuality education (Abel & Fitzgerald, 2006; Allen, 2008b) is not relevant to young people’s lives
because it differs from the range of relationships many young people engage in (Abel & Fitzgerald, 2006; Allen, 2004b). Students want to know about social and interpersonal aspects of sex, content that sexuality education rarely covers (Abel & Fitzgerald, 2006; Allen, 2001, 2006b, 2008b; Elliott et al., 1998). Specifically young people suggest they want content that explores how to have sex that is mutually pleasurable (Allen, 2008b), and how and when to have conversations around condom use (Abel & Fitzgerald, 2006). Students described information about condoms within sexuality education as practical but simplistic (Abel & Fitzgerald, 2006). Having a condom and using it during sex is complicated by complex social understandings of femininity and masculinity (Abel & Fitzgerald, 2006; Braun, 2013; Cooper & Gordon, 2015; Sundaram & Sauntson, 2016). Condoms may impact men’s masculinity by affecting their ability to maintain an erection (Abel & Fitzgerald, 2006; Braun, 2013). Women having condoms is likely to be read as an indication that they intend to engage in sex. This impacts the femininities available to them and often results in them being labelled a slut (Cooper & Gordon, 2015; Sundaram & Sauntson, 2016).

Students also critique the way that information within sexuality education is delivered (Allen, 2005b, 2008b, 2009b). Within the discourse of prevention, students are constructed as vulnerable and in need of protection from the dangers of sex and sexuality (Allen, 2007a; Jones, 2011). This results in education that focuses on morally laden messages which construct appropriate and inappropriate behaviours (Allen, 2007a; Jones, 2011). Students would prefer an approach to sex education that acknowledges their agency and constructs them as competent decision makers (Allen, 2008b). Overall students thought an ideal sexuality education teacher should be knowledgeable, non-judgmental and able to speak from experience (Allen, 2001, 2009b). The research
outlined above demonstrates sexuality education is commonly framed within restrictive discourses. This approach results in content that does not fully reflect students’ lives and the knowledge they require. Restrictive constructions of gender and sexuality have also been identified within other secondary school subjects.

**Gender and sexuality within other school curricula**

Research that explores the inclusion of gender and sexuality in curricula other than sexuality education is not very common. The perceived absence of gender and sexuality from other curricula likely means dominant discourses of heteronormativity and cisnormativity are being reproduced (Gerdin, 2015; Painter, 2008; Petrie, 2004). For example, research exploring the physical education (PE) curriculum in Aotearoa New Zealand shows that enacting hegemonic masculinity is rewarded, meaning that this curriculum reproduces dominant ideas about gender (Gerdin, 2015; Petrie, 2004). Other research exploring New Zealand students’ experiences of education found a large number of students learnt nothing about gender and sexuality outside of sexuality education (Painter, 2008). Students’ reports of the absence of content about gender and sexuality outside of the sexuality education curriculum implies that restrictive discourses are being reproduced in other curricula. This is because there are many subjects (e.g., English, Geography, Media Studies, Drama) where examples of human experience are central to teaching. For example, plays like *Romeo and Juliet* include discourses of romance, relationships, masculinity and femininity, which normalise some ideas while silencing others. The perceived absence of gender and sexuality from these courses implies only normalised ideas are being presented to students. The ideas that are presented therefore align with the dominant understandings of heteronormativity and cisnormativity. When discourses of gender and sexuality within education differ from these dominant
constructions, students are likely to notice as it is a unique experience. For example, a few students within Painter’s (2008) research recounted examples of critical teaching around gender and sexuality through the use of films, essays and debates.

A possible reason for the reproduction of restrictive discourses within secondary education is that educators frame approaches to gender and sexuality within what I call a discourse of fear. Within a discourse of fear, gender and sexuality are viewed as controversial and polarising topics, with contrasting discursive constructions taken up by different groups. These contrasting views present the potential to alienate particular groups by including content within education that does not align with their views. For example, the development of the sexuality education curriculum in the 1980s could be read as approaching gender and sexuality within a discourse of fear. The resulting document avoided aligning with the opposing political views and therefore may be interpreted as having prioritised neutrality of opinion over specific content.

The concept I label as a discourse of fear has been articulated by secondary school educators (Painter, 2008; Thein, 2013) and principals (Mayberry, Chenneville, & Currie, 2011). For example Painter (2008) found that secondary teachers from Aotearoa New Zealand thought the inclusion of queer content might ‘turn’ students queer and that parents would have similar concerns. Framing approaches to gender and sexuality within a discourse of fear has implications for the way that teaching and learning is approached, and often leads to gender and sexuality being framed within restrictive discourses.

The confinement of content on gender and sexuality to the sexuality education curriculum (which I outlined above) is also consistent with approaches to gender and sexuality being framed within a discourse of fear. Within sexuality education gender and
sexuality can be framed in academic ways, as biological facts to be learned (Allen, 2009b; Jones, 2011). This aligns with the discourse of fear because this biological approach is unlikely to alienate parents. In contrast the inclusion of diverse discourses within other subjects would likely involve the discussion of same-sex desire or gender stereotypes, ideas that might not align with parental beliefs. For example, reading texts like *The Colour Purple, The Miseducation of Cameron Post* and *Dare Truth or Promise* might be viewed quite differently than the inclusion of a text like *Romeo and Juliet*. Inclusion of the first three texts would begin to normalise same-sex attraction, which some parents might not agree with. While approaches to gender and sexuality continue to be framed within discourses of fear, the restrictive constructions of gender and sexuality within education are likely to continue. Further research is needed to explore discourses of fear and other discourses which help to maintain restrictive constructions of gender and sexuality within education settings. A better understanding of these discourses could help inform the development of resources and teaching approaches to effectively challenge the problematic constructions outlined above.

While educators’ fears about parents’ reactions to gender and sexuality within education have been documented, less is known about parents’ actual attitudes towards the inclusion of diverse discourses of gender and sexuality within education. Three papers exploring Australian parents’ views on the inclusion of gender and sexuality within education have been published. Two of these papers suggest that overall parents support framing gender and sexuality within discourses of diversity. Many of the parents within these studies saw diverse inclusion of gender and sexuality as an extension of the Australian culture (Ferfolja & Ullman, 2017b, 2017a). Australian parents from another study were divided in their opinion of queer sexualities. Some parents constructed the
normalisation of queer sexualities within media as important representation while others constructed this diverse inclusion as negative (Dyson & Smith, 2012). The participants across these three studies suggests that parents hold varied views about the inclusion of gender and sexuality within education, some viewing it as positive and others as negative. These findings therefore support the potential controversy of including diverse discourses of gender and sexuality within education as there are likely to be some parents who have a problem with constructing gender and sexuality in this way.

While these three Australian studies suggest parents hold a range of views about gender and sexuality within education, critique is needed about the extent to which these views should impact educational content. For example, while parents do play a large role in the educational lives of secondary school students, there are also laws and curriculum within Aotearoa New Zealand that frame inclusion and diversity as important. For example, The Code of Professional Responsibility and Standards for the Teaching Profession within Aotearoa New Zealand includes manaakitanga as one of its fundamental values. Manaakitanga is a Māori term and is interpreted within this context to communicate the role that teachers within Aotearoa New Zealand have in “creating a welcoming, caring and creative learning environment that treats everyone with respect and dignity” (New Zealand Education Council, 2017, p. 2). This implies teachers along with school leadership have a duty to include diverse discourses of gender and sexuality, which foster dignity and respect for all students. Questions remain about how to balance these codes of responsibility with the range of parent attitudes, which include opposition towards the inclusion of diverse discourses of gender and sexuality within education.
Discourses of gender and sexuality within tertiary curricula

Little research is available that comprehensively explores tertiary education teaching, and what is available tends to be authored by the educator of the course that is being explored (e.g., Hayes & Ball, 2009). The focus of these papers tends to be on the educators’ interpretations of students’ reactions to content, so students’ perspectives are often absent. Research where the researcher explores a course other than their own tends to explore content more broadly, often through the use of quantitative questionnaires, which does not allow for much in-depth information (e.g., Carpenter & Lee, 2015). Despite the limited body of research, what is available suggests that approaches to gender and sexuality within tertiary settings differ from those in secondary settings.

The construction of gender and sexuality as irrelevant to teaching appears to be a key reason why diverse discourses of gender and sexuality are not included within tertiary education (Carpenter & Lee, 2015; Taylor et al., 2018). Carpenter and Lee (2015) explored the inclusion of sexuality within the faculty of teaching at Auckland University. They ran a survey in both 2002 and 2009. Responses from the 2002 survey showed the majority of the heterosexual staff who responded thought that sexuality was not relevant to their teaching. While this number reduced in the 2009 survey, at this time point there was still a large number of respondents who regarded sexuality as irrelevant to their teaching. Between 2002 and 2009 there was an increase in the percentage of heterosexual staff who reported including LGBTQ content (26% in 2002 compared to 42% in 2009). LGBTQ staff members were more likely than heterosexual staff to include LGBTQ content at both time points (45% in 2002 and 59% in 2009). These changes imply that the inclusion of gender and sexuality within this faculty is improving, but no information is
provided about what inclusion means. Educators could conceptualise inclusion of content in a range of ways so further exploration is needed to better understand what this inclusion looks like.

Low rates of inclusion of queer and trans content has also been reported within medical schools. Taylor et al. (2018) found that in total 54% of the respondents from two medical schools within Aotearoa New Zealand reported no inclusion of gender and sexuality within their curriculum. These educators also used relevance to inform their decisions about inclusion of gender and sexuality, with many respondents indicating that they did not see this content as relevant to their teaching. Along with relevance tertiary educators also cite the demands of an already full curriculum as limiting their inclusion of content on gender and sexuality. This reason was identified in both Carpenter and Lee (2015) and Taylor et al. (2018). Researchers outside of Aotearoa New Zealand have also identified time constraints as a factor that influences the inclusion of gender and sexuality within tertiary curricula (Fanghanel, 2007 [UK]; Mitchell et al., 2011 [Australia]). While relevance and curriculum constraints might seem like two distinct factors, they can be interpreted as part of the same discursive construction, a discursive approach I labelled the discourse of relevance. Evaluations of relevance construct a hierarchy of content that informs decisions around what must be included within the curriculum and what can be excluded. Content at the top of the hierarchy is seen as an important part of the curriculum and will be included regardless of curriculum constraints, because it is given priority. The research presented above suggests that educators often place gender and sexuality at the bottom of their hierarchy making it unlikely they will include it in the curriculum. While gender and sexuality might not be relevant to some courses, teaching and medical professions are places where they have clear relevance. Both teaching and medical
programmes train professionals who will interact with a range of people. In their role as teachers, education students will also go on to play a role in the discursive constructions of gender and sexuality through teaching within future workplaces. This makes understandings of gender and sexuality an important aspect of teaching and medical students’ education. More research is needed to explore why tertiary educators construct gender and sexuality as irrelevant to their teaching, along with what content they do see as important and why. A better understanding of educators’ curriculum decisions could help with the development of frameworks that emphasise the relevance of gender and sexuality to educators.

The absence of gender and sexuality within tertiary curriculum is reflected in students’ critique of their programmes. Available research about tertiary student’s experiences of education suggests they think more content about diverse genders and sexualities should be included within their course (Lee & Carpenter, 2015; Röndahl, 2011). For example, New Zealand student teachers in Lee and Carpenter’s research reported that their training did not include enough about sexual diversity. As a result they felt unsure about their ability to discuss sexual diversity in teaching placements or future jobs (Lee & Carpenter, 2015). Medical and nursing students also critiqued the content on gender and sexuality within their courses. Students from Australia (Phillips, 2009) and Sweden (Röndahl, 2011) reported the reproduction of restrictive constructions of gender and sexuality within formal teaching and practical placements.

Current research provides some information about how educators approach the inclusion of gender and sexuality within tertiary curricula, but questions remain. For example, most of the research included above lumps aspects of sexual diversity (lesbian, gay, bisexual and queer) and gender diversity (transgender and intersex) into one research
study. This means neither of these concepts are explored in any detail. The inclusion of diverse sexualities compared to diverse genders can be quite different, especially within medical curriculum where the medical needs of each of these groups is likely to differ. Along with this, combining questions about gender and sexuality does not allow an understanding of exactly what is covered, or if diverse sexualities and genders are both included. Further exploration of each of these topics separately would help to gain a better understanding of the extent to which diversity of both gender and sexuality are currently included within tertiary curricula. The research that is available is also limited in terms of course type, mainly focusing on training teachers (Carpenter & Lee, 2015; Lee & Carpenter, 2015; Phillips & Larson, 2012; Robinson & Ferfolja, 2001) or medical students (Phillips, 2009; Röndahl, 2011; Safer & Pearce, 2013; Taylor et al., 2018).

Research from both secondary and tertiary settings suggests heteronormativity and cisnormativity are dominant within teaching and curriculum. Despite this similarity, the reasons for the presence of these restrictive discourses appear to be different. While educators at the secondary level are primarily motivated by fear about the reactions of others, tertiary educators primarily draw upon discourses which construct gender and sexuality as outside the relevance of their course. There are two key differences between secondary and tertiary education that may explain the different research findings between secondary and tertiary settings. These include the level of parent involvement and the body of available research. While parents often play a large part in the educational lives of secondary school students, parents tend to play less of a role in the education of tertiary students. For example, parents often attend parent teacher interviews while their children attend secondary school, but they are unlikely to have much, if any contact with their child’s tertiary educators. The lower level of parent involvement in tertiary education may
account for the apparent absence of the discourse of fear at this level of education. There are also differences in the type of research that is available between secondary and tertiary education. Tertiary educators are often researchers, meaning that tertiary education settings are often seen as places of research rather than places to be researched. While researchers often collect data about the education experiences of secondary students, collecting data from tertiary students would result in critiquing the teaching and curriculum of their colleagues.

**Institutional culture**

The restrictive discourses identified within both secondary and tertiary teaching and curriculum also have an impact on institutional culture. In this section I present research that explores how the exclusionary discourses documented above also circulate within the broader education environment (outside of teaching and curriculum). Information about how restrictive discourses impact secondary education environments is presented first, followed by information about tertiary education environments.

**Institutional culture in secondary education**

This section begins by exploring how dominant discourses of gender and sexuality are reproduced within schools’ disciplinary practices (Pomerantz, 2007; Sausa, 2005; Smith, 2015). Following this, I present research showing how secondary school students draw upon these exclusionary discourses to harass their peers inside and outside the classroom (Chambers, Tincknell, et al., 2004; Meyer, 2008a; Pascoe, 2005; Sexton, 2012), which teachers and schools often fail to address (Allen, 2019b; Chambers, Loon, et al., 2004; Ferfolja, 2007; Mayberry et al., 2011; Meyer, 2008b; Preston, 2016; Quinlivan, 2002; Woolley, 2013).
Restrictive discourses of gender and sexuality are reproduced within disciplinary practices. Spaces like the school ball, changing rooms and toilets along with uniforms or dress codes all contribute to making school environments heteronormative and cisnormative spaces. Research conducted in Aotearoa New Zealand shows that many high school balls prevent same-sex partners attending, creating the expectation that their students are heterosexual (Allen, 2006c; Smith, 2015; Smith et al., 2016). Bathrooms and changing rooms along with gendered sports teams reproduce binary ideas of gender, requiring students to identify with one of these prescribed categories (Ingrey, 2012; Johnson, Singh, & Gonzalez, 2014; Sausa, 2005). Uniforms and dress codes also create expectations about the appropriate attire for women and men (Firmin, Smith, & Perry, 2006; Gereluk, 2007; Pomerantz, 2007; N. Smith, 2012). These gendered practices lead many trans students to have negative school experiences (Johnson et al., 2014; Sausa, 2005). Overall, the disciplinary practices within schools reproduce discourses that normalise certain ways of being and exclude a broad range of students. The negative experiences are not confined to school organisation, peers also reproduce the restrictive discourses adding to the negative experiences of certain students.

The reproduction of exclusionary discourses within secondary schools contribute to the normalisation of gender policing and harassment. Students draw upon the discourses embedded within school spaces, curriculum and policy to police their peers. Research shows that homophobic and misogynistic harassment are common place in secondary schools (Chambers, Tincknell, et al., 2004; de Jong, 2014; Meyer, 2008a; Pascoe, 2005; Robinson, 2005; Sausa, 2005; Wyss, 2004). Students who act outside of expected gender norms are often harassed with taunts like gay or fag (Chambers, Tincknell, et al., 2004; de Jong, 2014; O’Conor, 1993; Pascoe, 2005; Sexton, 2012; Town,
This type of homophobic harassment is gendered and connects strongly to constructions of masculinity. These taunts are deployed mostly by men to police the behaviour of other young men. The performance of this harassment also acts as a way for young men to enact or reinstate their own masculinity (Allen, 2019a; Chambers, Tincknell, et al., 2004; O’Conor, 1993; Pascoe, 2005; Sexton, 2012; Town, 2002). Misogynistic harassment has also been documented within secondary schools (Kehily & Nayak, 1997; Meyer, 2008a; Robinson, 2005). This type of harassment tends to be deployed by young men as a way to reinstate their dominant place within the gender hierarchy (Meyer, 2008a; Robinson, 2005). Both homophobic and misogynistic harassment can be seen as further reproduction of the restrictive discourses that are present within school spaces, policy and curriculum.

The negative school environment created by the dominance of restrictive discourses and peer harassment has an especially big impact on queer and trans students. Research shows queer and trans students’ school experiences can be detrimental to their mental health and willingness to engage in education (Allen, 2019a; Clark et al., 2014; Goodenow, Szalacha, & Westheimer, 2006; Lucassen et al., 2014; Swearer Napolitano, Turner, Givens, & Pollack, 2008; Russell, Ryan, Toomey, Diaz, & Sanchez, 2011; Wyss, 2004). Queer and trans youth often have higher levels of depression and anxiety and lower self-esteem compared to their heterosexual and cisgender peers (Goodenow et al., 2006; Lucassen et al., 2014; Wyss, 2004). Negative school experiences make queer and trans students more likely to drop out of school (Allen, 2019a; Johnson et al., 2014; Sausa, 2005; Wyss, 2004). Trans students suggest that education for teachers along with changes to gendered school practices (e.g., toilets, uniforms, changing rooms) would help create a safer and more inclusive learning environment (Johnson et al., 2014).
Despite students’ negative experiences teachers often do nothing to stop homophobic and misogynistic harassment (Allen, 2019b; Chambers, Loon, et al., 2004; Chambers, Tincknell, et al., 2004; Ferfolja, 2007; Mayberry et al., 2011; Meyer, 2008b). One reason for teachers’ inaction is the construction of harassment as normal masculine behaviour (Chambers, Loon, et al., 2004; Preston, 2016). Other educators draw upon a discourse of victim blame by suggesting targeted students should alter their appearance in order to avoid harassment (Preston, 2016). While some teachers want to challenge homophobic and misogynistic harassment, they often feel limited by factors outside of their control including school policy and the actions of other staff (Ferfolja, 2007; Meyer, 2008b). Regardless of the cause, inaction towards homophobic and misogynistic harassment serves to further circulate discourses of heteronormativity, homophobia and cisnormativity. It also helps to maintain peer policing of those perceived as acting outside of expected norms.

**Institutional culture of tertiary education**

Exclusionary discourses within institutional cultures have also been reported within tertiary institutions in Aotearoa New Zealand. Unitech in Auckland (Woods, 2013) and the University of Otago in Dunedin (Treharne et al., 2016) have both carried out campus climate surveys. These surveys show differences in the experiences of students based on their gender and/or sexuality. Queer and trans students generally had more negative experiences on campus and reported being harassed often (Treharne et al., 2016; Woods, 2013). Some students felt the need to hide their (trans)gender or queer sexuality to avoid negative reactions from other students or staff (Lee & Carpenter, 2015; Treharne et al., 2016; Woods, 2013). For example queer training teachers in Aotearoa New Zealand reported feeling uncomfortable sharing their sexuality while on practicum, with some
being advised their queer sexuality was not something that should be shared with students (Lee & Carpenter, 2015). Tertiary educators also report hiding queer identities (Carpenter & Lee, 2015). Concerns about being ‘out’ on campus suggests that discourses of heteronormativity and cisnormativity are common within these tertiary settings.

The research I have presented above shows how dominant discourses normalise idealised versions of masculinity and femininity. Those who do not meet these idealised versions, are reminded of these expectations through harassment which has negative implications for their mental health and reduces their likelihood of completing education. While I have presented lots of research that focuses on the outcome of framing gender and sexuality within restrictive discourses, these are not the only approaches to gender and sexuality. In the following section I present research that includes examples of restrictive discourses being challenged within education settings.

**Individual and community approaches to diversity**

The negative effects of restrictive discourses, outlined in the previous section, indicate a need for alternative approaches to gender and sexuality within education. Quinlivan (2018) suggests that inclusion of more diverse discourses within education settings is approached through one of two frameworks. The first framework is a liberal rights discourse, which focuses on the inclusion of multiple constructions of gender and sexuality within education. The other framework is a critical approach which targets and disrupts cultural norms and underlying power structures (e.g., heteronormativity). While different, each of these frameworks result in the inclusion of more diverse discourses of gender and sexuality. In this section I present research that outlines the way dominant constructions of gender and sexuality have been challenged within education settings. I use the frameworks provided by Quinlivan (2018) to group the different approaches to
including gender and sexuality. First, I present approaches that fit within the liberal rights discourse, including a critique of these approaches. Following this I present research that fits within the critical approach along with barriers that make enacting this approach more difficult.

Students and staff in some schools are challenging the exclusionary culture of education environments through Gay Straight Alliances (GSAs). These collectives provide students with knowledge that allows them to challenge the restrictive ideas they encounter within the school environment (Elliott, 2016; Lapointe, 2014; Mayberry et al., 2011; Mayo, 2013). GSAs in the USA have challenged school cultures through the implementation of gender neutral bathrooms (Elliott, 2016) and by providing education challenging heteronormativity (Elliott, 2016; Mayo, 2013). Other positive outcomes of GSAs in the USA include increased tolerance of queer subjectivities (Griffin, Lee, Waugh, & Beyer, 2004) along with an increased sense of belonging and increased academic performance for queer student members (Lee, 2002). While this is positive, several authors also critique the practices of GSAs. Griffin et al. (2004) suggests GSAs’ positive impact on school environments is only a starting point and a school wide approach is required for more substantial change. Mayberry et al. (2011) has also critiqued GSAs, in particular the regulation of GSAs’ activism by school principals. Those schools who restrict GSAs’ activism frame queer students within a discourse of safety (expanded upon below) (Mayberry et al., 2011; Quinlivan, 2002). Discourses of safety represent an individual approach to improving education environments for queer and trans students (Griffin et al., 2004; Mayberry, 2006; Quinlivan, 2002, 2018; Woolley, 2013).
Individual approaches to improving the school environment for queer and trans students are common (Mayberry, 2006; Quinlivan, 2002, 2018; Woolley, 2013). Individual approaches aim to help students accept and manage reactions to their marginalised subjectivities. For example, schools often acknowledge the negative school experiences of queer and trans youth by providing them with counselling or safe spaces, an approach that frames them within a discourse of safety (Griffin et al., 2004; Mayberry, 2006; Quinlivan, 2002). These individual approaches to a systemic issue have been criticised (Mayberry, 2006; Quinlivan, 2002, 2018). By taking an individual approach schools appear to be ‘queer friendly’ without having to make systematic changes to the school community which might upset conservative parents (Quinlivan, 2002). Therefore, schools who only approach the inclusion of queer and trans youth using individual approaches might be framing gender and sexuality within a discourse of fear. In contrast to individual approaches, a community approach to diverse discourses of gender and sexuality would challenge the discursive constructions which maintain queer and trans students’ marginalised subjectivities (Mayberry, 2006; Quinlivan, 2002). Individual approaches to queer and trans youth align with Quinlivan’s (2018) liberal rights discourse whereas community approaches align with critical approaches to gender and sexuality.

There are educators who implement critical approaches to gender and sexuality within their classrooms. Frameworks like queer theory (Stein & Plummer, 1994; Sumara & Davis, 1999) and critical pedagogy (Fitzpatrick & Russell, 2015) can be used within classrooms to get students thinking critically about gender and sexuality. These theories disrupt normalising power and make inclusive discursive frameworks more visible. For example, a social studies teacher from the USA used concepts of inquiry and hypothesis testing to prompt students to think critically about why the USA has not had a woman as
president (Schmeichel et al., 2016). Information about the presence of women leaders from other countries disrupted the construction of men in leadership as normative. Critical approaches have also been documented within the PE and health curriculum in Aotearoa New Zealand (Fitzpatrick & Russell, 2015; Quinlivan, 2012), and the sociology curriculum in the USA (Stevens & Martell, 2016).

While critical approaches to gender and sexuality are promising they can also present challenges. Secondary and tertiary students can reproduce dominant ideas which can be challenging for educators to respond to (Hayes & Ball, 2009; Quinlivan, 2012; Robinson & Ferfolja, 2001; Schmeichel et al., 2016). Quinlivan (2012, 2018) provides an example of the types of challenges researchers and educators can face. Quinlivan reflected on a health lesson in Aotearoa New Zealand that involved the critical examination of men’s bodies within advertising. A young man in the class enacted hegemonic masculinity by making a joke about another young man finding the images attractive. This joke served to reinstate dominant and marginalised subjectivities which the activity had aimed to disrupt. Quinlivan (2012, 2018) has reflected on this experience several times. These reflections emphasize the importance of acknowledging potential emotive responses to content about gender and sexuality. Preparation can allow teachers to use comments, like the young man made, for classroom teaching and discussion. Quinlivan also reflects on how school policy can limit educational discussion around normative ideas. For example, when educators have to prioritise bullying policy, over critical teaching, in response to comments like those outlined above. In this way Quinlivan (2012, 2018) constructs some education policies as a barrier to framing gender and sexuality critically.
To avoid the types of responses outlined above, gender and sexuality could be approached critically only within certain classes. While this is an approach that has been used, it only overcomes some of the problems outlined above and I include a critique of this approach below. A secondary school literature class focusing solely on lesbian and gay literature provided a space where critical thought about gender and sexuality could occur without challenge from students. Students chose to take this course and were therefore interested in exploring diverse constructions of sexuality (Helmer, 2016a, 2016b). This high school course also challenged common constructions of queer content. The majority of students within the gay and lesbian literature class were straight, although many had queer family and friends. The students’ subjectivities challenge the common construction of inclusive discourses only being relevant to queer students. The researcher who observed this class also constructed the students as mature and able to engage with a critical approach to sexuality (Helmer, 2016a). This contrasts with the common view that secondary students are not mature enough to learn about queer content (Preston, 2016). While specific classes appear to overcome some of the challenges of including critical approaches within mainstream classes, it also limits the impact this content has on the broader school environment. So, while isolating content about diverse discourses of gender and sexuality might overcome some of the challenges of diverse inclusion, it does not present an ideal approach to the inclusion of diverse discourses within education. This approach might be appropriate in certain situations, for example if all students get a base level of diverse inclusion, individual classes might be useful for advanced education in gender and sexuality. Overall, the research from secondary education settings suggests that further research exploring effective approaches to including diverse discourses of gender and sexuality within education is needed.
The inclusion of diverse discourses of gender and sexuality within tertiary education is also important. As outlined above, tertiary educators are often responsible for training students for professions (e.g., teacher, doctor, nurse) where an inclusive approach to gender and sexuality is important. Despite the wide-reaching potential of diverse discourses within tertiary education (e.g., training teachers incorporating inclusive practices within their future workplaces), there is not much research that explores diverse inclusion at the tertiary level.

The research that is available shows that critical approaches to sexuality education within tertiary education are effective. A critical approach to teaching sexuality education can shift student teachers away from viewing sexuality education only within prevention discourses (Ollis, 2016 [Australia]; Sinkinson, 2009 [Aotearoa New Zealand]) and increase training teachers’ confidence in their ability to effectively teach sexuality education (Ollis, 2016). Teaching future educators how to enact critical approaches to sexuality education is important. Without this training they are likely to frame approaches to sexuality education based on their own experiences (Ollis, 2016; Sinkinson, 2009) and as outlined above students’ own sexuality education was likely to have been prevention focused (Allen, 2007b; Ollis, 2016; Sinkinson, 2009). Diverse approaches to gender within medical curriculum can also be beneficial. Research shows that learning about gender increases training doctors’ confidence in their ability to treat transgender patients (Safer & Pearce, 2013).

Overall approaches to challenging restrictive discourses of gender and sexuality within secondary and tertiary settings requires further research. Current research shows the potential of critical approaches for making inclusive discourses of gender and sexuality more available to students. Research suggests that these approaches are
currently being implemented in isolation by individual educators. Further research is needed to better understand what inclusive approaches to gender and sexuality look like within different curricula and how these approaches can be implemented on a larger scale to become community approaches.

**Research gaps**

At the beginning of this review I outlined research gaps identified by Jackson (2004) who reviewed research published in Aotearoa New Zealand up until 2002. Throughout this review I have included a range of research conducted in Aotearoa New Zealand since 2002. Below I provide an overview of this research and how it addresses some of the research gaps identified by Jackson.

Allen has published research exploring students’ experiences of sexuality education and the school environment (Allen, 2003a, 2003b, 2004b, 2005b, 2005a, 2006b, 2008b, 2008a, 2009b, 2013a, 2013b, 2019a, 2019b). Allen used both qualitative and quantitative methods to do this. While Allen’s research provides insight into student experiences of sexuality education and the broader school environment, it does not explore educators’ perspectives. Along with this, the majority of Allen’s qualitative data comes from students and schools in the North Island of Aotearoa New Zealand. It is possible that there are differences between the culture and school environments of the North and South Islands. The North Island also has a larger population and more cities than the South Island, meaning that students from North Island schools are more likely to come from urban settings. Other academics from Aotearoa New Zealand have added knowledge to the field through the exploration of critical interventions within health classes (Quinlivan, 2006, 2012, 2018), exploration of school formals (Allen, 2015; Smith, 2015; Smith et al., 2016), queer content within teaching (Painter, 2008) and the
experiences of queer students within secondary schools (Painter, 2008; Sexton, 2012). All of these studies are qualitative which help to address the lack of qualitative research identified by Jackson (2004).

Some of the gaps identified by Jackson (2004) remain and my research addresses a number of these gaps. For example, there is still limited research that explores educators’ perspectives of including gender and sexuality within teaching. My research addresses this research gap by including the subject positions of students and educators. Research including participants from rural locations whose education experiences and community culture might be quite different to urban locations, is still lacking. I address this through the inclusion of participants from education settings in the South Island including those who live in small towns and rural locations. Further exploration is needed about inclusion of gender and sexuality in subjects outside of sexuality education. My research helps to address this body of knowledge by exploring the inclusion of gender and sexuality within a range of secondary school curricula. Information about the inclusion of gender and sexuality within tertiary settings in Aotearoa New Zealand is limited to teacher and medical education programmes. Exploration of students’ and educators’ understandings of gender and sexuality within a wider range of tertiary curricula would be beneficial. My research includes tertiary students and educators from a range of subject areas to provide more information about the inclusion of gender and sexuality at this level of education.

Throughout this review I have drawn attention to the large body of literature that documents the dominance of heteronormativity and cisnormativity within education settings and the relatively sparse body of research exploring resistance to restrictive discourses. My research expands on previous research through the focus on effective
ways to resist the dominant constructions identified within past research. Due to my attention to a range of research gaps, the research findings presented in the remainder of this thesis begin to address the ongoing questions about gender and sexuality that I have outlined throughout this review. The research I have outlined throughout this review was also conducted in the past. While some of it was in the recent past, discursive constructions are always changing, meaning inclusion of gender and sexuality within education may have developed since this research was conducted. My research will help to provide more information about the ever-changing landscape of the inclusion of gender and sexuality within New Zealand education.
Chapter 4: Methodology

This research used qualitative methods to collect and analyse data. These methods were appropriate given the aim of the study, which was to gain an in-depth understanding about how gender and sexuality are included within education settings in Aotearoa New Zealand. Qualitative methods aligned with the aim because these techniques allow in-depth exploration of the topic of interest (Seidman, 2013).

When developing qualitative research it is important to plan the research based around the aim (Krueger & Casey, 2009). Focusing on the aim during the planning process allows the development of methods that align with the aim. It also allows for the recruitment of participants that will provide insight into the topic of interest (Krueger & Casey, 2009). My focus on education meant I had to make decisions about the stakeholders within education I would sample (e.g., students, educators, parents, principals) and what education levels I was interested in. I identified both educators and students as groups that have unique knowledge and perspectives about the topic of interest, so chose to include both of these groups. The absence of educators’ perspectives from much of the past research about education also informed this decision. Past research also influenced decisions about what education levels would be included in the research. As outlined in Chapter 3, within both secondary and tertiary education settings there is limited information about the inclusion of gender and sexuality across a range of subject areas. As a result of this research gap I chose to include both secondary and tertiary settings within my research. These decisions resulted in two key participant types (students and educators) and two education levels (secondary and tertiary). The recruitment and data collection of each of these four groups (secondary students,
secondary educators, tertiary students and tertiary educators) differed slightly. In this chapter I begin by explaining the recruitment process for each group followed by an outline of data analysis which was done the same way for all four participant groups.

**Recruitment**

The following section outlines recruitment of each of the four participant groups. I have presented these groups in a systematic fashion starting with secondary students then secondary educators followed by tertiary students and ending with tertiary educators. I organised it in this way to construct a fixed order of group presentation that is used throughout the rest of this chapter. Recruitment and data collection did not happen in this order. Tertiary education recruitment and data collection commenced first, in September of 2015 and continued until May 2017. While secondary education recruitment and data collection occurred between November of 2015 and June 2017. The specifics are outlined below.

