CLASS ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND:
BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN THE KNOWLEDGE OF ACADEMIC
"INSIDERS" AND ACADEMIC "OUTSIDERS" ABOUT OUR UNIVERSITIES.
IN THE ERA OF THE "DE-CLASS-IFICATION" OF WESTERN ACADEMIC KNOWLEDGE

by

Pamela Joan Third

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Graduate Department of Education
University of Toronto

© Copyright by Pamela Joan Third (1999)
The author has granted a non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

L’auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author’s permission.

L’auteur conserve la propriété du droit d’auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

0-612-41325-X
ABSTRACT

Class Encounters of the Third Kind: Bridging the Gap Between the Knowledge of Academic "Insiders" and Academic "Outsiders" about our Universities, in the Era of the "De-class-ification" of Western Academic Knowledge

Doctor of Philosophy, 1999

Pamela Joan Third

Graduate Department of Education, University of Toronto

Traditionally, one of the implicit, central, functions of Western universities has been that of social-class maintenance. In general, Western university students came from middle-class backgrounds and, when they left university, assumed middle-class roles within society. At present, in keeping with the ongoing shift towards a postmodern ethos within Western society, including within Western universities, it seems likely that many, if not most, Western university students no longer subscribe to traditional, substantialist, conceptions of social class (such as Marx's theory of social class), let alone subscribe to traditional middle-class views. Nevertheless, the notion that those who attend university necessarily either possess in advance, or acquire in the course of their university educations, such views apparently is still quite prevalent today among those who are not familiar with the philosophical changes that have been occurring within our universities in recent decades—including even among those who themselves are likely to possess postmodern perspectives. Based on my own experience, this gap in knowledge may have serious adverse effects on the relations of present-day Western university students and recent graduates who possess postmodern perspectives with others, including even members of their own families.

(cont.)
This work is designed to help bridge this gap, with the hope of remedying some of these adverse effects. The work comprises two major interwoven elements. The first of these elements is an overview of changes that have occurred within our universities in recent decades, beginning in the Sixties, focusing on the increased diversification of the Western academic "Family" during this period and associated philosophical change, especially at the underlying structural level. Three groups are singled out as having made the most significant contribution to this philosophical change: feminists, members of visible minorities, and mid-career students. The second of these elements is letters addressed to members of my own family, focusing on my experiences as a university student from a "working-class" background at the dawn of the postmodern era.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In the course of working on this project, I have held various short-term jobs, both "inside" and "outside" the academic environment, to help make ends meet. Many of the people with whom I worked in these various jobs provided me with a great deal of support as I proceeded, chapter by chapter, through the project. Some of these people, as well as the jobs themselves, also were a source of inspiration:

The first section of this project, "Introductions", was written mainly when I was working at the Art Gallery of Ontario, on their annual membership campaign. Thanks to the many underemployed artists also working on that campaign, who provided me with support and input (especially A.M.), as well as to the people associated with the AGO who mounted "The OH! Canada Project", that was then running.

The chapter concerning the Sixties was written when I held a series of short-term jobs through Secretarial Services at the University of Toronto, and Pinstripe Personnel. I was very impressed by the Rotman School of Management at the University of Toronto, where I helped for a couple of weeks in publicizing some of their executive management programs. This job ended too soon. I refined my argument about the underlying structural changes associated with the transition from Western metaphysics to postmodernity while working for the architectural firm, Volgyesi and Propst Inc.

The chapter concerning the Seventies was written mainly when I was registering delegates for the first Canadian Education Industry Summit, held in Toronto (coincidentally, at the Art Gallery of Ontario). Special thanks to Charles Ivey and the people at Motivational Strategies for involving me in this project. Also, thanks to all the educators across Canada with whom I got to speak about the future of Canadian higher education, in the course of registering them for the Summit, and at the event itself.

The two chapters concerning the Eighties, and most of the letters involved in the imaginary correspondence, subsequent to the Sixties, between me and my uncle, who does research on the relationship of IQ and genetics, were written when I was working in the genetics research department at Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children, affiliated with the University of Toronto. Special thanks to Dr. Rod McInnis, and all the other geneticists in the department, who taught me about the positive applications of genetics research.

The chapter concerning the Nineties was written mainly during a period of unemployment, interrupted only by a couple of weeks when I was typing final exams for teachers at Oakwood Collegiate (a local high school).

The concluding section of this work, "The Future", was written mainly when I was working at the Ontario Science Centre, and was spending my lunch hours exploring the various exhibits at the Science Centre. The exhibit, "A Question of Truth", and related lectures that I got to attend for free, as a (temp) staff member, were especially inspirational.

Finally, this project would never have been possible without my family.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract ................................................................. ii
Acknowledgments ........................................................ iv
Preface ................................................................ vii

## PART 1

**INTRODUCTIONS:**

Introduction of the First Kind: Contents and Organization ......................... 2

*Letters between an "Outsider" and an "Insider"* ................................. 18

Introduction of the Second Kind: Additional Background Information .......... 22

*Letters between an "Outsider" and an "Insider"* ................................. 42

Introduction of the Third Kind: Some Ancestors ..................................... 46

*Letters between an "Outsider" and an "Insider"* ................................. 66

## PART 2

**THE SIXTIES:** The Ascendancy of the Sons (and of those Daughters ...) .... 70

*Letters between an "Outsider" and an "Insider"* ................................. 110

**THE SEVENTIES:** The Ascendancy of the Mother ............................... 112

*Letters between an "Outsider" and an "Insider"* ................................. 157

**THE EIGHTIES** (from the "Inside"): The Ascendancy of other Families .... 160

*Letters between an "Outsider" and an "Insider"* ................................. 192
THE EIGHTIES (from the "Outside"):  
   The Children Venture into the "Outside" World ............................ 195  
   *Letters between an "Outsider" and an "Insider"* ......................... 223  
THE NINETIES: Mid-Career Students Come "In" from the "Outside" .......... 228  
   *Letters between an "Outsider" and an "Insider"* ......................... 271  

**PART 3**  
A HYPOTHETICAL FUTURE ......................................................... 279  

References .................................................................................. 316
PREFACE

For approximately the past twenty-five years, a major philosophical transition has been in progress throughout the West. During this period, we in the West have been making the journey from a Western metaphysical philosophical context to a postmodern context, albeit not all at the same pace, and not all equally willing to leave behind the familiar—even as we proceed beyond the familiar. Due to Westerners now being scattered across a broad philosophical spectrum, yet in many cases not being aware of where they and/or others are situated within this spectrum, a great deal of confusion now prevails in the West concerning a very wide range of issues, including a wide range of educational issues, relating to all levels of education.

The most obvious, and probably still the most common, basic variety of such confusion involves those Westerners who are themselves still situated within a Western metaphysical philosophical context assuming that those with whom they are dealing also are situated within this context, when this may no longer be the case. An additional basic variety of such confusion involves those who are situated within a postmodern context assuming that those with whom they are dealing are still situated within a metaphysical philosophical context when, in actuality, they are dealing with other postmodernists. I would suggest that this variety of confusion is probably quite common today, even though the seemingly common association of "postmodernism", in general, with more esoteric manifestations of it in the arts and university humanities departments is likely to suggest that "postmodernists" are few and far between, even in the late Nineties. To add to the confusion, as I have elsewhere discussed (Third, 1995), it would appear that there are presently many Westerners caught somewhere in between the Western metaphysical philosophical context and the postmodern context, in what I have called the "pre-postmodern" context, who are unable to make a distinction between postmodernism and
"pre-post-modernism". Confusion of all these varieties extends to contemporary Western higher education, including the double-edged central theme of this work, namely:

(a) the perceptions of those who possess little awareness of major changes that have occurred within our universities in recent years of the attitudes of present-day university students, and recent graduates, towards their university experiences and their academic achievements, and

(b) the perceptions of present-day university students, and recent graduates, of what those who possess little awareness of major changes that have occurred within our universities in recent years perceive to be the attitudes of present-day university students, and recent graduates, towards their university experiences and their academic achievements.

In this work, these themes are explored especially in relation to the category of social class.

My decision to focus in this work on present-day confusion concerning social class, in particular, in relation to higher education stems from problems I've experienced within my own family, beginning when I was an undergraduate and extending up to the time that I embarked on this thesis. I come from a family background that, employing conventional social-class categories and the criteria most commonly used to determine into which of these categories one fits (e.g., family income, father's occupation, and parents' educational backgrounds) would be considered working class. Furthermore, I'm the only person within my immediate family, in which I include my parents and several siblings (three sisters and a brother) to have attended university. My siblings, who are now all young adults (or relatively young adults, like myself), ranging from thirtyish to fortyish, are now all employed in occupations that, broadly speaking, would commonly be regarded as working-class occupations—although all of them are presently quite a bit better off financially than am I.
Through the course of my university studies, I've received a great deal of flak from various members of my family for attending university which, for a long time, I simply tolerated, because I could sympathize with how they might feel due to the disparities in our formal educations. However, increasingly, through the course of my graduate work in education, I came to feel that I didn't deserve to have all these negative feelings directed towards me related to my educational pursuits and, moreover, that I could not simply tolerate this anymore. There was much more at stake than the matter of all my siblings being better off financially than was I. A more fundamental problem was that it seemed that assumptions were being made about where I stood philosophically and politically (which, from a postmodern perspective, are very closely related), in relation to higher education and in relation to them, that simply were not correct. It seemed that I was being perceived as someone other than who I knew myself to be.

Given that the basic thrust of my academic work in education to date has been to try to foster greater mutual understanding and mutual respect among diverse people, I would have been a hypocrite to allow misunderstandings and ill-feelings within my own family related to my educational achievements to persist, without making a serious effort to rectify them. This thesis therefore consists, in large measure, of such an effort—or at least the beginnings of such an effort. It is my hope that this work will provide a stimulus for some constructive discussion among members of my family, wherein everyone has the opportunity to present their views, without which my effort to rectify matters would not be complete. This work also may be of some assistance to other present-day university students and recent graduates who find themselves in situations similar to my situation, and their families, as well as others who take an interest in such students and their families including, for example, staff of university counseling centres. (There are some additional possible applications of this work that will be addressed later in this work.)
As I've been reminded in the course of working on this thesis, a great advantage of introducing a relatively sensitive topic to others in written form is that one has the opportunity, through writing—and re-writing—to clarify in advance one's views and, thereby, to perhaps avoid unnecessarily triggering land mines as one proceeds to make one's case. In the process of writing an introduction for my thesis, my interpretation of the basic events to which I referred above changed quite significantly. While the fact that I come from a background that is working-class (using conventional criteria and categories) plays an important role in this work, this work is not, as I originally thought would be the case, primarily about difficulties encountered by university students from working-class backgrounds within their families and within universities. So that others who find themselves in situations similar to my own may avoid repeating my mistakes and so that my readers, on the whole, may better appreciate this work as it now stands, in the following few pages, which is to say the rest of this preface, I have presented my initial interpretation—or to use a term now widely employed by educational researchers, the "narrative" (that I use interchangeably with "story") that provided the starting point for this work—and traced its evolution.

The two key elements of my original narrative were (a) I come from a working-class background (as specified above), and (b) Western universities traditionally have been, and to a great extent continue to be, institutions catering to the middle class (also employing conventional criteria and categories). This narrative basically consisted of members of my family picking on me because, from their supposedly working-class perspectives, they perceived me, with all my university education, as being not only a traitor to my class but also someone who believed that I was superior to them, who looked down upon them. To add to the dramatic tension, as was also emphasized in the original narrative (and as was mentioned above), I am not only the first but also the only member of my immediate family to have attended university. As this narrative began to unfold, I recognized it as being the tale of many first generation university students of
recent decades who have been part of the major expansion of higher education throughout the West during this period—especially those from working-class backgrounds.

Although, from the outset, I situated myself within a postmodern philosophical context, it was almost incidental to my original interpretation of events that I was so situated. The principal function of my philosophical location in the story I initially was telling myself about events that had transpired was that it supposedly served to exonerate me of the class-related wrongdoings of which members of my family supposedly presumed me to be guilty. As a postmodernist, I no longer bought into a simplistic (as seen from a postmodern perspective) working-class versus middle-class dichotomy tied to Western metaphysics, or so I thought, even if other members of my family did buy into it—or so I thought. It follows that I did not and, indeed, by virtue of my philosophical location, could not, think of myself as superior to other members of my family owing to all my years of university education, even if they thought that I thought of myself that way—or so I thought.

By the second or third version of my introduction, even as several cracks in this narrative's foundation were widening into gaping crevasses, I was developing a strong sub-plot in which my situation was made even more tragic due to the "fact" that it was specifically my working-class sensitivities that were responsible for my transition from a metaphysical philosophical context to a postmodern context. (Forget feminism! Forget my background in the fine arts! Forget being a citizen of an officially multicultural country!) In this woeful tale of an innocent being wrongfully accused, it didn't matter a great deal in what philosophical context I was situated. I would have suffered just as much if I had been situated within a metaphysical philosophical context, presumably alongside other members of my family, as I did when I situated myself within a postmodern context. In my original interpretation of events, my postmodern outlook provided me with no insight into how other members of my immediate family themselves might be variously situated within the present broad Western philosophical spectrum, and
that their responses to my educational achievements could not be properly understood without taking into consideration both their individual philosophical locations and their individual social-class allegiances (or lack thereof).

In trying to make sense of the sometimes negative reactions of some members of my immediate family to my educational achievements, even though I had been philosophically situated within a postmodern context, I had drawn upon a narrative that belongs to a much simpler time philosophically, when we in the West were all situated within a metaphysical philosophical context and, furthermore, when people's fortunes were strongly tied to where they were positioned within the rigid dualistic and hierarchical framework of Western metaphysics. While, for certain members of my family, this basic narrative of class conflict did go a long way in explaining their reactions, for other members, it fell far short. As a prime example, it simply could not account for why I and my younger brother, who never finished high school and who has worked for many years in the logging industry in northern British Columbia—who, employing conventional social-class categories and conventional criteria for determining where one fits into these categories, is just about as "working class" as they get—get along very well and, more particularly, why he has been very supportive of my decision to pursue a Ph.D. (After I had finished an M.A. and was contemplating applying to do a Ph.D., he encouraged me to do so by saying it would be great if somebody in the family "went all the way" academically.) In my original tumultuous tale of class conflict, that hearkened back to a bygone era, there simply was no place for my sometimes excellent relations with members of my "working-class" family—including not only my younger brother.

The story that would serve to explain the varied reactions of members of my immediate family to my educational achievements in these philosophically complex times is a story that apparently has not yet been told. In the story upon which, through much writing—and re-writing—I eventually arrived, that serves as the foundation for this
work, philosophical considerations and social-class considerations are closely interwoven.

I came up with the main title of this work, *Class Encounters of the Third Kind* (a variation of the title of the Steven Spielberg sci-fi movie, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*) while I still assumed that it would be concerned primarily with social-class conflict in relation to higher education. After the focus of this work changed, I initially had some misgivings about this title since it seemed that, in this title, "class" received greater emphasis than was now warranted. This work by no means concerns only "class", in the sense of social class—and "class", in the sense of classrooms (or, in other words, related to education). Nevertheless, as I concluded, the pluses of this title (including the sci-fi resonances and, to be sure, the pun with my odd Scottish surname, Third) still outweigh this possible negative. Seen in a certain way, even this negative may be a plus since it could help to draw readers who assume that present-day problems such as those that I have introduced here can be explained primarily, if not exclusively, by social-class considerations. In reading this work, they may be stimulated to reexamine, and possibly also to abandon, their preconceptions, as I had to do when writing it.

The introduction to this work, following this preface, is divided into three separate sections (or three separate introductions) and itself comprises Part 1 of this three-part work. The first of these introductions is a fairly typical introduction to the contents and organization of this work. Since the contents and organization of this work depend to a great extent on a postmodern perspective, it seemed fitting to introduce at the outset what I understand by "postmodernism", which I do in the second introduction. In this second introduction, to further situate this work on the whole within a postmodern context, I also introduce how the meaning of "social class" changes as one proceeds from a Western metaphysical philosophical context to a postmodern context. In the concluding main section of this three-part introduction, paving the way directly for Part 2, the main part of
this work, I have provided an introduction to some early ancestors of the Western academic Family.
PART 1:
INTRODUCTIONS

CLOSE ENCOUNTER
OF THE FIRST KIND
Sighting of a UFO

CLOSE ENCOUNTER
OF THE SECOND KIND
Physical Evidence

CLOSE ENCOUNTER
OF THE THIRD KIND
Contact

CLASS ENCOUNTER
OF THE THIRD KIND
Not close encounter
INTRODUCTION
OF THE FIRST KIND:
CONTENTS AND ORGANIZATION
The specific contents and organization of this work were determined largely by my belated recognition of the key characteristics of those university students, and members of their families—including members of my own family—for whom this work is most directly relevant. When I was beginning this thesis, I envisaged that it would be of relevance mainly to first-generation university students from what would commonly be regarded as working-class backgrounds and their families (and, it follows, others who took an interest in such university students and their families including, perhaps, staff in university counseling centres). However, as my interpretation of the reactions of members of my family to my educational achievements, and of my reactions to their reactions, evolved, I realized that those university students who were likely to find themselves in situations similar to "my situation" comprised a much broader cross-section of students than I originally recognized. As I now see it, this group comprises all those Western university students of recent decades who have possessed, or who do possess, a postmodern outlook (of which evidence I shall present later in this work suggests that there are a great many) and for whom at least one of the two following additional criteria apply:

(a) At least certain members of their families are still philosophically situated within a Western metaphysical philosophical context, in whole or in part (thinking of the in-between pre-post-modern context, to which I previously referred), or at least act as though this were the case (this will be explained later on) and, as such, still possess, or act as though they possessed, a strongly-defined social-class consciousness—however they may be categorized (or however they may categorize themselves) in terms of social class within the Western metaphysical framework. Although this work happens to focus on members of a "working-class" family, the basic
pattern illustrated by this example would seem to be applicable to the rich and the poor alike.

(b) At least certain members of their families, wherever they may be situated philosophically (including within the postmodern context), do not realize that it is possible today (albeit still sometimes difficult) for a university student to proceed even as far as the Ph.D. level while possessing a postmodern outlook, and/or do not realize that the university student in question has possessed such an outlook while attending university. It follows that this work may be of relevance not only to first-generation university students but also to university students who come from families in which there is a long tradition of university attendance.

Given these key characteristics, it seems that a topic that has to be addressed in some depth in a work designed to remedy some of the confusion to which I earlier alluded is the changes that our universities have undergone in recent decades, leading up to the present situation where it is possible for university students to possess postmodern perspectives, even while they proceed through a program of studies that is likely to contain many traces of Western metaphysical philosophy. In addition, especially for the benefit of those university students (and recent graduates) who possess postmodern perspectives, yet who do not realize that members of their families who have not attended university, or who otherwise have had little direct contact with universities in recent years, may also possess postmodern perspectives, another topic that needs to be addressed is changes within our society outside of universities that have made it possible for many of its members, including not only those who have attended university in recent years, to now possess postmodern perspectives. In the main part of this work, Part 2, sections concerning such changes, generally written in a relatively conventional academic style, alternate with, yet operate in close conjunction with, sections written in the form of letters—the latter which also are included in Part 1 and Part 3.
I have organized my discussion of the changes introduced above (I will be more specific later in this section) in chronological fashion, beginning in the Sixties and proceeding up to the present—and, in Part 3 of this work, extending into a hypothetical future. Basically speaking, each of the chapters in Part 2 corresponds to a single decade, beginning with the decade of the Sixties. An exception is the two chapters I have devoted to the Eighties, for reasons which I will explain below. In the more conventional part of the text, I focus on changes within our universities during the period in question.

The central change within our universities addressed throughout this work is the increasing diversification of the Western university student and professorial populations—or, extending the central image of this work of "family" to the academic sector, of the Western academic Family—during the period under consideration. My primary examples are drawn from Canada and the United States, the countries with which, as a Canadian, I have the greatest familiarity and upon which I shall be focusing in this work. (England, where my mother was born and raised, also receives a considerable amount of attention.) Up to the Sixties, apart from the steady increase in the number of female university students since the late 19th Century, when the first women were accepted into Western universities, the basic composition of the university student and professorial populations in the West remained virtually the same as it was since the inception of Western universities. Both students and professors were, as is commonly pointed out in the literature concerning higher education, predominantly White, male, and from "middle-class" (the term most commonly employed, about which, as I shall discuss in the second of these Introductions, I have certain reservations) backgrounds.

As has become more readily apparent in recent years, as diversity within Western universities has increased, most of these university students and professors of yore also shared several additional key characteristics. Both students and professors also generally were brought up in the West and, thus, shared a Western metaphysical philosophical outlook. Moreover, most tended to speak as a first language the main language of
instruction in their university which, in the North American context, generally was English. (French-speaking universities in parts of Canada, especially in the province of Quebec, are a notable exception.) Furthermore, thinking of students in particular, the great majority of university students were very young, ranging in age from their mid- to late-teens through to their mid-twenties and, it follows, were relatively inexperienced in the ways of the world (unlike today's many older university students) and, furthermore, did not possess professional allegiances and commitments outside of the university (unlike today's many older and mid-career university students). Beginning with the major expansion of higher education throughout the West in the Sixties, the composition of the university student population has changed dramatically. There also have been significant changes in the composition of the professoriate during this period; however, due to overall reductions in hiring subsequent to the boom of the Sixties and early Seventies, and the low turnover rate among university professors with tenure and, to be sure, certain political factors, these changes have been less dramatic than those in the composition of the student population.

The one characteristic which is still widely shared by university students in North America, and probably also elsewhere in the West, is that such students still tend to come from upper-income groups. As Clark Kerr has pointed out, discussing the situation in the United States in particular, despite government grants to students based on their comparative ability to pay, progress in increasing attendance from lower-income groups has been meager (Kerr, 1995, p. 124). Student financial aid programs in Canada, that also have taken into consideration family income, with students from lower-income groups getting preferential treatment, apparently have been no more successful than American

---

1 For the sake of simplicity, and as is the wont of we Canadians, in general, who often have difficulty seeing past our hefty immediate neighbour to the south, throughout this work, I will be using "North America" to refer to the combination of just Canada and the United States. Whereas, especially as seen from a Canadian perspective, Canadian and American universities (especially American research universities) are closely intertwined, in many respects forming one unit, Mexico is not (yet) a full "academic trading partner" with Canada.
programs in increasing attendance from such groups. Nevertheless, despite the strong correlation between income level and social class, as traditionally conceived, as proposed in this work, owing largely to the greatly increased diversification in other respects among Western university students and, to a lesser extent, also among our university professors, in recent decades, it no longer can be assumed, because the majority of today's university students come from upper-income groups, that the majority of today's university students possess traditional "middle-class" outlooks—or, for that matter, that those university students who do happen to come from lower-income groups necessarily acquire traditional "middle-class" outlooks in the course of their university educations.

In this work, I have organized my discussion of the increasing diversification of the Western academic Family, and the corresponding positive contributions (or, thinking especially of the Sixties, mostly the lack thereof) of this increased diversification to the increased acceptance of a postmodern outlook within academe, using the basic chronological framework that I previously sketched. In successive chapters, groups sharing certain traits that set them apart from the preceding populations are introduced, and their impacts, both individual and cumulative, on Western higher education are discussed. These groups include the many young students, male and female alike, who took an active role in the student uprisings of the Sixties; women who positively identified with femininity, also as constructed within a Western metaphysical philosophical framework (in the chapter concerning the Seventies); members of minority races and cultures (in both of the two chapters concerning the Eighties); and mid-career students (in the chapter concerning the Nineties). Introducing only one main group at a time, each in a separate chapter corresponding to a single decade, offers a somewhat distorted picture of the evolution of the composition of the Western academic Family in recent decades. Many different groups converged upon our universities during roughly the same period, concentrated between the early-Seventies and the early-Nineties. In reserving essentially one decade for each main group, I have not been able to introduce
some groups as early as they started to have a significant impact on our universities. Furthermore, there were some close parallels between the impact on the Western academic Family of the arrival of some of these groups. If I were to stick to a strict, decade by decade, group by group, account, there would be a considerable amount of duplication. (To avoid some duplication of this nature, in the chapter concerning the Seventies and the following chapter, the first of the two chapters concerning the Eighties, I focus on different issues that pertain to the arrival of both groups associated with these decades. In the first of these chapters, I discuss increased philosophical diversification in general terms. In the second of these chapters, I concentrate on various communication problems among members of the Western academic Family associated with this increased philosophical diversification, some of which seem to have close parallels within my own family.) Yet, despite these drawbacks, this basic organizational scheme is useful in laying out my argument. Issues pertaining specifically to the arrival of some students from lower-income (or working-class) backgrounds in universities are addressed mainly in the form of the letters interspersed throughout this work (that I shall introduce more fully shortly).

A second broad change within our universities over this period, that to a great extent is a result of the aforementioned change yet that I believe deserves special attention here, is the evolution of academic research methods, especially in the humanities and social sciences. The transition from the "scientized" (which, for reasons which will be given later in this work, I distinguish from scientific, as practiced in the natural sciences) variety of research that prevailed in the humanities and social sciences up to and including the Sixties (that still prevails in some quarters in academe) to a postmodern variety of "research" (if this is the correct term), embodied by this thesis, did not occur overnight. It proceeded in stages, that roughly parallel various stages in the evolution of the composition of the university student and professorial populations. In this work, changes in academic research methods in recent decades, especially in the
humanities and social sciences, are addressed as much through illustration, by way of the evolving relationship of its two main elements, the more conventional text and letters, over the time period under consideration as through discussion of this subject.

A third broad change within our universities over this period that has contributed to it becoming increasingly possible for Western university students to possess postmodern outlooks is the introduction of new electronic technologies, including broadcast media and computer technology, into universities (and into other sectors of Western society), and the increased use of these technologies by university students, across the academic disciplines. Speaking of personal computers in particular, the American professor of composition (and literature), Richard Lanham, has argued that various capacities of the personal computers that are now widely employed in universities (and elsewhere) are highly consistent with a postmodern outlook (Lanham, 1993). In this work, not only will I be discussing such capacities (especially in the latter chapters concerning the more recent period), but also I will be illustrating them to some extent (and, indeed, already have illustrated them to some extent), through my incorporation of various graphic devices in the presentation of this work, that go beyond just getting the words on paper, that are all within the capacity of today's basic word processing programs. (I could have gone much further in this regard than I have.)

For those university students whose studies do not concern specifically computer technology, including the great majority of students in the humanities and social sciences, learning about and working with computers generally constitutes part of the "hidden curriculum" of their academic programs. Such students generally are not taught specifically about computers in the course of their studies. Nevertheless, they are expected to employ computers extensively in the course of their academic programs—including, for students enrolled in graduate programs, in the preparation of their dissertations. As will be elaborated in Part 2 (especially in the chapter concerning the Nineties), today's university students are likely to receive at least as much support for
possessing a postmodern outlook from aspects of the hidden curriculum, including their probable extensive use of personal computers in the course of their studies, than from what is formally recognized to be the curriculum of their academic programs.