**Secondary education**

Recruitment of secondary students and educators began with the recruitment of individual schools. The Ministry of Education website was used to identify South Island secondary schools that fell within an area that would be practical to travel to within the timeframe of data collection. Of schools within this range I chose a portion to contact ensuring a mix of single sex and co-ed, rural and urban schools with a broad range of deciles. Initial contact occurred via a letter sent to the principal of each of the schools (see Appendix B) the letter was followed by a phone call or email. These letters were sent at the end of 2015 (to nine schools in the South Island of Aotearoa New Zealand) and the end of 2016 (to 12 schools in the South Island of Aotearoa New Zealand). There was a
year between the recruitment of the schools as I recruited some schools before applying for ethical approval to provide evidence that there were schools willing to participate in this research. The end of the year was established as a good time to get in touch with schools about research to be conducted in the following year. So, the second lot of recruitment letters were delayed until the end of 2016 rather than being sent when ethical approval was granted. This process resulted in the recruitment of four secondary schools Rural High, Riverview High, Littletown High and Parkview High (All school and participant names mentioned throughout this thesis are code names chosen by the participant or assigned by the researcher).

**School demographics.** Providing information about the schools individually could make them identifiable and in turn threaten the anonymity of the participants. Instead, I have included a general overview of the range of demographic information represented by the four schools within this research. School deciles at the time of data collection ranged from 6 to 10 (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2015). Decile ratings range from 1 to 10 and indicate the relative average income of families within the school community, higher numbers indicate higher average incomes. At the time of data collection the participating schools’ rolls ranged from approximately 180 to 700 (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2015). All schools included students from year 7 to year 13 (ages 10 to 18). Three of the schools were coeducational, while one (Parkview High) was a single sex boys’ school.

Recruitment from each school was mediated through a staff member nominated by the principal to be my main contact. Each of these staff members recruited students in a targeted way by contacting those they thought would be suitable participants. Due to the paternalistic and powerful role that staff have within education settings, students may
have felt pressure to participate. Pressure to participate is a problem given the importance of informed consent when conducting ethical research (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004; Vanclay, Baines, & Taylor, 2013). To help ameliorate the potential pressure to participate, I did not follow up with participants who failed to show up at the scheduled interview times, assuming they had changed their mind about participation. I also gauged the participants’ engagement and interest in the project through responses given during the interviews. All of the students I interviewed seemed interested in the project and happy to answer my questions. The staff contact at each school also helped with the recruitment of educators, either through informing all staff about the research or directly contacting staff who might be interested. In two of the schools, the main contact also chose to take part in an interview.

**Tertiary Education**

**Students.** Tertiary students were recruited from two tertiary institutions in the South Island of Aotearoa New Zealand (although 31 out of the 32 participants came from the same institution). Recruitment occurred through posters around the campuses, presentations in two different classes, and the use of a departmental participation scheme.

The inclusion of queer and trans students was a priority. A key goal of qualitative research is to understand the topic of interest from the perspective of those to whom it is relevant (Seidman, 2013). The inclusion of gender and sexuality within education is likely to be particularly relevant to queer and trans students, who are often not represented within educational content (Graham, Treharne, Ruzibiza, et al., 2017; Johnson et al., 2014). Subjectivity, exploring how people are able to experience the world within a particular discourse, is an important part of discourse analysis (Willig, 2008). Without the inclusion of queer and trans participants my ability to fully understand the material
effects of certain constructions of gender and sexuality would be limited (this is explored further in the final section of Chapter 7). To help ensure the inclusion of queer and trans students targeted recruitment was used. This included posts on Facebook groups for queer and trans students and contacting participants from other queer and trans research I had worked on (these participants had provided an email address and ticked a box indicating they were willing to be contacted for future research).

**Tertiary educators.** Tertiary educators were recruited from one tertiary institution in the South Island of Aotearoa New Zealand. This was the same institution that the majority (31 out of 32) of the tertiary student participants attended. Potential participants were identified by looking through the staff pages of the institution’s website. Educators who taught content that appeared to have at least some relevance to gender and sexuality were selected. These educators were selected because I was specifically interested in understanding the inclusion of diverse discourses of gender and sexuality within education and these educators seemed best positioned to do this. Twelve educators identified through this method were contacted by email. The email informed them of the study and invited them to take part in an interview (See Appendix C).

**Participants**

In total 12 secondary students, 9 secondary educators, 32 tertiary students and 7 tertiary educators participated in an interview or group interview. The tables outlining the demographics of each of these participant groups is presented in Appendix D. An overview of each of these tables is provided below.

**Secondary students.** Of the 12 secondary students three attended Rural High, three attended Riverview High, one attended Parkview High and five attended Littletown
High. They were aged between 16 and 18 years old. Five were female and seven were male. The majority of the students recorded their sexuality as heterosexual, with one secondary school student recording their sexuality as bisexual. Eight students recorded their ethnicity as New Zealand Pākehā, two as New Zealand Māori and one as white.

Secondary educators. There were nine secondary educators two teachers from each of the four schools (Rural High, Riverview High, Littletown High and Parkview High) and one support staff member from Riverview High. The educators’ ages ranged from 24 to 50. Six recorded their gender as female and three as male. Seven recorded their sexuality as straight and two as gay. Teaching experienced ranged from 1 to 15 years. All nine educators recorded their ethnicity as European.

Tertiary students. Tertiary students ranged in age from 18 to 30. Of the 32 participants 18 recorded their gender as female or woman, 11 as man or male, 1 as trans woman, 1 as trans man and 1 as gender queer non-binary. Nineteen participants recorded their sexuality as heterosexual or similar, eight as bisexual, one as pansexual, one as gay, one as asexual homoromantic and one as pansexual/asexual spectrum. The majority of students recorded their ethnicity as some variation of New Zealander (19), other ethnicities included White (5), Chinese (2), other European (2), Asian (2), NZ Māori (1), and British Pākehā (1).

Tertiary educators. The tertiary educators’ ages ranged from 37 to 55. Of the seven tertiary educators 6 recorded their gender as female/woman and one as man. Four of the tertiary educators recorded their sexuality as heterosexual or similar, one as lesbian, one as gay and one as bisexual. Tertiary educators’ teaching experience ranged from 3 to 31 years. Their ethnicities included five Pākehā, one white British and one Eurasian.
The demographics were collected using an open response demographic questionnaire (see Appendix E for example). There were two key reasons for choosing an open response demographic questionnaire. One reason is the post-structuralist framework that underpins my approach to knowledge. Demographic questionnaires that provide a limited number of possible responses tend to draw upon positivist binary notions of identity (Treharne, 2011). Reason two is fixed response options never include all possible answers. The order of options that are available create a hierarchical structure, and hierarchy can also be inferred by what is not included as a possible response. For example, the inclusion of a box labelled other, discursively constructs the individual who has to tick that box as outside what is perceived to be a ‘normal’ or possible participant within the research. Given the exploration of gender and sexuality within this research, avoiding any kind of hierarchy or marginalisation of certain subjectivities was particularly important.

While there is no perfect way to collect participant demographics (Treharne, 2011), an open response option was chosen as the best method for this research, as it allowed me to avoid the above limitations. There were also some limitations to the open response option. One example is the information about Burt’s gender presented in Table D1. Burt recorded their gender as male/female. While Burt may have intended to do this, I interpret this entry as a reading error. The question about gender asked, ‘What term or terms do you use to describe your gender?’ I think Burt may have read the question as what term or terms do you use to describe gender. I did try to contact Burt to clarify this response but received no reply. To gain a better understanding of Burt’s gender I analysed what was said during the interview. During this interview Burt talked about having previously attended an all-boys’ school. Burt talked about the boys in a way that implied
they were part of the same group as him and also talked about girls as a group that was
different to him. “Boys’ schools we swear a lot more cause you’re just all around your mates.
Whereas here some of the girls might not like you swearing that much.” Given this other
information about Burt’s gender, I chose to interpret Burt’s response as an entry error and
refer to Burt using he/him for the remainder of this thesis.

Data Collection

Ethics

In this section I outline the formal ethics procedure. Throughout the rest of this
chapter I also reflect on what Guillemin and Gillam (2004) call ethics in practice. Within
these reflections I explain the relevance of certain methodological decisions in relation to
the key principles of ethical research.

Three ethics applications were completed and approved for this research project.
Category A\(^1\) ethics was granted by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee for
tertiary student group interviews (15/110), and secondary student and educator interviews
(16/013). The tertiary educator interviews were approved under category B\(^2\) by the
University of Otago Human Ethics Committee (D15/381).

Due to concerns about anonymity of study participants the Ethics Committee
suggested that no departments be identified within the tertiary research. Throughout the
thesis subject types are referenced using broad terms (e.g., social science subject). There
was also need for anonymity to ensure participants knew that their identity would not be

\(^1\) Category A ethics is a process where the proposed research is sent directly to the Ethics Committee to
consider and approve or make recommendations for change.
\(^2\) The Category B process involves the Head of Department granting initial approval followed by the
Ethics Committee reviewing and approving the research at their next meeting.
revealed to others. This is a standard ethical practice within research and a specific requirement of the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee approval. Participants were informed of anonymity prior to the interviews with the hope that they would be willing to talk more openly. The assurance of anonymity was particularly important for some participants who shared what may be viewed as negative attitudes towards their educational institution or workplace.

An interesting ethical question in relation to anonymity arose during one of the interviews with a secondary educator. Chris was interested in his right not to be anonymous. The following is a section from his interview outlining his concerns around anonymity.

It’s important to me to be known […] everything that I’ve just said I would like to think that anyone reading this material knew that it was possible to identify the person saying it. And that to me that’s fundamental to my practice as a teacher, that I stand by myself if that makes sense. I don’t need anonymity because none of this conversation needs to be anonymous there’s nothing to fear and I don’t want people to think I am afraid […]. The anonymity which I completely understand in terms of your research process and I respect, it is not helpful for me on my mission (laughs), but this is not my mission I realise that, I’m doing your interview here. (Chris, secondary educator, Riverview High)

Chris also reflected on the discursive constructions of anonymity in relation to sexuality in comparison to other constructs.

Every time someone says you have to be anonymous when they’re interviewing you about sexuality and they don’t ask you to be anonymous when they’re interviewing you about your income, I start saying what’s the difference. […] Why should I be not embarrassed about what I earn but ashamed of who I have sex with? (Chris, secondary educator, Riverview High)

Identifying Chris within this research was not possible. If I revealed his identity, it would identify the school I collected data from and threaten the anonymity of other participants from that school. Despite this, Chris’ statements do raise important methodological and ethical issues around participants’ right to be specifically named within research. While
anonymity is an ethical principle designed to protect participants (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004), can it at times also undermine their agency? By requiring their anonymity do we take away their ability to be recognised for their contribution to the research field? And as researchers do we benefit from their experiences in a way that they are not able to? Similar reflections have been made by other researchers who highlight the need for careful consideration about anonymity (Ashdown et al., 2018; Marx & Macleod, 2018) and consider varying levels of personal identification which can be used in different contexts (Ashdown et al., 2018).

Another important ethical consideration included within the ethics application was the construction of senior students as agentic decision makers. In line with this construction a case was made for not requiring parental consent for senior students (Year 11 to 13). Senior students providing their own consent aligns with the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (UNICEF, 1989). This document states young people should have “the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds” (Article 13) along with the right to express “views freely in all matters affecting the child” (Article 12). Requesting parental consent, and having a parent deny it would breech this right, as this research is about matters that affect students. The student therefore should be able to choose to provide their ideas and expertise in relation to gender and sexuality in education. The ability for students to provide their own consent was also important so that students were not nominated into the research by their parents giving consent for them, which they may not choose to give themselves (Oakley, 1994). The ethics committee approved this proposal.
Despite attempts to construct students as agentic decision makers who could provide their own consent, parental consent was requested by teachers from two schools. Rural High sent out school consent forms to the parents of students participating in my research. Riverview High had me contact the parents or guardians via text message to inform them of my research and gain their permission to interview students. Gaining access to secondary students for research can be a difficult process (Allen, 2009a; L. Smith, 2012), partly due to the role parents and schools play in mediating this process (Seidman, 2013). The need for parental consent could be seen as undermining the intention to construct students as important experts. But schools were an integral part of my ability to make this research happen and so a co-operative partnership with them was important for gaining access to students.

This paragraph outlines procedures that took place prior to interviews and group interviews. This process was the same across all participants, so it is outlined here instead of in each of the data collection sections. I was the lead researcher on this project and all interviews were organised and led by me. With the exception of the first four group interviews, in which a research assistant was present, I conducted all interviews and group interviews alone. In the group interviews where the research assistant was present, they assisted with admin tasks (giving out consent and information sheets) and asked some follow-up questions. Prior to all interviews, participants were provided with an information sheet about the study (See Appendices F, G, H and I) and an outline of the interview questions. Copies of the information sheet were also available at the time of the interview. Informed consent is an important part of ethical research (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004; Vanclay et al., 2013), so before taking part in an interview all participants signed a consent form (see Appendices J, K, L and M). I also verbally told all participants about
the overall aim of the research and answered any questions they had. An audio recorder was used to record all interviews. Audio recorders are a useful tool for qualitative interviews as they reduce the number of notes that need to be written by the researcher. This makes it easier for the researcher to focus on what the participant is saying and ask appropriate follow up questions (Patton, 1990). Prior to starting the interview, I checked that participants understood that I would be recording them and verbally asked for their consent to commence the recording. Before the beginning of the interview I gave the participants an overview of what would be done with the data. After the interview I also reminded participants of how the data would be used and that they could contact me if they changed their mind about taking part in the study or wanted any of their data removed. All of these procedures helped ensure participants’ informed consent (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004). Participants who took part in individual interviews were also asked if they wanted a copy of their interview transcripts. Emails were sent to those that requested them and at this time they were reminded again of their right to have any or all of the data retracted from the study. Two participants responded to this email and small changes were made to their transcripts.

**Secondary schools**

Data was collected from secondary schools between June 2016 and June 2017.

**Secondary Students.** Two data collection methods, media journals and interviews, were used to collect data from secondary school students. Students at Rural High were asked to create a media journal documenting examples or experiences of gender and sexuality over a two-week period. The media journal entries could be in any format the students chose (e.g., pictures, video, drawing, written). Media journals were chosen as a way to gain a greater insight into young people’s daily experiences. Including aspects like
video diaries in research allows researchers, who might have quite different experiences of the world, to gain insight into the lived experiences of their participants (Buchwald, Schantz-Laursen, & Delmar, 2009; Holliday, 2004; Iivari, Kinnula, Kuure, & Molin-Juustila, 2014; Noyes, 2004).

Media or video journals are an established method for collecting data from young people (Buchwald et al., 2009; Iivari et al., 2014; Vares & Jackson, 2015). They have also successfully been used within education contexts (Holliday, 2004; Iivari et al., 2014) and to collect data about life experiences of queer individuals (Holliday, 2004). Young people are familiar with using media to share events through video (Buchwald et al., 2009) or photos with apps like Instagram, Snapchat and Facebook. So, I chose to use media journals as a data collection method to engage students who already use media on a daily basis. Another reason for the use of media journals was to allow a greater range of participants to feel confident about taking part. While a traditional journal relies on participants’ writing abilities, media journals do not. As a result of the various formats for documenting experiences students with a range of writing abilities could record a media journal (Buchwald et al., 2009).

After trialling media journals at Rural High it became clear that this data collection method was too time consuming for participants. The process for media journals included an initial meeting with students to provide them with information and examples about what the research would involve. Students were then asked to collect data related to their experiences with gender and sexuality over a two-week period. At the end of this period the aim was to have four journal entries from experiences at school and two about experiences outside of school. Following this, they would take part in an interview with me where I asked them questions about their media journal entries.
Of the six students at Rural High who attended the initial meeting only three ended up providing data. The data collected across these three students included two photos (one each from Jess and Bebe Yaga) and two written reflective journal entries (provided by Hazel). Because of the limited number of journal entries from these students my planned interview questions (see Appendix N) did not allow me to gain a lot of information. To gain more information about the students’ understandings and experiences related to gender and sexuality I had to adapt my questions and come up with more during the interview. Adaptability and flexibility are important skills for qualitative researchers and these skills allow data to be collected from a range of different interviewees (Patton, 1990). I found a flexible and adaptable interview style was particularly important for interviewing high school students. During these interviews very short answers to open questions were common. It was therefore important to ask questions and cover topics that allowed secondary students to respond with more detailed answers.

As a result of the challenges I faced with media journals at Rural High, I modified my data collection methods to focus only on interviews. I initially did not want to rely only on interviews as I thought that I may not be able to gain detailed information from secondary students using this method. Data collection from Rural High indicated that interviews were able to provide in-depth information about the students’ understandings and experiences of gender and sexuality. The questions that I developed during my initial interviews at Rural High were used as the interview schedule for the remainder of the interviews with secondary school students (see Appendix O).

Within this research I used both individual and group interviews to collect data from student participants. Individual interviews were chosen to collect data from secondary school students because they provide a space for people who might not feel
comfortable or included in group interviews (Boyce & Neale, 2006). Due to the difficulty recruiting secondary school students and the small number of students from each school I did not want to risk students not feeling comfortable in a group interview. Using individual interviews with these students allowed me to gain in-depth insight into the experiences of each student, something that is not always possible with group interviews where one person may dominate the conversation (Smithson, 2000). Individual interviews also increase the number of questions that can be asked and the level of detail provided by each participant, in comparison to group interviews (Seidman, 2013). So, individual interviews were chosen for data collection from secondary students to allow in-depth understanding of each student’s ideas and experiences.

The interviews took place in a private room at each of the schools and ranged in length from 15 to 35 minutes. Despite the short length of several of the interviews, all participants provided some valuable information about discourses of gender and sexuality within their daily lives. After the interview the students were provided with a list of support services in relation to gender and sexuality (This included location relevant as well as nationwide services). The list of support services was provided to address the ethical principle of do no harm (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004; Vanclay et al., 2013). In-depth interviews ask participants to think about and reflect on their experiences and if they discuss emotional or upsetting experiences this may negatively affect them (Seidman, 2013). The resource list provided participants with guidance about people they could talk to if the interview prompted difficult or negative thoughts that they wished to talk to someone about.
All the secondary students who took part in an interview were put into the draw for a $30 gift voucher. One participant from each school received a voucher and a random number generator was used to determine which participant this would be.

*Secondary educators.* Interviews were chosen to collect data from secondary school educators to gain detailed information about secondary educators’ teaching practices in relation to gender and sexuality. These interviews also explored how gender and sexuality were addressed within the school environment more broadly (see Appendix P for outline of questions). The interviews were conducted in a private room at the school where the teacher worked and took place throughout the school day or after school. The interviews ranged in length from 21 to 57 minutes.

**Tertiary education**

*Tertiary students.* Group interviews were used to collect data from tertiary students. Easy access to tertiary participants and the large number of tertiary students willing to participate meant limitations associated with the use of group interviews with secondary students (participants not feeling comfortable or one participant dominating conversation) were not as relevant at the tertiary level. Even if some of these limitations did occur the large number of participants from this level of education meant that there would still be a broad range of detailed accounts. Group interviews also have a number of strengths which enhanced data collection. Strengths include the ability for participants to consider their own and others’ experiences and understanding (Patton, 1990) and the collection of data that highlights a range of different views (Frith, 2000). The varying views and experiences of different participants within the group interviews were helpful in prompting recall or thought from other participants. For example, many of the groups had participants from a range of subject majors which allowed students to reflect on how
their course was similar or different to others. These reflections would not have been possible in an individual interview.

It was important to consider the participants’ subjectivities during the group interview planning process (Krueger & Casey, 2009; Patton, 1990). While I have outlined the benefits of having a variety of students from different subject areas within group interviews, participants’ experiences should not differ too much (Krueger & Casey, 2009; Patton, 1990). If participants’ experiences differ too greatly on the topic of interest it can impact the quality of data that is collected (Krueger & Casey, 2009). For example, having groups of participants with very different experiences and views may reduce the willingness of some participants to contribute to conversation. I took this into consideration when organising group interviews. I made a decision that I did not want to include cisgender individuals in a group interview I planned with students I knew to be trans. This decision was made after reflecting on some of the statements that were made in previous group interviews. Experience with previous group interviews suggested that including trans and cisgender individuals in one group might not allow for an in-depth exploration of all participants’ discursive understandings and experiences. As a result of these reflections I chose to restrict group interview 9 to trans participants.

In total nine group interviews took place between September 2015 and May 2017 (see Appendix Q for details about participants in each group). The long period of data collection allowed me time to access a range of people with different genders, sexualities and courses, diversity I thought was important to include. The groups were held in a meeting room on one of the education institutions campuses. The interviews were semi-structured (see Appendix R for outline of questions).
Participants were provided with a $15 grocery voucher to cover any expenses related to their participation in the group interview. Those participants who signed up via the research participation website were not given a voucher because they were given experiment participation credits, which translated into course credit. After the group interview, participants were provided with a list of services available for information and support in relation to gender and sexuality.

Tertiary educators. As with secondary educators, interviews were chosen to collect data from tertiary educators. This method allowed lecturers to talk in detail about their teaching practices (Boyce & Neale, 2006). Interviews took place between November of 2015 and August of 2016 and were held in the educator’s office or a meeting room on campus. The interviews were semi structured (see Appendix S for outline of questions) and ranged in length from 42 to 70 minutes.

Transcription

All of the interview data was transcribed. The majority of the transcription was done by me, and a paid transcriptionist completed two of the group interviews. Transcripts were transcribed in a way that noted where two people spoke at the same time. Behaviours were also recorded on the transcripts, this included laughter, significant pauses and utterances like um. To maintain participant anonymity any identifying information was removed during the process of transcription. This included removing names of specific tertiary subjects or departments, names of schools, and names of people or places. These were replaced with code names (e.g., My student (Olly) asked a question) or more general descriptions (e.g., I’m a 2nd year (Science subject) student).
The quotes presented in chapters 5, 6 and 7 include some conventions that indicate how or if they have been edited. Round brackets (as outlined above) indicate where the participants’ words have been changed to include a more general description. Round brackets are also used to indicate non-speech behaviour like laughter. Square brackets containing three dots indicate parts of the quote that have been removed for conciseness and to enhance the ease of reading. The words that have been removed do not impact the meaning of the extract. Square brackets also indicate insertions made by me to provide clarity. For example, to indicate what a participant was talking about when they said “it’s important”.

**Data analysis**

Foucauldian discourse analysis was used to analyse data from all participant groups. Parker (1992) and Willig (2008) have both written guides on how to perform Foucauldian discourse analysis. Both of these guides have similar steps with slightly different ways of conceptualising the process. Willig’s six steps focus on directions for what to look for in the text, while Parker’s 20 steps provide specific questions to ask while exploring the data. I found both of these guides useful in gaining a greater understanding of the analytic process. Drawing on the steps from both of these guides I created a set of analytic concepts for myself. The analytic concepts I used cover the same content as the steps in Parker (1992) and Willig (2006) but with slightly different emphasis and groupings of ideas. They also include a combination of the directive approach of Willig’s (2006) steps and the question-based approach of Parker’s (1992) steps. See Table 1 for a summary of my analytic concepts alongside a summary of Parker’s (1992) and Willig’s (2006) steps.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1</th>
<th>Steps for Foucauldian discourse analysis</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parker’s steps</td>
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<tr>
<td>A discourse is realised in texts:</td>
<td>Discursive Constructions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Treat objects as texts which are put into words. Explore connotations through free associations” (Parker, 1992, p.7)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>A discourse is about objects:</td>
<td>Discourses</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Ask what objects are referred to and describe. Talking about the talk as if it were an object” (Parker 1992, p.9)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>A discourse contains subjects:</td>
<td>Action Orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“What types of people are talked about in this discourse? “Think” about what they can say in this discourse.” (Parker, 1992, p.10)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>A discourse is a coherent system of meaning: Map the “world this discourse presents” “How would a text using this discourse deal with objections to terminolology?” (Parker 1992, p.12)</td>
<td>Positioning’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A discourse refers to other discourses. Setting different discourses against each other and looking at the different objects they constitute? “Identify points of overlap and where what look like the same object are constructed in different ways” (Parker 1992, p.14)</td>
<td>Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A discourse reflects on its own way of speaking “Refer to other texts to elaborate discourse as it occurs” “Reflect on terms used to describe discourse involves moral/political choices on part of analyst.” (Parker, 1992, p.15)</td>
<td>Subjectivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A discourse is historically located: “How and where has the discourse emerged?” “How have they changed/ told a story.” (Parker, 1992, p.15)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Discourses support institutions: Which “institutions are reinforced by a discourse”? Which “institutions are attacked or subverted”? (Parker, 1992, p.18)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Discourses reproduce power relations: “Which people gain/ loose from employment of discourse”? “Who would want to promote/dissolve”? (Parker, 1992, p.19)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discourses have ideological effects: “Showing how discourses link with other discourses that sanction oppression” “Showing how discourses allow dominant groups to tell their narrative about the past to justify the present.” (Parker, 1992, p.20)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The analytic concepts that I developed were particularly useful for analysing my data as my research focuses on people, power, institutions and availability of discourses. By grouping consideration about each of these aspects together within one analytic concept, it focused and organised the analytic process.

Data analysis was a continual and non-linear process. It began during the interviews when I decided what follow up questions to ask and continued as I wrote and edited my findings chapters. The first formal step of data analysis involved identifying the initial discursive ideas. To do this I read all of the interview transcripts and coded relevant sections with an initial discursive idea (while the same steps were used for each participant group, the initial stages of analysis was completed separately for each group). Relevant sections were those that included the constructs of interest. These were anything related to gender and sexuality or where people learnt about these concepts. Items related to gender and sexuality that provided information about these constructs were also coded. These included marriage, relationships, sex (both the act and assigned at birth), and families. Coding produced initial discursive constructions including discourses of education (e.g., professionalism, social justice, limits of job), discourses of gender and sexuality (e.g., binary, biological essentialism, individual choice), and sources of information about gender and sexuality (e.g., education, peers, the media). Some sections of the interviews were not easily categorised into an initial discursive idea, so these were coded as miscellaneous. The initial discursive ideas were informed by, but not restricted to, those that I had identified in previous research. The coding of initial discursive ideas was done using the programme QDA Miner Lite. This programme allowed me to label sections of transcript with initial discursive ideas using the coding function. During coding I also made notes about other analytic concepts outlined in Table 1. These included
notes about the different constructions of gender and sexuality the participant was drawing on.

Once I had coded all the initial discursive ideas, I used QDA Miner Lite to compile all examples of a particular discursive idea. I was then able to isolate discursive ideas and their examples into separate documents to allow for further analysis (this was done separately for each of the four participant groups). The other analytic concepts outlined within Table 1 were used to gain a greater understanding about each of the initial discursive ideas. Specifically, how each discursive idea; constructed people, the arguments they contained, systems of power, connected concepts and their availability within education settings. For some of the discursive constructions I also explored their history (e.g., the gay agenda presented in Chapter 7). This was only done for some discursive constructions, as for others the history was not relevant within the context of this research (e.g., the evaluation of queer subjectivities presented in Chapter 5).

Along with using my analytic concepts to analyse the data I also performed the 4th and 5th steps of Braun and Clarke’s (2006) approach to thematic analysis. While Braun and Clarke label this a guide to thematic analysis they also acknowledge the commonality in processes across qualitative data analysis, including those between thematic and discourse analysis. Braun and Clarke’s (2006) steps informed my process of revising, recoding and renaming concepts. While analysing the initial discursive ideas in more detail they were renamed and some were combined. The use of these steps in the analytic process helped to clarify where concepts that had originally been categorised as two different initial discursive ideas actually constructed people, arguments and systems of power in the same way and therefore were really part of one larger discourse. When this
occurred, the discursive ideas were combined and renamed to better encompass all of the concepts.

Once the data from each of the different participant groups had been unpacked, they were compared. In this comparison I explored if there were any discourses that were commonly drawn upon by all participant groups (secondary students, secondary educators, tertiary students and tertiary educators) and if there were any discourses unique to certain participant groups. I also explored the different ways that the same discourse was drawn upon by different participant subjectivities (e.g., women, men, trans, queer and heterosexual). Once I felt like I had a good understanding of the availability and content within each of the discourses I made decisions about which discourses and which aspects of these discourses to present within this research.

This process resulted in two key categories of discursive constructions of gender and sexuality, restrictive and diverse. My decision to label individual discourses under the umbrella of restrictive or diverse involved a subjective process (Parker, 1992). As outlined in Chapter 2, discourses reproduce power dynamics which privilege some subjectivities and marginalise others (Foucault, 1977; Parker, 1992; Willig, 2008). Labelling discourses as restrictive or diverse involved analysing the power dynamics and the available subject positions for a diverse range of genders and sexualities. I labelled discourses restrictive when they had limited subject positions in relation to gender and sexuality and those positions that were available included large discrepancies in power (e.g., they contained marginalised and privileged subjectivities). In contrast, I used the term diverse discourse to refer to discourses that had more subject positions available and included less discrepancies in power between the available subject positions. The terms restrictive and diverse are for the most part used comparatively. For example, when I call
a discourse diverse, I do not mean it is the perfect way to understand a concept, instead, I mean compared to a restrictive discourse, it contains a broader range of valued subject positions.

During analysis I identified a range of examples of the way restrictive and diverse discourses constructed people, arguments and systems of power. As such it was not possible to include all of these examples within this thesis. I made decisions about which examples and discursive constructions would be presented within this thesis by thinking about those that would most effectively answer my research questions. My decision resulted in three findings chapters. The first focuses on the systems of power and material effects for different people when restrictive discourses are reproduced within education. The second explores the role educators play in reproducing restrictive discourses and the arguments and connected ideas that influence this practice. The final findings chapter explores how people choose to resist restrictive constructions of gender and sexuality within education settings and disrupt systems of power. By doing this they make diverse discourses and subject positions more available within education settings.
Chapter 5: Exploring the negative effects of restrictive discourses of gender and sexuality

As documented in Chapter 3, past research has demonstrated restrictive discourses of gender and sexuality are regularly reproduced within education settings. This chapter explores the outcomes of restrictive discourses of gender and sexuality by exploring secondary and tertiary students’ experiences. My analysis shows restrictive discourses continue to be reproduced within education settings, perpetuating constructions that privilege certain groups and stigmatise others. Within my analysis I specifically identify how restrictive discourses result in problematic outcomes including unequal treatment, expectations about social roles and abilities, and double standards of behaviour. This chapter builds upon past research by documenting the continued reproduction of restrictive constructions of gender and sexuality within the specific context of secondary and tertiary settings in the South Island of Aotearoa New Zealand.

This chapter primarily explores what Willig (2008) calls positioning and subjectivity. My analysis investigates positioning by exploring the different subject positions available within the restrictive discourses identified within my research. I also include analysis of subjectivity by exploring how these discourses influence the way people are able to experience the world. This chapter is organised in three sections, each section addresses a different outcome of restrictive discourses of gender and sexuality. In the first section I explore how problematic hierarchies of power reproduced within heteronormativity result in differential treatment for queer individuals. Following this, I investigate the ways that restrictive discourses of gender constrain young people’s academic pursuits through the expectations they construct about social roles and abilities.
In the final section, I explore how the intersection of discourses of gender and sexuality create subjective experiences of sex (the act) and sexuality for women and men.

**Problematic Hierarchies of Power**

In this section I focus on problematic hierarchies of power reproduced within discourses of heteronormativity. These hierarchies result in queer people being held to a different standard than their heterosexual peers. Unequal treatment was illustrated by participants when they evaluated queer subjectivities and made assumptions of heterosexuality. I begin by analysing the evaluation of queer subjectivities and then explore assumptions of heterosexuality in a sub-section titled the burden of proof for queer relationships.

**Evaluation of queer subjectivities**

The ‘normative’ evaluation of queer subjectivities by some of the participants provides an illustration of the problematic hierarchies of power embedded within discourses of heteronormativity. Heteronormativity constructs a hierarchy where heterosexuals, who are in the privileged subject position, can evaluate those who take up marginalised positions. Burt provided an example of evaluating queer subjectivities when he talked about other people’s reaction to a gay man on a reality television show.

Burt: Yeah coz sexuality I know through one of the guys that has that, they’re all pretty open with him. They were pretty understanding.

Katie: So, he’s gay or?

Burt: Yeah one of them is. (individual interview, secondary student, Littletown High)

This response arose as a result of a discussion about what Burt learnt about gender and sexuality outside of the school context. While the response does not directly relate to what Burt is learning within education it does provide information about the discourses that
Burt has access to. As shown by my analysis below, Burt’s statement implies that discourses of heteronormativity are an unquestioned set of ideas within the various context in his life.

Burt’s evaluation is indicated when he states “they’re all pretty open with him. They were pretty understanding”. Burt’s need to say how others felt about the gay man indicates the pervasive nature of discourses of heteronormativity, which construct the possibility for queer subjectivities to be accepted or not accepted. This range of possible attitudes towards queer subjectivities normalises evaluative statements to indicate how a particular person or group feel about queer subjectivities. Burt makes no mention of how the gay man treated the heterosexual people on the show. This further illustrates privileged and marginalised subject positions held by heterosexual and queer subjectivities within the discourses of heteronormativity. Only heterosexuals have the ability to evaluate queer subjectivities. In the extract above, the evaluation was generally positive as the gay man was tolerated or accepted. The outcome of evaluation can also be negative and result in harassment. The following extract further explores the types of evaluation Burt constructed as occurring within society.