Another subject that receives a significant amount of attention in this work, that does not exactly fall into the category of broad changes within our universities during the period under consideration, is that of different conceptions of human intelligence as seen from different philosophical locations. To the extent that, as many members of the Western academic Family have undergone a shift in philosophical outlook in recent decades their conceptions of human intelligence have changed, this also could be seen as a broad change within Western universities during the period under consideration; however, it is by no means only university students and professors who have undergone such a shift of outlook in recent decades. One of the reasons I will be devoting a significant amount of attention in this work to this subject is that, as I see it, traditional Western conceptions of human intelligence are integrally related to traditional Western conceptions of social class. Thinking of education, the still widely-accepted belief that some people are inherently "smarter" than others traditionally has served, and in some cases continues to serve, to obscure the social-class biases (or, in the present-day context, the lingering traces of these biases) of our education systems, including of our universities—in the eyes not only of those who gain admission to universities but also in the eyes of those who are excluded from universities. There are certain advantages for those who have attended university in allowing the view to persist among those who have not attended university that we who have attended university are especially "smart", even if we don't believe this ourselves; however, as I now see it, the disadvantages outweigh the advantages.

An additional reason that I will be devoting a significant amount of attention in this work—which, as I earlier discussed, consists in large measure of an effort to remedy certain confusion within my own family—to the subject of human intelligence is that this
subject has played a very significant role within my family. This is because one of my uncles is a psychologist who specializes in human intelligence, who just happens to have amassed the largest collection of family-related IQ's in the entire world, the family in question consisting of my family (in the very extended sense)! I ought to mention that this uncle is an uncle only through marriage. (He is my mother's sister's—or my aunt's—husband). Thus, we do not have the same surname (and we are not genetically related).

This collection, which I gather by now has become huge, began with his research for his Ph.D. thesis, concerning the relationship of IQ and various observable, inherited, physical characteristics, for which I served as a "research assistant", of sorts, via correspondence since he lives in England, back when I was about ten years old. This experience, and the ongoing effects on my family of my uncle's early academic research (and, in a sense, since I helped him with this work, also of my early, or earliest, academic research), would seem to have played significant roles in my eventual decision to pursue graduate work in education. It seems fitting that my recollections of this experience, presented in the form of letters, should comprise an integral component of this work.

The original letters from my correspondence with my uncle, or at least those that I had in my possession, have long since been lost or destroyed. The correspondence ostensibly between my uncle and myself incorporated in this work comprises a reconstruction of this correspondence, with a liberal amount of artistic license taken—most particularly for the parts of this correspondence dated past the Sixties. (Our actual correspondence relating to my uncle's work concerning IQ's all took place over the course of a couple of years, during the Sixties.) Such letters, comprising a reconstruction (and extrapolation) of my early correspondence with my English uncle, are one of two distinct kinds of letters incorporated in this work, that are distinctly situated, physically and otherwise, within the work. The letters that are part of this correspondence are situated in separate sections that fall in between the successive chapters of this work (or, in the case of this three-part introductory "chapter", in between its three main sections), each of
which is headed, "Letters between an "Outsider" and an "Insider"". Other letters, that are longer than the letters included in this correspondence, are incorporated within the chapters of Part 2, one within each chapter. One such letter also is incorporated in the relatively short concluding part of this work, Part 3, dealing with a hypothetical future.

These other letters comprise letters to individual members of my immediate family and, basically speaking, consist of my effort to begin to try to resolve different, yet related, apparent misunderstandings that exist in my relationships with each of these people, as previously discussed. The letter in the second of the two chapters devoted to the Eighties is anomalous in certain respects, as is this chapter on the whole. While this letter also is addressed to a family member, and is designed in part to serve the function discussed above, I have expanded upon the letter in this chapter, which comprises the major portion of the chapter, to also address certain changes within Western society outside of universities and, more particularly, within Canadian society outside of universities, during the period under consideration. Such changes point to a present-day wide acceptance of postmodernism in Canadian society, in particular, outside of our universities—that is probably underestimated by many of those within our universities, who are likely to associate "postmodernism" mainly with what they have learned about postmodernism in the academic context. It is largely because I had little contact with universities during much of the Eighties that I have chosen to give special consideration in this work to what was going on outside of universities relating to the transition to postmodernism within Western society during the decade of the Eighties. (Perhaps I should point out here that, during the Sixties, I also had little contact with our universities, since I was then too young to be attending university. My one tenuous link with universities during this period was my correspondence with my uncle.) With these letters, I have stuck to the historical "facts" more so than with the other letters in this work, ostensibly between my uncle and myself. At the same time, with these letters to members of my family, I've made an effort to be discreet. In these letters, I actually reveal
more about myself—even when I am outwardly revealing information about other members of my family—than I do about these other members. Nevertheless, particularly since I have not incorporated in this work responses from my family members to whom these letters are addressed, it is only fair that I should advise readers of this work that some of the content of these letters, especially revelations about parties other than myself, should be taken with a grain of salt. Just to be on the cautious side, in those letters addressed to my siblings, given names other than their actual given names are employed, which to a certain extent disguises the identities of my three sisters, if not my one brother. (Similarly, there neither was, nor is, an Uncle "Peter" in my life—or, for that matter, an Aunt "Jane".)

It was largely for the sake of clarity that these two different kinds of letters came to be separately situated, and situated as they are, within this work. In my original conception of this work, I imagined that these two different kinds of letters, as well as other letters comprising responses to the longer letters (written by me, adopting the personae of other members of my family, or possibly by the actual people to whom these letters are addressed), as well as perhaps even responses to these responses, would be integrally connected throughout this work, with additional integral connections between the main text, written in a more conventional academic style, and these varied letters. What probably inspired me to initially conceive of my thesis in this manner was that I had recently read some work about "hypertext" (basically consisting of a form of electronic text that involves multiple "layers", and that, by design, fosters a non-linear reading experience), especially its educational applications and implications, and had also experimented with George Landow's *Hypertext in Hypertext* (1994), an electronic version of his book, *Hypertext: The Convergence of Contemporary Critical Theory and Technology* (1992), in which he puts into practice various principles discussed in his book. Working in a print format, it was impossible to incorporate all the levels of connection of which I originally vaguely conceived, and as many letters as I originally
conceived. (I tried writing the first chapter in a manner that would approximate my early vision, but it simply didn't work.) The design of this work, on the whole, is a simplified version of my original conception, with many further connections between different elements of this work, and potential elements, left unexplored—at least at an explicit level. Something that I do like about the overall design of this work, in addition to being relatively accessible, is that, at least as I see it, this design reinforces a central image of this work of the gap between academic "insiders" and academic "outsiders" (i.e., some letters are inside the chapters, and some are outside), and of the bridging of the gap between these two groups (i.e., the letters to members of my family, who are academic "outsiders", are inside the chapters) which, in my view, is very much needed at present. At a later date, perhaps I will attempt to create a hypertext version of this work, or of something similar to it, since this work would be well suited to such a format—and, indeed, was first conceived with hypertext in mind.

A final basic point about the letters that I suppose should be addressed here is "Why?" That is to say, "Why are all these letters—which aren't even "real" letters, at that—incorporated in an academic thesis? For a start, even though social class has been addressed fairly extensively by academics in their academic writing, the form of conventional academic writing doesn't accommodate working-class voices. Of the various other forms from which I could choose, letters seemed especially appropriate since this thesis is largely intended to sort out (or to serve as a starting point for sorting out) certain problems between me and other members of my family and since, among the various forms of print communication, the form most commonly employed between relatives (and between others who have close relationships) is letters. This form also seemed appropriate for portions of this work since this work concerns social class, and since the central conception of social class employed throughout this work involves, as one of its aspects, the withholding, and the sharing, of confidential information—or, what I will be referring to in this work as "class-ified" information—such as the information
that is incorporated in letters (especially those letters between people with close relationships). Whether it is fitting to incorporate forms other than that of conventional academic writing in an academic thesis in the postmodern era will be addressed in the second of these introductions, when I introduce what I mean by "postmodernism".

Regarding the appropriateness of an academic thesis that is intended to sort out these kinds of issues, I personally believe it's absolutely essential.

Returning momentarily to the potential relevance of this work, as I stated in the preface to this work, owing to Westerners now being scattered across a broad philosophical spectrum, it seems a great deal of confusion now prevails in the West concerning a very wide range of issues, including a wide range of educational issues. The basic framework employed in this work would seem to have various applications in addition to helping to sort out confusion among family members relating to the present period of philosophical transition in Western higher education. Restricting ourselves for the time being to the educational sphere, there are many recent developments in Western education, at all levels ranging from primary education through to post-secondary education, that I would venture to say are intrinsically related to a shift towards a postmodern perspective within Western society, or within particular segments of Western society, yet that are sometimes mistakenly interpreted in terms that belong to a Western metaphysical philosophical context—either by those situated within a Western metaphysical philosophical context or by those themselves situated within a postmodern context. The pattern illustrated in this work, using the example of dynamics within my own family may help to remedy some of the present confusion of this nature, within our various educational "families".

An example that deserves mention here that, like the situation involving me and my family, incorporates the element of social class, is the interpretation that the Canadians Maude Barlow (chairperson of the Council of Canadians) and Heather-jane Robertson (a journalist and educational activist) have given to certain recent
developments in Canadian education, principally at the primary and secondary levels, in their book, *Class Warfare: The Assault on Canada’s Schools* (1994). The interpretation of these authors of these recent developments essentially consists of a mirror image of my initial interpretation of the reactions of members of my family to my educational achievements. Whereas I initially viewed myself as being, basically speaking, under assault from the working class, or the Left, Barlow and Robertson see Canada’s education system as being under assault from the Right. If, however, philosophical location and social class are considered in conjunction, many, if not most, of the recent developments enumerated in *Class Warfare*, including the increased partnering of schools and businesses, increased demands on schools for fiscal accountability, and a shift in curriculum designed to give students greater preparation for employment in the business world, may be interpreted as instances of our schools becoming increasingly responsive to Canadian society on the whole, consistent with a shift to a postmodern ethos within a democratic political context. It just so happens, whether or not Barlow and Robertson want to admit it, that Canadian society is a capitalist society.

To go a step further, while I am focusing in this work on the category of social class as it intersects with different philosophical contexts, it would seem that various other categories may be substituted for social class within the basic framework that I am employing here. For example, the categories of "gender" and "culture", that receive considerable individual attention in Part 2 of this work, seem to undergo a transformation very similar to that of social class when they are resituated philosophically from a metaphysical philosophical context to a postmodern context. (I shall introduce what this transformation entails when I introduce what is meant in this work by "social class", in the second of these introductions.) It would seem that a great deal of confusion, and in some cases also ill-feelings, currently revolves around various categories, in the educational sphere and elsewhere, apparently due to the same basic dynamics that apparently underlie confusion and ill-feelings within my own family with respect to
social class, especially in relation to contemporary higher education and, more particularly, in relation to what I've been up to in university all these years.

Having said that this work would seem to be of very broad relevance today, I must caution readers that there are limitations to the explanatory power of the framework that I am employing here. Thinking just of Western university students and their families, the possible reasons why certain members of families may respond negatively to the educational achievements of other members are as varied and potentially as complex as the reasons why, in general, family members sometimes don't get along. Furthermore, in some cases, even though it may appear that the academic pursuits of certain family members are at the root of tensions within a family, or just between particular members of a family, the problems may be far more deep-seated, such that even if nobody in the family pursued formal education beyond high school, the same basic problems likely would prevail. A framework that is generally useful, as I believe is the framework to be presented in this work, could do more harm than good if it is applied indiscriminately.
LETTERS BETWEEN AN "OUTSIDER" AND AN "INSIDER"
Dear Pamela,

Happy 10th birthday, Pamela. I hope you like the enclosed puzzle that Auntie Jane and I picked out for you.

Your mother has told your Auntie Jane and me that you have been doing very well in school. Congratulations. Your mother may have told you that I'm now also back at school, studying at a university. I'm presently working on a big project for school called a thesis. Since you're such a good student, I thought you might be interested in learning a bit about it, and maybe also in giving me a hand with it.

It's about something called "IQ", that you may have heard about before. "IQ" stands for Intelligence Quotient—or, in other words, how smart you are. You probably had an IQ test before in school. I'm doing research especially about how IQ runs in families.

If you'd be interested in finding out more, and maybe also in doing some research with me, through correspondence, please drop me a line.

Cheerio,

Uncle Peter

---

Dear Uncle Peter,

Thank you very much for the very nice puzzle. Mummie thinks it would be good fun for me to help you with your thesis. It will be fun to do some research for you. I did some research before in the library at school.

What do you want me to do?

Love,

Pamela
Dear Pamela,

Thank you for agreeing to help me with my thesis. What you will be doing for me is collecting some basic information about members of your family, including yourself. This information could help us to learn more about the relationship of intelligence and genetics. You probably already know about how we inherit certain physical traits from our parents. For example, if both of your parents are tall, there is a good chance that you will be tall, too—once you are all grown up. Perhaps a better example is that, if both of your parents have blond hair and blue eyes, there's a good chance that you'll have blond hair and blue eyes, too. Human intelligence seems to operate along much the same lines. It also seems be inherited through our genes, that we get from both of our parents. You'll be collecting some information for me that I will use to determine to what extent this is true.

The information that you will be collecting is in two parts. For the first part, I need you to collect some basic data about members of your family, including yourself. I've enclosed a crisscross table that I'd like you to fill in for me. I've listed various physical characteristics down one side, and the names of your family members along the top. It's quite easy to figure out. If you have any problems with it, ask your mother. For the items that involve some measuring, please be as precise as possible.

The second part involves administering IQ tests to your family. The included package that says on it "Do not open until test time" contains the tests and instructions about how to administer the tests. The test takes about two hours. Part of the IQ test involves some drawing. You should have some fun with that. Since this is scientific research, it is essential that you follow the instructions precisely—and no cheating. Remember, this is a test, just like in school.

When you've finished your research, I would like to have the completed tests and the completed table returned to me. Have fun.

Cheerio,
Uncle Peter
### FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHARACTERISTICS</th>
<th>YOU</th>
<th>MOTHER</th>
<th>FATHER</th>
<th>BELINDA</th>
<th>CHARMAINE</th>
<th>DANELLE</th>
<th>DAN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age (Give birthdate)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weight</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hair Colour</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hair Curly, Wavy, or Straight</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eye Colour</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skin Colour</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birthmarks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any Special Moles or Warts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body Hair - Light, Heavy, or Moderate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eyebrows - Bushy or Light</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eyebrows - Separate or Meet in Middle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eyelashes - Long or Short</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eyelashes - Curly or Straight</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Measurements:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chest</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hips</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neck</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circumference of Head</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of Back</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Width of Back</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of Arm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoe Size</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Width of Foot, at Widest Part</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glove Size</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shape of Earlobes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any Double-Jointedness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shape of Forehead - High or Low</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is Second Toe, Beside the Big Toe, Longer, or Shorter, or the Same Length, as Big Toe</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angle of Deviation of Last Joint of Little Finger</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colour of Earwax</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION
OF THE SECOND KIND:

ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION
Some Introductory Remarks About Postmodernism, and about Academic Writing in the Postmodern Era

To get a good, overall, sense of what is involved in the philosophical transition that has been ongoing in the West in recent years, I've found it is very helpful to think in fundamental structural terms, beginning with the fundamental structure of Western metaphysical philosophy, especially as it came to be seen in the Seventies, and thereafter, by certain feminists and certain members of other minority groups.

As suggested by the widespread use of the name "Western dualism" to refer to the philosophical system that traditionally held sway throughout the West, what I prefer to call "Western metaphysics" (my preference will be explained shortly) is commonly recognized as being "dualistic". That is to say, it is commonly recognized that this system comprises pairs of conceptually-related elements, the elements of which, even though they are conceptually related, are separable. Some key examples are masculinity/femininity, mind/matter, soul/body, reason/passion, science/art and culture/nature. As shall be discussed later in this second introductory section, the two principal classes associated with the Western category of social class, generally known as "middle class" and "working class", follow this same basic pattern. When Western metaphysics is viewed as simply dualistic, what is thought to keep the elements of each of these pairs separate from each other is, basically speaking, a gap between the elements of each pair—that traditionally was widely viewed as a logical, necessary, gap. Philosophers call this hypothetical, presumably necessary, gap "the excluded middle."

Traditionally, when it was only members of a ruling elite, comprised almost exclusively of White, "middle-class" (to use the conventional term), males, who had any say in the matter, this was the prevailing view of the underlying structure of Western metaphysics (or of "Western dualism").
However, in recent decades, as various new voices have entered into Western philosophical discourse, this view has been widely challenged. Certain feminist scholars (among others) have pointed out that, within a Western metaphysical philosophical framework, a hierarchical relationship pertains between the conceptually related elements of each pair. These feminists (e.g., Berman, 1989; Harding, 1991, 1993; Martin, 1985; Merchant, 1980; Plumwood, 1988; Wilshire, 1989) have observed that, within this philosophical framework, the elements commonly associated with men (e.g., masculinity, mind, soul, reason, science, and culture), generally have been viewed as superior to the elements commonly associated with women (e.g., femininity, matter, body, passion, art, and nature). Although there are various parallels between femininity and working class, I wouldn't go so far as to suggest that working class is more clearly associated with women than men, or that middle class is more clearly associated with men than with women. As shall be explored later in this work, it may be useful to think of Western metaphysics on the whole not simply as a "framework" but rather as an organic "tree" that comprises various branches, that are separate but at the same time related. Gender and social class could be seen as two of these branches. However, sticking for the time being to the basics, if the Western metaphysical philosophical "framework" is conceived as both dualistic, in the sense given above, and hierarchical (the same pattern could be seen as distinguishing each of the branches to which I referred above), it is no longer necessary to postulate a gap between the elements of each pair, or a seismic crack running through the entire system, to explain what keeps the elements of each pair, or each side of the overall system, separate from each other. The hierarchical feature of Western metaphysics itself can account for this phenomenon since, assuming, that the elements are on different "levels" and do not intersect, they automatically would remain separate.

I understand postmodernism as consisting, at bottom, of a collapse of this dualistic and hierarchical philosophical framework, that follows from a shift in the traditional hierarchical arrangement of the various conceptually-related elements
discussed above or, in overall terms, of the two sides of the framework. With this collapse, the certainty of "truth", that traditionally supported and, in turn, was supported by this framework is lost. As the subordinate side of the framework achieves an increased status, a point will be reached, prior to the collapse of the framework, when the two sides have roughly the same status, that may be recognized by someone who has proceeded beyond this point as an inherently "contradictory" position (with the quotation marks intended to indicate that this is as seen from the perspective of someone who has proceeded beyond this point). This is essentially what I mean by the term, "pre-post-modernism", that I introduced earlier. I would suggest that many people today who view themselves as postmodernists actually are stalled in this intermediate, inherently "contradictory", position and are not yet actually postmodernists, as I will be employing this term in this work. Put another way, it would seem that there are now two distinct philosophical positions from which "postmodernism" is being defined, which seems to have further contributed to the confusion which I earlier introduced associated with the present period of philosophical transition in the West. (On the other hand, some pre-post-modernists don't see themselves as postmodernists.) The way that I am defining "postmodernism" in this work would seem to be consistent, in underlying structural terms, with how "postmodernism" is understood by, among others, Jean-François Lyotard, Stanley Fish, Richard Lanham and Jane Flax, four Western academic postmodernists whose work has strong resonance for me, as well as by many artists, including Milan Kundera and John Cage. I will have more to say about the structural changes associated with the shift from Western metaphysics to postmodernism, including more about pre-post-modernism, in Part 2 of this work.

There is, to be sure, more to postmodernism than just its basic structural characteristics (although, as I've learned, by keeping in mind its basic structural characteristics, postmodernism isn't as complex as it may at first appear). The expatriate Czech novelist, Kundera, has helped me a great deal in coming to terms with
postmodernism, and in developing a style of "academic" writing—that, to be sure, diverges in some respects from conventional academic writing, that embodies various assumptions of Western metaphysics—that is consistent with my postmodern outlook.

In Kundera's novels, broad-scale political and cultural forces are internalized by individual characters, and reflected in their outlooks and behaviour. (For someone who has always lived in a democratic political context, such as myself, this is likely to be more readily apparent in Kundera's earlier novels, set in Czechoslovakia under Soviet rule, than in his more recent novels, set in contemporary France, where Kundera settled after fleeing Czechoslovakia in the seventies.) In her introduction to the Penguin edition of Kundera's *The Farewell Party* (1977), in comparing the outlooks of the French existentialist Jean-Paul Sartre and Kundera, Elizabeth Pochoda states: "Whereas Sartre called for fiction about men [sic] as the subjects of history, Kundera writes of people who strain after this distinction but are more often than not, and without their knowing it, history's objects" (ibid., p. x). Kundera's view of people as "history's objects" is echoed by the central point made by the American postmodernist, Stanley Fish, in his collection of essays, *There's No Such Thing as Free Speech* (1994), that it is impossible to escape our social locations. Given that, as seen from a postmodern perspective, various patterns which distinguish a given society are echoed at all levels of that society, ranging from the broad-scale political level to the interpersonal level, and including even the intrapersonal level, it is not grandiose for me to suggest that my portrayal of dynamics within my own family may serve to illuminate to some extent present dynamics within Western society as a whole, during the present period of philosophical transition in the West.

This notion may be somewhat difficult at first to reconcile with the argument put forward by Jean-François Lyotard in *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (1984) concerning the obsolescence of "grand metanarratives" in the postmodern era. Lyotard basically argues in this book that, in the postmodern era, metanarratives (or, in other words, narratives about narratives, or stories about stories), that supposedly possess
universal applicability, have lost their validity, thereby paving the way for an increased status for "local narratives", bound to a particular time and place. I generally agree with Lyotard's argument. However, Lyotard fails to acknowledge in this book that the transition from a metaphysical philosophical outlook to a postmodern outlook does not occur in one fell swoop, whether at the level of society in general or at the level of individuals. During the present period of philosophical transition throughout the West, it seems that a special category of narratives is required that recognizes our diverse philosophical locations, in which the "grand" (associated with what remains of Western metaphysics) goes hand-in-hand with the "local" (associated specifically with postmodernism). Such narratives, even though they may be rooted in the local (including, for example, in the observations of dynamics within a single family), may nevertheless have a very broad relevance.

In Kundera's novels, not only is there a conjunction between the "political" and "personal", in keeping with a postmodern sensibility (and, to be sure, the sensibility of those feminists who popularized the slogan, "The personal is the political"), but also, since these novels were written during this period of philosophical transition throughout the West, there is a further conjunction between the "grand" and the "local", the latter which may largely explain the widespread, "universal", appeal of these postmodern novels. As such, Kundera's novels seem to provide an excellent model of this special category of narratives, that I call "transitional narratives", into which I would categorize this thesis, in general. More particularly, his style of writing (or styles of writing, since Kundera commonly employs various styles of writing in his novels, including short essays, first-person narrative, and fiction) seem(s) to provide an excellent model for today's postmodernists doing academic work of directions that they might take for their academic writing—assuming they wish to make their philosophical orientation explicit. (While letters from the past play a prominent behind the scenes role in Kundera's novel, The Book of Laughter and Forgetting, I don't recall that any of Kundera's novels include
class encounters of the third kind

28

parts that are written in the form of letters. However, based on Kundera’s aesthetic, and
postmodern aesthetics in general, there is no reason why his novels—and, for that matter,
postmodern academic writing—could not include letters.)

Postmodernists today engaged in academic work, whether as professors or as
students, have basically three options with respect to the style of writing that they employ
for their academic work, as follows:

(a) The first of these options is to employ a style of writing that in no way
diverges from the style of conventional academic writing, that embodies
various assumptions of Western metaphysical philosophy, yet to
acknowledge (at least to oneself) that, as seen from a postmodern
perspective, this style is merely a style, contingent upon various historical
factors. This is the option that Stanley Fish has chosen, that he attempts to
defend in his various recent essays concerning both "academic
professionalism" and "rhetoric". I personally view this option as
indefensible—unless, perhaps, it is employed as a last resort by students
writing essays for their courses, who very much need good grades for
these courses (because there are scholarships at stake, or something of this
ilk), and this is the only way for them to get the good grades. In asserting,
as does Fish, that in the postmodern era, academic writing, and other
aspects of the academic enterprise, are not seriously effected, it appears
that Fish is merely protecting his own professional interests, with little
consideration for the welfare of others, including even his own students,
who are not members of the academic profession.

(b) The second option is to draw upon models of postmodern writing that
originated outside of the academy including, for example, the works of
postmodern novelists such as Kundera. While I myself have drawn upon
such models for my academic writing, even I recognize that such work is
highly problematic in terms of academic evaluation. Work based exclusively upon such models incorporates few common elements that provide a basis for the rank ordering of works (or, it follows, of students and/or professors), which is integral to academic evaluation as it now stands. The potential problems associated with the evaluation of such work parallel potential problems associated with the evaluation of novels presented as dissertations (an option that was sometimes available to graduate students in creative writing programs even before the dawn of postmodernism), as discussed by Sheppard and Hartman (1989).

(c) The third basic option available to postmodernists presently doing academic work is to combine a conventional academic style of writing and a style that is distinctively postmodern, drawing upon models from outside of academe, to forge a distinctively "postmodern-academic" style, as I have done in this thesis.

Frankly speaking, I see the overall, hybrid, style of this thesis as only a transitional style, that is fitting for someone situated within a postmodern context during the present period of philosophical transition throughout the West and, more particularly, in Western universities, that is nevertheless also highly suitable for the special category of "transitional narratives" into which this work falls. In the context of a transitional narrative, a style associated with Western metaphysics may sometimes be useful to reflect the perspective of a figure in the narrative who is (or who appears to be) still operating within a Western metaphysical philosophical framework. For the figure in question still (apparently) operating within a Western metaphysical philosophical framework, such a style is (probably) more than just a style—which is not to say that the narrator who employs such a style for these purposes is still bound to Western metaphysics. Also, such a style may sometimes be useful when considering underlying structural characteristics associated with the transition from Western metaphysics to postmodernism. In the latter
case, *even for the narrator*, such a style may be more than just a style—yet this also is not to say that the narrator who employs such a style for this purpose is still bound to Western metaphysics.