Burt: It’s probably more just putting them down and saying “what are you doing?” and things like that.
Katie: Ok so just generally kind of questioning their?
Burt: Yip
Katie: And that’s people who might be gay or bisexual or lesbian?
Burt: Yeah
Katie: Do people ever say those kind of things about people who are straight?
Burt: No, you don’t really hear as much about that. (individual interview, secondary student, Littletown High)
Burt seemed to take for granted that those occupying queer subject positions are most likely to be evaluated by their peers and suggested this evaluation can be negative and result in harassment. Interpreted through Foucault’s (1977) theory of disciplinary power this harassment can be understood as policing (as outlined in Chapter 2). Lisa’s experience (below) illustrates how policing, in the form of harassment, functions to pressure people to comply with gendered expectations (Anderson & Grinberg, 1998; Driver, 1985; Foucault, 1977).

The following response came up during a discussion about if Lisa thought there would be differences between the environment around gender and sexuality within secondary and tertiary education. Lisa indicated that she believed there would be differences as a result of an increased level of maturity within tertiary education. She provided the following as an example of “little kids” being “weird about things”.

Like I cut my hair the other day and my brother on the bus he’s like “Oh jeez, oh you look like a lesbian”. […] And then there’s this girl sitting next to me on the bus and [my brother is] going “yeah she’s a lesbian now” and she’s going “oh ewww” so they just act so much, it’s not like they’re saying it’s a negative thing, but they’re just, it’s different. (Lisa, individual interview, secondary student, Littletown High)

Getting a haircut resulted in Lisa’s brother perceiving her as acting outside of ‘feminine norms’ (Butler, 1999; Foucault, 1977). The policing appears to be an attempt to draw attention to this ‘non-normative’ behaviour, possibly with the aim of getting Lisa to conform to ‘feminine norms’ in the future. This type of policing can be explained through Judith Butler’s heterosexual matrix (Butler, 1999) outlined in Chapter 2. When interpreted through the heterosexual matrix, Lisa’s brother ‘accused’ her of being a lesbian because she was not embodying femininity in a way that was intelligible to him (Butler, 1999, 2004). Lisa suggested that her brother’s reaction to her haircut constructed lesbian subjectivities as different rather than negative. While Lisa perceived this incident
as innocuous, her brother could also be interpreted as purposefully drawing upon a discourse of heteronormativity to taunt Lisa. The discourse of heteronormativity constructs lesbians as less than heterosexuals and therefore as something people should not want to be. Lisa’s brother’s comments on her haircut can therefore be interpreted as a purposeful act of policing. He wanted Lisa to feel bad about her haircut and remind people on the bus that being a lesbian is undesirable.

Lisa’s experience also illustrates subjectification, in that she was constrained by the discourses other people used to construct her (Butler, 1997; Davies, 2006). Regardless of Lisa’s reasons for this haircut or how she interprets it, others’ interpretations of the haircut influence how she is able to feel about it. Lisa was labelled a lesbian by her brother because he perceived her as ‘acting like’ a lesbian by cutting her hair. In this way he interpreted Lisa’s performance of gender as linked to her sexuality. Previous research findings also show that performance of gender rather than sexuality influences policing in the form of harassment. Several researchers documented the commonplace harassment of people who are not queer but are perceived to be so (Chambers, Loon, et al., 2004; Chambers, Tincknell, et al., 2004; Sexton, 2012). Those who are queer but do a good job of ‘acting straight’ can avoid this type of attack, and in some cases they may even take up the role of bully to protect their own subjectivity (McDermott, Roen, & Scourfield, 2008; O’Conor, 1993; Sexton, 2012; Town, 2002). As such, both subjectivity and the way subjectivity is interpreted by others plays a role in the availability of different subject positions.

Brenda, a tertiary student who took part in group interview 5, provided another example of the evaluation of queer subjectivities: “I went to an all girls’ school and there was no lesbians or anything, and I was fully accepting of it”. This recollection came up
in response to a question about Brenda’s perception that University was more liberal than secondary education. Her statement was used as part of the comparison between her secondary and tertiary education experiences.

Brenda’s recollection included an evaluation of queer subjectivities, constructing herself as a ‘tolerant heterosexual’. Participants within my research talked about the importance of accepting queer subjectivities because within the current culture in New Zealand there is an expectation that people will not be homophobic. “Yeah the stigma is on people who are intolerant and it kind of sounds bad when you think about it, but we rip people out for being sexist or homophobic.” (Bull, group interview 8 tertiary student, straight male). Bull’s reflection arose during a group discussion about the supportive and diverse culture of their university. Bull’s reference to an expectation of ‘acceptance’ towards queer subjectivities helps to explain Brenda’s clear articulation of her tolerance. It may be particularly important for cisgender heterosexual people to make evaluative statements voicing their acceptance of queer subjectivities in order to avoid the negative repercussions and the “stigma” of being “intolerant”. Brenda’s statement also includes assumptions about the burden of proof for queer relationships, I will analyse this assumption in the following section.

**The burden of proof for queer relationships**

Within this section I highlight the burden of proof that is often required for queer subjectivities and relationships. The ‘natural’ status of heterosexuality within the discourse of heteronormativity constructs heterosexuality as the default. This default means people are assumed to be heterosexual because heterosexuality is the norm. As a result of this norm, queer subjectivities must be stated, and queer relationships proved.
The examples I present highlight the problematic nature of these assumptions and the heteronormative ideas and policies they reproduce.

To fully explore the nuanced nature of the discourses participants reproduced, it is important to acknowledge that social understandings are not as simple as assumed heterosexuality. As explored in the previous section when people are ‘accused’ of being queer (e.g., Lisa after her haircut) it is usually about their gender performances (e.g., a man being interested in things that are constructed as feminine) rather than sexual/romantic subjectivities. In terms of assumptions about sexual/romantic subjectivities, assumptions of heterosexuality are commonplace within education contexts. These heterosexual norms appear to be maintained in a cyclic fashion. People assume people are heterosexual because it is constructed as normative. Along with this, people do not want to label others as queer because within a discourse of heteronormativity this is often perceived as negative or lesser. While people might be willing to use gay as an insult (e.g., Lisa’s experience) they may be less willing to sincerely label someone queer. People therefore assume others are heterosexual unless they have specific knowledge otherwise, because within the discourse of heteronormativity this is the most ‘respectful’ thing to do.

The statement from Brenda, that I introduced in the section above, provides an example of the burden of proof for queer relationships. (“I went to an all girls’ school and there was no lesbians or anything”). Research conducted in Aotearoa New Zealand during 2012 found that more than 7% of the 8000 secondary school students identified as a sexuality other than heterosexual (Clark et al., 2014). It is therefore statistically improbable that there were no lesbians at Brenda’s school. Her interpretation that there
were no lesbians at her school indicates that she required proof of their subjectivities. In the absence of this proof, Brenda assumed that all her peers were heterosexual.

Water, a tertiary student, provided another example of the burden of proof for queer relationships. The following quote arose from a question about similarities or differences between secondary education and the diverse and supportive culture this group referred to within their university. Water’s example indicates how the heteronormative assumptions within the burden of proof for queer relationships can be embedded within policy that creates unfair precedents for queer compared to heterosexual couples.

For my year 13 ball I wanted to invite my best friend who went to a different high school and was a girl. And I had to get my dad to write a letter to the principal to say that she was my girlfriend coz otherwise I wasn’t allowed to take a female partner. So, I had to prove that I was dating her by getting dad to write a letter to the school. (Water, group interview 8, tertiary student)

While Water appeared to be heterosexual, indicated by recording her sexuality as straight and implied by her narrative (although there is some room for interpretation), she does provide important information about heteronormative school policies. Water’s emphasis on the need to provide evidence that she and her friend were dating implied different rules for queer and heterosexual couples within her school. The policy described by Water, is founded on a discourse of heteronormativity and means that students who are queer and wish to take a same-sex partner to the ball are put in a difficult position. The construction of queer relationships as ‘non-normative’ means some young people may not be ‘out’ to their parents. This is a problem given that Water indicated that her dad was the one required to provide proof of the relationship. School policies, like the one Water describes, therefore require queer students to ‘out’ themselves to their parents to gain the required proof. Heteronormative policies like this are also problematic for students with
parents who do not approve of (or know of) their relationship. Parents who do not approve may refuse to provide consent, meaning queer students are unable to attend together. Even if the school policy requires heterosexual couples to provide proof of their relationship, the same problems are less likely to arise because of the ‘accepted’ and ‘natural’ status of heterosexuality. Work exploring heteronormativity at school balls in Aotearoa New Zealand documented similar policies. These include policies that only allow heterosexual couples to attend (Smith, 2015; Smith et al., 2016) or requiring parental evidence of the relationship and participation in compulsory counselling sessions prior to attendance (Allen, 2019a).

Water’s example also suggests that there is an expectation that young people are in relationships. The policy that Water talked about constructs being in a relationship as normative, and the ball as only a space for couples. Other research also documents school balls in Aotearoa New Zealand as couple-centric spaces (Smith, 2015; Smith et al., 2016). The focus on couples is problematic for students who wish to take a friend, because a person you are dating is constructed as the only legitimate person to take to the ball. The expectation of a romantic partner is likely driven by the societal focus on heterosexual monogamous relationships (Barker, 2005; Conley, Moors, Matsick, & Ziegler, 2013; Conley, Ziegler, Moors, Matsick, & Valentine, 2013; Robinson, 1997). Heteronormativity emphasises entering into monogamous long-term relationships and lays out normative practices for these relationships (Barker, 2005; Robinson, 1997; Rubin, 1984). Society also privileges certain relationships over others. At the top of this hierarchy is the monogamous heterosexual marriage (Barker, 2005; Rubin, 1984). When heteronormativity and these romantic and monogamous discourses are drawn upon in the
development of school policy, they discount other important relationships within students’ lives, for example the best friend Water described.

In this section I have explored how hierarchies embedded within the discourse of heteronormativity have negative effects for those who are not heterosexual. Specifically, I presented evidence that discourses of heteronormativity allow heterosexuals to make evaluative statements about queer subjectivities, normalise the harassment of those perceived to be queer and create assumptions of heterosexuality that place a burden of proof on queer relationships. When heteronormativity is reproduced within education these are the types of ideas that are implicitly reproduced. These discourses have negative implications for students whose relationships, or the relationships within their families, do not align with these heteronormative ideals.

**Restrictive discourses, social roles and academic pursuit**

This section explores how binary discourses of gender affect constructions of appropriate social roles of women and men. Restrictive constructions of appropriate social roles have implications for a range of people. Through my analysis, I will show how binary discourses can influence the types of subjects students take, the opportunities presented to them, the types of careers they pursue, and the way they are treated when they choose certain career paths.

It is important to note that the analysis within this section focuses on the restrictions within binary discourses of gender. These discourses only contain subject positions for women and men, meaning that there are no available subject positions for non-binary or other trans subjectivities. As such the restrictions within this section focus on the limited way binary discourses discursively construct women and men. The absence
of subject positions for other genders within binary discourses is also a problem, but one that was not often raised by participants (this is explored in more detail in Chapter 7).

Restricted constructions of women and men, within binary discourses of gender, influenced students’ understandings about the types of subjects they should take.

Katie: And you said there are some subjects that have a lot of girls why do you think there are more girls in those subjects?

Rikki: Because it’s I think the stereotypes of how males are meant to be like strong and are meant to take like blokey subjects like PE and mechanics, when that’s not really true you can do whatever you enjoy. […] like if there wasn’t any pressure on males maybe they would take more subjects like that [referring to dance and drama], and same with females going into mechanics and stuff like that. (individual interview, secondary student, Riverview High)

During his interview, Rikki explained that only certain subjects are constructed as appropriate for men. He implied taking subjects that are not “blokey” may have an impact on men’s masculine status. It is important to note that Rikki challenged these notions with both his words (“stereotypes”) and his actions (the subjects he chose to take). In another part of the interview Rikki explained that he takes both drama and dance, subjects which he would probably not label “blokey”. It is possible that Rikki’s status as a bisexual man allows him the confidence to challenge these norms. Connell’s (2005) hierarchy of masculinities is useful for understanding Rikki’s subject choice. Within this theory there is a hierarchy of masculinities ranging from hegemonic to subordinate. Other masculinities fall between these, each with varying levels of privilege and status. Also, according to the heterosexual matrix taking up hegemonic masculinity requires heterosexuality (Butler, 1999). When framed within these theories, taking subjects that are not “blokey” is unlikely to influence Rikki’s masculine status. Rikki’s sexuality relegates him to a subordinate masculinity, meaning he is already occupying one of the least privileged forms of masculinity. Regardless of the classes he chooses, the subject
position of hegemonic masculinity is not available to him. A man to who hegemonic masculinity was an available subject position might be more impacted by taking courses constructed as feminine.

Rikki also commented on women’s subject choices, suggesting that they might feel “pressure” to comply with feminine norms by not taking “blokey” subjects. Kelly’s understanding of women’s subject choices contrasted with Rikki’s. In the course of a discussion about if particular science subjects were gendered and why Kelly explained that women’s subject choices are likely influenced by the messages they receive about their competency. “I feel like there’s this sort of idea amongst our age […] that, you know like woman are less likely to be able to achieve in the […] heavy sciences.” (Kelly, group interview 1, tertiary student). Kelly suggested that discourses that construct women as less capable than men are commonly reproduced within education.

Research assistant: Do you think it’s just possible that women maybe don’t have as much interest in those topics?

Kelly: I think that’s framed by like their idea of not being able to do well in those topics, or maybe even in earlier schooling, like peers and stuff, I don’t know, I’m thinking teachers’ ideas of whose, who fits into those categories and that sort of pushing like that sort general direction, yeah. (group interview 1, tertiary student)

Kelly constructed the reproduction of restrictive discourses by peers and teachers, as impacting young women’s subject choices and career pursuits. Kelly specifically constructed teachers as figures of authority who impact students’ constructions of their capabilities from an early age. She implied that teachers have the power to influence girls’ career aspirations by reproducing discourses which place limits on their abilities. Kelly’s reference to peers implies that these young girls take up the discourses presented to them by figures of authority and apply them to themselves and others.
Amy also made observations about the role of education in reproducing constructions that limit young women’s understandings of appropriate jobs. The following response arose in the course of a discussion after I asked a question about gendered dominated subjects within tertiary education and if anything needed to be done about this.

For post high school things we had people from all the different universities come and talk to us, we didn’t have anyone from any polytechs, or apprenticeship places or anything […]. Whereas my brother said they have people from lots of engineering firms and stuff come and talk to the guys about doing apprenticeships, I went to an all-girls. [...] I don’t think anyone ever really said to me that there are lots of options for doing apprenticeships. (Amy, group interview 3, tertiary student)

Amy constructed her school as restricting girls’ access to career options. Amy appeared to label her school’s practice as restrictive because the girls were only presented with career opportunities understood as fitting with ‘women’s roles’. Amy contrasted her experience at a single sex girls’ school with her brother’s experience. She believed the students at her brother’s school were exposed to a broader range of opportunities.

The examples I have presented, from Rikki, Kelly and Amy show how binary discourses of gender restrict women and men’s career pursuits in different ways. While both women and men were constructed as needing to adhere to ‘gendered norms’, only women were constructed as having limited abilities. Knowledge of the distinct restrictions that binary discourses of gender place on women and men suggest that multiple approaches may be needed to overcome these restrictive constructions. Constructions of both ability and gender norms appear to play a role in restricting the type of study and occupations people think they should pursue, therefore both need to be targeted for effective change to occur. This information could be useful in the development of policies addressing gender inequalities within education.
Even when girls or women are encouraged into ‘traditionally masculine’ subjects they still face challenges. The following narrative comes from a group interview comprised of friends who had attended the same high school, three of them chose to study the same science subject at university. The following extracts begin by exploring how their secondary school teacher encouraged them into the subject by constructing them as able, followed by the challenges they faced through their pursuit of the subject at university.

The following quotes come from a discussion that arose in response to a question I asked about if gender differences in enrolment within tertiary education was a problem and if anything should be done about it. The young women talked about the importance of their teacher in encouraging them to pursue a career in a science subject. “Our teacher was amazing […] she was really interested in getting girls into (science subject) and getting them through into the industry. And so, she kind of drilled this into us” (Gabby, group interview 4, tertiary student). Their teacher’s resistance, to dominant discourses of women’s career options, appeared to have been an important influence for these young women. Unfortunately, when they reached university, dominant ideas about their course being a ‘man’s domain’ were continually reproduced by their peers.

I’ve told a couple of people I was doing (science subject) they’re like, “Wait you do (science subject)?” like “Isn’t that a guy’s thing?” or like “you don’t look like you do (science subject)” Ok well I do. […] when you say you do it as a female they’re like “Wow really, Why?” (Gabby, group interview 4, tertiary student)

Questions about if they really took the subject could be interpreted as questions about these women’s right to pursue a career in the subject. This policing could be viewed as attempting to get women to pursue careers that are constructed as feminine or that women are constructed to be more capable of.
The women felt that support and contact with other women taking the course was important. These women were lucky to have each other for support within the male dominated classes. “So many guys compared to the ratio between women. […] this year I haven’t met a single lecturer in (science subject) who’s a female, or a tutor or […], lab monitors yeah, they’re all men” (Briana, group interview 4, tertiary student). To make sure other women in the course had support they started a club to help women in the subject connect with each other.

The three of us actually have started a club[…] to try and get more women like in contact with each other who are doing (science subject) yeah because it’s, it’s a little bit daunting walking into a room and you know noticeably being one of the only people who are you know female in the class. (Gabby, group interview 4, tertiary student)

By using the term daunting Gabby implied that the underrepresentation of women made the classroom an uninviting space for her and her friends. Briana also commented on how she felt about the class environment.

Research assistant: So how does that make you guys feel that it’s mainly like that? Male dominated.

Briana: A bit awkward like I don’t really belong in the class. (group interview 4, tertiary student)

The extracts I have presented suggest discursive constructions of gender that impact women’s choices to enter a particular field are not the only constructions that constrain women. Even after resisting these constructions, women are constrained by the way they are constructed by others. While these women were able to take up the subject position and be students within this science subject, their gender effected their experience. They experienced social repercussions for challenging the dominant construction of what students in this science subject ‘should look like’ and as a result were reminded of their difference. Having experiences (like the ones described by these women) may deter
people from feeling like they should continue with their course of study. While Gabby and her friends were able to support each other through what might be described as an unwelcome atmosphere, not all women have the same support. My analysis shows the importance of challenging discursive constructions which frame certain jobs as for a particular gender. This will allow a range of people to feel they are capable of pursuing a wide range of careers and feel like they belong within both their training and the workforce.

In this section I have presented examples of how restrictive discourses of binary gender affect career pursuits. Participants provided examples of gendered constructions within education that limit students’ subject decisions. These decisions appear to be influenced by dominant constructions of masculinity and femininity, and gendered constructions of capabilities. Differences in gendered work are important because they feed into larger patterns of inequality. For example, those careers that are commonly constructed as masculine (e.g., politician, scientist, engineer) tend to have higher pay and higher status. This higher status is often reflected in influence over knowledge and decisions that affect a range of people. In contrast jobs that are often constructed as feminine (e.g., nurses, hairdressers, caregivers) tend to be lower paid and have less control over knowledge and decisions within society. Challenging gendered constructions within education settings could help to expand students’ understandings of suitable careers. Changing these constructions might also have positive consequences for representation of gender in a range of different careers which currently have gender disparities.

**Intersections of gender and sexuality**

This section explores the participants’ talk about intersections between gender and sexuality and how this creates problematic normative sexual behaviour. Women within
my research talked about how intersections of gender and sexuality resulted in hierarchies (like male privilege) that had a range of negative impacts on their lives. Specifically, women talked about how privileged constructions of masculinity influence the way women are expected to enact their femininity. This section explores the concept of subjectivity (Willig, 2008) by analysing how normative constructions of (hetero)sexuality affect women and men in different ways.

Participants problematised biological constructions of men’s (hetero)sexuality, because these constructions normalise ‘the predatory male’. Discourses which construct men’s active (hetero)sexuality as biological, normalise their ‘uncontrollable’ sex drive and their position as the pursuer and active partner in sexual acts (Allen, 2003a; Elliott, 2003; Gavey, 1992, 2005). The construction of men as having an uncontrollable sex drive, forces women into the role of possible victim of this active (hetero)sexuality. The following quotes were a result of a discussion about Hazel’s interest in topics related to sexual violence. I asked Hazel if she thought those types of topics should be talked about within secondary schools. Hazel drew upon the discourse of the predatory male and explained the negative impact this discourse can have on the lives of women.

Yip definitely there’s way too much victim blaming like I think if girls drink too much they get told, oh it’s your fault for drinking too much you shouldn’t get drunk. Or you shouldn’t wear that, or you shouldn’t wear this, and then it won’t happen to you. But then if guys are drunk and do that stuff [harassing women] they’re like oh I was drunk, it’s not their fault. Basically, that’s what I’ve witnessed a lot of and see a lot of, obviously with that Stanford rape case. (Hazel, individual interview secondary student, Rural High)

In the extract above Hazel refers to the Stanford rape case (People vs Turner, 2015). This case was widely publicised in the news and social media during the time I was collecting data. I will expand on this case and the relevance to my research later in this section.
Hazel identified the predatory heterosexual male as linking to discourses of victim blame. Women’s responsibility is one of the ideas within the discourse of victim blame. This idea dictates that it is a woman’s responsibility to keep herself safe from sexual violence (Bedera & Nordmeyer, 2015). The expectation that women will keep themselves safe means that if something happens to a woman, her behaviour is often the focus (Hackman, Pember, Wilkerson, Burton, & Usdan, 2017; Zaleski, Gundersen, Baes, Estupinian, & Vergara, 2016). Discourses of victim blame also construct women as in control of men’s sexual drive. Women are expected to audit their behaviour to make sure that they are protecting themselves by not being drunk and/or not wearing clothing that could be seen as encouraging men’s advances.

The discourse of victim blame has implications for women and men’s subjectivities. Willig (2008) describes discourses as having an impact on subjectivity because they allow or constrain the types of thoughts, experiences and feelings that individuals can have. Willig (2008) suggests that analysing discourses in relation to subjectivity requires the analyst to speculate. This is because we can never really know exactly what someone else is thinking and feeling, we can only infer their thoughts and feelings from the information that is available to us. I speculate that women drawing upon a discourse of victim blame may be made to feel responsible for the actions of others. For example, if a woman is attacked by a man, she and others are likely to focus on the way that her actions contributed to the event. Focusing on her actions may result in the woman feeling guilty for her actions and how they may have contributed to her assault. In contrast, within a discourse of victim blame, a man may be able to feel less guilty about his actions. If a man assaults a woman, the discourse of victim blame may allow him to minimise the role that he played by shifting the focus to the woman’s actions. While
Willig (2008) suggests subjectivity is the most speculative part of discourse analysis because we cannot be sure how people experience the world, Hazel did talk about the discourse of victim blame in relation to her own experiences. Hazel’s experience provides greater insight into if my speculations align with the thoughts and feelings she experienced in relation to this discourse.

In the previous paragraph I analysed Hazel’s critique of discourses of victim blame but in the section below she appears to draw on it to explain her experience. At the end of my analysis of the following extract I will discuss the contrast in Hazel’s attitude in each of the extracts about victim blame. In the extract below Hazel reflected on unwanted attention she received at a party. The extract was written in Hazel’s media journal, so unlike other quotes where brackets indicate researcher changes, the brackets in the following quote are Hazel’s words.

Throughout the night I couldn’t go talk to someone or do anything without someone grabbing me or touching me or making degrading comments aimed at me. (note that myself and these others were not drunk as such, we had had a few drinks but it was not enough to be able to excuse it). (Hazel, media journal, secondary student, Rural High)

Hazel made a point to note that she had been drinking but was “not drunk enough to be able to excuse it [unwanted attention]”. I present two possible interpretations for this reference to alcohol. Within the first interpretation Hazel could be read as framing her actions within a discourse of victim blame. She explained that she had been drinking but was not drunk enough to make the advances her responsibility. This frames her as having acted as a responsible woman, who thought about her actions to ensure her safety. The implication of this statement is that if Hazel had too much to drink, she would no longer be a ‘responsible woman’. Within the discourse of victim blame, at this point of inebriation the men’s actions could be excused because they would become her fault.
The second interpretation is that the others Hazel referred to are the young men who were harassing her. Interpreted through Hazel’s description of victim blame, if these men reach a certain threshold of drunkenness, they are no longer responsible for their harassment. If this interpretation is used then Hazel is saying that they were not at this threshold and therefore their actions could not be excused. Both of these interpretations could be applied simultaneously. If women and men are drinking together it could be interpreted that with each drink women are more responsible for men’s actions towards them, while with every drink men become less responsible for their actions. Either of these interpretations are negative for young women who must act ‘responsibly’ to avoid being blamed for any actions that might be perpetrated against them.

During her interview Hazel presented contrasting views on the discourse of victim blame by critiquing it (within the first extract) and using it to frame her actions (within the extract from her media journal). In the second extract Hazel constructed herself as a victim of men’s advances and used justifications about the amount of alcohol she had consumed to make sure she was not cast as an ‘irresponsible woman’. One explanation for these apparently contradictory constructions is that Hazel only has limited discursive resources available to explain her actions (Parker, 1992; Willig, 2008). Lemke (1995, p.24) suggests that “we speak with the voices of our communities, and to the extent that we have individual voices, we fashion them out of the social voices already available to us”. The discourse of victim blame, and the need to be a ‘responsible woman’ maybe the only voice present within Hazel’s community. This is one interpretation of why she felt the need to justify the alcohol consumption of her and others at the party. While she acknowledged discourses of victim blame are problematic and unfair, she has not been provided with other ways to think about the behaviour. Another interpretation is that she
thought that others (e.g., me as a researcher) would frame her within the discourse of victim blame. In this case explaining her actions within the discourse of victim blame was a way to manage others’ constructions of her. By making it clear that she was not drunk she was able to position herself as ‘acting responsibly’ and thus not to blame. This allowed her to make it clear she was not responsible for the young men’s actions, even if others framed her within a discourse of victim blame.

I would now like to return to the Stanford rape case. Hazel’s reference to this case linked her experiences and understandings to the discourses circulating within society at the time I was collecting data. The case involved Brock Turner, a Stanford college student, who was convicted of sexually assaulting another student while she was passed out drunk (Jackson, 2016 [newspaper article]; Powell, 2016). Statements made by Brock’s friends link this case to discourses (introduced above) about alcohol consumption and victim blame. Brock’s family and friends used his alcohol consumption to minimise the control he had over his actions. They also used language that drew upon discourses of victim blame, implying that Emily, the woman who Brock assaulted, was partially responsible for his actions. For example Leslie, a woman who has been friends with Brock since high school, wrote a letter to the judge saying “I don’t think it’s fair to base the fate of the next ten + years of his life on the decision of a girl who doesn’t remember anything but the amount she drank” (Rausmussen, 2015 [letter to judge], as cited in Jackson, 2016 [newspaper article]). Leslie’s statement draws upon the discourse of victim blame because she constructs Emily (the victim) as actively choosing to do something (press charges) that will affect Brock’s life. By framing the case this way Leslie constructs Brock as the victim of Emily’s choices. In contrast Leslie minimises the role that Brock played in the sexual assault stating “Brock, having a few too many drinks himself, is not in
control of his emotions” (Rausmussen, 2015, [letter to judge] as cited in Jackson, 2016 [newspaper article]). Leslie constructs the assault as a mutual interaction that was misunderstood because both parties had consumed too much alcohol.

The Brock Turner case was a particularly salient example of discourses around gender and sexuality during the time I was collecting data. The statements from Brock’s family and friends caused varying reactions from the public. This case was also talked about by Jo and Arthur during their group interview. They linked this case to their concerns about understandings of consent. The following quotes come from a section of discussion that started with a question about where the information from education sits within all their sources of information about gender and sexuality. This the group to talk about the lack of information within secondary education which resulted in the following example to highlight their concerns.

Jo: There’s that thing in the news at the moment with that kid Brock or whatever his name is and the idea that he just has absolutely no idea what he’s done wrong. The idea that he actually is that ignorant of the world that he can’t understand that it should not be sexy...to want to penetrate an unconscious person, that, that, that’s not normal. And that fact that, that is so out of his comprehension that, that isn’t normal means that something needs to be done.

Arthur: Yeah, the fact that he said that if I was given free [not sent to jail] I would go round high schools and talk about the dangers of alcohol and promiscuity [tone shows unable to believe].

Jo: As if that was the issue. (group interview 6, tertiary students)

Arthur explained that Brock’s response to his actions was to want to talk to young people about alcohol and promiscuity. Arthur and Jo seemed dumbfounded by the fact that Brock could write off his actions as merely a result of consuming too much alcohol. Jo and Arthur were clear that this case was rape and drew attention to the problematic misunderstandings of consent that circulate within society. Jo suggested that everyone should already understand that this was not consensual sex, but she also conceded that evidently not everyone does and that something needs to be done. Jo advocated for
resistance to current discursive constructions of sex and consent as a way to reduce the occurrence of sexual violence. Dominant discourses of gender and sexuality play a role in maintaining current problematic understandings of sexual violence which allow the victim to be blamed and perpetrators to minimise their culpability.

The concerns about consent, raised by Jo and Arthur, are not confined to the social sphere. Court cases about rape also appear to frame consent within discourses which share some of the problematic ideas evident in discourses of victim blame. Due to the way that consent is framed within a court setting, victims’ actions are often the centre of inquiry (Ehrlich, 1998). The focus is on the victim’s actions because consent is often framed in terms of its absence. For example, it is expected that the absence of consent will be indicated by an unwilling party, rather than actively gained by an interested one. A perpetrator’s violence and the possible gendered power dynamics of those involved are less likely to be acknowledged or the focus of court room processes (Ehrlich, 1998). The examples and experiences that I have presented above suggest that education should focus on challenging discourses of sexuality, consent, and victim blame which reinforce these unequal and problematic ideas about sex and sexuality.

Hazel also identified discrepancies in the construction of women and men’s sexual behaviour that have implications for how they are treated. These discrepancies affect how women and men are able to feel about their sexual experiences. The discrepancies play out in the form of a double standard. While Hazel did not use the term double standard, she described instances where the same sexual behaviour was appraised differently based on the gender of the performer. The following is a reflection Hazel recorded in her media journal prior to the interview.
For example, if a guy gets with a girl or multiple, then he is considered a “stud” and looked up to which is fine. But when it comes to girls, often if they do any of that [engaging in sexual activity] then they are labelled a “slut”, “dirty” and “cheap” because apparently it is wrong for females to do this but not for males. Another thing I have experienced is that when a female does not want to do anything [sexual], she is a “prude”, “frigid”, and “too good”. (Hazel, media journal, secondary student, Rural High)

The extract illustrates the restricted behavioural framework constructed for women within discourses of femininity. Hazel explained that women are appraised negatively for having too much or too little sex, while men’s active (hetero)sexual behaviour is appraised positively. This appraisal leads women and men to be treated differently by their peers. Young men are praised for their heterosexual activity, as it is viewed as appropriate masculine behaviour. If women enact their sexuality in the same way they are taunted by their peers, but if they refrain from sexual activity they may also be taunted. Past research has also documented this double standard within secondary schools. In this research women were also harassed with taunts like whore if they were perceived as engaging in too much sex (Hird & Jackson, 2001; L. Smith, 2012; Sundaram & Sauntson, 2016).

The sexual double standard affects how women and men can feel about their sexual activity. If men are sexually active this discourse allows them to feel positive about their behaviour, allowing them to enjoy sexual activity. In contrast, policing of women’s sexual activity, with terms like slut, implies that women should feel shame about their sexual activity. Constructions of women’s sexuality suggest they should not be having sex for pleasure or exploring their sexuality. Women who choose to have a large number of sexual partners or who engage in sex for pleasure are constructed as ‘non normative’, and therefore may experience their sexuality as abnormal. Discourses that constrain women’s sexuality in this way likely influence women’s ability to feel positively about their sexual experiences.
Being (hetero)sexually active was explained by Hazel to be an important part of
hegemonic masculinity. The following is a response to a question I asked in relation to
the media journal entry analysed on the previous page. I asked Hazel what would happen
if a male was not having any sex.

They’d [young men] probably get [taunted] the same actually to be honest. Like quite a few guys
this age feel quite a lot of pressure to be doing that [having sex], and that’s probably why so many
guys probably are maybe, because they feel like they have to, to be a man maybe. I think that’s
been quite a big thing for guys coz they need, they feel like they have to be having a lot of sex to
be considered a man or tough or you know, better than everyone else. Yeah if they don’t, if they
don’t have a lot of sex then they’re probably. I’ve seen it actually, they’re kind of, they’re not
picked on a lot but they get that um, I don’t really know how to explain it, but just they’re not as
good maybe. (Hazel, individual interview, secondary student, Rural High)

According to societal norms, as articulated by Hazel, men are expected to be having sex
to be able to take up the privileged subject position which allows them to “feel better than
everyone else”. Hazel explained that those young men who are not engaging in
(hetero)sexual activity are assigned a marginalised subject position and labelled “not as
good” by their peers. The example above shows how women play a role in men’s ability
to enact their masculinity. For men to enact hegemonic masculinity they require women
to engage in (hetero)sexual sex with them. In contrast, for young women to be perceived
as appropriately feminine they must limit their (hetero)sexual activity. The need for men
to be having sex with women to take up privileged masculine status links to some of the
discourses that I have analysed above. Men might feel the need to pressure women into
sex or treat them in negative ways to help gain and maintain masculine status. My analysis
suggests that for there to be changes in these problematic constructions of sex and sexual
behaviour the intersections of gender and sexuality need to be challenged, especially the
restrictive constructions of femininity and masculinity which construct restrictive sexual
expectations. Sexuality education would be the ideal place to challenge some of these
norms, as my review of the research within Chapter 3 suggests that constructions of
gendered desire included within sexuality education contribute to these restrictive constructions (Diorio & Munro, 2000; Elliott, 2003; Sundaram & Sauntson, 2016).