To clarify, some readers of earlier drafts of this work (and of my preceding, related, work) have seen universalizing tendencies especially in my "structural" approach to the philosophical change presently occurring in the West, including both its style and content. They have found these supposed universalizing tendencies difficult to reconcile with me identifying myself as a postmodernist—even though there are other aspects of my work that they immediately recognize as being consistent with a postmodern perspective. My response is that we in the West are in the process of emerging from a philosophical environment that was/is highly structured. (How highly structured may become clearer in the course of this work.) I see my work concerning the underlying structural characteristics associated with the transition to postmodernism as being much like unraveling a piece of knitting, that has a predetermined pattern, or predetermined underlying structure. To complete the process of unraveling, we are obliged to take the strand of yarn back the same way it came, respecting the existing structure: the failure to do so will result in frustrating snarls, and the incompleteness of the unraveling process. In this process, there are absolutes. However, once the unraveling process (or, to use the term more commonly employed by postmodernists, the "deconstruction") is complete, we are left with a long strand of yarn, from which we may construct an infinite variety of postmodern woollies. I hope the analogy helps.

Returning to the overall, hybrid, style of this work, as shall be explored in its later chapters, it seems reasonable to me that, in the postmodern era, there should be closer alliances between the academic community and various other professional communities, and that these other professional communities, that are firmly footed in the broader society, should have greater input in determining appropriate standards for academic work. Given my long-range view of where our universities seem to be headed now, the
"creative", hybrid, style of writing that I have adopted for this work may be seen not only as a reflection of my postmodern outlook but also as a reflection of my professional allegiances outside of academe, as someone who has worked in the arts and media (including educational media), where such a style is now commonly employed.

Also on the subject of what the present-day options are in terms of writing style for postmodernists doing academic work, at the risk of offending some of my readers, I should mention here that I do not regard the abstruse style of poststructuralism, that is now commonly identified within North American universities with postmodernism, as a viable option. As a form of "creative writing", I find some poststructural work interesting (although the style somewhat dry); however, at least the majority of poststructuralists don't seem to see their work in this manner. It seems to me that many, if not most, poststructuralists actually are situated within the pre-post-modern context rather than the postmodern context, as I am defining it in this work. Alternately, to introduce some terms relating to social class that I will be employing throughout this work, some poststructural writing could be seen as an effort by actual postmodernists to create a form of "classified" academic knowledge in the era of the "de-classification" of academic knowledge, in the hope that Western universities may retain their traditional social-class maintenance function even in the postmodern era—in which, paradoxically, as shall be discussed in the following section, traditional conceptions of social class no longer hold. For me, anyway, this doesn't seem reasonable.

For those readers who desire additional background about postmodernism in general, Lyotard's above-mentioned The Postmodern Condition would seem to be a good starting point—especially if these readers also are interested in the implications of postmodernism for Western higher education, to which much of this book is devoted. Regarding postmodern aesthetics, the collection of writings by John Cage, Composition in Retrospect (1993), may be helpful in this regard, as may some of the essays by the American professor of rhetoric, Richard Lanham, from his collection, The Electronic
Word: Democracy, Technology, and the Arts (1993). Regarding specifically possibilities in terms of form for writing from a postmodern perspective, I of course would highly recommend Kundera's work. For readers who prefer to have things spelled out for them, they may wish to start with Kundera's collection of essays, The Art of the Novel (1986)—an alternate title for which, given the argument I have made here, could be "The Art of the Postmodern Dissertation." The definition of "novelist" that Kundera puts forward in this book nicely sums up how I perceive the activity in which I have been engaged in working on this thesis. (I assume that, in the following quotation, when Kundera uses masculine pronouns, he is referring to both men and women.)

The novelist makes no great issue of his ideas. He is an explorer feeling his way in an effort to reveal some unknown aspect of existence. He is fascinated not by his voice, but by a form that he is seeking, and only those forms that meet the demands of his dream become part of his work. (ibid., p. 144)

However, I believe more may actually be gained in this regard just from the example of Kundera's novels, especially those that are more innovative in terms of form, including The Book of Laughter and Forgetting (1996/1979). (For teachers, the sections about Madame Raphael, the French teacher, themselves are worth picking up "The Book").

An Introduction to What is Meant by "Social Class" in this Work

I have found the work of the French sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu, especially his essay, "What Makes a Social Class? On the Theoretical and Practical Existence of Groups" (Bourdieu, 1987) very helpful—to a point—in coming to terms with the various possible meanings of "social class" in the present period of philosophical transition, and pluralism, in the West. Bourdieu's essay incorporates a comprehensive overview of various ways of understanding "social class", which helped me to recognize the complexity of the subject with which I am dealing; however, a shortcoming of this essay, as I see it, is that Bourdieu fails to distinguish the different philosophical contexts with
which these different ways of understanding "social class" are associated, which I would suggest is due in large measure to Bourdieu having been situated in the in-between pre-post-modern context when he wrote this essay, from which such distinctions cannot be made.

Employing the framework sketched at the beginning of the preceding section, two of the ways of understanding "social class" that Bourdieu discusses could be seen as being associated strictly with a Western metaphysical philosophical outlook. Bourdieu's own conception of social class, which comprises two distinct parts, provides a good introduction to how the world may be viewed from a divided pre-post-modern position.

In the chapter concerning the Seventies in Part 2 of this work, in which I provide a detailed discussion of pre-post-modernism, I will have more to say about Bourdieu's own conception in relation to pre-post-modernism. Although Bourdieu's discussion of the various ways of understanding "social class" is quite comprehensive, there is another way of understanding "social class" that Bourdieu doesn't discuss (his philosophical position would seem to preclude it), that plays an important role in this thesis. Following, I will provide a summary of the various ways of understanding "social class" outlined by Bourdieu, and introduce how these various ways fit, or don't fit, into this thesis. Then I will introduce the additional way, that Bourdieu doesn't discuss, that figures prominently in this work.

The first basic way of understanding "social class" discussed by Bourdieu is what Bourdieu calls the "objectivist" view, which Bourdieu illustrates primarily with Karl Marx's highly influential theory of social class. As Bourdieu points out, objectivists such as Marx regard economically and socially differentiated individuals divided into "real, objectively constituted, groups" (ibid., p. 4). In Marx's theory, in political terms, there are just two "real" classes, the "proletariat", comprised of workers, and the "bourgeoisie", comprised of what were in Marx's day two major groups within society, capitalists and landowners. (When the focus of Marx's work shifts from political issues to economic
issues, psychological issues, and so forth, there may be appear to be more than just two
categories, which nevertheless are all "real". Marx is not entirely consistent in how he
defines "social class". According to Marx, there was a "real", natural, antipathy between
these two groups, such that, as Marx saw it, "The history of all hitherto existing society is
the history of class struggles" (Marx & Engels, 1848/1936, p. 55). A third group (to
which Bourdieu doesn't refer in his overview), comprised of intellectuals such as Marx,
himself (and Bourdieu), the position of which within Marx's basic framework is
indeterminate, was deemed by Marx to have a vital role to play in this class struggle, by
helping members of the proletariat to become increasingly aware of their supposed
oppression, and by stimulating them to take action to remedy it. (I will return to this
feature of Marx's theory later in this section.) Bourdieu himself rejects Marx's theory of
"social class" and, moreover, objectivist views on the whole—at least outwardly.

Summing up his dissatisfaction with such views, with that of Marx singled out here,
Bourdieu states:

[B]y equating constructed classes, which only exist as such on paper, with
real classes constituted in the form of mobilized groups possessing
absolute and relational self-consciousness, the Marxist tradition confuses
the things of logic [i.e., theoretical categories] with the logic of things.
(ibid., p. 7)

In his essay outlining the history of the term "class", Gobo (1995) points to the
origin of the objectivist view of Karl Marx. As Gobo discusses, in the natural sciences, in
the period leading up to when Marx fashioned his theory, the term "class" had gained a
great deal of currency, especially in relation to the categorizing, or the "classifying", of
various biological phenomena. As Gobo states, "According to the ideology of the natural
sciences, Marx thinks it is possible to be neutral and objective in the analysis of social
relations" (ibid., p. 453). The second view which Bourdieu discusses, the "subjectivist"
view, owes more to prevailing scientific ideology than it may at first appear.

According to the basic subjectivist approach, social classes are held to be, as
Bourdieu states, "nothing more than pure theoretical artifacts (scholarly or "popular"),
obtained by arbitrarily cutting up the otherwise undifferentiated continuum of the social world" (Bourdieu, ibid., p. 3). Among subjectivists, Bourdieu includes phenomenologists, ethnomethodologists, and constructivist sociologists (ibid., p. 1). As Bourdieu readily recognizes, like objectivists, subjectivists "accept a substantialist philosophy, in Cassirer's sense of the term, which recognizes no other reality than that which is directly given to the intuition of ordinary experience" (ibid., p. 3). In other words, the approach is more closely connected with a Western scientific outlook or, more generally, with Western metaphysical philosophy, than it may at first appear. Thinking back to the underlying structural characteristics of Western metaphysics, in basic structural terms, these two approaches, objectivist and subjectivist, may be distinguished by being associated with alternate sides of the two sides of the Western metaphysical philosophical framework. (If this isn't already clear, my further discussion in the chapters to follow relating to the underlying structural changes that occur in the transition from a Western metaphysical philosophical framework to postmodernism should help to clarify it.2) Bourdieu also rejects the "subjectivist" approach, offering examples which indicate to him that social classes are not not "real". As a prime example, he states:

Social classes, or more precisely, the class which is tacitly referred to when we speak of social classes, namely the "working class", exists sufficiently to make us question or at least deny its existence, even in the most secure academic spheres . . . (ibid., p. 9)

Having rejected both subjectivist and objectivist approaches, Bourdieu concludes that social classes must be . . . well, this is where things get somewhat muddled. As an alternative to "objectivist" and "subjectivist" conceptions of "social class", Bourdieu presents his own primary conception, that he identifies as a "structural", or "relational", conception. (He later presents another conception, to which he also is sympathetic, that

---

2In this further discussion, which follows from a discussion of the philosophy of Socrates, I generally will be employing a "Socratic" vs. "anti-Socratic" distinction rather than an "objectivist" vs. "subjectivist" distinction. An "objectivist" outlook roughly corresponds to a "Socratic" (or, "masculine"-dominant" outlook)—even though a "Socratic" outlook is generally associated with the "Right" and the "objectivist", Karl Marx, in particular, identified with the "Left"—whereas a "subjectivist" outlook roughly corresponds to an "anti-Socratic" (or "feminine"-dominant") outlook.
may be seen as his secondary conception. I'll get to it shortly.) In the following long quotation, Bourdieu outlines this conception.

In fact, it is possible to deny the existence of classes as homogeneous sets of economically and socially differentiated individuals objectively constituted into groups, and to assert at the same time the existence of a space of differences based on a principle of economic and social differentiation. In order to do so, one needs only to take up the relational or structural mode of thinking characteristic of modern mathematics and physics, which identifies the real not with substances but with relationships. From this point of view, the "social reality" spoken of in objectivist sociology (that of Marx, but also Durkheim's) consists of a set of invisible relationships, those precisely which constitute a space of positions external to one another and defined by their relative distance to one another. For this realism of the relation, the real is the relational; reality is nothing other than the structure, as a set of constant relationships which are often invisible, because they are obscured by the realities of ordinary sense-experience, and by individuals in particular, at which substantialist realism stops. (ibid., p. 3)

Huh? On the one hand, Bourdieu rejects a "substantialist" (i.e., either objectivist or subjectivist) conception of "social class" while, on the other hand, he is not prepared to entirely relinquish such a conception. Thus, in his conception of "social class," even if social classes, as such, are not "real", a set of relationships pertaining to social classes is conceived to be "real"—albeit often invisible. That's one way to get around obviously "contradicting" oneself: make one of the elements invisible.

To further complicate matters, Bourdieu discusses some additional ways of understanding "social class" that, it seems, may readily be collapsed into one, that have no obvious relationship to his structural conception of social class, yet towards which he demonstrates sympathy.

The first of these ways is social classes understood as practical, flexible, "classes" (if indeed this is the correct term) that are contingent upon specific cultural and historical considerations. As Bourdieu states,

[P]ractical classifications are never totally coherent or logical in the sense of logic; they necessarily involve a degree of loose-fitting, owing to the fact that they must remain "practical" or convenient. Because an operation of classification depends on the practical functions it fulfills, it can be based on different criteria, depending on the situation, and it can yield highly variable taxonomies. (ibid., p. 10)
Unfortunately, the examples Bourdieu provides of social classes understood as practical classifications are very limited in scope and, even as Bourdieu makes his argument about the potential variability of social classes, suggest little variability. (A key example he employs here is the practical alliance of men and women in the contemporary labour movement, that itself was heavily influenced by Marx.) To realize just how variable social classes may be, one has only to consider systems of social classification within other cultures. For example, Hindu society in India is divided into essentially five different classes. The first four of these classes are the four castes, based on historical divisions, as follows: the Brahmans, or priests; the Kshatriyas, traditionally warriors, administrators, and gentry; the Voisyas, formerly farmers and herdsmen, now merchants and bankers; and the Sudras, comprising farmers, labourers, and artisans. Beneath these four castes is a casteless group, that constitutes a fifth social class within this system, called the untouchables or Harijans, Ghandi's term meaning "Children of God" (Shapiro, 1973, p. 257). In the contemporary Western world, despite our particular philosophical heritage and, in this century, the widespread, strong, influence of Marx's theory of social class, there would seem to be considerably greater variability, and flexibility, in these practical groupings, or "classifications"—which, within such a context, may be a deceptive term—than Bourdieu suggests. (One reason would seem to be the recent increased influence of non-Western cultures in the West.)

Bourdieu distinguishes social classes understood as practical classifications from social classes understood as "folk categories", which he defines as "those impeccably real social fictions produced and reproduced by the magic of social belief" (ibid., p. 9). For example, as Bourdieu suggests, Marx's theory of social class may be seen as part of our present "folklore" concerning social class.

As I see it, social classes understood as practical classifications and as "folklore" are essentially one and the same. I would suggest that these ways of understanding "social class" are consistent with a postmodern outlook, and were consistent with Bourdieu's
dawning postmodern awareness at the time that he was writing this essay, even as he then still had one foot squarely situated in a Western metaphysical philosophical context.

Among these different conceptions of social class, the first conception, the strictly objectivist conception, especially Marx's conception, has played the most significant role within my own family. Besides Marx's view of social class having been absorbed into Western discourses in general concerning social class, members of my father's family, including his parents, were, or are, actively involved in the labour movement. In labour circles, Marx's theory of social class, or at least its rudiments involving an opposition between workers and the "others", that Marx called the bourgeoisie and that is now more commonly called the middle class, has been highly influential. Although my father was less heavily involved directly in the labour movement than were other members of his family (when we were growing up, community theatre took up most of his free time), from the time that I was very young, due largely to my father having come from a union family, and the ongoing influence of members of his family actively involved in the labour movement, social class was a very salient category. Social classes then appeared to be (at least to me) very real, as in Marx's conception of social class. I shall just note here that, departing somewhat from Marx, it became apparent to me early on that, from a working-class perspective within a basic Marxist framework, the position of intellectuals—or, more particularly, of university-educated intellectuals—is more clearly defined than in Marx's own work. In general, they are seen as members of the middle-class (or what I would call the "upper class"), and not members of the working-class—or as "them", and not as "us". Although an objectivist conception of social class appears to have played the most significant role in relations within my family, sometimes appearances can be deceiving. Since we have entered the postmodern era, social classes understood as practical classifications/folklore (including Marx's theory of social class understood as a practical classification scheme/folklore) also seems to have played some role. I will be elaborating on what this role may have been throughout this work.
The additional postmodern conception of "social class" that figures prominently in this work, that Bourdieu does not discuss in his overview, involves how substantialist, realist, conceptions of social class (including Marx's conception as well as Bourdieu's structural, or relational, conception) may be viewed from a postmodern perspective.

From a postmodern perspective, from which it may be recognized that the underlying structure of Western metaphysical philosophy is both dualistic and hierarchical, it becomes apparent that such conceptions replicate this dualistic and hierarchical structure. First, society is divided into two principal groups. One of these groups (whether "real", or not "real", or both) is viewed as necessarily having a higher status than the other group (whether "real", or not "real", or both). In Marx's theory, the two groups are outwardly defined in economic terms. However, since the Western metaphysical philosophical framework ultimately rests on the existence of knowledge thought to comprise the "truth", underlying Marx's economic classification scheme is an additional classification scheme based upon the possession of certain kinds of knowledge. The knowledge possessed by those in the high-status, or "high-class", group is thought to be superior to the knowledge possessed by those in the low-status, or "low-class", group, the former consisting of, or at least incorporating, the "truth", understood in absolute terms. While these two classification schemes overlap to a great extent, they are not isomorphic.

I would suggest that, as seen from a postmodern perspective, substantialist conceptions of social class associated with Western metaphysics hinge upon the possession, or the non-possession, of "truth". The underlying "social practice" associated with such conceptions therefore may be seen as the withholding by members of the high-status group of special knowledge, associated with "truth", from members of the low-status group, in addition to the sharing of such knowledge among members of the high-status group—as has taken place, and continues to take place, within our universities. In this work, I will be referring to such knowledge, that seems to be integrally related to how "social class" is understood within a Western metaphysical philosophical framework, as "class-ified
knowledge", or "class-ified information". It is when this class-ified information gets into the "wrong" hands, as it already has to a great extent during the present period of philosophical transition in the West, that traditional social-class divisions, and the Western metaphysical philosophical framework on the whole, break down.

Regarding terminology, within those contexts in which a hereditary aristocracy wields considerable power within society but nevertheless consists of a minority of the overall population, as was the case in Europe when Marx first devised his theory, it makes some sense to generally employ "middle class" as the English equivalent of Marx's term, borrowed from the French, the "bourgeoisie". Within such a context, another, relatively small, but nonetheless influential, group can be seen as being members of an "upper class". However, in the present-day Western world, especially as it is commonly employed in the North American academic context, the term "middle class" is highly problematic. First, as seen from a postmodern perspective, it serves to obscure the underlying binary structure, as discussed above, of substantialist conceptions of social class; i.e., if there is a "middle class", then presumably there are at least two more principal groups that come into play here. Second, when university students and professors, past and present, are described as being predominantly "middle class", or describe themselves as "middle class", as is common practice in North American universities, this can be highly deceptive. This is likely to suggest that university students and professors are less well-off economically relative to others in society than they actually are. Through my years as a university student, several of my supposedly "middle-class" fellow students who I've got to know well enough to know about their family backgrounds have been from very economically privileged families. (It is my experience that, when thrown together in the academic context, especially in the postmodern era, very rich students and those students who have little to lose in economic terms get along very well.) Moreover, with the possible exception of a few young, single, women, who have numbered among my university professors over the years, who had just embarked on academic careers and, thus, were then at the very
bottom of the academic pay scale, none of my professors, including even those who spouted Marxist theory, seem to have been headed for the poorhouse.

Because of these problems with the term "middle class" in contemporary usage, throughout this work, for general purposes, the social class (or "social class") most commonly identified as the "middle class" will be identified as the "upper class". Its opposing partner usually will be identified as the "working class" although, in certain cases, especially when I am contrasting these two classes (or "classes"), I will employ the term "lower class". Another set of terms related to social class that I will commonly employ is the "Right" and the "Left". When using the latter term in this work, I make a distinction between academic "Leftists", who identify with the working class yet who are not members of this class, and members of the working class. The former get quotation marks (i.e., "Leftists", or the "Left") whereas the latter do not (i.e., Leftists, or the Left). No such distinction was required here for the term, "Right", which never gets quotations—unless I am referring to the term itself. Especially within the academic context, the "Left" commonly refers to those holding a liberal position regarding issues other than, or in addition to, social class. For example, feminists, in general, are commonly referred to as members of the "Left". Similarly, the "Right" commonly refers to those holding a conservative position regarding issues other than, or in addition to, social class. I will sometimes use the terms "Left" and "Right" in this broad sense. Even when used in this broad sense, the academic "Left" gets quotations marks, whereas the academic Right doesn't.
LETTERS BETWEEN AN "OUTSIDER" AND AN "INSIDER"
Dear Uncle Peter,

We did the IQ tests. There is one test that is blank because Dad didn't want to do the test. Mummie did do the test. The twins, Dan and Danielle, did the special test for kids who can't yet read. I helped them, just to understand what to do. They also did the drawing of the man. There was a problem I followed your instructions.

I finished collecting all the information you wanted. I had a problem with one of the questions, the one about the colour of the earwax. Everybody's earwax looked the same colour to me. It was just normal earwax colour. I just left that one blank.

I was very careful with my measuring, just like you wanted. Dad helped me with it, especially the question about the angle that the last joint of the little finger bends in. He taught me how to use a protractor. But he still wouldn't do the IQ test. He said that.

I'm enjoying my summer vacation. We got a new T.V. a little while ago. It's not really a new T.V. It's a second-hand one, but it works well. I don't watch too much because I like reading. I'm looking forward to school starting soon.

I like doing this research. I'm learning a lot. Everybody wants to know how well they did on the test, except for Dad who didn't do the test. I hope we find out soon.

Love,
Pamela
Dear Pamela,

It's the beginning of a new school year. I'm still at the university, still working on my thesis. I'm now also teaching a class of undergraduate university students. I suppose it usually does take some time for undergraduates to settle down after their summer vacations. By the time you receive this letter, you should be well settled into the fourth form.

Thank you very much for doing such an excellent job with your research. It's unfortunate that your father would not do the IQ test. Maybe you could ask your mother to explain to him how important it is to have both parents represented in a study of this nature—or maybe you could do it yourself. I know you understand how important it is. I do hope he will change his mind.

Regarding your other news, I'm surprised that it's taken you this long to get a "new" T.V. We bought our first T.V. several years ago, when they first came out. It helps, of course, that Auntie Jane kept her job as a secondary school science teacher, even after she had the children. But with our busy lives, we don't watch much television. Auntie Jane has continued to teach and to look after your cousins while I've been busy doing my Ph.D. Since you mentioned in your letter that you prefer reading to television (as I do), I've enclosed a little present for you. Plato's Republic is one of my all-time favourite books. I hope you enjoy it.

I'm sorry to have to keep you waiting for the results of your IQ tests. This is very complex work that demands a great deal of time, so it will be some time yet before I have the results.

Incidentally, the drawing of the man that your sister Danielle did was quite extraordinary.

Cheerio,
Uncle Peter
Smallsville
CANADA

Winter, 1963/1964

Dear Uncle Peter,

Thank you very much for the very nice book. Some of it is hard. I like the book very much.

I asked Dad for you if he would do the IQ test, but he still says no. He likes the book you sent, too. He's helping me with it. He thinks some of it is very funny.

Everybody, except for Dad, wants to know how well they did on the IQ test. I hope we find out soon.

Love,

Pamela
INTRODUCTION
OF THE THIRD KIND:

SOME ANCESTORS
The First Fathers

The Spiritual Father

From the inception of the first Western university, the University of Paris, that was granted its official charter by Pope Innocent III in the 13th Century, through to the middle of this century, there was an intimate, albeit not always explicit, relationship between Western universities and Christianity. Only in recent decades has this relationship become, generally speaking, more distant. Thinking of the Western academic community through the ages as a multi-generational family, it may be said that, traditionally, the ultimate head of this Family was a spiritual, or religious, father, namely the male, Christian, God (who, as exemplified by the beginning of the Lord's Prayer, "Our Father who art in heaven," has been widely viewed as the "Father" of Christianity in general).

This was a Father who worked in mysterious ways, who kept a great deal of knowledge to Himself. Nevertheless, prior to the inception of Western universities, a very limited segment of the human population, comprised mainly of male clerics (as I shall elaborate below, women apparently did have considerable power within the Church up to the 12th Century), was believed to have been sufficiently initiated into God's sacred mysteries to serve as mediators between "ordinary" citizens and God. As a result these clerics, who themselves were only mere mortals, came to possess a great deal of power within society. It seems to have been more than coincidence that it was at a point in history when the supposed mysteries of the Father started to seem far less mysterious to a wide range of the population than they had in the past and, it follows, when the substantial power of the clerics and, more generally, of the Christian Church, was threatened, that Western universities came into being. From the inception of Western universities to the present, a key function of our universities (although not the only
function) would seem to be that of preserving the mystery—or, in other words, the preservation of a special, secret, knowledge to be shared among only a select segment of the population, and, it follows, the preservation of the existing distribution of power within society.

There were various factors that seem to have contributed to Western universities coming into existence when they did. The most significant factor, in my estimation, would seem to have been that, through the Middle Ages, especially in the period immediately leading up to the founding of the first Western university, there was, as documented by Illich and Sanders (1988), a significant increase in literacy among members of the general population. This increase in literacy was accompanied by a significant increase in the use of writing for everyday, mundane, purposes, such as the keeping of accounts, the drawing up of formal contracts, and even for communication between close friends and relatives among "ordinary" citizens (especially, before writing could be entirely taken for granted, concerning those matters that could not be trusted to a messenger, that constituted the secrets of "ordinary" citizens)—in the form of letters.

Illich and Sanders provide ample evidence which supports their case that, especially in the part of Europe lying north of the Alps, between the 11th and 13th Centuries, an unprecedented change occurred in the nature of social relations owning to the increase in the use of writing, and the loss of its former sacred associations. As stated by these authors, "The use of documents, together with a new way of shaping the written word, turned writing, which in the Early and High Middle Ages had been extolled and honoured as a mysterious embodiment of the Word of God, into a constituent element in the mediation of mundane relations" (ibid., p. 32). The change that Illich and Sanders discuss could have been even greater had not universities, the earliest of which were very closely connected to the Church, come into being when they did. The "sacredness" of the written word was, to a large extent, preserved within these institutions (including through Latin
and Greek being favoured in these institutions over local languages employed for everyday purposes)—along with the existing distribution of power within society.

It wasn't only the interests of the clergy that were served by these institutions. With increased levels of literacy within society as a whole, a very high level of literacy was now demanded of members of the non-clerical, ruling, elite. In order that they could maintain their dominance. Universities provided training to young members of this elite, so that they might be able to continue to take up their "rightful" places within society at large, in addition to providing training for future clergy. Through universities, the interest of the Church in preserving the mystery of the written word was being served, at the same time that the interest of members of the non-clerical ruling elite in acquiring mastery of the written word was being served, and alliances between these two groups probably were strengthened.

Another basic explanation for the rise of Western universities in the 13th Century has been offered by David Noble, in his book A World Without Women: The Christian Clerical Culture of Western Science (1992). This explanation seems to me to have some serious weaknesses; however, especially since parts of this explanation are highly relevant to issues concerning the relationship of women and universities that will be addressed in one of the chapters of Part 2 of this work, I will briefly discuss this explanation here. Noble argues that the exclusion of women from many Church-related activities in the 12th Century effectively caused, in and of itself, the rise of Western universities in the 13th Century. (Noble fails to acknowledge that the increases in literacy and writing during the preceding period may have made even some contribution to the rise of Western universities.)