In this section I have explored how intersections of gender and sexuality construct constraining and problematic expectations about sexual activity. Discourses often construct men’s sexuality as active and predatory, meaning women need to take up the subject position of the responsible woman and if they are not seen as doing so they are likely to encounter discourses of victim blame. Current discourses of gender and sexuality also reinforce double standards around sexuality which pressure men to be (hetero)sexually active and women to moderate their sexual behaviour. Overall current discourses of gender and sexuality reproduce unequal power relationships between men and women.

**Conclusion**

In this chapter I have used examples, from student participants and the media, to demonstrate how restrictive discourses of gender and sexuality result in negative implications for a range of different people. Discourses of heteronormativity and binary gender contain ideas that continue to have negative effects on the lives of young people. Discourses of heteronormativity construct unequal hierarchies of power that normalise the evaluation of queer subjectivities and inform assumptions of heterosexuality which create a burden of proof for queer relationships. Restrictive constructions of gender limit understandings of what is normative and possible along with the subjective experience of women and men when they enter a gendered workforce. The intersections of restrictive discourses of gender and sexuality construct restrictive behavioural frameworks for women’s and men’s sexual behaviour. These behavioural frameworks also reproduce problematic ideas which contribute to the normalisation of victim blame and the
minimisation of perpetrator culpability. Throughout this chapter I have presented examples of students’ experiences which show how education plays a role in reproducing these discourses and the restrictive and problematic behavioural frameworks they construct. To change the impact that these restrictive discourses have on people’s lives they need to be challenged within education and broader community settings. Challenging these discourses would reduce their dominance within society and in turn reduce the likelihood of the negative implications outlined in this chapter. The following chapter provides more information about the reproduction of restrictive discourses by exploring this reproduction from educators’ perspectives. Resistance to restrictive discourses is also already taking place in some education settings. In Chapter 7, titled Students and educators as agents of change I present examples illustrating how restrictive discourses, like the ones presented in this chapter, are currently being resisted by institutions, students and educators.
Chapter 6: Discursive barriers faced by educators that limit the inclusion of diverse discourses

This chapter plays an important role in addressing some of the gaps within current research about gender and sexuality within education in Aotearoa New Zealand. As outlined in Chapter 3 there is limited research exploring the perspectives of educators within Aotearoa New Zealand. By exploring the discursive constructions that impact educators’ inclusion of gender and sexuality I am able to provide an overview of discursive barriers to inclusion faced by educators in Aotearoa New Zealand. I also explore effective approaches for including diverse discourses of gender and sexuality within education. Specifically, I include narratives from experienced educators explaining how they overcame discursive barriers to include diverse discourses of gender and sexuality within their teaching. Many of the educators who took part in my research highlighted a need for interventions to implement more inclusive discourses within education settings. The educators often voiced their desire to change their school environments in relation to gender and sexuality but were unsure how to do this.

This chapter is organised into three key sections based on the different components of education that contribute to the limited inclusion of diverse discourses of gender and sexuality within education environments. The first section explores discursive constructions educators draw upon, the second section explores discursive constructions students draw upon, and the final section explores restrictive constructions embedded within resources and curriculum.
Discursive ideas educators draw upon that limit inclusion of diverse discourses

In this section I explore beliefs that affect how willing or able educators are to include diverse discourses of gender and sexuality in their teaching. I should note that this section focuses mainly on secondary educators. While some of the tertiary educators I interviewed talked about these discursive barriers they did so in reference to lower levels of education. So, the discursive ideas outlined within the following section might be limited to educators within secondary education.

Angela listed a range of concerns that educators might have about the inclusion of diverse discourses of gender and sexuality.

Katie: And are there any changes you’d like to see in terms of the availability of resources or professional development in relation to gender and sexuality?

Angela: I think teachers do need more support. […] they need tools to be able to get these discussions [about gender and sexuality] going because the reality is not everyone’s comfortable with it. Even though they might feel strongly or […] if you asked them, they would say it’s important [inclusion of gender and sexuality], if you watched their teaching for a term you might never see it. And then when you’d asked them why, up would come the barriers of “I’m not confident”, or “I’ll have a parent complaint”, or “I have no resources”, or “I don’t know how to do it.” (individual interview, tertiary educator)

The concerns that Angela raised could be interpreted as being a result of the oppositional discourses used to frame gender and sexuality. Educators are concerned about teaching gender and sexuality because regardless of how they frame their teaching they expect there will be students and parents who disagree. These concerns are problematic because not including gender and sexuality really means “Reinscribing […] the normative construct of […] fixed gender binary, particular forms of masculinity and femininity […] it just gets done […] unconsciously, so people don’t realise they’re doing it.” (Taylor, individual interview, tertiary educator).
While Angela’s educators were hypothetical, some of the secondary educators I interviewed reproduced the same concerns. Spot referred to topics like “sexual health” and “evolution” as “controversial” requiring schools to be “mindful of the families that kids come from”. Spot also articulated her concerns around having ‘informal’ conversations with students. The previous and following quotes arose from initial questions about what Spot includes in relation to gender and sexuality and how her students or colleagues influence those decisions.

And I think too, you know when kids outside of your subject come to talk to you about stuff, you have to work out where your line’s at and where it becomes a guidance issue. Because they travel by a whole set of different rules which makes it a wee bit easier for them to talk about a whole range of things. (Spot, individual interview, secondary educator, Rural High)

Spot’s concern about boundaries appeared to stem from framing approaches to gender and sexuality within a discourse of fear. The discourse of fear (which I introduced in chapter 3) refers to framing approaches to gender in sexuality in relation to fear about potential reactions from parents. Spot’s main motivation for what and what not to teach in relation to gender and sexuality appeared to focus on the possible reactions to content rather than what students might learn. The discourse of fear can be read in her reference to students’ families along with her construction of gender and sexuality as “controversial” and that talking about it could “cause issues”. Spot suggested counsellors are better suited for the task of discussing topics with students because they have specific training and professional boundaries that allow them to have ‘difficult’ discussions. Spot appeared to construct the majority of conversations about gender and sexuality as requiring specific knowledge, training and professional protection of confidentiality to ensure the potential for negative reactions from parents were minimised.
Lola enacts Angela’s construction of a distinction between educators’ personal discourse and their teaching practices.

Katie: So, it sounds like you have quite a broad […] conceptual understanding [of gender] but you’re not quite sure how to put that into practice?

Lola: You’ve summed it up well. […] So, I’d be willing to learn, I’m obviously very accepting of many different […] people and views […]. I am aware that I maybe don’t come across that way, because I just refer to he/she. (individual interview, secondary educator, Littletown High)

Lola’s account has a number of possible interpretations. Her reference to being accepting of many different people and views could be interpreted as speaking to her privilege as a cisgender heterosexual woman who has the ability to accept those in marginalised subject positions (like the position of tolerant heterosexual that I analysed in the previous chapter). Lola also indicated that these personal views of acceptance were distinct from her teaching practices around gender within the classroom. Her comments suggested that within the classroom she reproduced binary constructions of gender indicated by her reference to only he/she. The extract from Lola suggests that knowledge and understanding of diverse discourses of gender and sexuality are separate from the ability to include diverse discourses within teaching. It would be good for future research to explore if a knowledge practice gap in relation to gender and sexuality is common. If it is, it suggests that efforts to increase the inclusion of gender and sexuality within education need to focus on both knowledge of gender and sexuality as well as practical approaches to inclusion.

Educators’ constructing gender and sexuality as irrelevant or unimportant to their teaching also acts as a barrier to diverse inclusion. While none of the educators I interviewed constructed gender and sexuality as unimportant, Molly provided an example of educators within her school who did. In response to a question about school policy or
recommendations in relation to gender and sexuality Molly reflected on the ‘outdated’ discourses held by the “Old Boy’s Club”. Molly’s talk about these men implied that the reproduction of restrictive discourses was done out of ignorance rather than malice “You know like, but they don’t do it to be bad they do it because they’re not aware” (Molly, individual interview, secondary educator, Riverview High). She also constructed these men as being in leadership roles, meaning that regardless of their intentions their constructions of gender and sexuality had the potential to have a large impact on the school environment. “Like and then someone was going on maternity leave […] and there was some joke about her going home to make her husband’s tea and it was just, could you not, could you stop now, like really, really? At a top level there’s a lot of just.” (Molly, individual interview, secondary educator, Riverview High). Molly viewed challenging these men’s ideas as difficult.

Katie: Right, so it’s just kind of ideas that have been around for a long time that people haven’t really questioned and continue not to question so they are maintained kind of thing?

Molly: Well not even that because they, I think they have been questioned and people have moved on from them but it’s sort of like patting the dinosaur on the head and saying that’s very nice we’ll just carry on doing what we’re actually doing you know. (individual interview, secondary educator, Riverview High)

Molly suggested people have tried to challenge these attitudes but that these men have not responded. Her use of “dinosaur” constructs these men as coming from a different era, an era where restrictive discourses of gender and sexuality were common. While Molly did not agree with the “Old Boys’ Club” ideas she constructed them as inevitable and unable to be changed. As a result of this inevitability these ‘outdated’ views were tolerated and these men were essentially given permission to continue reproducing the conservative and restrictive ideas. While people keep “patting the dinosaur on the head” these ‘outdated’ views will continue to circulate within education environments as long
as these men remain in power. The “Old Boys’ Club” appear to construct diverse discourses of gender and sexuality as unimportant to their teaching and the education environment more broadly. The perception of these topics as unimportant results in these men reproducing restrictive and ‘outdated ideas’. The “Old Boys’ Club” could therefore be read as approaching gender through what I introduced in chapter three as a discourse of relevance. Within this discourse gender and sexuality are constructed as unimportant topics to include within education and so normative constructions of gender and sexuality continue to be reproduced.

Exploration of the reasons educators reproduce restrictive discourses of gender and sexuality is important. Without a clear understanding of the reasons for reproducing restrictive discourses, it is not possible to provide appropriate support to enable more inclusive discursive constructions. My exploration of educators’ accounts suggest that reasons for the reproduction of restrictive discourses within education are complex but may include concerns about how the content will be received by students and their parents, an inability of how to include diverse content or an unwillingness to explore these topics due to the view that they are not important. Educators are not the only component within education. Students also play a role in constructing classroom environments. In the following section I explore the role students’ discursive constructions have on educators’ inclusion of diverse discourses of gender and sexuality.

**Discursive ideas students draw upon that limit inclusion of diverse discourses**

This section explores the discursive ideas students draw upon that limit educators’ ability to include diverse discourses of gender and sexuality. The main challenge explored
in this section is negative reactions from students. The examples I use come from tertiary education but links to secondary education will be included when I explore how the limits can be overcome.

The pervasive nature of restrictive discourses of gender and sexuality are incorporated in many students’ worldviews (Chambers, Tincknell, et al., 2004; Foucault, 1977; Meyer, 2008a; Pascoe, 2005). In response to a question about how they defined gender and included it within their teaching Lily and Gerry explained that content that resists dominant discourses can be “challenging” for students because it disrupts their worldview. “Very challenging for some people because it’s [binary concepts of sex/gender] so embedded in what’s accepted and so some of that challenging that I do can be a little bit resisted by the audience.” (Gerry, individual interview, tertiary educator).

Gerry and Lily both constructed the possibility of negative reactions (“resisted by the audience”; “ruffle feathers”) in response to teaching “world changing” content. These challenges can be dangerous or disconcerting for educators. Taylor and Lily described memorable reactions students had in response to “challenging” content they taught. Both of these recollections resulted from a question I asked about student responses to teaching about gender or sexuality.

I have had a student that [...] put me in quite a vulnerable and dangerous position. [...] I was in my [...] mid 20s maybe, and he was an older, middle aged, very conservative man. [...] He demanded to meet me early one day before class and basically berated me for an hour about the terrible person I was, and the filth [...] I was, and the man hater. [...] So that was fairly eye opening to me because [...] he didn’t at all want any of his fundamental beliefs to be upset. (Taylor, individual interview, tertiary educator)
It was a man and [...] I think maybe the way I was saying something somehow triggered him in a very negative way, that made him think that he was being targeted, and clearly didn’t want to be in a group that was aligned with the antagonist or the oppressor, and I think he was quite angry about it. (Lily, individual interview, tertiary educator)

When presented with discursive constructions of gender and sexuality that differ from their understandings of the world students may feel threatened. The reactions that Lily and Taylor described could be interpreted as an attempt to reinstate the dominant discourses that were disrupted by their teaching. One reason I include these extracts is to acknowledge the complex role that educators inhabit. Taylor’s and Lily’s experiences actualise aspects of the concerns I explored in the first section of this chapter. Negative responses from students do happen and can be “dangerous”.

Taylor and Lily each provided an interpretation of the specific threat that prompted the attempt to reinstate dominant discourses. Taylor suggested her student’s reaction was in response to his beliefs being threatened. Lily suggested her student may have felt that he was being personally accused of the social inequalities that diverse discourses of gender and sexuality highlight. I would expand on Taylor’s and Lily’s interpretations of these reactions. As I have highlighted previously, disruption of dominant discourses also disrupts power. By highlighting and resisting men’s privileged status both Taylor and Lily could be perceived as threatening this dominant status. This provides another explanation for why these students reacted negatively to Lily’s and Taylor’s teaching.

Students feeling accused by university educators who challenge restrictive constructions within education has also been explored in the UK. Clarke (2018) wore a gay pride shirt that read “Some lecturers are gay. Get over it!” to a lecture. After hearing
that the shirt had become a major topic of conversation, Clarke (2018) conducted a qualitative survey to analyse what students thought of the shirt. A large number of students had negative responses because they felt they were being accused of homophobia. The responses from students reproduced the dominant discourse of heteronormativity while also denying its existence through claims of equality. Past research from the secondary level also documents students’ emotive reactions to educators inclusion of diverse discourses. As outlined in chapter 3 Quinlivan (2012, 2018) reflects on one such reaction and the difficulties educators may face responding to such reactions within the framework of education settings. The types of reactions experienced by the educators in my study (Taylor and Lily) and the experiences of Clarke (2018) and Quinlivan (2012, 2018) help explain why some educators may feel hesitant to include resistance to dominant ideas within their teaching.

**Approaches to overcome these challenges**

The previous section detailed how the introduction of concepts that resist dominant constructions of gender and sexuality can challenge students. These challenges can result in negative reactions which can be “dangerous” for educators and may make them feel hesitant about including material that challenges dominant discourses. Educators suggested a number of approaches to minimise resistant responses from students. In this section I explain how framing content to highlight its importance, teaching diverse discourses in earlier education, and co-constructed approaches could minimise negative reactions to diverse discourses. While the previous section focused on tertiary education, the approaches included in this section are relevant for both tertiary and secondary teaching.
Framing content as an important part of curriculum is one way to minimise negative reactions from students. When I asked Taylor if responses like the one analysed in the previous section still happened she explained.

I might front end what I’m doing, […] now with more of a “the reasons I’m doing this is because […] I believe that you as a future policy maker, […] as a future teacher […] are going to be […] in a position to.” […] because of the way I frame it, it distances it more from me as an individual person and less kind of wheelbarrow pushing, which is what you use to be kind of accused of, you know pushing your own barrow. […] now I frame it much more in terms of responsibility and opportunity to change things for the better for you and everyone else, its more palatable. (Taylor, individual interview, tertiary educator)

Taylor suggested students might react negatively because they perceive her inclusion of gender and sexuality as serving a personal agenda. Part of the construction of her having a personal agenda (“wheelbarrow pushing”) in relation to diverse discourses is likely related to her lesbian subjectivity. I explore educators’ queer subjectivities and constructions of personal agenda in detail in the following chapter. By framing her teaching within discourses of social justice and professionalism she emphasises the relevance of the material to her students. Using this framing constructs learning and implementing diverse content as part of students’ professional responsibility. Taylor explained that framing diverse content in this way made it more “palatable”, suggesting that it minimised the likelihood of students feeling personally attacked by the content. By reducing these feelings of attack, Taylor’s approach also minimises the chance that students will attempt to reinstate dominant discourses. Framing appears to be a skill Taylor developed overtime to enable her to include diverse topics more effectively.

Lily’s teaching practices also developed to more effectively frame her teaching and minimise negative responses. The following reflection forms part of the same response as the reaction described by Lily in the previous section.
So that [negative response from student] probably went on that side of the ledger […] maybe let’s ah try and modify this (laughs) let’s see if we can rework parts of this. I think I was always tactful about it, but I do think over 15 or 20 years you do change. I mean you’re a different thinker, you’re a different person, you’ve gained experience, you’ve got different audiences you just know yourself better and you know how to navigate those questions more easily too. (Lily, individual interview, tertiary educator)

Taylor’s and Lily’s experiences highlight how reflective practices can aid development of approaches to the inclusion of gender and sexuality. Reflection helped these educators modify their content so that it was more effectively received by their students. Lily suggested that these types of reflective insights develop with increased teaching experience. While refining teaching approaches can take time, I suggest that experiences from educators like Taylor and Lily can help inform newer educators’ approaches. Fears about student complaints or reactions could be minimised through the use of framing that effectively communicates the relevance of diverse discourses within education. While Taylor and Lily are talking about the tertiary level and students’ reactions, similar approaches could be used within secondary education. Spots’ example in the first section along with past research (Mayberry et al., 2011; Painter, 2008; Thein, 2013) suggests secondary educators are primarily concerned with parent reactions to the inclusion of gender and sexuality within education. Framing could also be used to frame the importance of diverse content for parents. Talking to parents about the relevance of including gender and sexuality within education and the specific positive outcome this can have for their child may help minimise secondary educators’ fears about parents’ responses.

It is important to note that the current cultural and political climate might minimise the likelihood of negative reactions from students. The reactions I presented in the previous section both happened more than a decade ago. As a result of political changes
within Aotearoa New Zealand (e.g., marriage equality) social attitudes towards gender and sexuality have likely changed in the last ten years. Both of the reactions also happened at tertiary level and appeared to contain an element of privileged status on the part of the student. The students in both Taylor and Lily’s narrative were men who, as described previously, are often constructed as having positions of power over women. Taylor also described the man who berated her as being older, a position within society which is often constructed as privileged in terms of knowledge and power. It is therefore possible that the negative responses outlined above are more likely to occur when students construct their educators as having a comparative or lesser status to them on some social dimension. As such the more comparative status (between students and educators) in tertiary education may make these negative reactions more likely to occur at this level of education, compared to secondary or primary education.

Another way to minimise students’ negative reactions to the inclusion of diverse discourses of gender and sexuality is to include these discourses at lower levels of education. Tertiary educators highlighted the limited knowledge their students had about diverse discourses of gender and sexuality. The following is another example that Taylor provided in response to my question about students’ responses to her teaching.

I’ve had students who have just sat there absolutely dumb founded and said “Holy hell I have never thought about this before” and that just amazes me […] we get students […] who’ve never thought about emphasised femininity or hegemonic masculinities (Taylor, individual interview tertiary educator)

Taylor suggested that some of the tertiary students she taught had never been exposed to diverse discourses of gender and sexuality, implying these discourses were not included in earlier education. The material being completely new makes it more likely that it will challenge students’ already established ideas and prompt a negative response. A solution
to this is that diverse discourses are integrated more extensively at lower levels of education. “It would be beneficial […] at a lower level (of education) as well you know.” (Lily, individual interview, tertiary educator). Lily’s suggestion arose at the end of the interview when asked if there was anything else she would like to expand on.

Past research presented in Chapter 3 shows that within secondary education, gender and sexuality are primarily framed within biological essentialist and heteronormative discourses (Allen, 2006a, 2007c; Diorio & Munro, 2000; Painter, 2008). This means that inclusion of diverse discourses in tertiary education exposes tertiary students to completely new knowledge. If diverse discourses were slowly built upon across the different levels of education, then the material presented at tertiary level would not be “world changing”. It is also important to note only a small portion of New Zealanders attend tertiary education. Therefore, if diverse discourses of gender and sexuality only circulate within tertiary settings, a limited number of people will be exposed to them.

Another possible way to minimise negative reactions to diverse discourses is through teaching approaches that allow the co-construction of knowledge. The quote from Matthew arose in response to a question about students’ responses to his teaching around gender.

Some of them come with a […] mind that isn’t exactly open and so they’re going “Huh oh feminism what’s that all about?” […]. So, you know lets actually look at it, and lets actually critique it. And by doing that we actually realise, hey you know what there’s a really good point there because the women’s voices are pretty much silent in these texts. (Matthew, individual interview, secondary educator, Parkview High)

Matthew suggested his students came into the classroom with established discursive understandings of feminism. Rather than trying to challenge students’ constructions of
feminism, Matthew approached feminism through a critical lens as a joint exploration task. This approach exposed the students to alternative constructions of feminism but in a way that allowed them to come to these ideas for themselves. The co-constructed critical approach described by Matthew presents another way to minimise the likelihood of a negative reaction when introducing alternative discourses of gender and sexuality to students.

The previous two sections present the possibility of negative reactions from students and approaches to minimise them. Framing teaching to highlight relevance, including diverse discourses in the earlier levels of education, and using approaches that allow co-construction are all methods that can minimise students’ feeling threatened by diverse discourses of gender and sexuality. Therefore, these approaches could reduce the likelihood students will attempt to reinstate dominant constructions. The negative responses I presented highlight the dominance of restrictive discourses within society and the need for broader inclusion of diverse discourses within education. Researchers, policy makers and practitioners play an important role in developing and evaluating these types of teaching tools. Without access to effective approaches for including diverse discourses, educators will likely continue to be unsure or concerned about how to frame these topics and continue to reproduce restrictive discourses of gender and sexuality.

**Discursive ideas embedded within resources and curriculum that limit teaching of diverse discourses**

In this section I explore how discourses within resources and approaches to curriculum can limit educators’ inclusion of diverse discourses. I begin by presenting examples of how restrictive discourses within resources like textbooks can influence
educators’ ability to include diverse discourses of gender and sexuality. Following this I explore how curriculum and course organisation effects the stability of diverse discourses along with who is exposed to them.

Dale talked about the problematic construction of sex (assigned at birth) within biology textbooks.

Katie: What about like just in a biology textbook would there be stuff in that about like intersex […]?

Dale: There would be something about intersex, but it would be in the context of animals normally. And maybe there would just be a box somewhere that said oh remember there are some people also who are born with male and female reproductive parts. […]

Katie: Yip so the very biological […].

Dale: Yeah, I mean exploring gender, nah. No, you’re not going to find that.

Katie: And so would that be presented as a, like a pathological model as well […]?

Dale: Yeah, I see what you mean. Yeah so actually the box would be “Oh hang on there’s some people with a terrible problem as well (laughs) here they are, and here’s a photo.” Yeah that’s true a lot that I have seen actually does come across like that. Because you know they tell you about the normal […] and then they show you all of the diseases and the problems. (individual interview, secondary educator, Parkview High)

This example highlights the way restrictive and problematic discourses can be reproduced in the resources educators use. Discourses that pathologise experiences like being intersex can undermine teaching about equality and diversity. The pathologising construction in the textbook is likely to be particularly salient and potentially upsetting for students who are intersex. The way that intersex variations are constructed within biology textbooks may limit Dale’s ability to challenge discourses around gender within his classroom and the broader school environment. The construction in the textbook differs greatly from the attitudes of Dale’s ideal school environment.

I would like us to get to the place where… marginalised people are not seen as marginalised (laughs) number one. Secondly, they are not seen as people who have some sort of problem that needs to be fixed, I think that would be a great start. And you can see wherever you go that we’re a long way from there. (Dale, individual interview, secondary educator, Parkview High)
Dale’s ideal situation is that diverse discourses are the dominant discourses within education. Within diverse discourses of gender and sexuality any person would just be viewed as another variation of the human existence. The problem is that the reproduction of pathologising discourses (like the one in the textbook) limits the ability for this ideal to be actualised.

The compartmentalisation of diverse discourses to only certain subjects also limits the broad inclusion of these discourses. In Chapter 3 I presented research that suggests sexuality education in Aotearoa New Zealand predominantly reproduces restrictive discourses of gender and sexuality (Allen, 2004a, 2007c; Diorio & Munro, 2000; Elliott, 2003) these constructions were challenged by some of the educators who participated in my research. When I asked how she defined gender Anni explained:

So, gender in terms of male and female and transgender which is a really big one in health. Which I guess hasn’t been talked about in the past and this generation coming through its really important to, to talk. to discuss it so […] when they come across it it’s […] you know it’s something that’s normal in their life. (Anni, individual interview, secondary educator, Riverview High)

Anni talked about her inclusion of diverse discourses of gender within her teaching of health (sexuality education is a part of the health curriculum in Aotearoa New Zealand). She acknowledged the importance of this for making a range of subjectivities a normal part of human existence. Anni also pointed out that these approaches are recent and that previously within education binary discourses of gender were reproduced. While Anni provided a good example of resistance to restrictive constructions, as outlined within my literature review, teaching about gender and sexuality within secondary schools is primarily compartmentalised to sexuality education (Painter, 2008). Within Aotearoa New Zealand sexuality education is only compulsory until year 10 (age 13 to 14) (Ministry of Education, 2015). This limits students’ exposure to diverse discourses as
they are only available to them within the sexuality education curriculum, and they only take this subject during their first two years of secondary education. The dominance of restrictive essentialist discourses of gender within other school curricula could reduce the impact of these diverse discourses, as they continue to be alternative rather than dominant. Although, it is important to note that some inclusion of diverse discourses is better than none and even individual acts of resistance to normative constructions of gender and sexuality can have a big impact on individuals (see examples in the following chapter).

Students’ limited exposure to diverse discourses of gender and sexuality was constructed as a problem by tertiary educators. Within tertiary settings, rather than being compartmentalised to a specific subject, diverse discourses of gender and sexuality were limited to individual educators. When asked about changes she would like to see in relation to gender and sexuality within education Angela explained “I guess what’s always precarious about these sorts of topics is that it often rests on the shoulders of a passionate individual.” (Angela, individual interview, tertiary educator). Angela pointed out the instability of diverse discourses when inclusion of these topics lies with individual educators. When one person is responsible for including diverse discourses of gender and sexuality, the ability for students to access that content relies on them taking a certain class and the educator remaining at the institution. Gatamon also discussed concerns about the precarious nature of diverse discourses at the tertiary level. The following is part of the response Gatamon gave when asked how she would like to see gender and sexuality included in her subject area in the future.

The current administration […]. doesn’t see (the topics I teach) as very important and I don’t know if I would be replaced, or if anybody would teach (these topics) if I stopped doing it myself. […] I think those things [topics] are important, I think that they should be considered part of the curriculum and then a lot of people say “oh no but we’ve got to do (this) and we’ve got to do (that) and […] those topics are far more important than discrimination because it barely exists, if at all
Gatomon talked about her concerns around the value others place on topics that relate to gender, sexuality and equality. While Gatomon placed diverse discourses of gender and sexuality high within her hierarchy of relevance, she talked about others who did not see these topics as important. Due to the low level of priority Gatomon’s peers put on topics that address aspects of gender and sexuality, the inclusion of diverse discourses within the course she talked about is precarious. Gatomon raised concerns that topics like discrimination would be excluded if other educators were to take over her teaching. Gatomon suggested making these subjects a curriculum requirement would maintain their status as an important part of developing professional skills, regardless of who was teaching the paper. I will expand on curriculum inclusion in the following section.

**Approaches to overcome discursive construction within resources and curriculum**

What currently goes on in secondary schools outside of the required health curriculum is down to “passionate individuals” aiming to provide inclusive education. Tertiary education appears to be much the same with some educators going out of their way to ensure that discourses of diversity are a part of their classroom practices. The presence of these “passionate individuals” is positive, and they are including content within education that has been previously overlooked (see research covered in Chapter 3). For there to be widespread change in the discourses that are available to students within education settings diverse discourses of gender and sexuality need to be included by more than a few “precarious” “passionate individuals”. This section explores
approaches to resources and curriculum that may help to increase the availability of diverse discourses of gender and sexuality within education.

Resources that reproduce problematic restrictive discourses could be approached in several ways. The obvious way to overcome the barriers outlined above is to update resources so that they frame gender and sexuality within more inclusive discourses. The problem with this approach is that it would be costly and therefore something that many schools may not be able to afford. An alternative way to overcome restrictive discourses within resources is to use them as a teaching opportunity. For example, the textbook’s construction of intersex (that Dale talked about) could become a point which is challenged within the lesson. If time is limited simply acknowledging that there are other ways to view this construct and providing an example could be enough to challenge restrictive discourses reproduced by the resource. Victor (a tertiary student) talked about how meaningful this approach can be. The following was part of a discussion that occurred when I asked about experiences with gender and sexuality within education that were very positive or negative.

I did have a positive [experience within education] […]. Most of the negatives that I’ve experienced in (area of science) have been through (biological discourses) […] there was focus in [one course] on standard by the book [teaching] but we did have one or two […] younger lecturers, […]. The first thing they said when they came into the lecture was […] “we’re teaching this based on the book and the curriculum set by the school, but I want you all to know that as I’m teaching this, this does not touch on the gender binary, the spectrum that is sexuality and gender,” and just tried to make it clear that they were teaching this based on curriculum and that wasn’t their view and that they wanted everyone to be included which I thought was great.(Victor, group interview 9, tertiary student, trans man)

Victor constructed these educators’ acknowledgement of the specific discursive framework as a positive experience. By locating their teaching within a discursive framework they made visible the possibility for other discursive frameworks. This was important for Victor because in the past these ideas had been reproduced as simple facts.
While this teaching likely still reproduced problematic ideas about gender and sexuality, it also resisted them, making it clear they were one of many ways these concepts could be viewed. Prologue like the one described by Victor could be a useful tool for educators using resources or curriculum that reproduce restrictive discourses. Prologue that acknowledges multiple discourses might be especially useful for science (a subject mentioned by both Dale and Victor). Scientific discourses tend to present ideas as unquestionable fact. By acknowledging the biases and inequalities that are embedded within scientific concepts, educators can create more inclusive classroom environments and help students become more critical consumers of knowledge.

While prologue could be an effective way to challenge restrictive constructions of gender and sexuality, it requires educators to be able to identify these restrictive constructions. As I highlighted in section one, dominant discourses of gender and sexuality are often reproduced “unconsciously, so people don’t realise they’re doing it” (Taylor, individual interview, tertiary educator). Therefore, many educators may also find it difficult to identify when restrictive discourses are reproduced within resources. For educators to be able to effectively include prologue that challenges restrictive constructions, they may need access to professional development and resources. Professional development and resources could focus on helping educators identify restrictive discourses within their current teaching and provide examples of more inclusive discourses that could be used to frame their teaching.

Students’ limited exposure to diverse discourses was another problem raised in the previous section. While diverse discourses continue to be isolated to specific subjects or taught only by “passionate individuals” (Angela, individual interview, tertiary educator) they will continue to be “marginal and marginalised” (Lily, individual
interview, tertiary educator). Including diverse discourses of gender and sexuality within policy and curriculum would help make them a larger part of educational culture, meaning students would be more likely to be exposed to diverse discourses. The inclusion of gender and sexuality within the formal curriculum would also mean that educators could not construct these topics as irrelevant, and these topics would no longer fall on the “shoulders of a passionate individual”. The inclusion of diverse discourses of gender and sexuality within formal curriculum would need to be approached differently within secondary and tertiary settings. Dale made suggestions about how gender and sexuality could be incorporated within the secondary education curriculum. The following was part of dialogue around how Dale defined sexuality and included it within his teaching.

I would say the practice at the moment is very sporadic, like we would definitely not be able to say that it [gender and sexuality] was integrated in our curriculum. You know that’s a totally different thing. Definitely, definitely not integrated into the curriculum. […] You know whereas things Māori for instance, although we have a long way to go, if you had a talk about it in this way you would find it’s far more integrated into the curriculum. You can sort of […] see it there, it’s in the unit plans […]. You’re not going to be seeing much about gender and sexuality in the unit plans at this stage I don’t think. (Dale, individual interview, secondary educator, Parkview High)

Dale also suggested curriculum inclusion would make gender and sexuality an integrated rather than a segregated part of learning. Dale talked about the important role policy and curriculum played in prompting the integration of Tikanga and Te Reo Māori within education. He suggested the same approach be applied to gender and sexuality. Dale acknowledged reports from the Ministry of Education that provided guidelines about gender and sexuality but suggested that these were not enough to prompt change within his school.

I mean it’s not as though people are sitting round talking about it staff wise, so I don’t see any of that. I brought it up last year because I saw the new recommendations come out from the Ministry and I pointed it out to senior leadership that it’s actually there in this great report that they all read and actually mentioned that we’re going to have to, well I think that they should address it. Because I think in one of those documents, even speaking about having a safe space for people. Yeah, so I just spoke to them about it but nothing has come of it since then and that was about, it must have
been about August last year somewhere around there. (Dale, individual interview, secondary educator, Parkview High)

This extract highlights why Dale thinks gender and sexuality need to be integrated within curriculum. He suggested that staff will not sit “round talking about it” until they are required to.