According to Noble, early Christianity, through the 1st Millennium, was relatively accepting of women. Noble provides various examples of women presumably possessing considerable power within the Church during this period, especially examples in which the wives of clergy members shared various Church responsibilities with their husbands.
and, thereby, supposedly gained considerable power within the Church in their own right. However, it should not be overlooked that there was a great deal of misogyny within the Christian Church from its very beginnings. For example, as pointed out by Berman (1989), very early Christianity incorporated a belief in the inferiority of the souls of women, that was borrowed from classical Greek philosophy by Philo, the Roman Hellenist philosopher and rabbi. (Such a belief continued to be integral to Christianity through the ages.) Noble goes on to discuss how clerical marriage persisted, albeit increasingly on the defensive, through the beginning of the 2nd Millennium. A point that is pivotal to Noble's basic argument is that, by the late 12th Century, not long before the founding of the first Western university, Catholic leaders succeeded in imposing celibacy for all clergy members, including banning marriage. Noble would have us believe that this development not only effectively excluded women from positions of power within the Church itself and, furthermore, that it excluded women from being students or teachers in the early universities—points which are themselves uncontroversial—but also that the imposition of celibacy for all clergy members was the key factor that led to the rise of Western universities. Moreover, he would have us believe that this development was the key factor that led to the rise of Western science which, as I shall discuss below, has been closely connected through the centuries with Western universities. In Noble's own words: "It was no accident that the new university emerged at the very moment when the clergy was forced to become celibate, when the ecclesiastical world without women had at last been secured" (ibid., p. 131).

A central problem with this argument is, as previously noted, that Noble fails to acknowledge the misogyny of Christianity from its inception. In a related vein, Noble fails to give consideration to why women were increasingly excluded from active participation in various Church practices in the period leading up to the imposition of celibacy for all clergy members. On the other side of the coin, as also previously noted, Noble fails to give consideration to the significant increases in literacy and writing in the
period leading up to the inception of the first university. Related to this point, he also fails to give consideration to the close alliance between the clergy and members of the non-clerical elite that was integral to Western universities from their inception, and why this close alliance should have come into being.

It seems probable that the increases in literacy and writing for mundane purposes in the period leading up to the inception of the first Western university significantly contributed to the increasing exclusion of women from active participation in various Church practices during this period, in addition to making a significant, independent, contribution to the inception of the first Western university. Assuming Church leaders were feeling threatened by these developments since they were resulting in a decrease in their own power within society, they would have been inclined to try to wrest back power from those from whom they could most readily get it—including women, who generally were viewed by the Church as inferior to men, and therefore not deserving of real power in the first place. Nevertheless, as shall be further explored later in this work, even if the exclusion of women from various Church practices in the 11th and 12th Centuries did not significantly contribute to the rise of Western universities (or, as Noble also maintains, to the rise of Western science), the increased inclusion of women in Western universities through the 20th Century does seem to have significantly contributed to the de-classification of Western academic knowledge (including scientific knowledge) and, it follows, to the increasing acceptance of postmodernism within these institutions. At the root of the problems with Noble's argument, it appears that Noble was projecting what had been going on in Western universities in recent decades onto the distant past.

Moving on now to the relationship of Christianity and Western science especially as it evolved within Western universities, in the past two centuries, subsequent to the beginning of the Industrial Revolution (which was around 1750), Western science has commonly been portrayed as the opposite of, and in opposition to, religion. However, prior to this period, there was a very close, and explicit, relationship between Western
science and religion. The range of scholarly work of Isaac Newton (1642-1727), commonly regarded as the father of modern science, provides a good example of the traditional close, and unabashed, relationship between Western science and religion. Newton gained a lasting reputation as author of *Principia Mathematica* (the long title of which, translated into English, is "Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy"), in which he maintained that all of nature could be understood in mathematical, mechanical, terms, and other scientific works. Yet, in his lifetime, Newton also produced several religious tracts, with titles such as *A Church History, A History of the Creation*, and *A Historical Account of Two Notable Corruptions of Scripture*. An interesting point made by David Noble, in the same work to which I referred above, about the rise of Western science is that major power struggles within organized religion were occurring during Newton's era, when "modern" science was in its formative years. As Noble argues, science took shape "in an epic struggle for political power through access to divine knowledge" (1992, p 241). As Noble suggests, it was largely to support the political agendas of religious groups and those segments of society at large allied with these groups that, during this period, claims came to be made about scientific knowledge consisting of a form of divine knowledge and, in turn, scientific knowledge came to be widely regarded as a form of divine knowledge. This early, basic, conception of scientific knowledge has stuck over the centuries, even though, over time, the supposed "divinity" of scientific knowledge has tended to become implicit.

By the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, Western science had distanced itself from its Christian origins, at least superficially. Western academic disciplines other than those associated with the natural sciences, that all adopted the method of inquiry of the natural sciences, followed suit. Those Western academics who sought a justification for the underlying assumptions of Western science that were remnants of its Christian origins, including the central assumption of the existence of absolute "truth", no longer were able simply to turn to religion. Metaphysical philosophy took over where religion
left off. Many metaphysical philosophers, like their scientific forebears, were, or are (there are still some of them left), deeply religious. A prime example is the German philosopher, Immanuel Kant (1724–1804), who devised an elaborate philosophical system, incorporating various hypothetical cognitive "categories" (redolent of the classes employed in social classification, of the "objectivist" variety) to account for mathematical, aesthetic, and moral judgement, who was a devout Catholic. In the 19th Century, there was a rediscovery of the works of classical Greek philosophers, including Plato and Aristotle, that became staples of Western academic humanities curricula. (Classical Greek philosophy did not always play a major role, at least directly, in Western universities.) Ironically, while overlooking the Christian origins of Western science, and the ongoing, implicit, close relationship between Christianity and Western science, Western scholars turned to a school of philosophy that had made a significant contribution to early Christianity—or, more specifically, upon which early Christians had drawn, perhaps quite selectively—to justify the underlying assumptions of Western science.

The Philosophical Father

From the 19th Century onward, including through the Sixties in this century, the philosophical Father of the Western academic Family was, or so it then appeared, the classical Greek philosopher or, Plato—or what then appeared to be the classical Greek philosopher, Plato. (This awkward statement will be clarified below.) For example, according to Alfred North Whitehead's oft-quoted characterization of the Western philosophical tradition, "it consists of a series of footnotes to Plato" (1929/78, p. 39). However, if one is not seeking a reaffirmation of Christian thought in Plato's works, it would seem more accurate to say that the philosophical Father of this Family was Socrates, the central figure in Plato's works, with this Socrates understood to be a serious metaphysical philosopher—or, perhaps, as seen from another angle, the projection by
readers of Plato's works from the 19th Century onward of an internalized, male, Christian, God onto the central figure in Plato's works. Since I believe that the distinction between Plato and Socrates is an important one, with significant implications for the work that you are now reading as a whole, before I proceed, I will discuss in broad terms the rationale for this distinction and, at the same time, indicate why, in this section and through the rest of this work, I shall be referring to the philosophical Father of the Western academic Family as "Socrates", by which I mean both this figure in Plato's work and its Christian correlates, rather than as "Plato".

There are certain idiosyncratic features of Plato's works that allow for various interpretations of these works, once we abandon certain preconceptions. First, Plato's works are written in the form of dialogues, much like scripts for plays, with various figures—or, thinking in theatrical terms, various characters—expressing various views—or, in other words, playing various dramatic roles. Second, Plato himself does not directly appear in these dialogues: neither is there a character in the dialogues with its own role identified as "Plato" nor do the characters in the dialogues with their own roles ever refer to someone called "Plato" and, in so doing, provide information about Plato's personal views. Third, Plato's former teacher, after whom the central character in the dialogues was modeled, was dead, poisoned by Athenian authorities who opposed his teachings, before Plato began to write his dialogues, and Socrates did not leave behind his own written record of his philosophy. The traditional view of how Plato's works should be interpreted, that widely prevailed up to and including the Sixties, and that still prevails in certain quarters, is that the views of Plato, author of the dialogues, were synonymous with the views of Socrates, the central character in these dialogues and, furthermore, were synonymous, or virtually synonymous, with those of Socrates, Plato's former teacher. Yet if, when we are engaged in reading Plato's works, we are not necessarily seeking a divine, metaphysical, "truth" in the works, and/or within ourselves, that transcends the particularities of the social locations of the various key players (i.e., Plato, the author of
the dialogues; Socrates, the central character of the dialogues; Socrates, Plato's former teacher; and we readers of the dialogues), given the above-mentioned idiosyncratic features of Plato's dialogues; various alternate interpretations are possible. Some of these are as follows:

(a) Plato's views were the same as those of the central character of his dialogues, Socrates, but not the same as those of his former teacher, Socrates. With this interpretation, the traditional view that the philosophical Father of the Western universities was Plato still holds. (With this interpretation, one could equally say that the philosophical Father was Socrates—as is also possible with the traditional interpretation.)

(b) Plato did not agree, to a greater or lesser extent, with the views of Socrates, the central character of his dialogues; however, the views of Socrates, the central character of Plato's dialogues probably were very closely related, or even identical, to those of Socrates. Plato's former teacher. Given this arrangement, Plato's dialogues may be seen as incorporating a fair measure of irony, reminiscent of the highly ironic portrayal of Socrates by the classical Greek satirist, Aristophanes, a contemporary of Plato, in his play, The Clouds. With this interpretation of Plato's dialogues, it would appear that, during the period when a more traditional interpretation prevailed, the philosophical Father of the Western academic family was Socrates, especially the character in Plato's dialogues, and perhaps also Socrates, Plato's former teacher, as opposed to Plato, with Plato's dialogues viewed not as Plato intended but, rather, from a non-ironic, serious, perspective.

(c) Plato's views were not the same as those of Socrates, the character in his dialogues, but were the same as those of Socrates, his former teacher. With
this arrangement, the intriguing possibility arises that both Plato and Socrates favoured an ironic approach to life and, furthermore, that through his philosophical teachings Socrates wanted his students to gain an appreciation for irony. However, as intriguing as this possibility is, it seems highly unlikely that Athenian authorities would have wanted to do away with Socrates for possessing an appreciation of irony. With this interpretation of Plato's dialogues, it would appear that, during the period when a more traditional interpretation prevailed, the philosophical Father of the Western academic family was only Socrates, the character in Plato's dialogues, with Plato's dialogues viewed not as Plato intended but, rather, from a non-ironic, serious, perspective.

In recent years, among postmodernists in general, interpretations of Plato's dialogues which recognize distance between the views of Plato and Socrates, especially as portrayed in Plato's dialogues, have gained increasing popularity. Just as, as discussed above, the traditional interpretation of Plato's dialogues may be seen as consisting in large measure of a projection of a particular vision of the self onto Plato's works, postmodern interpretations may be seen as consisting in large measure of a projection of a particular vision of the self onto Plato's works—in this case a postmodern, ironic, vision of a self that is distanced from the various social roles that one enacts in one's life. As is especially relevant to this work, these social roles include roles relating to social class. The second alternative interpretation above, in which only Plato possessed an ironic outlook, seems more probable to me than the third alternative interpretation, in which both Plato and Socrates possessed ironic outlooks; however, I wouldn't completely rule out the third interpretation. I also recognize that Plato's attitudes towards Socrates, his former teacher, and towards, Socrates, the central character of his dialogues, probably did change over the course of his career, and may even have changed somewhat in the course of writing individual dialogues. (It is beyond the scope of this work to illustrate why this would
Assuming, then, that the philosophical Father of the Western academic Family was Socrates, as specified above, even though he has been commonly identified as "Plato", I shall now introduce some of the main features of Socrates' philosophy.

At the centre of Socrates' philosophy, certain individuals possessed the "truth", understood in absolute terms, whereas others didn't. To account for why some individuals presumably possessed the "truth" whereas others presumably didn't, Socrates employed his Theory of Ideas or, as it is alternately known, his Theory of Forms. According to this theory, all objects in the material world are mere imitations of Ideas. These prototypical, quintessential, Ideas were said by Socrates to reside in a non-material realm, closely resembling the Christian construct of heaven. For example, the imagery associated with gaining access to this realm, like that associated with gaining access to heaven, invariably entails ascent. Also, Socrates describes coming into contact with Ideas as being associated with strong positive emotions, similar to the emotions that might be experienced by Christians upon finding themselves in heaven. (I shall return to this point shortly.) Regarding how we obtained access to this realm, Socrates maintained that human beings possessed eternal souls, which retained a vision of eternal Ideas, thus enabling us, or at least some of us, to recognize Ideas, or their imitations. As Socrates maintained, select individuals possessed superior souls, and a superior ability to discriminate Ideas, whereas others possessed inferior souls and an inferior ability to discriminate Ideas.

Socrates suggests that, underlying the "quality" of one's soul was a quasi-genetic mechanism (before, of course, the science of genetics, or even the notion of genes, existed). First, Socrates suggests that there is a strong correlation between "superior" souls and masculine physical characteristics such that, generally speaking, males possessed souls that were superior to those of females. However, Socrates recognized "genetic" variation among both males and females. For example, in Plato's Republic, in
which Socrates devotes considerable attention to the education of the potential leaders, or Guardians, of his hypothetical, ideal, Just State, Socrates acknowledged that certain females were fit to receive the same education as male Guardians. This education included, as a key component, rigorous physical activity, in which only those females, and for that matter, those males, who possessed certain athletic aptitudes more commonly associated with males than with females would be expected to succeed. On the other side of the coin, Socrates ridicules men who are physically weak, sometimes likening them to women. The implications extend beyond their physical conditions to the state of their souls and, in turn, their intellects. In his quasi-genetic theory, who one's parents are also comes into play, albeit indirectly. For example, also in the Republic, Socrates takes it for granted that only those children who come from the "Guardian class", whose parents already hold privileged positions within society, were fit to receive an education befitting future Guardians. Thinking in terms of souls, presumably only those parents who themselves possessed superior souls could be expected to produce offspring who possessed superior souls.