Molly, an educator at a different secondary school also talked about the promise of integrated approaches to gender and sexuality. The following was part of a discussion prompted by a question about any changes Molly would like to see in relation to the inclusion of gender and sexuality within education. “Yeah so that nobody felt that talking about gender identity and stuff was an add on, because then you wouldn’t feel like you were getting it wrong or not wrong, it would just be part of [education]” (Molly, individual interview, secondary educator, Riverview High). Molly suggested integrated approaches to gender and sexuality within education would put less pressure on educators. This is because they would not be attempting to provide a whole lot of factual information, instead they would be providing inclusive examples within their normal teaching. Molly’s talk implied that integrated approaches might also reduce some of the fears educators have about the inclusion of gender and sexuality, as it would be a normalised part of education. The status of diverse discourses as normal would reduce the potential for parents to critique a particular educators’ teaching, as it would be something that everyone was including.

This section has presented ways to challenge restrictive constructions of gender and sexuality within resources and approaches to curriculum. Many of the educators within my research thought that for sustainable and widespread inclusion of diverse discourses of gender and sexuality, changes needed to be made to policy and curriculum across a range of subject areas. This type of widespread change would facilitate changes
in institutional culture which would make education environments more inclusive for all students and staff.

**Conclusion**

In this chapter I presented a range of examples which highlight the complex professional roles educators navigate. Various aspects of educators’ diverse roles influence their willingness and ability to include diverse discourses of gender and sexuality within their teaching. One important finding is that many educators were motivated to include diverse discourses of gender and sexuality within their teaching, they just did not know how. This suggests that many educators reproduce restrictive discourses because of uncertainty rather than unwillingness. Knowing that reproduction of restrictive discourses is primarily driven by uncertainty means efforts to make education environments more inclusive should focus on practical resources for educators. Along with this, techniques like framing and critical co-construction can be used to communicate the relevance of including these topics within education. Using these framing methods can help to reduce negative reaction from students. My findings provide evidence for what educators construct as barriers to the inclusion of diverse discourses of gender and sexuality within education, along with approaches to overcome these barriers. To better understand what would facilitate the inclusion of diverse discourses within education more research needs to be done.

Curriculum also plays an integral role in constructing the overall importance education places on diverse discourses. Changes that make diverse discourses a required part of a range of curricula would help in the development of inclusive education environments. There are currently “passionate individuals” who effectively challenge restrictive discourses within their teaching. With further exploration of the suggestions
within this chapter, ideally we will be able to develop resources and approaches that allow all educators to feel confident including diverse and inclusive discourses of gender and sexuality within their teaching. In this chapter I have provided examples of some educators who challenged dominant constructions of gender and sexuality within their teaching. The following chapter expands on this exploring the different ways both students and educators challenged restrictive discourses of gender and sexuality within their education settings.
Chapter 7: Students and educators as agents of change

In this chapter, I analyse examples of resistance to dominant discourses of gender and sexuality. As outlined in Chapter 2 resistance is important as it disrupts the power embedded within dominant discourses and provides space for alternative constructions of gender and sexuality (Foucault, 1969, 1977; Parker, 1992; Willig, 2008). Instances of resistance within education settings therefore provide important opportunities for change. So, the examples of resistance included within this highlight how, by challenging the dominant discourses that circulate within education settings, students and educators act as agents of change. This chapter adds to the small body of research exploring resistance to dominant discourses of gender and sexuality within education settings. These acts of resistance within education settings help destabilise restrictive discourses and increase the availability of discourses of diversity, which are more inclusive (Foucault, 1977; Parker, 1992; Willig, 2008).

This chapter has been organised into three sections. The first section explores friends as agents of change, it focuses on how participants’ friends and peers informed their knowledge of alternative discourses of gender and sexuality. The second section explores how educators’ subjectivities can challenge discourses of heteronormativity along with the discursive constraints faced by these educators. The final section of this chapter focuses on students’ subjectivities and resistance. Within the final section, I explore how students’ subjectivities influence their access to knowledge and in turn their evaluation of certain discursive constructions.
**Friends as agents of change**

This section explores the importance of friends as a source of information about gender and sexuality, particularly in relation to diverse discourses. Within this section, I present examples of friends making alternative discourses of sexuality, gender enactment, and gender subjectivity available within education settings. Finally, at the end of this section I include examples of friends prompting resistance to dominant discourses of gender and sexuality.

Friends provided a source of information about inclusive discourses of sexuality.

Katie: What do you think are the key things that affected that [an open mind], that produced that kind of attitude?

Lisa: Well one of my friends came out as lesbian and so we just did have to accept [...] we couldn’t treat her any differently [...]. I think that was one of the main things like we just had to accept it and you know just be supportive of her. And yeah that was definitely the main thing that sort of gave me such an open mind.

Katie: Yip, so having experiences with people and knowing people can kind of affect?

Lisa: Yeah, coz it doesn’t make them any different as a person. (individual interview, secondary student, Littletown High).

Her friend’s sexuality challenged Lisa’s heteronormative thinking and prompted her to frame sexuality through a more inclusive discourse. When her friend came out Lisa encountered two conflicting discourses which she could not draw upon simultaneously. The discourse of heteronormativity constructed Lisa’s friend’s sexuality as non-normative. If Lisa continued to draw upon the discourse of heteronormativity, she would have to view her friend differently, which conflicted with Lisa’s construction of friendship. The discourse of friendship that Lisa drew upon constructed a good friend as “supportive” and “accepting”. To maintain her construction of friendship Lisa accepted her friend’s sexuality and embraced “an open mind” about sexuality and related concepts.

Peers also challenged gender norms and exposed participants to alternative
discourses of gender enactment. Discussion of the school ball provided information about these gender norms along with examples of students who resisted them. To explore gender and the school ball I asked participants about ‘normal’ school ball attire and what would happen if people dressed outside of these expected norms. Participants from three out of four secondary schools shared examples of students from their school who challenged gender norms through their ball attire. Students at Rural High talked about ball attire but did not provide examples of students who challenged dominant ideas. This suggests that there were no recent events of this type of resistance at Rural High. The absence of these events could mean that no students at Rural High wanted to challenge gendered dress codes, but it could also indicate that diverse discourses of gender enactment were less available to students at Rural High, than to students at the other three high schools. In this case, these types of events may have been absent from this school because students who wanted to resist these norms were concerned about the social consequences of doing so.

Participants at Littletown High, Riverview High and Parkview High shared examples of girls attending the ball in tuxedos (“tuxes”). “Yeah most of the girls wear dresses and most of the boys wear tuxes. Last year we had a girl wearing a tux though, she looked really good.” (Michelle, individual interview, student, Littletown High). Here, Michelle explained how gender is normally enacted through attire at the school ball and pointed out how one of her peers challenged these norms. Michelle talked about this act of resistance in a positive way, indicated by her appraisal of the girl as looking “really good”. Michelle’s positive appraisal suggests she accepted the girl’s clothing despite it being outside of the norms she articulated at the beginning of her statement. Other examples of girls’ resistance to gendered clothing norms were met with positive reactions, similar to Michelle’s.
Another example of peers’ resistance to gender norms was provided by students at Riverview High. These students shared an example of a guy who wore a dress to the school ball (described by Tom as a formal).

Katie: What [...] if a girl doesn’t wear a dress, or a boy does wear a dress, what happens then?

Tom: Absolutely nothing, no one cares. Last year [...] I went to the formal with a girl who is gay, and she wore a suit, and that was all good. And then a guy in the year above us, just more for a bit of a laugh, he wore a dress as well so it was kind of, [...] you know nobody minded, it was all very positive. That was kind of that. (individual interview, secondary student, Riverview High)

This act of resistance was particularly salient given the way secondary school students talked about the restrictive behavioural framework within discourses of masculinity in comparison to discourses of femininity. There was a perceived difference in women and men’s ability to challenge gender norms. Gender expectations for men were constructed as more restrictive than gender expectations for women. Tom’s reaction to the guy’s dress will be analysed along with the following extract about resistance to gender expectations.

Katie: What about if a guy decided to wear a dress, would that be different [than a woman wearing a tux]?

Hazel: I’d say that would probably be worse, I don’t know why but, I guess obviously for years and years females have worn dresses so it’s hard to kind of get out of that whole thing [...]. Some people might think it’s a joke, but that guy might really like that dress and might feel comfortable in it and that’s fine. But I guess other people might be like “oh that’s weird”. But I think most people will take it as a joke. (individual interview, secondary student, Rural High)

Hazel pointed out that a man wearing a dress is not the same as a woman wearing a tux. Her use of “worse” shows she believed students at her school would view both of these acts of resistance negatively. Hazel rationalised the difference in these constructions to the history of women wearing dresses, which has become a ‘norm’ that seems unchallengeable. Tom interpreted the guy at his ball, as wearing the dress for a “laugh”, similar to Hazel’s construction of people viewing a guy in a dress as “a joke”. This presents a contrast in the way women’s and men’s resistance to gendered clothing was
viewed. The girls’ tuxes were not referred to as having humorous intent, indicating the girls were taken more seriously than the guy in the dress. Other than Tom describing his female friend who wore a tux to the ball as gay, no one attempted to explain the girls’ attire. This suggests girls in tuxes were constructed as acting in ways that were alternative but more ‘normative’ than a guy wearing a dress.

Humour may also have played a role in the students’ interpretations of the women’s and men’s ‘non-normative’ ball attire. The fact that Tom, and potentially other young men interpreted the guy’s dress as a joke may have allowed him to maintain his masculine status even while he wore a dress. Humour is gendered and something that young men often use as a way to assert their hegemonic masculinity (Allen, 2014; Kehily & Nayak, 1997; Smith et al., 2016). In this particular situation, the young man could be interpreted as making a joke of women’s attire, and by doing so he could be interpreted as reinstating rather than threatening his masculine status.

While humour is one interpretation of the guy’s dress, other participants at Riverview High provided alternative appraisals of the guy who wore a dress.

Last year, we had a guy dress up as a girl and a girl dress up […] in a tux, what a guy would normally do, and it was, it was great. The guy’s dress was actually made for him by one of the students here and he got most elegant which is the girls’ prize, so it was lovely. (Milly, individual interview, secondary student, Riverview High)

Milly labelled the act of resistance to gender norms as “great” and pointed out the dress was made for him by another student. Rikki used the term “cool” in his explanation and Tom also explained that “it was all very positive”. Not only was the guy viewed positively by his peers, his clothing choice was even validated by the school through the award he received.

It is important to note these students’ attire was read as a challenge to gender norms, which may not have been their intent. It is possible some of these students were
actually trans and rather than dressing like a girl, they wanted to be read as one of the girls. In this case, the participants’ interpretation of them as dressing up as a girl or dressing up like a boy may have been a negative experience. Constructing the students as dressing up like a girl or boy also shows that these alternative enactments were framed through established understandings of gender. The framing of gendered behaviours within the framework of dominant gender expectations highlights the complexity of discourses of gender. While these students accepted the behaviour, they still viewed it as outside of expected norms.

Regardless of the interpretation of these students’ school ball attire, they still challenged gender norms, which are often taken for granted. By resisting gender norms through their school ball attire these students made alternative constructions of gender visible and disrupted the unquestionable status of dominant discourses. As well as showing other students that these discourses can be challenged, they also made visible the consequences of this resistance. While there was some dismissal of the reasons and seriousness of these acts of resistance, there was also positive acknowledgement of them. This positive acknowledgement could be particularly important for students who are considering resisting discourses of gender or sexuality themselves.

Along with providing examples of resistance to gender norms, friends were also constructed as important sources of information about gender subjectivities. The difference between discourses of gender enactment and gender subjectivities are important to note. While many participants talked about the development of more diverse gender norms, fewer participants talked about gender outside of the binary of woman and man. Tom provides an example of a high school student who did talk about gender subjectivity and the important role his friend played in his understanding of this concept.
Tom’s response arose from a question about the sources of information he had about gender. “I have a friend who has a brother who is transgender, so I’ve learnt a bit about gender through her.” (Tom, individual interview, secondary student, Riverview High). Tom explained the importance of learning from people later in the interview: “There’s nothing like just talking, […] talking to a transgender person, talking to someone who is of a different sexuality to you to really understand it.” Tom also explained, outside of his interaction with his friend’s sister “talking about gender doesn’t really come up or hasn’t really come up in my life significantly”. This suggests that Tom’s main source of information about gender and gender subjectivity was through his friend’s sister. Arthur also talked about the importance of friends in developing his understanding of gender. The following quote came up at the end of the group interview when I asked the most important point we had talked about in relation to sexuality.

I actually had to sit down and like briefly discuss with someone, coz I didn’t quite get what it was. […] Coz there’s your sex and then there’s your gender, and that’s still used interchangeably in the wider society but when you’re talking, and friends with people who don’t want to identify by one way or the other, like in one of the binaries, it becomes important to be able to differentiate between the two. (Arthur, group interview 6, tertiary student, bisexual, male).

Tom and Arthur suggested that conversations with friends were vital for gaining a better understanding of gender outside of the dominant constructions that circulate within society. Their ability to talk to people who understood the topic personally was important. This links to Allen’s (2001) finding that students prefer ‘experience’ knowledge over ‘factual’ knowledge. For Tom and Arthur their friends’ explanations of gender were based on their experiences, so they may have valued it over academic learning. While friends can provide information about gender subjectivities, Jo (a bisexual woman who attended the same group interview as Arthur) suggested relying on friends means that many people will not be exposed to diverse discourses of gender subjectivities. The following arose in the course of a discussion that began with a question
about if there are differences between approaches to gender and sexuality within secondary and tertiary settings.

I’ve a lot of friends who […] didn’t go to university and I feel like their awareness of the world is lessened. I don’t necessarily mean that they aren’t ever going to be exposed to different things. But especially if you don’t leave your hometown, and you don’t make new friends, and you don’t meet new people it can reach the point where you’ve been friends with the same people that you don’t really know how to start relationships with new people with alternative identities. So, they end up not having those conversations [about gender diversity]. Most of these friends I’ve ended up having to have those conversations with them, and it’s something that they appreciate. (Jo, group interview 6, tertiary student, bisexual woman).

Jo implied alternative discourses of gender are more available at university than lower levels of education. Jo emphasized the importance of environment and friends through her suggestion that people who maintained the same friends and environment were unlikely to encounter alternative constructions of gender and sexuality. Jo positioned herself as a friend who had shared information and exposed others to alternative discourses of gender and sexuality. While Jo did not appear to have a problem providing this role, it is important to note that not all queer or trans students will want to take on this role. The current reliance on friends for information about diverse discourses implies that diverse discourses of gender and sexuality are not available within many education settings. My findings alongside Allen’s (2001) suggest that framing information about gender and sexuality within personal stories rather than factual knowledge could be a particularly effective approach for including diverse discourses within education.

Participants’ friends also played a role in prompting them to challenge restrictive discourses of gender and sexuality. Jason explained how his friend’s suicide prompted him to challenge restrictive discourses of masculinity. Jason’s reflection was a result of me asking if there were changes he would like to see in relation to gender and sexuality.

I think from experience I’d like to see more people feel like they can talk about it [gender and sexuality] […]. Our football team we did ‘It’s ok to talk up’. One of our friends committed suicide a few years ago […]. Yeah, I don’t know, there are a few reasons why we think it might have happened like, coz he was afraid to talk about it, I think. (Jason, individual interview, secondary student, Littletown High)
Jason suggested the pressures of maintaining hegemonic masculinity, including “trying to stay strong” and “bottling it up”, played a role in his friend’s suicide. This tragic event caused Jason and others from his football team to take action and resist dominant constructions of masculinity. Jason talked about the importance of resistance to make talking about feelings a normalised part of masculinity.

Kelly provides another example of a student who voiced a desire for change to dominant constructions of gender. In the following extract Kelly explained why she would like to write an essay about transgender issues.

Kelly: Gay marriage has been the latest sort of issue brought up in the media and like politics and stuff, but transsexual issues are still very like in the dark […] like in New Zealand at least. So, I feel like I want to write something about that, it’s just something that sparked interest because it hasn’t really been talked about as much as everything else.

Katie: So, you want people to be more aware and more inclusive of trans issues?

Kelly: Yeah definitely and I’ve got friends who are trans, like […] so I just feel like a lot of people, especially older people, just don’t get where a lot of younger people are coming from, like with the latest social movements. (group interview 1, tertiary student, heterosexual woman)

Kelly’s desire to be an active ally appeared to be instigated by her trans friends. She explained she wanted to challenge current constructions of gender by informing others about alternative discourses. Kelly compared the development of societal discourses around sexuality to discourses of gender. She perceived discourses of gender to be more restrictive than discourses of sexuality, noted by the visibility of resistance to discourses of heteronormativity within media and politics through the introduction of the marriage equality bill. While Kelly demonstrated a desire for change it is also important to note the language she used (gay marriage, transsexual, social movement) does not align with the language common in trans and queer communities. For example, the GLAAD website describes transsexual as “An older term that originated in the medical and psychological communities” and while some people still identify with this term it only encompasses a
small part of the transgender community (GLAAD, n.d). Kelly’s use of this language draws attention to the complicated territory of challenging restrictive discourses. Resistance is complex and is constrained by the language of dominant discourses. This means that attempts to resist dominant discourses can result in the reproduction of other discourses that also contain restrictive constructions.

In this section, I have presented extracts that show friends are important sources of information about diverse discourses of gender and sexuality. Friends provided participants with examples of alternative discourses of gender and sexuality and prompted them to take action. It is important to point out, while the friends included here were important agents of change for participants, not all friends want to provide information about alternative discourses of gender and sexuality. The current reliance on friends for exposure to diverse discourses highlights a need for students to have other forms of access to this information. When friends are the main source of resistance to dominant discourses, it puts pressure on trans and queer people to be sources of information, and it restricts who is exposed to diverse discourses. In the following section I explore the role educators can play in resisting dominant discourses within education settings.

**Educators’ sexuality as resistance to heteronormativity**

This section focuses on two secondary school teachers, Chris and Matthew. During their interviews both men disclosed their gay sexuality and made connections between their gay subjectivity and their teaching practices. The role of their sexuality in their teaching varied for each man. In this section I analyse extracts from their interviews to demonstrate how both men provided resistance to heteronormativity but were also constrained as a result of how they were framed by others.
Chris and Matthew both serve as examples of resistance to heteronormativity by being ‘out’ gay teachers. As shown in the previous section the mere presence of someone being ‘out’ can have an important impact on individuals’ understandings of sexuality. This type of resistance may be particularly important when performed by teachers, who hold power and may be viewed as role models by students (Bezen, Aykutlu, Secken, & Bayrak, 2017; Bricheno & Thornton, 2007; Lumpkin, 2008). Chris reflected on an act of resistance within the classroom and the significance it held for one of his students. Chris’ reflection arose from a train of thought that started with a question about how he envisioned a gender neutral uniform.

We were watching a film and there was a heterosexual kiss. I did look away because I do sometimes find heterosexual kissing kind of uncomfortable (laughs) and I’m ashamed of that, but it’s true. But the thing is that she [referring to previous student] noticed that, and she remembers that I’d been challenged […]. I said to the kids “I always do find it uncomfortable if I’m honest, I’ve still got to come to terms with heterosexuality. I’m still not quite kind of comfortable with it.” And she said that meant everything to her […]. The message that I guess I try and communicate to people […] is you don’t have to be perfect about this stuff [gender and sexuality]. You don’t have to always be right, and actually I don’t think that’s possible. And anyway, it’s not what the kids need from you, they actually just need to see you making an attempt at it coz they are making an attempt at it as well. (Chris, individual interview, secondary educator, Riverview High)

Chris challenged heteronormativity by showing discomfort towards heterosexual intimacy. Chris appeared to use his unease as a learning tool for his students. There are two ways his discomfort could help develop students’ thinking. First, it challenged the concept of heterosexuality as normal, because to Chris, it was not normal. Second, it constructed discomfort as something to be overcome by individuals. To overcome his discomfort Chris pointed out he needed to change, rather than suggesting changes to enactments of heterosexuality. Chris’ behaviour showed his students that it is ok to feel uncomfortable about unfamiliar things, but this is a personal problem, rather than a problem with the object that prompted the discomfort.
While Chris’ act of resistance may not have been significant for all of his students, it was for at least one. Chris explained, she “now identifies as female but I understood to be male when I taught her, misunderstood to be male actually”. This interaction highlights how heteronormativity can be challenged within the classroom and how these small acts of resistance can have a big influence on individuals. The student’s trans subjectivity may have made this act of resistance particularly salient. She may have perceived Chris’ challenge to heteronormativity as acknowledging a range of silenced and marginalised subjectivities, therefore acknowledging her. The role subjectivity plays in constructions of resistance is explored in detail in the final section.

While both Matthew and Chris resisted discourses of heteronormativity, they were also constrained by them. Matthew talked in detail about the impact heteronormativity had on his teaching, including fears he had about coming ‘out’. Talk about Matthew’s fears arose from dialogue that began with a question about the inclusion of sexuality within his teaching and follow up questions about his use of the word cautious in his response (included on the following page). “For a long time I thought, well I can’t come out while I’m teaching at a boys’ school, but eventually I sort of found some courage and it was fine” (Matthew, individual interview, secondary educator, Parkview High). Matthew’s reluctance to come ‘out’ while working at a boys’ school shows another aspect of the complexity of resistance to dominant ideas. While Matthew wanted to come ‘out’ it required courage because of the predominance of heteronormativity, and the influence it would have on others’ constructions of him. Matthew’s concerns about coming ‘out’ at school are similar to other queer teachers (El Amoor, 2018; Gray, Harris, & Jones, 2016; Lineback, Allender, Gaines, McCarthy, & Butler, 2016; Town, 1995). Queer teachers report fears about losing their jobs (El Amoor, 2018; Gray et al., 2016; Lineback et al.,
2016; Town, 1995) and only coming ‘out’ at school when they were prepared to resign (El Amoor, 2018). Some of Matthew’s fears were also framed through discourses which construct gay teachers as having a ‘gay agenda’ and recruiting students, I expand on this below.

While Matthew “found some courage” to come ‘out’, he continued to be constrained by concerns about how others would perceive him. Matthew explained after coming ‘out’ he was more cautious about what he chose to teach.

Katie: Do you include aspects of sexuality in your teaching?
Matthew: Yes, and personally I’m just a little bit more cautious about doing that explicitly. If it’s sort of […] authentically in a text, but I probably wouldn’t say, right boys, today we’re going to study a text that’s all about gay characters. I think that would be a step too far for our boys, they’re generally a little bit more conservative and their families are a bit more conservative than you might expect at a different school, so I’m just cautious how to do that. I’m also very wary […] all the students here especially in the senior school, they know that I’m gay, they know that I recently came out. I don’t want to be seen as having a recruitment drive for anything like that. You know it’s part of […] keeping myself safe. […] One text that I have taught before I came out is *The Talented Mr Ripley*. If you read the book on about page 2 or 3 it’s very obvious that the main character Tom Ripley is gay. (individual interview, secondary educator, Parkview High)

This extract highlights the complexity of Matthew’s subjectivity and teaching practices. He used the past tense to refer to the book *The Talented Mr Ripley*, implying this book was something he taught in the past and that at the time of the interview he no longer did.

Before Matthew came ‘out’ he suggested others constructed him as heterosexual, and within this construction he appeared to feel confident teaching *The Talented Mr Ripley*. When perceived by others as heterosexual Matthew’s inclusion of *The Talented Mr Ripley* could be interpreted as an exploration of texts, a normal part of the English curriculum. Matthew suggested that coming ‘out’ changed how others may interpret his motivations. In this way Matthew was constrained due to concerns about the discourses others might use to frame his teaching of *The Talented Mr Ripley*. In particular he was concerned others would frame his teaching of queer content as recruitment.
While Matthew appeared to no longer feel comfortable actively including queer content within his teaching, he indicated he had no problem responding to student inquiries. The following makes up part of Matthew’s reply to a question I asked about students’ responses to his teaching.

Last week […] I was taking the class of a colleague […] and they were doing Shakespeare’s Othello. One boy asked, “Hey what do you think of the idea that Iago’s gay?” […] that’s sort of an interpretation that’s got some support […] from critics and things, so we talked about that. I’m probably very comfortable answering questions that students come up with. I’m certainly less comfortable about “Ok, today class we’re going to answer the question is Iago gay?” You know, if it comes from the students I’ll respond, but I probably don’t want to be seen to be having a sexual identity agenda in the class. (Matthew, individual interview, secondary educator, Parkview High)

In both of the previous extracts Matthew voiced concerns about how others might construct his motivations, if he were to actively include queer content. He used the terms “recruitment drive” and “agenda”. These terms link closely to arguments that were a part of concerns about gay men, and more specifically gay teachers during the 1970s. The gay rights movement prompted retaliation from conservative groups. These groups claimed queer people were out to recruit children and queer teachers would promote queer sexualities within the classroom. More extreme versions of this argument suggested the recruitment centred around the seduction of vulnerable young people (Graydon, 2011; Jackson, 2007). Matthew explained that careful consideration around inclusion of content about queer sexualities was about “keeping himself safe”. Matthew provided no evidence for his concerns so they may not align with what students and parents actually think about him, and gay educators more generally. Regardless of the students’ and parents’ actual perspectives, Matthew was constrained by concerns about how others might construct his teaching. Several university lecturers have reflected on the difficulty of teaching about subjectivity. These educators are often perceived as serving their own interests (Clarke, 2018; DeSoto, 2005) (also see Taylor’s example in previous chapter) and face more
student criticism than those who teach subjects like science, which are perceived as objective (DeSoto, 2005). This suggests it might be easier for straight teachers to resist discourses of heteronormativity in a critical way, as they can avoid accusations of personal interest.

In contrast to Matthew’s discomfort about actively teaching queer content, Chris explained he would be uncomfortable not addressing diversity. The following extract is Chris’ response to my question about how comfortable he felt teaching content about sexuality.

I think I’d be really uncomfortable not [including content on sexuality]. Like I hate that elephant in the room stuff, I find it really uncomfortable. So, if something comes up that presents a version of sexuality that students in the class might be challenged by, or might be new to them, or might be interesting. To not address it to me would infer some kind of notion that there is something to be ashamed of, some notion that there’s something unacceptable about that thing, and that’s the last thing that I would want to happen. And I would feel upset and uncomfortable to know that I’d done that. Though I’m sure I have, it’s not something that I want to do or feel happy about doing. (Chris, individual interview, secondary educator, Riverview High)

Chris thought it was important to use conversation about sexuality as a way to ‘normalise’ diverse sexual subjectivities for his students. Chris suggested not talking about concepts that are brought up within the classroom would reproduce constructions of certain subjectivities as ‘abnormal’. While Chris made an effort to actively challenge normative constructions of sexuality within the classroom he, like Matthew, was still constrained by others’ constructions of sexuality. The following arose at the end of the interview when I asked if Chris had anything else to add. This extract is part of our dialogue around anonymity that was analysed in the methodology chapter. Specifically, this was part of the response to my reflection that collecting sexuality demographics might not be the norm in research.

Like I can’t talk about myself as a teacher without talking about my sexuality, because half of it is sourced within my life experience as a gay man. And it would disable me from being able to
talk about what value I bring to the classroom. And so, I’m constantly having to assert something that I think […] is a feature of mine, do you know what I mean. I actually push it out there because it’s important, I think it makes me valuable. (Chris, individual interview, secondary educator, Riverview High)

Chris constructed his sexuality as a strength that formed an important part of his value as a teacher. In another section of his interview Chris explained how he presented himself to his students as one example of “male gender” and “gay sexuality”. Chris’ discussion about subjectivity allowed students to think about their own subjectivities and exploration of subjectivity “becomes a part of the classroom discourse.” Despite Chris’ positive construction of his sexuality, he talked about a need to “assert” this value. This implies Chris was constrained by the way others constructed him. Others may view Chris’ sexuality within restrictive discourses that construct it as something he should not share with his students.

While both Matthew and Chris resisted dominant discourses of sexuality, they were also constrained by the way others constructed them. Concerns about others’ constructions, whether real or perceived, affect teachers’ willingness to be open about their queer subjectivity at school (El Amoor, 2018; Gray et al., 2016; Lineback et al., 2016). Chris explained many teachers choose not to come ‘out’ because they fear “judgements” from “families, and the community, and the school” along with concern “that they would not have the same opportunities, or not have the same influence over their students”. By this Chris appeared to mean that teachers fear taking up the subject position of gay teacher because of the impact it could have on their ability to take up other roles. For example, Chris implied it might limit educators’ ability to take up leadership roles within the school and that it could impact students’ respect, which would in turn impact educators’ influence over students. Concerns about coming ‘out’ means many
students are not exposed to the value people like Chris and Matthew bring to the classroom. Educators’ fear about the discursive frameworks others will view them through also limits connections with other colleagues and can make queer teachers feel like they are alone.

One of the things that I’ve found lacking in my experience as a teacher is just other colleagues who identify even as homosexual males. […] It’s incredibly difficult to find other teachers who will identify in the classroom as such. I’ve just spent the last 7 years working in (another country) where that just doesn’t happen. Coming back to New Zealand it’s a relief to know that I have colleagues out there, even if I’m not in personal contact with them. (Chris, individual interview, secondary educator, Riverview High)

Chris suggested knowledge of other gay educators was important. The presence of gay teachers could also serve as an important litmus test for teachers who are considering coming ‘out’. Chris and Matthew demonstrate to other teachers that it is possible to enact subjectivities of teacher and gay man simultaneously.

The presence of gay teachers like Chris and Matthew provide students with exposure to diverse discourses of gender and sexuality. While they were able to disrupt discourses of heteronormativity through their presence in the classroom, they were also constrained by how others perceive them. Their examples of resistance highlight the need for regular and continued acts of resistance within education, so that heteronormativity is no longer dominant. Disruption to the dominance of heteronormativity would allow more queer teachers to construct themselves as “valuable” without fear of the way they might be constructed by others.

**Student subjectivity and evaluation of discursive constructions**

Subjectivity affects personal experiences and the discourses people are exposed to. As a result of experience, knowledge and exposure to political ideas, people can often evaluate the same discursive construction in different ways (Parker, 1992). Within this
section I explore how knowledge about various discursive constructions influences the evaluation of particular discourses. Specifically, I explore three tertiary students’ contrasting evaluations of similar content. I begin by presenting aspects of their gender and sexuality and then analyse their subjectivities in relation to their evaluation of these similar educational experiences.

Victor’s, Rory’s and Brenda’s gender and sexuality appeared to influence how they evaluated the inclusion of sexuality within their courses. The details about gender and sexuality outlined below come from the open response demographic questionnaire the participants completed before the focus group. Victor recorded his gender as trans male and described his sexuality as pansexual/queer. Rory recorded their gender as queer/non-binary and described their sexuality as pansexual/bisexual/ace (an abbreviation for asexual)/asexual spectrum. Brenda, on the other hand, recorded her gender as female and described her sexuality as straight. The following extracts include Brenda, Victor and Rory’s responses to the pairing of gay sexuality and HIV within their various courses (they did not take the same course but shared examples of similar course content). After presenting the extracts I use the participants’ demographic information to make inferences about their subjectivity and possible explanations for their evaluation of the content.

Brenda gave the following response when asked how sexuality was included in her course.

In (humanities subject) […] one of our readings was this guy going on […] a sex holiday and he was interacting with other males […] and writing about it afterwards. […] [the article] was just researching the ideas of AIDS and things and how they felt afterwards, so he would have sex with them and then interview them afterwards. […] Out of all of our readings, everybody read that one straight away because they thought it was so interesting. And it’s not something we get in all of our other classes […] everybody was very interested in it because it’s not something we talk about openly. (Brenda, group interview 5, tertiary student)
Brenda provided an interesting example of the inclusion of sexuality in her course. While the article Brenda talked about does provide a challenge to the idea that everyone is straight, I would argue it does so in a problematic way. Brenda’s description suggested the research article was about gay men’s attitudes to HIV. The pairing of gay men and HIV is common within health education and promotion (Adams, Braun, & McCreanor, 2010; Adams & Neville, 2012) and reproduces moral and health discourses embedded within a history of homophobia and discrimination (Herek, 2002; Herek & Capitanio, 1999). Reproducing the historically meaningful pairing of gay men and HIV is particularly problematic when, as in Brenda’s case, it is the primary source of content on gay sexuality. Brenda noted this when she said “it’s not something we talk about often”. While this statement appeared to refer to sex generally it also seemed to refer to gay subjectivities specifically. This interpretation is strengthened by the fact that this was the only detailed explanation Brenda gave about sexuality in her tertiary course. It is also important to note, Brenda did not give much detail about how the educator framed this article. It is possible that the educator challenged some of the dominant constructions of HIV and sexuality, or the article itself did this. If the dominant construction was challenged, then this would provide a different interpretation of Brenda’s learning experience.

In contrast to Brenda’s positive appraisal, Victor and Rory were critical about the pairing of gay men and HIV within their education. When asked about how sexuality was included within his course Victor critiqued the simplistic representation of HIV presented within his science focused paper.

*We had a lecture on HIV, and it seemed like they were trying to present the facts […] But in terms of the prevalence and who is spreading it, I just got like this nasty taste in my mouth, they only spoke about homosexual men (Victor, group interview 9, tertiary student)*
Rory followed on from this, stating their concerns about a similar portrayal of HIV within their health-focused paper.

I just want to say that that phenomenon about HIV is really common in my Department too. It’s like they want to use this as an example of something where there’s a very specific demographic that’s got a much higher incidence rate than other groups, but […] they just say gay men. […] So, it’s really interesting to me the way that that’s framed, when it could be people that have this sort of exposure, micro tears in wet tissue of their anus are more likely to contract this disease. That’s science. (Rory, group interview 9, tertiary student)

Both Victor and Rory perceived these simplistic presentations of HIV risk as leaving out important information. Rory pointed out the scientific inaccuracies in the construction of HIV risk only in relation to gay men. While the risk models presented in their class focused on a particular subjectivity, Rory explained it was really about the type of sex people are engaging in. Anyone engaging in anal sex is at increased risk of HIV because of the composition of this tissue in comparison to vaginal tissue (New Zealand AIDS Foundation, n.d.). Simplistic framing of HIV within discourses of medicine and science fail to capture the complex nature of gender, sexuality and disease prevalence. Instead, these discourses perpetuate negative attitudes towards gay male subjectivities.

Victor and Rory’s critical evaluation of their education experiences contrast with Brenda’s positive stance. I suggest the differences in these constructions are because of aspects of their subjectivities and the discourses available to them. The discourses available to Victor and Rory are likely different from the discourses available to Brenda. Victor and Rory identify with subjectivities who are regularly marginalised, which may have made them more attuned to, and critical of, restrictive discourses of gender and sexuality. In contrast, Brenda’s cisgender heterosexual subjectivity tends to be privileged, so she may be less aware of inequalities constructed and maintained by discourses of HIV. The subjectivities within the group interview each participant attended may have
also contributed to these varied accounts. Victor and Rory took part in the same discussion and the third participant of their group interview was May, a bisexual transwoman. Brenda took part in a discussion with Lauren and YY, both heterosexual women. The subjectivities of the other participants within a group interview can influence other attendees’ contributions and thinking (Smithson, 2000). For example, if Brenda was in a group with Victor and Rory her ideas may have been challenged by them, or their talk may have prompted her to reflect more critically on her course experience.

This section highlights how the same content can be viewed very differently. While the presence of content on queer subjectivities may appear to some to be inclusive, educators’ and students’ subjectivities influence these interpretations. As such, it is important to consider educational content carefully, and from a range of subjectivities. This analysis also highlights the need for careful consideration of each research participant’s subjectivity and how the composition of group interviews can affect what is discussed. If we only include privileged subjectivities within research, we only report the perspectives of privileged groups.

**Conclusion**

Currently within education settings, exposure to alternative discourses of gender and sexuality relies on individual acts of resistance. These acts of resistance primarily come in the form of the diverse subjectivities of teachers and peers. These diverse subjectivities destabilise the normative constructions of gender and sexuality and expose the education community to alternative discourses of gender and sexuality. While students appreciate learning about gender and sexuality from their peers, this puts pressure on trans and queer individuals and limits who is exposed to diverse discourses of gender and sexuality. To produce wider sustained change and challenge the negative
constructions that I have documented in the previous chapters, more is needed than individual acts of resistance.

While restrictive discourses continue to be dominant within education settings, it will remain difficult for individuals to perform acts of resistance. Matthew and Chris provided examples of how despite resisting normative constructions of sexuality, people can still be framed within restrictive discourses by others. Larger institutional changes need to take place if we want inclusive discourses to be circulated more broadly within education. Broader circulation of diverse discourses may allow more students and educators to feel safe being ‘out’ at school and in turn make more acts of resistance visible within these settings. When approaching broad inclusion within education it is important to reflect upon subjectivities. While content may appear to challenge dominant ideas, it is important to consider how it could be interpreted from a range of perspectives. In the final chapter of this thesis I will reflect on my research methods and findings and discuss how my findings could inform educational policy and practice.
Chapter 8: Conclusions

Throughout this thesis I have explored the discursive constructions of gender and sexuality within education settings in Aotearoa New Zealand. The participants within my research include students and educators from a range of subject areas and represent both secondary and tertiary education settings. My research findings expand on previous research by providing information about aspects of gender and sexuality that have not been thoroughly explored within the context of Aotearoa New Zealand. Using post-structuralism and Foucauldian discourse analysis to frame conceptualisations of knowledge and power, I explored the reproduction of and resistance to dominant constructions of gender and sexuality. My findings provide information about why restrictive discourses continue to be reproduced within education settings along with recommendations for practices that could facilitate the availability of more inclusive discourses within education. Overall, my research findings suggest exposure to diverse discourses of gender and sexuality within education relies on contact with individual students and educators. This results in only certain students being exposed to inclusive discourses of gender and sexuality.

At the same time as developing these findings, in the literature review chapter, I synthesised previous research and provided an overview of the research concerning gender and sexuality within education. My review of this research documented the dominance of restrictive discourses of heteronormativity and cisnormativity within education settings, and the scarcity of research exploring the reasons for the continued dominance of these discourses. I also integrated previous research into my findings
chapters to show how my research aligns or differs from past research about the inclusion of gender and sexuality within education.

In the remainder of this chapter I synthesise my research findings to show how they answer each of my research questions, contextualise my findings within the broader field of educational research, provide some reflections on the strengths and weaknesses of my research process, and outline the implications of my findings for education research and policy.

**Synthesis of my findings**

The aim of this research was to explore the discursive constructions of gender and sexuality within education settings in Aotearoa New Zealand. This aim included a specific focus on including educators’ perspectives and resistance to dominant constructions. I addressed the aim about educators’ perspectives by recruiting secondary and tertiary educators to participate. Their data was analysed to present a findings chapter dedicated to educators’ perspectives (see Chapter 6). The focus on resistance to dominant constructions also resulted in a chapter that specifically explores resistance to dominant discourses within secondary and tertiary education settings (see Chapter 7). My findings also address each of my specific research questions by exploring what discourses of gender and sexuality are dominant within education settings. Presenting information about the availability of diverse discourses within education and differences in this availability between secondary and tertiary settings. Analysing the discursive barriers to the inclusion of diverse discourses of gender and sexuality within education. Finally, my research also explored the different ways that educators include gender and sexuality in their teaching. In the subsections below I explain my research findings for each of these
key areas. I also reiterate some of the key comparisons between my research findings and past research.

**What discourses of gender and sexuality are dominant within education settings?**

Throughout my first findings chapter (Chapter 5) I presented examples that demonstrate how discourses of heteronormativity and cisnormativity, along with restrictive constructions of masculinity and femininity, continue to be dominant within education settings in Aotearoa New Zealand. I explored how the dominance of these discourses leads to the normalisation of particular systems of power which create restrictive behavioural frameworks. These restrictive constructions have negative impacts for a range of students and result in a range of social repercussions. The discourse of heteronormativity constructs a hierarchy of power that favours heterosexual subjectivities over queer subjectivities. The unequal power within the discourse of heteronormativity results in the evaluation of queer subjectivities and assumptions of heterosexuality. Tertiary students indicated the importance of heterosexual people voicing their acceptance of queer subjectivities in order to take up the subject position of tolerant heterosexual.

Students from secondary education settings indicated that heteronormativity constructs a culture where taunts like gay and lesbian are used to police the gendered behaviour of peers. Those students who enacted their masculinity or femininity in a way that was seen to be outside of expected norms were taunted by their peers. This finding align with past research conducted within secondary schools in Aotearoa New Zealand (Allen, 2019a; Sexton, 2012) and internationally (Chambers, Tincknell, et al., 2004;
Meyer, 2008a, 2008b; Pascoe, 2005). Like my research findings, past research indicated normalisation of homophobic harassment within secondary education settings (Allen, 2019a; Chambers, Loon, et al., 2004; Meyer, 2008a; Pascoe, 2005; Sexton, 2012). My findings show that the restrictive frameworks and the resulting gender policing continue to be dominant within secondary education settings in Aotearoa New Zealand.

My findings around assumptions of heterosexuality and the need for evidence for queer relationships seem contradictory to my findings about gender policing in the form of taunts like gay. My interpretation of these inconsistencies is that within the context of heteronormativity students are only willing to use terms like gay or lesbian as a taunt. People appear to fear seriously suggesting that a person is attracted to someone of the same gender, indicated by the need for proof of queer subjectivities. Fear about labelling someone as queer is maintained by the discourse of heteronormativity and the normalisation of the terms gay and lesbian as taunts.

The dominance of heteronormativity within secondary schools also results in events like school balls being heterosexual and couple centric spaces. My findings about the dominance of heterosexuality at the school ball aligns with past research conducted within New Zealand. This research also found heteronormative school ball policies. Some policies did not allow queer couples to attend the ball (Smith, 2015; Smith et al., 2016) while others constructed specific requirements for queer couples who wished to attend together (Allen, 2019a).

Binary discourses of gender are also dominant within education settings. These discourses limit the subject positions that are available to students. Participants within my research predominantly talked about gender subjectivities within the confines of woman
and man, indicating that discourses that include non-binary or other trans subjectivities are not very available or visible within education settings. Binary discourses of gender also impact secondary and tertiary students’ educational choices. Restrictive constructions of gender impact both women and men’s education choices and the jobs they choose to pursue. Along with this women’s academic pursuits are also influenced by constructions of their ability. Participants within my research suggested that there are certain subjects (e.g., the physical sciences) that are constructed as being outside of what women are capable of. As a result of this there is an expectation that they will not perform as well in these subjects as men might. The results of these restrictive constructions is that women might be less likely to pursue careers which are constructed as outside of their abilities (e.g., work in the physical sciences).

Past research has documented disparities in the representation of women compared to men within science and technology fields (Blair, Miller, Ong, & Zastavker, 2017; Howe-Walsh & Turnbull, 2016; Sinnes & Løken, 2012). My exploration of restrictive discourses suggests that both gendered constructions of subjects/careers and gendered constructions of ability affect subject choices. According to my findings these gender discrepancies in science and technology might be a result of science and technology being constructed as masculine and outside of a woman’s ability. My findings show that even if women overcome discursive constructions that imply they should not take a subject, they are faced with other discursive barriers. For example, women who took a science subject at the tertiary level were regularly policed by their peers. The experience of being one of a few women in a class and continual policing affected women’s comfort taking this subject. My findings suggest even if students are able to overcome the initial discursive barriers (of gendered constructions of careers and ability),
the social repercussions of this choice (e.g., continual policing) could lead women to eventually change career path. My research findings indicate that dominant constructions of femininity and masculinity need to be disrupted in order to change gendered employment patterns (e.g., the disparities between women and men within science and technology fields).

My findings along with past research suggests that discourses of hegemonic masculinity, hegemonic femininity and constructions of sexuality contribute to a culture that normalises rape (see Gavey, 2005). Many of these discourses are reproduced within secondary school classrooms spaces like sexuality education because these classes frame sexuality within discourses of biology and prevention. The absence of desire, especially female desire, and the focus on bodily functionality means that sexuality education often fails to challenge problematic and gendered constructions of sexuality (Allen, 2004a; Allen & Carmody, 2012; Diorio & Munro, 2000; Elliott, 2003). These restrictive discourses are therefore readily available to students and normalise unequal power dynamics between women and men. Within my research normalisation of active male desire and female passivity also appeared to influence young people’s evaluation of sexual activity by limiting the subject positions available to both women and men. Participants within my research also talked about the use of terms like frigid and slut being used to police young women’s sexual behaviour. My findings align with past research which notes the restrictive sexual framework that young women have to navigate within (Hird & Jackson, 2001; L. Smith, 2012; Sundaram & Sauntson, 2016). More specifically past research indicates the absence of discourses of desire for women, which results in the possibility of female desire and enjoyment in sex being used as a taunt (Hird & Jackson, 2001; Sundaram & Sauntson, 2016).
Academics have long critiqued biological and prevention approaches to sexuality education which leave no room for the construction of desire (Allen, 2004a; Allen & Carmody, 2012; Fine, 1988; Fine & McClelland, 2006). These critiques suggest biological constructions of sexuality are heteronormative and reduce sex to the prevention of disease and pregnancy. The critics of prevention approaches suggest that discourses of pleasure or desire should be central to secondary school sexuality education (Allen, 2004a; Allen & Carmody, 2012; Fine, 1988; Fine & McClelland, 2006). The academic critiques along with my findings indicate that replacing current constructions of gendered heterosexuality within sexuality education would be helpful. Specifically, challenging gendered constructions of heterosexuality, gendered constructions of desire, and rape myths (e.g., discourses of victim blame) would help to minimise the problematic ideas within education that contribute to rape culture.

**How available are diverse discourses of gender and sexuality within education settings?**

My findings show that while diverse discourses are available within both secondary and tertiary education settings, only some students are exposed to them. Within my research the participants talked about individual students and educators providing exposure to diverse discourses of gender and sexuality within education settings.

Previous research provides examples of students resisting dominant discourses of gender and sexuality through their membership in GSAs (Elliott, 2016; Lapointe, 2014; Mayberry et al., 2011; Mayo, 2013) along with their attire at the school ball (L. Smith, 2012). For example students from the USA who were a part of GSAs were able to increase exposure to diverse discourses within education settings by providing education that
challenged heteronormativity (Elliott, 2016; Mayo, 2013). Students within my research talked about similar acts of resistance as past research. These included being ‘out’ at school, challenging gender norms through school ball attire and challenging problematic constructions of gender. Student participants also talked about the importance of peers’ resistance for making diverse discourses of gender and sexuality available within education settings. Interacting with friends who are queer or trans can help students to better understand these subjectivities and make them more likely to draw upon discourses of diversity. The value placed on the knowledge provided by friends aligns with past research findings that shows secondary school students value knowledge gained from experiences over factual knowledge (Allen, 2001).

My research findings indicated two key differences in the availability of diverse discourses. The first was the availability of alternative discourses of gender enactment for women compared to men. My findings indicated that men had a more restrictive behavioural framework in terms of gender enactment compared to women. As a consequence, women have access to a broader range of acceptable femininities and a broader range of behaviours that they can perform and still be taken seriously. In contrast, men’s restrictive behavioural framework means that their challenges to dominant forms of masculinity might be read quite differently. For example, attempts to challenge masculinity might be read as a joke about feminine behaviour rather than an attempt to enact their gender in an alternative way.

There were also differences in the exposure to diverse discourses of gender and sexuality between secondary and tertiary education settings. Discourses of diversity were more accessible to students within tertiary settings. This difference appeared to be primarily driven by the broader range of people and subjectivities within tertiary
education compared to secondary education. The diversity of subjectivities within tertiary settings means that people are more likely to interact with someone of a difference subjectivity to themselves. My findings show that heterosexual or cisgender students’ interactions with people of difference subjectivities provide important exposure to diverse discourses of gender and sexuality. While this is positive, if individual students continue to be the primary source of exposure to diverse discourses within education settings this will put undue pressure on queer and trans students. Reliance on individuals also limits who is exposed to diverse discourses of gender and sexuality.

My findings indicate that passionate educators also provide exposure to diverse discourses of gender and sexuality within education. Educators’ queer subjectivities and the type of content educators include within their teaching can provide students with exposure to diverse discourses of gender and sexuality. While this exposure is positive for students, challenging established norms can be dangerous for educators. Specific dangers for educators can include the way they are constructed by others (e.g., fears about being perceived as having a gay agenda) and reactions from students (e.g., being confronted by students). For educators to feel safe resisting dominant constructions of gender and sexuality within education these restrictive discourses need to be resisted on a larger scale. When individual educators are the only ones introducing these alternative constructions, it leaves them open to these dangers. If restrictive constructions of gender and sexuality were challenged more broadly, educators’ subjectivities and teaching content could be normalised. This normalisation would also minimise the likelihood of the dangerous negative reactions outlined above.
What discursive barriers are there to the inclusion of
diverse discourses of gender and sexuality within education
settings?

Analysis presented in Chapter 6 identified three key discursive barriers which limit educators’ willingness and ability to include diverse discourses of gender and sexuality within their teaching. These include the discursive constructions held by educators, discursive constructions held by students and discursive constructions within resources and curriculum.

Some of the secondary educators who participated within my research viewed gender and sexuality as controversial topics. The construction of these topics as controversial appears to be associated with fears about negative reactions from people with conservative views. This view results in some educators framing approaches to gender and sexuality within a discourse of fear. These educators tend to reproduce restrictive constructions of gender and sexuality as a way to avoid the potential for negative reactions from parents or other members of the school community. Fear of parents reactions has also been articulated by secondary educators in past research (Mayberry et al., 2011; Painter, 2008; Thein, 2013). For example, New Zealand educators in Painters’ research voiced concerns about queer content making students gay and suggested that parents would have similar concerns (Painter, 2008).

Educators’ lack of knowledge about how to include gender and sexuality within the classroom presents another barrier which limits the inclusion of diverse discourses. My findings suggest that there are educators who want to include diverse discourses of gender and sexuality within their teaching but they are unsure about how to do this. In
some cases educators’ personal constructions of gender and sexuality are inclusive but there is a gap in their ability to enact these diverse discourses within their teaching practice. Other educators reproduce restrictive discourses because they discount the relevance of gender and sexuality to their teaching. My analysis of past research with tertiary educators also identified constructions of relevance as impacting the inclusion of content about gender and sexuality. I framed this research as suggesting tertiary educators’ hierarchical evaluations about the relevance of gender and sexuality limited their willingness to find a space for these topics within the curriculum (Carpenter & Lee, 2015; Taylor et al., 2018). While none of the educators within my research directly framed gender and sexuality as irrelevant to their teaching, educators from both secondary and tertiary institutions talked about colleagues who constructed gender and sexuality in this way.

The discursive constructions of gender and sexuality that students draw upon can also act as a barrier to educators’ inclusion of gender and sexuality. For example, my findings indicate that students can have negative reactions to the inclusion of diverse discourses because they feel like their worldviews are being challenged. The educators on the receiving end of these reactions can be put in dangerous positions which may reduce their willingness to continue challenging dominant constructions. Students’ negative reactions to the inclusion of diverse discourses are a result of the continued reproduction of restrictive discourses within the majority of subjects at secondary school level. Educators’ ability to resist dominant discourses is also influenced by the reproduction of restrictive constructions of gender and sexuality within resources. Educators’ attempts to challenge restrictive constructions can be undermined by resources that reinstate discourses educators had aimed to replace with a more inclusive
construction (e.g., pathological models of intersex variations within textbooks). The absence of diverse discourses of gender and sexuality within formal curricula also limits the inclusion of gender and sexuality within education. It acts as a barrier because when there is no requirement for inclusion only a small number of educators choose to include these topics. These discursive barriers explain why many educators do not include diverse discourses of gender and sexuality within their teaching. As such the barriers also help to explain why students only have exposure to diverse discourses of gender and sexuality through their contact with “passionate individuals”.

**How do educators include gender and sexuality in their teaching?**

Despite barriers to the inclusion of diverse discourses, a number of secondary and tertiary educators include diverse discourses of gender and sexuality within their teaching. These educators taught in a range of subject areas and challenged dominant constructions through their teaching in various ways. Those educators who resisted dominant constructions of gender and sexuality within their teaching did so because they were passionate about inclusive education. While these educators provided students with important exposure to diverse and inclusive constructions of gender and sexuality, overall the inclusion of diverse discourses within education is variable and unstable. The reliance on individual educators to provide exposure to diverse discourses limits exposure to students within these educators’ classes, and relies on these educators remaining at the institution.

My findings provide a number of approaches that can be effective in helping educators to include diverse constructions of gender and sexuality within their teaching.
Framing gender and sexuality within discourses of social justice and professionalism could be particularly useful for helping to frame the importance and relevance of diverse discourses to students. This approach is likely to be particularly effective for tertiary students in professional training programmes (e.g., teaching, medicine, law) where gender and sexuality are important aspects of developing skills to interact with a range of people. Within secondary education content can be approached through a critical lens that allows the co-construction of knowledge (between the students and the teacher) across the course of a lesson. This critical co-constructed approach could provide secondary students exposure to diverse discourses of gender and sexuality along with valuable skills in critical thinking. Approaching diverse discourses in these ways could help to overcome some of the barriers outline above (e.g., negative reactions from students). Along with these particular approaches, choices around texts and films and an openness to talking about diverse subjectivities within the classroom are ways that passionate educators can include diverse discourses within their teaching. My findings about approaches to the inclusion of diverse discourses within education align with other researchers’ findings. Both my findings and past research indicate that the use of approaches that allow the inclusion of diverse discourses within education are currently limited to particular educators. These educators use a number of approaches including queer theory (Stein & Plummer, 1994; Sumara & Davis, 1999) and other critical approaches (Fitzpatrick & Russell, 2015; Helmer, 2016a; Quinlivan, 2012; Schmeichel et al., 2016) to include diverse discourses of gender and sexuality within education settings.

Overall my research shows that the reproduction of restrictive constructions of gender and sexuality is still common within secondary and tertiary education settings in Aotearoa New Zealand. My research has added to the current body of knowledge by
exploring how discursive barriers (like students’ and educators’ knowledge and understanding), and the limited inclusion of diverse discourses within resources and curricula help to maintain restrictive discourses. Along with this I have documented acts of resistance that demonstrate how students and educators can resist dominant constructions of gender and sexuality. The inclusion of students and educators from both secondary and tertiary settings means that my findings include perspectives, subject areas and education levels missing from much of the previous national and international research. Because my findings are from the South Island of Aotearoa New Zealand and include data from schools in small towns and rural locations, they provide information about parts of Aotearoa New Zealand not commonly represented in previous research.

While my findings address some research gaps, more research is needed to better understand the continually changing landscape of gender and sexuality within education in Aotearoa New Zealand. My findings suggest research collaborations between researchers and educators would be beneficial. The aim of such collaborations would be to develop and test resources to address the discursive barriers outlined within this research. The development of resources could help increase educators’ confidence including diverse discourses within their teaching (Fenaughty, 2019), which would overcome some of the discursive barriers identified within my research. Future research should also explore parent’s perspectives on the inclusion of gender and sexuality within education in Aotearoa New Zealand. My findings and past research, suggest fear about negative reactions from parents is a barrier to the inclusion of diverse discourses of gender and sexuality within secondary education (Mayberry et al., 2011; Painter, 2008; Thein, 2013). Exploration of parents’ perspectives could provide a better understanding of parents’ actual attitudes about including diverse discourses of gender and sexuality within
education. If parents have positive attitudes to the inclusion of diverse discourses within education this could be used to mitigate educators’ fears about the inclusion of diverse discourses. If the findings indicated parents in Aotearoa New Zealand do draw upon conservative discourses of gender and sexuality, the extent to which parents’ views affect education should be considered critically. The results of research exploring parents’ perspectives could be used to develop ways to communicate the educational importance of diverse discourses of gender and sexuality to parents. Future research that provides a clear understanding of the discourses parents’ use to frame gender and sexuality would allow the development of approaches that specifically target these concerns. More specifically, the inclusion of gender and sexuality could be framed as important in the context of ideas parents saw as important learning for their children. Developing approaches to communicate the importance of diverse discourses to parents is similar to the framing approaches deployed by the tertiary educators within my research. These educators use framing to communicate the relevance of teaching about gender and sexuality to their students.

**Methodological reflections**

As outlined in Chapter 1, personal experience and my own subjectivity contributed to my interest in this research topic. These same experiences and subjectivities also influenced the research process, including the interactions I had with participants. As such, it is important to reflect on the impact that my role as a researcher has had on this research. My research explored constructions of gender and sexuality and these constructs (particularly gender) tend to be performed in visible ways. Therefore, I reflect on how my gender performance might have been interpreted by the participants, and in turn how this might have impacted their responses. While during my late teenage
years I moved away from the undercut (which I mentioned in the introduction) in favour of a more feminine haircut, I have now returned to a slightly classier version of the hairstyle my 11 year old self donned. I do not wear makeup and during data collection I primarily wore some kind of button up shirt, many of which were purchased from the ‘men’s’ section. Overall, I would describe my gender performance as not typically feminine. While I did not discuss my femininity with participants, they may have read my non-normative feminine appearance along with my research topic as indicative of my support for more inclusive constructions of gender and sexuality. As a result of this participants may have been more likely to provide answers that aligned with what they perceived my views to be. While this may be the case, it is important to note that the participants that I interviewed appeared to draw upon a range of constructions of gender and sexuality, so regardless of how they read my appearance they still shared a range of views. My choice of discourse analysis may have aided in my ability to detect a range of views even if participants attempted to say what they thought I wanted to hear. This is a strength of discourse analysis, even when trying to be thoughtful about language we can still unconsciously reproduce personal understandings and norms. These unconscious reproductions provide some information about our understandings and experiences.

Like the participants’ language, my language use during the interviews was important. As a qualitative researcher conducting research that explores discursive constructions it was important to reflect on the discourses I may have reproduced during interviews. While I made every effort to be a mindful researcher and choose my language carefully, during analysis I identified instances where I reproduced dominant discourses. For example, during an interview with Rikki (a student from Riverview High) I asked “What about sexuality at the school formal? Are people allowed to bring same-sex
partners?" The way I asked this question implicitly reproduced the discourse of heteronormativity by using the term “allowed”, drawing upon an assumption that there was some reason that same-sex couples would not be allowed to attend the formal. By drawing upon the discourse of heteronormativity, I created a situation where Rikki may have had to challenge my heteronormative assumptions. It may be difficult for participants to challenge a researcher, because of unequal power relations (in favour of the researcher) within research interviews (Walsh, 2014). Challenging the researcher may have been particularly difficult in this case as there were also discrepancies in age between Rikki (16) and I (26). Braun (2000) suggests that instances where the researcher reproduces dominant discourses, particularly of heterosexism, are common within group and individual interview research. By reflecting on these instances of reproduction, researchers can develop their interview skills and focus on using language that is more inclusive of diversity (Braun, 2000). Reflecting on this particular example I can see how an alternative line of questioning could have attained the same information without the reproduction of heteronormativity. For example, I could have asked Rikki “What kind of couples attend the formal together?” This question could have gained the same type of information without the reproduction of heteronormativity.

The ability to reflect on the participants and my own implicit reproduction of discourses was aided by the analytic concepts that I developed using Parker’s (1992) and Willig’s (2008) steps for discourse analysis. The analytic concepts of people and systems of power along with the focus on comparison were particularly helpful for analysing implicit reproduction. The focus on people allowed a deeper exploration of how talk that initially appeared to construct particular subjectivities in a positive way actually contained unequal systems of power. These systems of power created possibility for the
dominant group to discursively construct a group in a marginalised position, something that was not possible in the reverse. For example, initially statements like those I analysed in the evaluation of queer subjectivities section (see Chapter 5) appeared to positively appraise queer subjectivities. Further exploration of how this discourse constructed particular groups alongside an analysis of the systems of power within the discursive construction provided a deeper understanding of the subtle inequality. The combination of these analytic concepts allowed me to understand how the use of language within this discourse helped to maintain the privileged position of heterosexual. The process of comparison also allowed careful consideration of the subtle difference in language that indicated a tolerance to diversity, versus language that recognised the value of diversity. Overall, the development of analytic concepts enhanced the analytic process because it allowed me to analyse groups of discursive constructs in a way that aligned with the aims of the project.

A limitation of my research is the paternalistic role that schools played during the recruitment process. Researchers have documented the challenge of collecting data from schools and the gatekeeping role they often play during the research process (Allen, 2009a, 2011; L. Smith, 2012). In order to have access to secondary school students I recruited individual schools. Principals’ initial decision about whether to participate represents the first paternalistic aspect of recruitment. School staff also helped me recruit students and educators. Educators were recruited in several ways including some targeted recruitment of only specific teachers and some general recruitment where all staff were informed of the research. Student recruitment was targeted with a staff member contacting specific students, rather than opening up participation to all senior students. As a result, it is possible that the students and (to a lesser extent) the teachers who participated were
ones the school staff thought would represent the school in a particular way. Along with this, while ethical approval allowed me to gain consent from students rather than parents, several schools sought parent permission. This practice could be seen as undermining the specific ethical decision to construct senior students as capable agentic decision makers. While the paternalistic role of schools acts as a limitation, without the co-operation and help of school staff I would not have had access to any secondary school teachers or students. Therefore, I would not have been able to explore the discursive constructions of gender and sexuality within secondary settings. Also, despite this potential limitation, secondary school students and educators were rich informants. The aim of qualitative research is to include participants who can talk in detail about the topic of interest (Polkinghorne, 2005). All of the participants I interviewed provided detailed information about the inclusion of gender and sexuality within education. The secondary school students were also diverse, taking a range of subjects and taking part in a range of extracurricular activities. So, while secondary school participants being selected by school staff could be seen as a limitation, it could also be seen as a strength. It appears that many of these staff were purposeful in their choice of participants and attempted to recruit a range of students and educators who represented the diversity within their school and could provide data that would meet the aims of my research.

Participants’ self-selection to take part in this research presents a limitation for the applicability of my findings. The time commitment and active nature of participating in a research interview limits who is willing to participate and the resulting participants tend to be interested in the topic (Polkinghorne, 2005). While self-selection is a factor within any research project, I think it is particularly important to reflect upon within this study. Self-selection, especially on the part of educators, likely means that my data provides an
overestimation of the number of educators who actually challenge restrictive constructions of gender and sexuality. While I talked to a range of educators who challenged dominant constructions of gender and sexuality, these might be the only educators within their education settings who do this. My research aims and questions may have deterred those educators who construct gender and sexuality as irrelevant to their teaching and those who reproduce restrictive constructions. As such, future research could attempt to include these educators by using research methods and questions that might be more likely to encourage them to participate. Exploration of educators who construct content on gender and sexuality as irrelevant would allow a more in-depth understanding of these educators’ teaching decisions. An understanding of these educators teaching decision would provide a fuller understanding of why restrictive discourses continue to circulate within education settings.

The research process highlighted the importance of carefully considering methods for collecting data from secondary school environments. It is often difficult to access secondary school students for research, especially when photo and other media methods are involved (Allen, 2009a, 2009c, 2011; L. Smith, 2012). I faced these challenges and decided to change my methodology, from media journals to interviews, so that I could collect at least some data from secondary students. This change in method reduced the time commitment required to participate within my research and made it easier to recruit secondary schools and individual students. Despite changes in data collection methods secondary school students provided rich data that allowed me to answer my research questions. Also, had I not made this change it is possible I would not have been able to recruit the number of schools and individual students and educators that I did. As such, flexibility in methods and designing research with minimal time requirements are
important considerations when attempting to collect data from schools. This may be a particularly important consideration when, as with my case, there is no prior relationship between the researcher and the school. Allen has reflected on the importance of previously established relationships for the success of photo elicitation research within schools in Aotearoa New Zealand. In one research paper she notes that when recruiting for a photo elicitation project she only contacted schools where relationships had already been established (Allen, 2009c).

The shared geographical location of the participants who took part in this research could be viewed as both a strength and a limitation. The fact that all of my participants were recruited from education settings in the South Island of Aotearoa New Zealand could be seen as a limitation, because my findings may only apply to these particular educational contexts. My findings therefore may not be reflective of other areas of Aotearoa New Zealand or other parts of the world. The specific geographic location is also a strength of this research. Sampling students and educators from a range of schools in the South Island allows my findings to extend on past research. As outlined in my summary of the research above, many of the patterns identified within past research were also identified within my research. The inclusion of participants from this particular region, provided information about how education settings within this region are consistent with education settings in other regions and countries.

The specific efforts made to recruit a diverse range of tertiary students is another strength of my research. Subjectivity affects people’s experience of the world (Willig, 2008). My findings emphasise the importance of including a broad range of subjectivities due to the different perspectives provided by participants with different life experiences. For example, when exploring gender and sexuality, cisgender heterosexual students might
interpret and experience education content differently than trans or queer students. Researchers conducting qualitative research should think carefully about which participants are included. This would involve careful thought throughout the research process including consideration about recruitment criteria, the type and placement of advertisement for the study and targeted or specific recruitment to ensure representation of a range of subjectivities. Inclusion of only dominant voices and those who experience normative subjectivities can result in findings that do not adequately explore the impacts of dominant discourses on marginalised subjectivities.

Another strength of my research was the use of an open response demographic questionnaire. This questionnaire was particularly suited for this research where I did not wish to reproduce certain hierarchies of subjectivity through the collection of demographic details. While this method of collecting demographics is a strength, as outlined in Chapter 4, this type of demographic form may be affected by confusion when reading and responding (e.g., not understanding what is meant by sexuality). This confusion may be more likely for people who have difficulty with literacy. The impact of reading ability is not confined to open response option questionnaires, but open response questionnaires may magnify this problem in comparison to fixed response option questionnaires. This is because with fixed response questions even if people do not understand what they are being asked, the possible answers provide more context, reducing the likelihood of confusion. To reduce confusion with open response demographic questionnaires it may be useful for researchers to briefly explain the questions to participants, include descriptions of what is meant by the terms used, or provide examples. If examples are provided this should be done with caution as it could undermine the motivations for using an open response demographic questionnaire in the
first place, by constructing an expected response. An effective way to provide examples without reproducing normative ideas could be for the researcher to explain how they would respond to a particular question or questions. Even if the researcher was heterosexual and cisgender the focus would still be on their individual demographics without the construction of expectations about how others should respond.

**Implications**

My findings imply that while some students are exposed to diverse discourses of gender and sexuality, this exposure is reliant on “passionate individuals”. Even those individuals who resist dominant constructions of gender and sexuality are limited in what they can do, as a result of the constructions others use to frame their actions. My findings have applications for education policy. The Code of Professional Responsibility and Standards for the Teaching Profession within Aotearoa New Zealand includes manaakitanga as one of its fundamental values. This is a Māori term and is interpreted within this context to communicate the role of teachers in Aotearoa New Zealand in “creating a welcoming, caring and creative learning environment that treats everyone with respect and dignity” (New Zealand Education Council, 2017, p. 2). This value implies teachers along with school leadership have a duty to challenge restrictive constructions of gender and sexuality because these discourses often contribute to a learning environment where not everyone is treated with dignity and respect. Tertiary institutions within Aotearoa New Zealand are governed by the 1989 New Zealand Education Act which requires all universities within Aotearoa New Zealand to “accept the role of critic and conscience of society” (New Zealand Ministry of Education 1989, section 4, point v). Taking on the role of critic and conscience implies that Universities within Aotearoa New Zealand will model best practice and be leaders in diverse and inclusive
environments. According to my research findings, for secondary and tertiary settings to fulfil the roles outlined above, changes need to be made.

The greater circulation of diverse discourses of gender and sexuality within education settings could help create a culture of dignity and respect for everyone. While individual educators currently provide exposure to these discourses, many of the educators within my research suggested the need for changes at a higher level. For secondary and tertiary education settings to fulfil the goals laid out within the documents above, gender and sexuality need to be incorporated within curriculum and policy. My findings show that while educators have access to recommendations about best practice in relation to gender and sexuality, these recommendations are often used in reactive ways (in relation to an ‘out’ queer or trans student) rather than proactively fostering inclusive education environments. The problem with this approach is that queer and trans students already exist within these education settings, even if the educators are not aware of who they are. To provide safe and respectful environments for these students, diverse discourses need to be embedded within curriculum and policy. Without the inclusion of diverse discourses within curriculum and policy, educators will continue to face discursive barriers and in the absence of having a policy imperative to overcome these barriers, only a few passionate individuals will do so. While, as demonstrated by my findings, these passionate individuals provide points of resistance within education settings, the individual nature of this resistance makes it unstable and only available to students who these educators teach. For widespread and sustainable change the inclusion of diverse discourses needs to be approached from an institutional level rather than just an individual level.
My findings also provide some specific examples of how experienced educators address discursive barriers that limit the inclusion of gender and sexuality (see Chapter 6). Educators who faced challenges to the inclusion of diverse discourses (e.g., negative reactions from students) developed approaches to minimise these barriers. My findings indicate that framing content as an important part of the course of study and providing students with examples for why this content is relevant for them and their future lives or professions can be effective, especially at the tertiary level. Secondary educators within my research indicated that critical co-construction can be effective. This process involves students and educators interrogating content from a critical standpoint to understand any inherent inequality or privilege within texts and considering other ways the same objects could be constructed. Each of these methods allows an alternative to presenting new information in a threatening way, which can prompt push back from students. Because the techniques outlined above provide specific pedagogical approaches to the inclusion of diverse discourses and minimise the likelihood of negative reactions from students, they may help to reduce educators concerns about the inclusion of diverse discourses within their teaching. Changes at higher levels resulting in gender and sexuality becoming an integrated part of curriculum would also facilitate educators’ inclusion of diverse discourses. It would do this by shifting the inclusion of diverse discourses from something that educators chose to do on an individual level, to something that is a regular and required aspect of curricula. Within the first construction, where is something that educators choose to do, there is the potential that inclusion can be interpreted by students or their parents as some kind of personal agenda. This interpretation might be especially likely if queer or trans educators chose to include queer or trans content in their teaching. The same type of interpretations would not be possible if diverse inclusion was common.
practice for all educators and was governed by those at higher levels rather than by individual educators, as it currently is.

**Summary of conclusions**

Throughout this thesis I have presented examples that illustrate the negative implications of restrictive discourses of gender and sexuality within secondary and tertiary education settings in Aotearoa New Zealand. I have shown that while some students are exposed to diverse discourses of gender and sexuality within education settings, this exposure relies on “passionate individuals”. If we want to overcome the discursive barriers that limit the inclusion of gender and sexuality, then inclusive discourses of gender and sexuality need to become an integral part of curriculum and policy. The values underlying both secondary education (The Code of Professional Responsibility and Standards for the Teaching Profession within Aotearoa New Zealand) (e.g., creating a learning environment where everyone is afforded dignity and respect) and tertiary education (The 1989 Education Act) (e.g., being the critic and conscience of society) already align with diverse inclusion. For the values embedded within the above and other education policies to be enacted by educators changes need to be made. While some underlying policy and legislation exists more guidance and support is needed so that education settings prioritise the inclusion of diverse discourses of gender and sexuality. Along with this, educators require more professional support and resources so they can increase their confidence and ability to effectively enact inclusive education practices.

Opponents to the inclusion of gender and sexuality within education often see these topics as ideas that lie outside the role of education. What these claims fail to consider is that gender and sexuality are already part of education. Ideas about gender and
sexuality are reproduced in gendered practices, books that are read, and curriculum examples educators choose to include. Education settings are already teaching students about gender and sexuality, it is just that this is done within restrictive and normalised frameworks, which are interpreted by many students and educators as the absence of content. The reproduction of these restrictive constructions of gender and sexuality have negative outcomes for any students or educators whose sexuality or gender performance differs from the dominant constructions of gender and sexuality. The reproduction of restrictive discourses can also limit students’ subject choices and career aspirations. The continued reproduction of restrictive constructions of gender and sexuality, results in education environments which are not safe and respectful for all. Education institutions have a significant amount of both normalising and disciplinary power. This power can be utilised to draw attention to and challenge the reproduction of social inequality which marginalises particular subjectivities. Individual students and educators are already using power to enact positive change, imagine how much could change if this was done at an institutional level. By making diverse inclusion of gender and sexuality a priority, education institutions within Aotearoa New Zealand could lead the country towards a more inclusive and respectful society.
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Appendix A: Published Literature review

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ARTICLE

Using Foucault’s theory of disciplinary power to critically examine the construction of gender in secondary schools

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Abstract
Schools are typically thought of as important places for young people to learn specific academic skills. This review synthesises research from “western” English-speaking countries to argue that young people learn more than just academic skills at school. Specifically, the review explores how aspects of classroom teaching and culture contribute to how young people understand gender. Drawing on Foucault’s theory of disciplinary power, practices within schools are deconstructed to show how they create certain gendered ways of being. The discourses of gender within schools are critiqued by highlighting how they limit diverse expressions of gender. Section 3 of the review draws on literature to highlight how dominant discourses and the practices that create them can be resisted creating the opportunity for other discourses of gender.

1 | INTRODUCTION:
FOUCAULT’S THEORY OF DISCIPLINARY POWER

Social practices in schools invite the repetition of particular social constructions of gender. This repetition generates the normalisation of certain gendered practices. The pervasiveness of certain gendered practices in schools means these practices are interpreted as “natural” phenomena, and so a dominant discourse is created that reasserts gender norms. By deconstructing the disciplinary practices that create these norms, the
origin of the discourse is exposed and the possibility for alternative discourses of gender is created (Anderson & Grinberg, 1998; Derrida, 1997; Foucault, 1977; Jardine, 2005).

This review draws on Foucault’s theory of disciplinary power as articulated in his treatise on prisons (Foucault, 1977). In this work, Foucault explains the exercise of power within contemporary “western” society. Foucault uses the panopticon prison design as a metaphor for the way disciplinary power operates. In this design, all the prisoners are housed in a way that they are visible to a guard tower but the content of this tower is not visible to them. This creates the perpetual possibility of surveillance and the prisoners are therefore in a constant state of possible supervision by authority. Foucault explains that this state of possible supervision leads to the prisoner effectively becoming their own guard. This self-surveillance becomes part of the prisoners’ normal routine.

Foucault’s metaphor of the prisoners’ self-surveillance can be applied to many daily practices. For example, children may initially be dressed in “gendered” colours such as blue and pink by their parents. The daily practice of being dressed in gender appropriate colours, observing these colours in the clothing section for their gender, and noticing other children of the same gender wearing the same colours makes dressing in gender appropriate colours part of the child’s daily routine. That certain colours are for boys and others for girls become part of the child’s unquestionable understanding of the world. The practice of dressing in certain gender appropriate colours and not dressing in others become something the child initiates and maintains themselves. There is power located in the practice of colours and clothing that creates the appropriate colours to dress in as a girl or a boy; this, in turn, creates certain ways to think about gendered colours. The power in this mundane daily practice creates certain gender norms that are
reinforced through positive reactions. It also creates inappropriate practices that prompt negative reactions from others in an attempt to get people acting within the gender norm.

Disciplinary practices are embedded within the mundane daily practices of many homes, schools, and other institutions. Although the goal of these practices is organisation of large numbers of people, they also create widespread ways of doing, thinking, and talking about tasks. Foucault refers to this widespread, common-sense knowledge as dominant discourses. These discourses are seen as the appropriate way of doing and being. The presence of appropriate ways of doing also create inappropriate ways and people are punished by authority or society for any inappropriate actions (Foucault, 1977; Gutting, 2005; McHoul & Grace, 1998).

Dominant discourses about gender require widespread dispersal; they are therefore often embedded within institutions that reach a large portion of the population. Schools are institutions that are structured by disciplinary practices that aim to educate young people and craft them into citizens who will be of use to their community (Jardine, 2005). The crafting of social citizens through schooling involves the implementation of practices to control large numbers of students (Anderson & Grinberg, 1998; Driver, 1985). Organisation and control allow schools to fulfil the goal of teaching students’ skills and ideas constructed as important within a specific community. Schools realise this goal by shaping students’ behaviour, thinking, and bodies to create intelligible and valued citizens. Gender is one area shaped by school practices that craft students through social understandings of “appropriate” ways to be
gendered citizens (Anderson & Grinberg, 1998; Butler, 1999; Driver, 1985; Foucault, 1977).

According to Foucault (1977), constant supervision and correction results in school expectations becoming part of students’ normalised practices. Foucault’s theory of disciplinary power applies because there are many teachers who supervise students and their adherence to school practices. Students can be punished by teachers for acting outside expected codes of behaviour and rewarded for adhering to them. When these practices include aspects of gender, students are also rewarded or punished for meeting or failing to meet gender ideals. For example, dress expectations often make items such as skirts seem logical for women and unthinkable for men (DaCosta, 2006; Dussel, 2004; Gereluk, 2007). Punishment for incorrect dress reinforces these unspoken gender ideals. On the surface, young people appear to be punished for not dressing in an appropriate manner; however, it also punishes students for not wearing the dress deemed appropriate for their gender (DaCosta, 2006; Dussel, 2004; Foucault, 1977; Gereluk, 2007).

The discourses of gender embedded within school practices create certain understandings about the appropriate gendered ways of being within the school environment. These discourses also become part of students’ understandings about the correct way to enact gender. Students then use these understandings to enact their own social authority, handing out social punishment to peers not seen to be obeying the norms. For example, trans and gender diverse students have reported how in order to use school bathrooms without harassment they need to present as intelligible males or females in the eyes of their peers (Woolley, 2016).
This review draws on evidence from qualitative research in secondary schools from “western” English-speaking countries with examples primarily from New Zealand, Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The research will be used to highlight the practices within schools that facilitate particular social constructions of gender, how these gender discourses become part of students’ thinking, and are then used to police each other. Students and teachers can also challenge dominant gender discourses, which is the focus of Section 3. We advocate for educators, researchers, and students to all play a role in resisting dominant discourses of gender, expanding the range of meaningful expressions of gender within education.

2 | DISCIPLINARY PRACTICES

2.1 | Gender in school

This section outlines school-wide disciplinary practices that encourage students to enact gender in particular ways. These disciplinary practices consist of single sex schooling, uniforms, and single sex spaces within schools.

Single sex schooling was founded on a discourse of separate roles for women and men. There was a perception that women and men needed different curriculum to prepare them for their “separate” future roles (Fry, 1988; Shmurak, 1998). Girls’ schools often had fewer educational courses. The courses offered focused on preparing girls for their future role of homemaker or for female-dominated employment such as teaching and nursing (Fry, 1988; Griffin, 1989). Single sex schools are still a feature of education in New Zealand and the UK: 27% of New Zealand schools (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2016) and 12% of British schools (Cooper, 2010) are single sex. Single sex schooling is less popular in the US with only 90 single sex schools (about 0.002 %)
nationwide, although single sex classes are often offered in coeducation settings (Cooper, 2010; U.S Department of Education, 2014). The continued presence of single sex schools could be seen to be maintaining the historical discourse of separate future roles. Single sex schooling also reinforces the gender binary, making females and males seem like “natural” and exclusive categories (Butler, 1999; Foucault, 1977). They also require students to enrol based on these gender categories. Single sex schools therefore help to maintain these societal categories and create an expectation of a homogenously gendered student body. Coeducation schools may offer space for more diverse constructions of gender, including trans, gender diverse, or intersex individuals.

Uniforms and dress codes within secondary schools also play a role in constructing gender. School uniforms are common in New Zealand, Europe, and South American schooling, and dress codes are popular in North America (Dussel, 2004). Dress regulations are explained in terms of creating uniformity, removing visual markers, putting the focus on education, and teaching students to dress in appropriate ways (DaCosta, 2006; Dussel, 2004; Firmin, Smith, & Perry, 2006). Schools that implement uniforms or dress codes usually have different expectations for young women and young men (Gereluk, 2007). Separate dress expectations give young women and young men different messages about appropriate ways to present themselves within their community context. As explained in the example in Section 1, punishment for incorrect dress reinforces appropriate ways to dress as an intelligible female or male (DaCosta, 2006; Dussel, 2004; Foucault, 1977; Gereluk, 2007). Dress codes can also be particularly problematic for trans or intersex youth who may be expected to wear the clothing of the sex they were assigned at birth, even if this does not align with their gender identity (Sausa, 2005).
Uniforms and dress codes construct certain bodies as appropriate and others as inappropriate. Schools are often thought of as places for children (Allen, 2007a; Jones, 2011; Pomerantz, 2007); dress codes are therefore developed for bodies that are not adult. Pomerantz (2007) analysed the case study of a young Canadian woman sent home from school for inappropriate dress. Comparisons between this student’s clothing and the school’s dress policy highlight the role of the body in dress codes. The problem was not the tank top the disciplined student wore but the body within it. Her body was larger, and more adult than bodies are expected to be in the school environment. Pomerantz (2007) argued other students wearing the same top would likely face no consequences. This suggests that school dress regulations are about more than just dress. They also construct acceptable and unacceptable bodies.

Pomerantz (2007) highlights the gendered nature of the appropriate school body. Dress codes expect young women to dress modestly to be “appropriately feminine.” The emphasis on female modesty is often framed within a discourse of female safety (Pomerantz, 2007). This discourse normalises uncontrollable heterosexual male desire and positions young women as responsible for ensuring they do not provoke this desire. It also locates young women as the cause of any loss of male control (Pomerantz, 2007; Ringrose & Renold, 2012). Therefore, discourses embedded in dress policies at secondary schools align with discourses of victim blame. These same discourses have been challenged by social movements due to the problematic messages they construct (Ringrose & Renold, 2012). The Slut Walk movement is one example, which highlighted the problems with the discourse of victim blame and the way it was used to explain women’s clothing as the cause of sexual assaults (Ringrose & Renold, 2012). Links between discourses of female modesty, victim blame, and sexual assault raises
questions about the presence and normalisation of female modesty within disciplinary practices at secondary school.

Within schools, there are many spaces that require intelligible female or male gender presentation. Trans youth describe the problematic nature of bathrooms, sports teams, and other practices within schools that segregate students by gender (Johnson, Singh, & Gonzalez, 2014; Sausa, 2005; Woolley, 2016). Students are often segregated within schools based on the assumption they are cisgender. The term cisgender refers to people whose sex assigned at birth aligns with their gender identity (Treharne, 2011). This term is used to challenge the norms associated with the binary use of “woman” and “man,” and assumptions that “trans” will be added before woman and man to specify people whose gender and sex assigned at birth do not match (Stryker, 2008). School spaces such as toilets and changing rooms and activities like sports teams are constructed in binary ways and leave no space for trans, gender diverse or intersex individuals (Sausa, 2005; Woolley, 2016). Spaces specified as being only for cisgender females and males once again make gender diverse individuals invisible within schools.

2.2 Gender in classroom teaching

Gender and sexuality are central themes in sex education. Sex education in western English-speaking countries is orientated around the goals of prevention of sexually transmitted infections and pregnancy (Abel & Fitzgerald, 2006; Allen, 2007b; Diorio, 1985; Education European Expert Group on Sexuality, 2016; Jackson & Weatherall, 2010). This focus on prevention means that young people are taught about bodies in essentialist binary ways (see Clarke, Ellis, Peel, & Riggs, 2010). Gender is constructed within an essentialist binary discourse as two natural biological categories. Within these
categories of woman and man, certain appearances and behaviours are seen as normative but others are seen as nonnormative. Gender discourses within sex education construct how young women and men are expected to act in sexual situations based on these natural gender categories (Diorio & Munro, 2000; Elliott, 2003).

The prevention model of sex education constructs sex as something that could create a pregnancy, which assumes sexual intercourse between cisgender women and men (Abel & Fitzgerald, 2006; Allen, 2007b; Diorio, 1985; Education European Expert Group on Sexuality, 2016; Jackson & Weatherall, 2010). In this way, “opposite sex attraction” is one of the assumed natural behaviours for young women and young men. The requirement of heterosexuality for intelligible gender performances is well documented and conceptualised as the heterosexual matrix (Butler, 1999) or heteronormative hegemony (Ludwig, 2011). Sex education is one place within schools where the intersections of discourses of essentialist binary gender and heterosexual sexuality are clearly presented to young people. For example, one New Zealand sex education resource describes the vagina as “a tube to receive the penis during intercourse” (Wright, 2000, p. 119). The inactive nature of the vagina in this discourse constructs a passive female heterosexuality, and by default, an active male heterosexuality (Elliott, 2003).

References to masturbation and pleasure within sex education are also gendered. Pleasure is a missing discourse in most sex education (Allen, 2004, 2007) but is especially absent in relation to young women (Diorio & Munro, 2000; Elliott, 2003; Fine, 1988). Young women’s bodies are constructed primarily as reproductive within sex education. The focus on reproduction means that resources centre on internal reproductive organs. In some resources, the clitoris is not even included in visual
representations of the female genitalia. This means sex education is a disciplinary practice that constructs women’s role as primarily reproductive. The absence of reference to desire also constructs sex as primarily reproductive for women rather than men, where desire is more central. Discussion of male puberty is typically framed in terms of positive bodily changes including male masturbation. Cisgender men thus receive some positive messages about their body through sex education (Diorio & Munro, 2000; Elliott, 2003).

The menstruation content of sex education constructs women and their bodies in a negative and restrictive way. Resources for teaching about menstruation often come from companies that sell sanitary pads and tampons (Agnew, 2012; Diorio & Munro, 2000). Within these resources menstruation is constructed as a hygiene crisis, as something that should be hidden, and as a requirement for womanhood (Agnew, 2012; Agnew & Sandretto, 2016; Diorio & Munro, 2000). The common discourses of menstruation therefore construct a need for products that allow discrete and hygienic menstruation as the way to appropriately enact “feminine menstruation.” These discourses also construct young women as dirty or unclean as a result of a bodily function. Young women’s bodies are again being constructed in certain restrictive ways within sex education (Agnew, 2012; Agnew & Sandretto, 2016; Diorio & Munro, 2000; Elliott, 2003). The premise of menstruation for the definition of womanhood also defines who fits into the category of women. There are a range of women who will never experience menstruation for a range of different reasons, including women who do not have a uterus or ovaries. These women are excluded from “womanhood” when defined in these reductionist terms.
The absence of space for other genders within sex education is also problematic. The above critique of sex education is dichotomised within the terms of “female” and “male.” An interview study looking at the experiences of 24 trans youth highlighted how gender identities other than female and male are absent from many curricula (Sausa, 2005). The focus on cisgender heterosexuality in sex education means that trans, gender diverse, and intersex individuals are not acknowledged or provided with information about ways to maintain their sexual health. Constructions of binary-gendered individuals seem to be pervasive in sex education. But it is important to note that sex education curricula are often vague and can hence be interpreted in multiple ways. Jones (2011) explored the different discourses present in international sex education curricula. Discourses ranged from dominant discourses that aimed to maintain certain social understandings of sex to critical discourses that encouraged young people to question privilege and systems of power in relation to gender and sexuality (Jones, 2011). Even with curriculum documents that include critical discourses and theory, how teachers interpret and teach them plays a large role. For example, the New Zealand sexuality education curriculum draws on holistic meanings of sexual health with objectives that aim to teach young people to critically examine gender and sexuality within society (Ministry of Education, 1999, 2015). Although the curriculum aims to teach students to acknowledge and challenge dominant ideas about gender and sexuality, research suggests that the teaching of sex education often does not meet these aims (Allen, 2004, 2007a, 2007b).

Gender discourses in school curricula other than sex education are also affected by the motivations and beliefs of teachers, school culture, and the specific subject requirements (Mayberry, Chenneville, & Currie, 2011; McKnight, 2015; Painter, 2008;
Stevens & Martell, 2016). Gender is often perceived as a controversial topic due to the argument that information about gender and sexuality is value based. This argument creates the possibility of differences between values taught at school and those taught at home. Schools often fear negative reactions from parents and communities if the difference in values between school and home are too great. This fear means teachers often maintain dominant discourses of gender to avoid any negative reactions from parents (Mayberry et al., 2011). Teachers in one US study explained that certain topics lend themselves to challenging dominant discourses of gender (Stevens & Martell, 2016). These teachers taught both social studies and sociology. They pointed out the centrality of the White male within history and therefore within the social studies curriculum. The sociology curriculum was seen as providing more flexibility and opportunities to challenge dominant sexist discourses within society. Within this study, teacher attitudes were important; only those teachers who acknowledged problems with normative gender discourses in society used the sociology curriculum to challenge these discourses. Students in a New Zealand study also reported their experiences of gender within a range of curricula. Some reported virtually no content on diverse gender and sexual identities, but others cited the inclusion of books and movies that challenged traditional notions of gender (Painter, 2008). Overall, discourses of gender within curriculum favour essentialist binary notions of gendered heterosexuality; challenges to this discourse are dependent on the attitudes of teachers and schools.

2.3 Gender discourses in peer and teacher interactions
Research indicates that students draw on dominant gender discourses within schools and deploy these in social interactions with their peers. More specifically, students use understandings of gender to harass or police those seen as not abiding by the “gender
rules” (Chambers, Tincknell, & Loon, 2004b; Kehily & Nayak, 1997; Meyer, 2008a; Robinson, 2005; Sexton, 2012). This fits in with Foucault’s concept of the normalisation of school disciplinary practices, which are then applied to the self and others (Anderson & Grinberg, 1998; Driver, 1985; Foucault, 1977).

Peer groups have a large influence on the way young people express their gender at school. Research from the United Kingdom, the United States, and New Zealand shows that students police gender via harassment, which pressures the recipient to conform to “normative” understandings of gender (Chambers et al. 2004b; Kehily & Nayak, 1997; Meyer, 2008a; Robinson, 2005; Sexton, 2012). Young men, in particular, are often the perpetrators of gender harassment (Chambers, Loon, & Tincknell, 2004a; Chambers et al. 2004b; Meyer, 2008b; Robinson, 2005). Enacting dominant discourses of masculinity within schools appears to rely on boys subordinating anyone who is different to them. These behaviours help maintain boys’ privileged masculine status within the gender hierarchy (Chambers et al. 2004a; Chambers et al. 2004b; Meyer, 2008b; Robinson, 2005).

One way boys police each other’s gender is through the use of terms such as “gay” and “fag.” Boys in the United States explained that fag was used to “call out” unmasculine behaviour (Pascoe, 2005). The use of gay within schools has been assigned various meanings. Some argue that gay has become a word to mean “stupid,” which is still a problematic slur; other students and teachers acknowledge that gay is often used as a label for male students who are acting in “gender inappropriate” ways (Chambers et al. 2004a; Chambers et al. 2004b; Sexton, 2012, 2015). The disciplinary practice of using gay and fag to police gender maintains the privileged status of masculine
heterosexuality as well as maintaining the “undesirability” of diverse sexualities and genders.

Harassment of girls, by boys, is also common in secondary schools (Chambers et al. 2004b; Meyer, 2008a; Pomerantz, 2007; Robinson, 2005). Young men cite a range of reasons for their attitudes towards their female peers. Boys describe how they use sexual harassment to get back at a girl or put her in her place (Chambers et al. 2004b; Robinson, 2005). This type of harassment reinforces the different roles of males and females and positions women as subordinate in the gender hierarchy (Meyer, 2008a). The study of sexual harassment within Australian schools highlights how these behaviours are part of a broader context. Researchers noted that the sexual harassment of females enabled young men to assert their masculinity (Robinson, 2005). This type of gender policing is often assumed to be a “normal” part of being a boy or is brushed aside as unimportant. Boys who do not take part in gender harassment often have their own gender questioned because they are not acting like boys “should” (Kaur, Boyask, Quinlivan, & McPhail, 2008; Robinson, 2005).

Teachers are often unwilling or unable to intervene in instances of gender harassment. Within schools, assumptions about the “normality” of gender bullying, and sometimes the “abnormality” of the victim, means that gender harassment continues to be considered normal (Meyer, 2008b; Preston, 2016; Sausa, 2005). Teachers play different roles in gender harassment such as actively contributing or explaining it through a discourse of victim blame, or being silent bystanders (Chambers et al. 2004a; Chambers et al. 2004b; Meyer, 2008b; Robinson, 2005; Sausa, 2005). Examples of teachers actively contributing to gender harassment include making comments or joking
about gay males (Chambers et al. 2004a; Meyer, 2008b). Examples of school staff
drawing on discourses of victim blame include school counsellors advising trans
students to change their gender expression to avoid bullying (Sausa, 2005), and teachers
justifying bullying due to a student’s personal presentation (Preston, 2016). This
reframing of the individual as the problem highlights the deeply ingrained nature of
gender practices. Rather than questioning the system, individuals who do not fit the
system are questioned. There are many teachers who acknowledge the widespread
nature of gender harassment at school. These teachers also attribute their powerlessness
to challenge harassment to discourses circulating in the broader school and community.
These discourses construct gender harassment as normal or harmless (Chambers et al.
2004a; Chambers et al., 2004b; Meyer, 2008b; Robinson, 2005).

The widespread dispersal of essentialist binary discourses of gender within
secondary schools is problematic for all students. It means young people are bullied or
harassed for anything seen as falling outside hegemonic femininity and masculinity.
Girls who play rugby, boys who like to dance, and young men and women who want to
wear clothes deemed as inappropriate may be questioned by their peers. The question
therefore is what tools can be used to challenge current practices within schools and
construct alternative discourses of gender?

3 | FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The review thus far has presented evidence of the limited and problematic construction
of gender in secondary schools. In the following section, we turn to research reporting
how these limited gender discourses are challenged.
The literature drawn on in the previous sections demonstrates how constructions of gender relate to broader school and societal discourses. These discourses are reinforced through systems of power embedded within the disciplinary practices of schooling. These systems create shared understandings of gender and “naturalise” certain ways of being gendered, rendering other ways “unnatural.” These concepts fit with Foucault’s (1977) theories of power and the continued reproduction of normative discourses. The important point here is that having a critical insight into dominant discourses creates an opportunity for resistance to these discourses. The power within disciplinary practices that create essentialist binary discourses of gender in education can be “repurposed.” The practices that create certain gendered ways of being can be changed. These changes can create new ways of doing and thinking about gender which produce gender discourses that are less constraining. The knowledge of how discourse and power operates within daily practices can maintain discourse but also create opportunities to resist and expand those same discourses (Foucault, 1977). Foucault’s theories of resistance can be used by researchers and educators to disrupt current discourses about gender by questioning practices within schools. These and other critical theories could be included within secondary school curricula, providing students with the tools to challenge and disrupt current discourses about gender.

Changes to curriculum and teaching can create resistance to dominant discourses of gender within schools. Frameworks like queer theory (Stein & Plummer, 1994; Sumara & Davis, 1999), critical pedagogy (Fitzpatrick & Russell, 2015), and critical race praxis (García, 2015) can be used in the classroom to get students thinking critically about gender, as well as sexuality and “race.” These theories acknowledge and question the systems of power that create norms and provide opportunities for
alternative discourses. For example, one US social studies teacher used concepts of inquiry and hypothesis testing to challenge students’ perceptions of why America is yet to have a woman president (Schmeichel, Janis, & McAnulty, 2016). Information about the presence of female leaders in other countries showed alternative discourses of women in leadership.

These theories have also been applied in health, physical education, and the sociology curriculum (Fitzpatrick & Russell, 2015; Kaur et al., 2008; Quinlivan, 2012; Stevens & Martell, 2016), although these theories have effectively resisted dominant discourses of gender they are also challenging to work with. Researchers note resistance does not easily happen, instead sometimes dominant discourses are reinforced (Quinlivan, 2012; Schmeichel et al., 2016). For example, in a New Zealand study, Quinlivan (2012) explains how an activity where students were critically examining the use of male bodies in advertising led to a male student enacting hegemonic masculinity. They did this by making a joke about another male student finding the images attractive. This incident reinscribed dominant and marginalised masculinities that the activity had meant to challenge. Quinlivan (2012) suggests that teachers and researchers may benefit from preparing for these types of situations by thinking beforehand about how they might use them to further generate teaching and discussion.

Researchers can also play a role in challenging the reproduction of normative gender discourses within schools and this review is one contribution to this process. We encourage researchers to continue to explore the most effective ways to disrupt normative gender discourses, to continue to publish research that highlights the need for change, and to continue to explore positive alternatives to current practices.
Students can be an active part of resisting dominant discourses of gender within schools. Gay–straight alliances (GSAs) provide a space for students to learn about theories that allow them to effectively challenge dominant discourses about gender and sexuality (Elliott, 2016; Mayberry et al., 2011; Mayo, 2013; Woolley, 2016). Students in one US GSA challenged school practices by setting up a gender neutral toilet within their school. The same GSA also gave presentations within the health classroom, where they shared stories that challenged dominant discourses of gender (Elliott, 2016). Students from a different US school commented that being part of the GSA gave them the language and arguments to challenge the thinking of their peers. This GSA also took part in actively educating others by talking to training teachers at the local university (Mayo, 2013). The theories and critical approaches to gender within GSAs therefore provided students with tools to challenge gender within their school and broader community. Although GSAs are shown to be positive for individual students and can achieve some institutional change, they also face challenges. Some schools see GSAs as safe spaces for individual students but limit the types of activism students can participate in (Mayberry et al., 2011). For example, one student in Mayberry et al.’s (2011) study referred to the principal’s resistance to a suggestion of a GSA school assembly. The principal’s explanation stemmed from fear of possible negative reactions from the school community. For student groups such as GSAs to succeed in resisting dominant discourses of gender within schools, they need schools to acknowledge that issues exist with institutional practices rather than with individuals (Mayberry et al., 2011; Mayo, 2013; Woolley, 2016).

School administrators can contribute to resistance of dominant discourses by challenging how gender practices are framed. When schools frame gender as the
of individuals they continue to reinforce dominant discourses of gender and gender privilege (Kaur et al., 2008; Mayberry et al., 2011; Mayo, 2013; Woolley, 2016). School leaders can create resistance to dominant discourses by being critical of their practices and considering the messages within their rules: What are they expecting students to wear? How are instances of gender harassment dealt with? By asking these questions and making changes to practices, schools can actively create different discourses and produce new gender norms that are more inclusive and affirming of self-identification (Fields & Payne, 2016; Johnson et al., 2014; Kaur et al., 2008; Quinlivan, 2012). We frame changes to school practices and the inclusion of critical theories and pedagogies as creating opportunities for resistance to dominant discourses. We also acknowledge that dominant discourses of gender are widespread and pervasive. As outlined in the research examples, resistance to discourses can also produce counter resistance from students or community members reinstating dominant discourses (Mayberry et al., 2011; Quinlivan, 2012).

Overall, we have highlighted that current practices within schools construct gender in limited ways. Further research is needed to explore how school leaders can be facilitated in making changes to their school culture with the aim of shifting discourses of gender within schools in the long term (Mayberry, 2006; Meyer, 2008a). Currently, schools tend to reinforce essentialist binary discourses about gender. But schools, or more specifically principals and teachers, can also be powerful agents of change. School leaders can encourage teachers and students to resist dominant discourses within schools and be an active part of contributing to broader social change around gender. We challenge researchers to also continue to be agents of change by conducting and
publishing research on effective ways to challenge gender discourses within educational contexts.

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AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES

Katie Graham achieved her BA Hons from the University of Otago in 2014 and is currently a PhD candidate in the Department of Psychology at the University of Otago, Aotearoa/New Zealand. Her PhD topic is the discourses of gender and sexuality in...
Aotearoa/New Zealand education. She is also interested in critical psychology and social justice issues in education.

Dr Gareth Treharne is a senior lecturer in the Department of Psychology at the University of Otago, Aotearoa/New Zealand. His research spans health psychology, critical psychology, and the psychology of gender and sexuality. He is currently coediting the Palgrave Handbook of Ethics in Critical Research with coeditors from South Africa; the book will be a collection of stories of ethics in action across diverse fields of health and social research. His current research includes studies of the discrimination experienced by people with diverse genders and sexualities and studies on educational initiatives to improve the provision of healthcare for transgender people. Prior to working in Aotearoa/New Zealand, Dr Treharne completed his BSc and PhD in psychology at the University of Birmingham, United Kingdom.

Associate Professor Karen Nairn is currently based at the Otago University College of Education, New Zealand. Her research focuses on processes of exclusion in education shaped by gender, sexuality, and ethnicity. Her book Children of Rogernomics, a neoliberal generation leaves school, connects the stories of young people with the wider social and economic story of New Zealand during the last three decades. More recently, she coedited Springer’s Handbook of Geographies of Children and Young People and Space, Place and Environment. Prior to her university career, she was a high school geography teacher
Appendix B: Letter to principals

(November 1st 2016)

Dear,

I am writing to introduce myself and inform you of a study about portrayals of gender and sexuality in education that I plan to carry out in term 1 of 2017. I will follow up this letter with an email later in November to ask about your willingness for students and teachers from your school to be involved in the research.

My name is Katie Graham and I am a PhD student at the University of Otago supervised by Associate Professor Karen Nairn and Dr Gareth Treharne. My PhD explores gender and sexuality in New Zealand education. As part of this research I wish to collect data from secondary students and teachers because schools are important learning and socialisation environments in New Zealand. I understand that schools are busy places and you are often asked to contribute to research. I hope you will be interested in this research due to its ability to inform educational practice.

We have designed the study so it will cause minimal disruption to students’ and teachers’ regular routines. I would ask to interview approximately 5 senior students and 1 or 2 teachers from your school. The individual interviews would last about 1 hour. Students would be asked about their understandings of gender and sexuality, what they learn about gender and sexuality at school and what they learn about gender and sexuality from other sources. Teachers would be asked how gender and sexuality is included in their teaching and what resources they use to inform this teaching. I am interested in interviewing some teachers who provide sexuality education in particular but I would also like to interview teachers across a range of curriculum areas to hear how gender and sexuality feature in the broader curriculum.

The findings will include students’ and teachers’ perspectives on the portrayals of gender and sexuality in education. These perspectives will include positive aspects of current practice and suggest improvements. This information may be especially relevant to sexuality education and to recent updates from the Ministry of Education (Sexuality education: A guide for Principals, Boards of Trustees, and Teachers 2015). This guide highlights the importance of student perspectives in sexuality education and the role of research in this field. Being part of this research would allow students and teachers from your school to have their perspectives heard (although the specific identity of participants and schools will remain anonymous). It would also allow these perspectives to be part of sexuality research in New Zealand which the Ministry of Education will draw upon to inform future reports.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this research – I will get in contact with you later in November. In the meantime, please feel free to email me about the study or let me know a convenient time to call if you wish to discuss the study by phone (kejgraham27@gmail.com).

Yours sincerely,

Katie Graham, BA(hons)

Supervised by:

Karen Nairn, PhD, DipTchg Gareth Treharne, PhD
Appendix C: Email to university lecturers

Hello,

My name is Katie Graham and I’m doing my PhD under the supervision of Dr Gareth Treharne and Assoc Prof Karen Nairn. I’m contacting you in hopes you might be willing to find the time to take part in an interview about gender and sexuality in your teaching. The interview would involve questions about whether you include aspects of gender and sexuality in your teaching and, if so, which sources you use to inform this. Even if you feel your teaching doesn’t focus on gender or sexuality, I would still be very interested to interview you about your thoughts on the relevance of gender or sexuality in your field of expertise.

An outline of the specific questions and an information sheet is attached to this email to provide you with further details. The interview would likely take about an hour and depending on your preference could take place in your office or an interview room in the Department of Psychology. If you are interested in being interviewed, I am happy to interview you any time throughout the coming year that would best suit you. If you do not wish to take part but have a colleague who might be interested feel free to share this information with them.

If you have any questions about taking part in the study, please feel free to contact me or my supervisors. This study has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee (reference number D15/381).

Thanks for taking the time to consider this,

Katie Graham
Appendix D: Tables detailing demographic information

Table D2
Secondary students’ demographic details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Sexuality</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jess</td>
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<td>Straight</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>NZ Māori</td>
<td>Rural High*</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bebe Yaga</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Straight</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Māori</td>
<td>Rural High*</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hazel</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Heterosexual</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>NZ European</td>
<td>Rural High*</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rikki</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Bisexual</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>European/Pākehā</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milly</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Straight</td>
<td>17</td>
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<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Straight</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>NZ Pākehā</td>
<td>Riverview High</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burt</td>
<td>Male/Female</td>
<td>Straight</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Not provided</td>
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<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jude</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>New Zealander</td>
<td>Littletown High</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Straight</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>NZ European</td>
<td>Littletown High</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jason*</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Straight</td>
<td>17</td>
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<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Michelle</td>
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<td>NZ European</td>
<td>Littletown High</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ian</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Straight</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>NZ European</td>
<td>Parkview High</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3 * indicate code names chosen by participants.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Sexuality</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Teaching Experience</th>
<th>Year levels taught</th>
<th>Subject area</th>
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<td>Rural High*</td>
<td>14 years</td>
<td>12 and 13</td>
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<td>Anni*</td>
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<td>1 year</td>
<td>9 to 11</td>
<td>PE and Health</td>
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<td>Molly</td>
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<td>New Nzer</td>
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<td>3 years</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>(Support Staff) Manage Student Volunteers</td>
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<td>Chris*</td>
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<td>Gay, Homosexual, Queer</td>
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<td>10 to 13</td>
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<td>11 years</td>
<td>12 and 13</td>
<td>English</td>
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<td>9 to 13</td>
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<td>NZ European</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Littletown High</td>
<td>3 to 4 years</td>
<td>7 to 10</td>
<td>PE and Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lola</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Heterosexual</td>
<td>NZ European</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Littletown High</td>
<td>10 years</td>
<td>8 to 13</td>
<td>Home Economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Sexuality</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>Year of study</td>
<td>Subject Grouping of major and minor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelly</td>
<td>Female, woman</td>
<td>Heterosexual</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>NZ European, Pākehā</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glenn</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Heterosexual</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>NZ Pākehā</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harry</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Straight</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Nzer</td>
<td>4th</td>
<td>Humanities, Social Science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Straight, Heterosexual</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>European, Swedish</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Social Science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophia*</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Bisexual</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Social Science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amy</td>
<td>Female, Cisgender</td>
<td>Heterosexual</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>NZ European</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Social Science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joel</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Bisexual</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>White, Pākehā</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harriet</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Straight, Heterosexual</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>White European</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alice</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Straight, Heterosexual</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>NZ European</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Humanities, Social Science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rose</td>
<td>She, Female</td>
<td>Pansexual</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>NZ European</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Social Science</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Briana</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Find guys attractive</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>NZ European</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Science, Language</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gabby</td>
<td>Female, Cis</td>
<td>Bisexual</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Pākehā, Caucasian, New Zealand American</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Science, Humans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steph</td>
<td>Female, Cis</td>
<td>Bisexual</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Asian, Eurasian, Filipino, Swedish</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Humanities, Science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nikki</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Straight</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Japanese, East Asian</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lauren</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Straight</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>New Zealand European</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Humanities, Social Science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YY*</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Normal, to male</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Medical Science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brenda*</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Straight</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>NZ European</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Social Science, Humanities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alina</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Asexual homoromantic</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arthur*</td>
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<td>Bisexuality</td>
<td>21</td>
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<td>4th</td>
<td>Social Science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jo</td>
<td>Female, Woman</td>
<td>Bisexual</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>NZ European</td>
<td>4th</td>
<td>Arts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jasmine</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Straight, Heterosexual</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>NZ Māori</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aaron*</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Gay</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Dutch, Euro</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fern</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Heterosexual</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>NZ European</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Social Science, Science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bull*</td>
<td>Male, Man, Gay</td>
<td>Straight, Heterosexual</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>NZ European</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Business, Science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cobra*</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Straight, what makes me happy</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>NZ European</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Business</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Cody*</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Heterosexual</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Kiwi European</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water*</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Straight</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>NZ Pākehā</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gray*</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>NZ European</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunchboxkid*</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Bi</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Pākehā</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victor</td>
<td>Male, Trans male, FTM</td>
<td>Pansexual, Queer</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>White Caucasian</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Rory</td>
<td>Gender queer, Non-binary</td>
<td>Pansexual, Bisexual, Asexual spectrum</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Post Grad, Medical Science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May*</td>
<td>Trans Woman</td>
<td>Bi</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>NZ European</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Arts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Table D5

*Tertiary educators’ demographic details*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Sexuality</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Teaching experience</th>
<th>Year levels taught</th>
<th>General subject area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gerry *</td>
<td>Male if forced, Other (non-binary)</td>
<td>Gay</td>
<td>White-British</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>8 years</td>
<td>200 and 400</td>
<td>Social Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margaret*</td>
<td>Woman</td>
<td>Heterosexual</td>
<td>Pākehā</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>13 years</td>
<td>100 to 400</td>
<td>Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angela</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Heterosexual</td>
<td>Pākehā</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Since 2004</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taylor*</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Lesbian</td>
<td>Pākehā</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>20 years</td>
<td>100 to Postgrad</td>
<td>Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lily</td>
<td>Woman, she, gender neutral terms when possible</td>
<td>Heterosexual</td>
<td>Other, Eurasian</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>15 years</td>
<td>All levels</td>
<td>Humanities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carol</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Heterosexual</td>
<td>Pākehā</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>3 ½ years</td>
<td>2,3,6</td>
<td>Medical Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gatamon</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Bisexual</td>
<td>Pākehā</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>31 years</td>
<td>3rd and 4th</td>
<td>Humanities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix E: Example of demographic questionnaire

Demographic questionnaire for Students: Gender and sexuality

in secondary education.

Participant number ..................................
How old are you?

What year are you in?

What subjects do you take?

What (if any) extracurricular activities do you do? (e.g. sport, student council, band)

What term or terms do you use to describe your gender?

What term or terms do you use to describe your sexuality?

What term or terms do you use to describe your ethnicity?

A code name will be used to present any quotes from the data you provide. If you would like to choose this name please write it below. We encourage you to pick a name that is not strongly linked to you so that your anonymity will be protected.

...........................................................

A code name will also be used to represent your school. Write any suggestions for your school codename below.

...........................................................
Appendix F: Secondary students information sheet

Gender and sexuality in secondary education
INFORMATION SHEET FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

Thank you for showing an interest in this project. I would like you to show me about gender and sexuality in your life. I see young people’s opinions and experiences as important and would like your opinion to be part of this research. Below is some more information about the study so you can decide if you would like to take part.

What is the Aim of the Project?

The aim of this study is to collect information about how gender and sexuality is presented to you on a daily basis. To learn about this I would like to interview you about your learning both in and out of school. I am interested in what young people like you are learning about gender and sexuality at school and how this compares to what you learn about gender and sexuality from other sources.

What Type of Participants are being sought?

Senior students (Year 11 to 13) from schools who have agreed to take part are being recruited for this study. Approximately 5 students from your school will be recruited to take part. If you decide to take part in this project you will go into the draw to win a $30 movie or book voucher.

What will Participants be Asked to Do?

All together participation in this project is expected to take about 1 hour of your time. It will involve an audio recorded interview where I ask you questions about what you learn about gender and sexuality at school and what you learn from other sources. During this interview if you talk about something concerning that suggests you or someone else is in danger I may need to inform someone else (for example a school or community counsellor). The need to inform someone else will depend on if you are already receiving support in relation to the concern.

Please be aware that you may decide not to take part in the project without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

What Data or Information will be Collected and What Use will be Made of it?
An audio recording will be made of the interview so that it can be transcribed and analysed. You will also be asked to fill out a confidential demographic questionnaire; this will be used to describe the participants who took part in the study. Only me, my supervisors (Dr Treharne and Associate Prof Karen Nairn) and a transcriber who types up your interview will have access to your data.

The data will be securely stored in locked filing cabinets or password protected computers so only those mentioned above will have access to it. Your contact details will be destroyed after the research is completed. Other data like your interview transcript will be kept at the university for at least 5 years.

The completed research will have quotes directly from your interview but only a codename will be attached to these. The results of the project will eventually be available in the University of Otago Library (in Katie’s PhD thesis) and may be published in academic journals. Every attempt will be made to preserve your anonymity.

This project involves a semi-structured questioning technique. The general line of questioning is about your learning about gender and sexuality. The precise nature of other questions will depend on how the interview develops. While the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee is aware of the general areas to be explored in the interview, the Committee does not know exactly what will be asked. If you feel hesitant or uncomfortable about a question remember that you can choose not to answer it.

**Can Participants Change their Mind and Withdraw from the Project?**

You may withdraw from participation in the project at any time and without any disadvantage to yourself. If you wish to change or exclude any or all of the data you provided please contact me (Katie) within four weeks of the final interview.

**What if Participants have any Questions?**

If you have any questions about our project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact either:-

Katie Graham  
Department of Psychology  
University Telephone Number: 03 4716942  
Email: katie.gender.research@gmail.com

or  
Dr Gareth Treharne  
Department of Psychology  
University Telephone Number: 03 4797630  
Email: gtreharne@psy.otago.ac.nz

This study has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (ph +643 479 8256 or email gary.witte@otago.ac.nz). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.
Appendix G: Secondary educators information sheet

Reference Number: 16/013
29th February 2016

Gender and sexuality in secondary education
INFORMATION SHEET FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

Thank you for showing an interest in this project. I am interested in talking to secondary teachers like you about how gender and sexuality are included in your classroom. Below is some more information to help you decide if you think this research is something you would like to be a part of.

What is the Aim of the Project?
I would like to interview you about gender and sexuality in your teaching. The study will inform how you and other secondary school teachers construct their understandings of gender and sexuality, how gender and sexuality is included in teaching and how these things differ across different subject areas. This study is being done as part of the requirements of Katie Graham’s PhD in the Department of Psychology.

What Type of Participants are being sought?
Secondary school teachers from schools willing to participate are being recruited for this study. I am interested in teachers from a range of subject areas to get an idea about the relevance of gender and sexuality across the school curriculum.

What will Participants be Asked to Do?
Should you agree to take part in this project, you will be interviewed. In this interview I will ask how you build up your understanding of gender and sexuality, how you incorporate gender and sexuality in your teaching and the relevance of gender and sexuality to your teaching. The interview will be audio recorded and is expected to last about 1 hour.

Please be aware that you may decide not to take part in the project without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

What Data or Information will be Collected and What Use will be Made of it?
The interview will be audio recorded so it can be transcribed and analysed. Demographic information will also be collected from you in a confidential questionnaire. This information
will be used to describe the participants who took a part. Only me, my supervisors (Dr Treharne and Associate Prof Karen Nairn) and a transcriber who types up your interview will have access to your data. The data collected will be stored in a secure way so only those mentioned above will have access to it. Your contact details will be destroyed once the research is completed but other data like your interview transcript will be retained in secure storage for at least five years.

The completed research will have quotes directly from your interview but only a codename and a general description of your role (e.g. English teacher at co-ed school) will be attached to these. The results of the project will eventually be available in the University of Otago Library (in Katie’s PhD thesis) and may be published in academic journals. Every attempt will be made to preserve your anonymity.

This project involves a semi-structured questioning technique. The general line of questioning is about gender and sexuality in your teaching. The precise nature of other questions will depend on how the interview develops. Although the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee is aware of the general areas to be explored in the interview, the Committee has not been able to review the precise questions to be used. In the event that the line of questioning develops in such a way that you feel hesitant or uncomfortable you are reminded of your right to decline to answer any particular question(s).

Can Participants Change their Mind and Withdraw from the Project?
You may withdraw from participation in the project at any time without any disadvantage to yourself. If you wish to change or exclude any or all of your data please contact me within four weeks of the interview. If you want a copy of your interview transcript please let me know so I can email you one.

What if Participants have any Questions?
If you have any questions about our project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact either:-

Katie Graham and Gareth Treharne
Department of Psychology
Department of Psychology
University Telephone Number: 03 471 6942 University Telephone Number: 03 479 7630
Email: katie.gender.research@gmail.com Email: gtreharne@psy.otago.ac.nz

This study has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (ph +643 479 8256 or email gary.witte@otago.ac.nz). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.
Appendix H: Tertiary students information sheet

Reference number: 15/110
September 2015

Gender and sexuality in tertiary education
INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS

Thank you for showing an interest in this project. Please read this information sheet carefully before deciding whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate we thank you. If you decide not to take part there will be no disadvantage to you and we thank you for considering our request.

What is the Aim of the Project?

The aim of this study is to collect your perspectives of the ideas about gender and sexuality presented in your tertiary education courses. You will be asked how gender and sexuality are portrayed within your course, and how these ideas fit with your overall understandings of gender and sexuality. This information will be collected through a group interview of 4 to 6 people. The study will provide information about the different ways gender and sexuality are portrayed within tertiary education. The study is being done by Katie Graham as part of her PhD in the Department of Psychology.

What Type of Participants are being sought?

Undergraduate students from the University of Otago and Otago Polytechnic are being recruited for this study. Participation involves group discussion, so if you have friends who would like to take part bring them along. Participants who sign up via the University of Otago Department of Psychology’s research participation scheme will receive course credit for taking part (after completing a short questionnaire). All other participants who are not taking psychology papers will receive a $15 grocery voucher to acknowledge your participation.

What will Participants be Asked to Do?
Should you agree to take part in this project, you will be asked to take part in a group discussion about gender, sexuality and your tertiary education course. The full discussion is expected to last about an hour and a half, but you are free to leave at any time.

What Data or Information will be Collected and What Use will be Made of it?

The discussion will be audio recorded so an accurate representation of the conversation can be transcribed and analysed. Demographic information (age, degree, courses, gender, sexual orientation) will also been collected from you on a confidential questionnaire, and this will be used to describe the participants who take part in the study. The only people who will have access to the data from this study are Katie Graham (the PhD student collecting this data), her supervisors (Dr Treharne and Associate Prof Karen Nairn), and a transcriber who will be typing up the discussion afterwards. The data collected will be securely stored in such a way that only those mentioned above will be able to gain access to it. Data obtained as a result of the research will be retained for at least 5 years in secure storage.

The completed research will have quotes directly from the discussion but only a code name, which you may choose, will be attached to these. The results of the project will eventually be available in the University of Otago Library (in Katie’s PhD thesis) and may be published in academic journals but every attempt will be made to preserve your anonymity.

This project involves a semi-structured questioning technique. The general line of questioning includes your perceptions of the portrayal of gender and sexuality in your tertiary education course and society more generally. The precise nature of the questions which will be asked have not been determined in advance, but will depend on the way in which the group discussion develops. Consequently, although the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee is aware of the general areas to be explored in the interview, the Committee has not been able to review the precise questions that will be asked during the group discussion.

In the event that the line of questioning, during the focus group, develops in such a way that you feel hesitant or uncomfortable you are reminded of your right to decline to answer any particular question(s), and you may withdraw from the project at any stage without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind. This could include leaving during the focus group, and asking to have some or all of your data excluded from analysis.

If during the focus group you talk about a time when a staff member or student behaved in an inappropriate way, the research team will not take any action in response to any information you disclose. You will be provided with information about the University’s or Polytechnic’s grievance procedures and contact details of the appropriate people who can help should you wish to take action.
Can Participants Change their Mind and Withdraw from the Project?

You may withdraw from participation in the project at any time and without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind. Up to four weeks after the group discussion you may contact the researcher to change or remove any or all of your data. This may involve a brief meeting with the researcher to ensure changes are accurate.

What if Participants have any Questions?

If you have any questions about our project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact either:

Katie Graham (researcher)
Department of Psychology
University telephone number: 03 471 6942
Email: kejgraham27@gmail.com

Dr Gareth Treharne (supervisor)
Department of Psychology
University Telephone Number: 03 479 7630
Email: gtreharne@psy.otago.ac.nz

Associate Prof Karen Nairn (supervisor)
College of Education
University telephone number: 03 479 8619
Email: karen.nairn@otago.ac.nz

This study has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (ph +643 479 8256 or email gary.witte@otago.ac.nz). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.
Appendix I: Tertiary educators information sheet
Reference Number: D15/381
November 2015

Gender and sexuality in tertiary education
INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS

Thank you for showing an interest in this project. Please read this information sheet carefully before deciding whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate we thank you. If you decide not to take part there will be no disadvantage to you and we thank you for considering our request.

What is the Aim of the Project?
The aim of the study is to get an idea about how you include gender and sexuality in your teaching. You will be asked about how you build up your understanding of gender and sexuality, how you incorporate gender and sexuality in your teaching and the relevance of these topics to your teaching. The information will be collected through an interview. The study will inform how tertiary educators build up their understandings of gender and sexuality, what they include in their teaching and differences between different tertiary education disciplines. This study is being done as part of the requirements for Katie Graham’s PhD in the Department of Psychology.

What Types of Participants are being sought?
Lecturers from the University of Otago and Otago Polytechnic are being recruited for this study. Participation involves taking part in an interview. You have been contacted for participation due to teaching in a department/subject of specific interest.

What will Participants be asked to do?
Should you agree to take part in this project, you will be interviewed. You will be asked how you build up your understanding of gender and sexuality, how you incorporate gender and sexuality in your teaching and the relevance of gender and sexuality to your teaching. The interview will be audio recorded and is expected to last about 1 hour. Please be aware that you may decide not to take part in the project without any disadvantage to yourself.

What Data or Information will be collected and what use will be made of it?
The interview will be audio recorded so it can be transcribed and analysed. Demographic information will also be collected from you on a confidential questionnaire. This information will be used to describe the participants who took part. The only people who will have access to the data from this study are Katie Graham (the PhD student collecting this data), her supervisors (Dr Treharne and Associate Prof Karen Nairn) and a transcriber who will type up the audio recording. The data collected will be stored in a secure way so only those mentioned above will have access to it. Data obtained as a result of the research will be retained for at least 5 years in secure storage.

The completed research will have quotes directly from the interview but only a code name and a general description of your role (e.g. lecturer in social sciences) will be attached to these. The results of the project will eventually be available in the University of Otago Library (in Katie’s PhD thesis) and may be published in academic journals. Every attempt will be made to preserve your anonymity.

This project involves a semi-structured questioning technique. The general line of questioning is about gender and sexuality in your teaching. The precise nature of other questions will depend on how the interview develops. Consequently, although the Department of Psychology is aware of the general areas to be explored in the interview, the Committee has not been able to review the precise questions to be used. In the event that the line of questioning does develop in such a way that you feel hesitant or uncomfortable you are reminded of your right to decline to answer any particular question(s).

**Can Participants change their mind and withdraw from the project?**

You may withdraw from participation in the project at any time without any disadvantage to yourself. If you wish to change or exclude any or all of your data please contact the researcher within four weeks of the interview. If you want a copy of your interview transcript please let the interviewer know so they can email you one once your interview has been transcribed.

**What if Participants have any Questions?**

If you have any questions about our project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact either:-

Katie Graham and Gareth Treharne
Department of Psychology and Department of Psychology
University Telephone Number: 03 471 6942 University Telephone Number: 03 479 7630
Email: kejgraham27@gmail.com Email: gtreharne@psy.otago.ac.nz

This study has been approved by the Department stated above. However, if you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (ph 03 479-8256). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.
Appendix J: Secondary students consent form

Participant number Reference Number 16/013
29th February 2016

Gender and sexuality in secondary education
CONSENT FORM FOR SECONDARY STUDENTS

I have read the Information Sheet concerning this project and understand what it is about. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I am free to request further information at any stage.

I know that:-

1. My participation in the project is entirely voluntary;

2. I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without any disadvantage;

3. Personal identifying information may be destroyed at the conclusion of the project but any raw data on which the results of the project depend will be retained in secure storage for at least five years;

4. This project involves an open-questioning technique. The general line of questioning includes the observations I recorded in my media journal. The precise nature of the questions which will be asked have not been determined in advance, but will depend on the way in which the interview develops. In the event that the line of questioning develops in such a way that I feel hesitant or uncomfortable I may decline to answer any particular question(s) and/or may withdraw from the project without any disadvantage of any kind.

5. The results of the project may be published and will be available in the University of Otago Library (in Katie Graham’s PhD thesis) but every attempt will be made to preserve my anonymity.

I agree to take part in this project.

............................................................................. ..............................
(Signature of participant) (Date)

.............................................................................
(Printed Name)

I wish to receive a transcript of my interview my email address is

...................................................................................
(Please note we cannot guarantee the security of information sent via email)

This study has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (ph +643 479 8256 or email gary.witte@otago.ac.nz). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.
Appendix K: Secondary educators consent form

Participant number Reference Number 16/013

29th February 2016

Gender and sexuality in secondary education
CONSENT FORM FOR
SECONDARY TEACHER PARTICIPANTS

I have read the Information Sheet concerning this project and understand what it is about. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I am free to request further information at any stage.

I know that:-

1. My participation in the project is entirely voluntary;

2. I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without any disadvantage;

3. Personal identifying information may be destroyed at the conclusion of the project but any raw data on which the results of the project depend will be retained in secure storage for at least five years;

4. This project involves an open-questioning technique. The general line of questioning includes gender and sexuality in my teaching. The precise nature of the questions which will be asked have not been determined in advance, but will depend on the way in which the interview develops. In the event that the line of questioning develops in such a way that I feel hesitant or uncomfortable I may decline to answer any particular question(s) and/or may withdraw from the project without any disadvantage of any kind.

5. The results of the project may be published and will be available in the University of Otago Library (in Katie Graham’s PhD thesis) but every attempt will be made to preserve my anonymity.

I agree to take part in this project.

............................................................................. ...............................
(Signature of participant) (Date)

.............................................................................
(Printed Name)

I wish to receive a transcript of my interview my email address is

........................................................................................................
(Please note we cannot guarantee the security of data sent via email)

This study has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (ph +643 479 8256 or email gary.witte@otago.ac.nz). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.
Appendix L: Tertiary students consent form

Participant number .............. Reference number: 15/110

Gender and sexuality in tertiary education
CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS

I have read the Information Sheet concerning this project and understand what it is about. All of my questions about the project have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I am free to request further information at any stage.

I know that:
1. My participation in the project is entirely voluntary.
2. I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without any disadvantage.
3. Personal identifying information (my contact details) may be destroyed at the conclusion of the project but any raw data on which the results of the project depend will be retained in secure storage for at least five years.
4. This project involves an open-questioning technique. The general line of questioning includes my perceptions about the portrayal of gender and sexuality in tertiary education. The precise nature of the questions which will be asked have not been determined in advance, but will depend on the way in which the interview develops and in the event that the line of questioning develops in such a way that I feel hesitant or uncomfortable I may decline to answer any particular question(s) and/or may withdraw from the project without any disadvantage of any kind.
5. I will receive a psychology course credit after completing a short questionnaire (if I signed up via the University of Otago Department of Psychology’s research participation scheme) or a $15 voucher as an acknowledgement of my participation.
6. The results of the project may be published and will be available in the University of Otago Library (in Katie Graham’s PhD thesis) but every attempt will be made to preserve my anonymity.
7. If I wish to make changes to some or all of my contributions I should contact the researcher within four weeks of the group discussion.

I agree to take part in this project.

............................................................................. ........................................
(Signature of participant) (Date)

.......................................................................
(Printed name)

.............................................................................................................................
(Email address so we can send you a copy of the results)

This study has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (ph +643 479 8256 or email gary.witte@otago.ac.nz). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.
Appendix M: Tertiary educators consent form

Participant number ..................  Reference D15/381  November 2015

Gender and sexuality in tertiary education
CONSENT FORM FOR
PARTICIPANTS

I have read the Information Sheet concerning this project and understand what it is about. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I am free to request further information at any stage.

I know that:-

1. My participation in the project is entirely voluntary.

2. I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without any disadvantage.

3. Personal identifying information will be destroyed at the conclusion of the project but any raw data on which the results of the project depend will be retained in secure storage for at least five years.

4. This project involves an open-questioning technique. The general line of questioning is about gender and sexuality in my teaching. The precise nature of the questions which will be asked have not been determined in advance, but will depend on the way in which the interview develops and that in the event that the line of questioning develops in such a way that I feel hesitant or uncomfortable I may decline to answer any particular question(s) and/or may withdraw from the project without any disadvantage of any kind.

5. The results of the project may be published and will be available in the University of Otago Library (in Katie Graham’s PhD thesis) but every attempt will be made to preserve my anonymity.

6. If I wish to make changes to some or all of my interview I should contact the researcher within four weeks of the interview.

I agree to take part in this project.

.............................................................................  ...........................................
(Signature of participant)  (Date)

.............................................................................
(Printed Name)

Email address .................................................................

I wish to receive a transcript of my interview [ ]
I wish to receive a copy of the results [ ]
Appendix N: Media journal interview questions

Questions for secondary school students

Can you show me which entries from your journal are from school and which are from elsewhere?

Can you tell me why you collected this?

Can you tell me more about what is going on here?

If you had to choose which ones do you think are most important?

Can you tell me if you noticed anything similar or different about the things you collected?

Did you notice anything that you expected?

Did you notice anything unexpected?

Has how you think about gender or sexuality been influenced by what you noticed?

-Did you notice anything about women or girls?

-Did you notice anything about men or boys?

-Did you notice anything about people who do not see themselves as a man or a woman?

-Did you notice anything about relationships or marriage?

-Did you notice anything about desire or pleasure?

Is there anything else you would like to say?
Appendix O: Secondary students interview schedule

Questions for secondary school students

What subjects do you take?
Do you think gender and sexuality are relevant to these subjects?
Can you tell me how gender is included in your classes?
- Are there ideas about women or girls?
- Are there ideas about men or boys?
- Ideas about genders other than female and male?
Can you tell me about how sexuality is included in your classes?
- Are there ideas about relationships?
- Are there ideas about family?
- Are there ideas about desire or pleasure?
Do you notice things about gender and sexuality outside of school?
- On the internet?
- On television?
Is there anything you would like to see included in your classes about gender and sexuality?
If you wanted to know more about areas of gender or sexuality, where would you go?
How do you think students at your school would react to gender-neutral bathrooms?
How do you think students at your school would react to gender-neutral uniforms?
- What do you think gender-neutral uniforms would look like?
How do you think students at your school would react to people attending the ball/formal in clothes seen as appropriate for a different gender?
Do you think ideas about gender and sexuality will be different when you leave school (e.g. at university, in the workplace)?
Do you think gender and sexuality is different at other schools?
Would you like to see changes in ideas around gender and sexuality at school?
- What would your best-case scenario be?
Is there anything else you want to add?
Appendix P: Secondary educators interview schedule

Questions for secondary school teachers

What do you teach?
Overall what do you view your role as an educator to be?
How do you define gender?
Do you include aspects of gender in your teaching?
- How comfortable do you feel talking about gender?
- Do you think gender is commonly talked about in your subject area?
- What responses if any have you had from students?
How do you define sexuality?
Do you include aspects sexuality in your course?
- How comfortable do you feel talking about sexuality?
- Do you think sexuality is commonly talked about in your subject area?
- What responses if any have you had from students?
How do you go about developing content on gender and sexuality?
- Do ideas or opinions of colleagues or students influence your teaching of gender and sexuality?
- Do school polices or recommendations influence your teaching of gender and sexuality?
What sources of information do you use for content on gender and sexuality?
Are there enough subject specific resources on gender and sexuality?
Do you have access to personal development in relation to gender and sexuality?
How relevant do you think gender and sexuality are to your teaching?
Has the way you approach gender and sexuality in your teaching changed since you became a teacher? How?
Would you like to see changes in the way gender and sexuality is included in education in the future?
Would you like to see changes in the availability of resources or professional development on gender and sexuality?
Is there anything else you would like to add?
### Appendix R: Group interview composition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group number</th>
<th>Number of participants</th>
<th>Friendship status</th>
<th>Length of Group</th>
<th>Participants present</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Strangers</td>
<td>43 minutes</td>
<td>Kelly and Glen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Strangers</td>
<td>56 minutes</td>
<td>Harry, William and Sophia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>57 minutes</td>
<td>Amy, Joel, Harriet, Alice and Rose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>52 minutes</td>
<td>Briana, Gabby, Steph and Nikki</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Strangers</td>
<td>58 minutes</td>
<td>Lauren, YY and Brenda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>68 minutes</td>
<td>Alina, Arthur and Jo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Strangers</td>
<td>35 minutes</td>
<td>Jasmine and Aaron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>50 minutes</td>
<td>Fern, Bull, Cobra, Cody, Water, Gray and Lunchboxkid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>56 minutes</td>
<td>Victor, Rory and May</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix R: Tertiary students group interview questions

Focus group questions for the study

What do you study?

Do you think gender and sexuality are relevant to these courses?

Overall how would you describe the portrayal of gender in your course?

-Can you give any examples of the way gender is talked about or referred to in your course/class?

Overall how would you describe the portrayal of sexuality in your course?

-Can you give any examples of the way sexuality is talked about in or referred to in your course/class?

Has your lecturer/demonstrator/tutor ever made comments about gender or sexuality that you felt strongly about? What/how/why?

What ideas, other than those you’ve mentioned, do you have about gender and sexuality? Where do these ideas come from?

How was gender and sexuality talked about in your previous education? (eg high school, primary school, previous tertiary education)

Is there anything you think your course or the University/Polytech does really well in relation to gender and sexuality?

Are there things you think could be done differently in relation to the portrayal of gender and sexuality within your course or the University/Polytech in general?

Is there anything else you would like to add about the portrayal of gender and sexuality within the University/Polytech, your previous schooling or society more generally?

What is the most important idea about gender that we have talked about today?

What is the most important idea about sexuality we have talked about today?
Appendix S: Tertiary education interview schedule

Questions for university educators

What do you teach?
Overall what do you view your role as an educator to be?
How do you define gender?
Do you include aspects of gender in your teaching?
-How comfortable do you feel talking about gender?
-Do you think gender is commonly talked about in your subject area?
-What responses if any have you had from students?
How do you define sexuality?
Do you include aspects of sexuality in your course?
-How comfortable do you feel talking about sexuality?
-Do you think sexuality is commonly talked about in your subject area?
-What responses if any have you had from students?
How do you go about developing the lectures that include gender and sexuality?
-Do ideas or opinions of colleagues or students influence your teaching of gender and sexuality?
-Do university or polytech polices or recommendations influence your teaching of gender and sexuality?
Do you incorporate ideas about gender and sexuality into exams or assignments?
What sources of information do you use for content on gender and sexuality?
Are there enough subject specific resources on gender and sexuality?
Do you have access to personal development in relation to gender and sexuality?
How relevant do you think gender and sexuality are to your teaching?
Has the way you approach gender and sexuality in your teaching changed since you became an educator? How?
Would you like to see changes in the way gender and sexuality is included in your course or education in the future?
Would you like to see changes in the availability of resources or professional development on gender and sexuality?
Is there anything else you would like to add?