As described by Socrates, Athenian society was a society that was highly stratified in terms of what we in the 20th Century have come to know as "social class". A major social division within classical Athenian society was that between slaves, comprised largely of prisoners of war and their descendants, and free citizens, which included Socrates and his students. As shall be discussed one of the chapters of Part 2 of this work, it may be incorrect to assume that Athenian slaves generally were seen as inferior to Athenian citizens, even though these slaves did not have the same social privileges as citizens. Socrates recognized further divisions based on the nature of one's employment and/or economic resources. For example, Socrates viewed artisans and farmers as being lower on the social hierarchy than people like himself and his students, who were sufficiently well-off to be able to spend a considerable amount of time engaged in philosophical pursuits.
To elaborate somewhat on Socrates' Theory of Ideas, Socrates maintained that there were two basic "principles of the soul", the rational and the irrational. As he specifies in the Republic, the rational principle was the one by which a person reasons. Alternately, the irrational principle, which Socrates associated with human corporeality, was the principle by which a person "loves and hungers and thirsts and feels the flutter of any other desire" (Republic, Book IV, p. 708). As Socrates stressed in the following quotation, "absolute good" can best be attained without interference from the senses.

When a person starts on the discovery of the absolute by the light of reason only, and without any assistance of sense, and perseveres until by pure intelligence he arrives at the perceptions of absolute good, he at last finds himself at the end of the intellectual world, as in the case of sight at the end of the visible tunnel. (Republic, book VII, p. 791)

Socrates associated women in general, and those engaged in "working class" professions, as well as artists, especially poets, with the corporeal, sensual, emotional, irrational, side of his fundamentally two-sided, metaphysical, philosophical framework. As the following quotation illustrates, Socrates is especially harsh towards poets.

The imitative poet implants an evil constitution, for he indulges the irrational nature which has no discernment of greater and less, but thinks the same thing at one time great and at another small—he is a manufacturer of images and is very far removed from the truth. (Republic, Book X, p. 863)

(If we think of Plato, the author of these words, as a poet, of sorts, this passage could be seen as highly ironic. Thinking in such terms, when Socrates further recommends that all poets should be banished from the ideal Just State, Plato may have been chuckling to himself.)

Beauty, associated with emotion, and intellectual "truth", that is supposedly devoid of emotion, have a very awkward relationship in Socrates' scheme. This awkward relationship can be observed in the following passage from the Symposium, the overall theme of which is love. (Socrates basic argument in this dialogue is that spiritual love is more noble than the mere satisfaction of physical desires.)
But what if man had eyes to see the true beauty—the divine beauty, I mean, pure and clear and unalloyed, not clogged with the pollution of mortality and all the colours and vanities of human life—thither looking, and holding converse with the true beauty, simple and divine? Remember how in the communion only beholding beauty with the eye of the mind, he will be enabled to bring forth, not images of beauty, but realities (for he has hold not of an image but of a reality), and bringing forth and nourishing true virtue to become the friend of God and be immortal, if mortal man may. (Symposium, p. 335)

Not only in this particular dialogue dealing with love, but also in Plato's other dialogues, Ideas are associated with images of poignant beauty. Many passages in Plato's dialogues convey that Socrates possessed a deeply reverential, strongly emotional, attitude towards Ideas, which is difficult to reconcile with his stated disapproval of emotionality—and, more generally, with Socrates' efforts to uphold a strict division between rationality and irrationality.

Socrates offers in passing in the Republic what may be seen as a solution for reconciling this emotionality with his strict division of rationality and irrationality, by postulating a third principle, passion, which "when not corrupted by bad education is the natural auxiliary of reason" (Republic, Book IV, p. 703). However, assuming that a strict division of rationality and irrationality is retained, this hardly seems to be a solution, since this third principle, that presumably bridges rationality and irrationality, is fundamentally inconsistent with a strict division of rationality and irrationality—or seen in more societal terms, between "us" and "them"—that he tries so hard to retain throughout the dialogues. Philosophical descendants of Socrates, who have situated themselves on the other, "bad", side of the philosophical divide separating rationality and irrationality (who themselves are likely to associate this side with intuition rather than with irrationality), who I shall introduce below, have run into a similar problem.

To conclude this very basic introduction to Socrates' philosophy, those who were most like Socrates himself, or like more politically powerful members of society whose positions to which Socrates apparently aspired, were deemed by Socrates to be able to gain access to Ideas, and thereby to possess "truth". It seems worth noting that Socrates,
himself, was not powerful politically, in the strict sense, as exemplified by Socrates being put to death by political leaders of Athens for his supposed corruption of youth. (Socrates' position in relation to political leaders of Athens could be seen as being similar to that of clerics in the period leading up to the inception of the first Western university in relation to the non-clerical elite—a key difference being that leaders of Athens ultimately had less need for Socrates, and for his variety of "class-ified information", than members of the non-clerical elite in 12th Century Europe had need for the clerics, and for their variety of "class-ified information.") Socrates never openly acknowledged that the striking similarities between himself (or who he aspired to be) and those who he deemed most capable of possessing "truth" could be more than a coincidence; however, this is not to say that Plato, the author of the dialogues, didn't recognize that more than coincidence was involved.

The Uncles

Among the philosophical descendants of Socrates are those who have identified more with the subordinate side of Western metaphysics, that Socrates associated with irrationality, than with the dominant side, associated with rationality. This pattern may apply to all, or to just some, or perhaps sometimes even to just one, of the "branches" of Western metaphysics to which I earlier referred. (In general, there tends to be a consistent pattern across these various branches; however, as shall be illustrated in the chapter to follow concerning the Sixties, and also with the examples I will provide below, there may be exceptions.) Other philosophical descendants of Socrates have identified equally with both sides. Once again, this may apply to all, or to just some, or perhaps even to just one, of the many branches of Western metaphysics.) (Also once again, there tends to be consistency, but there may be exceptions.) Even though White, middle-class, males in general commonly have been identified with the dominant, rational, side of Western metaphysics (for example, many feminists have made this generalization), through the
ages, at least as far back as the Sophists who figure in Plato's dialogues, whose views Socrates strongly opposed, there have been some White, "middle-class" (intended here in a very loose sense), males who have assumed one of these less orthodox positions, more commonly associated with members of various minorities. In this work, in keeping with its familial theme, I will be calling these male ancestors of the contemporary Western academic Family, who are associated in whole or in part with an anti-Socratic, or "Leftist" (in a broad sense), position, the "Uncles", since they are closely related to but not identical with the Fathers.

Especially among teachers of rhetoric, that traditionally comprised a key component of the university humanities curriculum and that itself was associated with the subordinate side of Western metaphysics, these less orthodox positions are likely to have been represented to some extent within Western universities from their very early years. However, in the 20th Century, leading up to the main period under consideration in this work, there were a few especially prominent Uncles who helped to legitimize these less orthodox positions within the academy—or at least upon whom those within the academy who were similarly inclined relied to bolster their arguments. None of them themselves were principally employed as university professors. Nevertheless, particularly as an increasing number of members of minorities gained acceptance into the Western academic Family, these Uncles gained increasing prominence within the academy.

The work of the French philosopher, Henri Bergson (1859-1941), provides a good example of what I will call in this work the basic anti-Socratic position. On the surface, the basic anti-Socratic position seems to be distinguished by a simple reversal of the conventional, rational-dominant, configuration of Western metaphysics. On the one hand, there is an outward high valorization of "irrationality"—that, as in Bergson's philosophy, comes to be reconceived in more favourable terms, as intuition. It follows that there also is a high valorization, at least outwardly, of things commonly associated with irrationality (or intuition), including femininity, the emotions, subjectivity, the body, art, and rhetoric.
On the other hand, there is an outward rejection of rationality and things commonly associated with rationality, including masculinity, reason, objectivity, and science. Defying conventional views (which is to say the views of those in a rational-dominant, Socratic, position), Bergson viewed reason contemptuously, as something that alienates us from "true reality" (Bergson, 1934). In turn, according to Bergson, "truth" was attainable only through intuition (ibid.).

Bergson seems to have pictured himself as a rebel pitted against mainstream society. When positioning himself in relation to the basic philosophical framework described by Socrates and other Fathers, Bergson positioned himself, at least outwardly, on the "bad" side of Western metaphysics (as seen from a Socratic perspective), associated with irrationality. However, implicitly, the conventional Socratic arrangement of rationality and irrationality is still very much present in Bergson's work, serving as a backdrop against which the reversal of the standard hierarchy occurs. Although, in Bergson's philosophy, the reversal of the standard hierarchical arrangement is fairly consistent across various branches of Western metaphysics (including, for example, branches that involve masculinity/femininity, art/science, and intuition/reason), it is noteworthy that the branch involving the social classes does not appear to have undergone a similar reversal. In his own way, Bergson seems to have been as much an elitist as his close relatives, the Fathers. (For further discussion of the underlying structural characteristics of Bergson's philosophy, focusing on the ambiguous role of intuition in this philosophy, see Third, 1996.)

In certain respects, the later work of the Swiss psychologist, Carl Jung (1877-1961), after he had adopted archetypes as a central element of his psychology, also seems to reflect a basic anti-Socratic position. For example, in the following quotation, from Jung's 1943 essay, "Anima and Animus" (referring to the feminine and masculine archetype respectively), Jung suggests that "woman", especially idealized feminine woman, is in certain respects superior to "man".
Woman, with her very dissimilar psychology, is and always has been a source of informations about things for which a man has no eyes. She can be his inspiration; her intuitive capacity, often superior to man's, can give him timely warning, and her feelings, always directed towards the personal, can show him ways in which his own personally accented feeling would never have discovered. (1943/19ûî. p. 77)

Similarly, in the next quotation, from his 1938 essay, "Psychological Aspects of the Mother Archetype", Jung praises those men in whom the anima presumably readily manifests itself.

[Such a man] may have good taste and an aesthetic sense which are fostered by the presence of a feminine streak. Then he may be supremely gifted as a teacher because of his almost feminine insight and tact. He is likely to have a feeling for history, and to be conservative in the best sense and cherish the values of the past. (1938/1982, p. 114)

However, in contrast to Bergson, Jung doesn't devalue rationality, and things association with rationality, including masculinity. Jung maintained that the masculine and feminine archetypes were represented in all of us and, furthermore, generally maintained that, ideally, there should be a balance between masculinity and femininity.

Foreshadowing the "contradictions" that I earlier introduced associated with pre-post-modernism, Jung's outward acceptance of both masculinity and femininity leads him to sometimes "contradict" himself—or at least to come very close to doing so—especially with his views concerning women. Although, as illustrated above, when discussing idealized, feminine, woman, Jung is very flattering, when Jung is reflecting on women with whom he is acquainted, Jung often finds fault with women, to the point where he can be extremely insulting. As in the following, an explanation that he sometimes uses to account for the supposed faults of "real" women is that they are too masculine.

In women, Eros [associated with feminine sensuality] is an expression of their true nature, while their Logos [associated with "masculine" reason] is often only a regrettable accident. It gives rise to misunderstandings and annoying interpretations in the family circle and among friends. This is because it consists of opinions instead of reflections, and by opinions I mean a priori assumptions that lay claim to absolute truth. Such assumptions, as anyone knows, can be extremely irritating. (1948/1982, p. 172)
Even though Jung finds fault with supposedly highly-masculine women, it is interesting that he praises, rather than condemns, supposedly highly-feminine men.

Overall, Jung's later work may be seen as reflecting not simply the basic anti-Socratic position but, rather, the combined Socratic and anti-Socratic position, in which there is an equal, or at least roughly equal, identification with both sides of Western metaphysics. This position, and variations of it, will play an important role in this work, beginning in the chapter of Part 2 concerning the Seventies.

In Jung's work, as in the philosophy of Henri Bergson, there tends to be considerable consistency across various branches of Western metaphysics. Jung's work extends to a branch that is not addressed by the other ancestors of the Western academic Family to whom I have referred in this introductory section, namely that involving West/East, or Western culture and Eastern (or Asian) culture, especially in his book, *Psychology and Religion: West and East* (1938/1969). As shall be addressed in the chapter of Part 2 concerning what was occurring inside universities during the Eighties, that focuses on the issues of race and culture, the same pattern that underlies Jung's views concerning gender, and so on, underlies his views in this area. However, also similar to the case of Henri Bergson, in Jung's work, the branch of Western metaphysics associated with the social classes seems to have retained a more conventional, Socratic, configuration.

In contrast, in the theory of social class of Karl Marx, on the branch of Western metaphysics associated with the social classes, there is a reversal of the conventional, Socratic, hierarchical arrangement, which is not apparent on other branches. Regarding his views concerning social class, in particular, Karl Marx also could be seen as an Uncle of the contemporary Western academic Family even though, in most respects, his views were indistinguishable from those of the early Fathers.
LETTERS BETWEEN AN "OUTSIDER" AND AN "INSIDER"
Dear Pamela,

You should be happy to learn that I've finished calculating the IQ's for you and those members of your family who were kind enough to take the tests.

I should explain at the outset how the IQ's are calculated and what they mean. The first stage in calculating an IQ is to count up the number of points that each testee obtains on the test, to derive what is called a "raw score." The IQ (which stands for "intelligence quotient") is obtained by dividing the raw score by the average score earned by persons of the same age, and then multiplying by 100 to produce an answer in whole numbers. As an example, if a testee scores 42 points and the average for his age group is 40 points, his IQ would be 105, which is a little above average. The average score is, of course, 100. IQ's are quite stable. However, it should be kept in mind that, even on the best tests, variations in score of 5 IQ points are not unusual, and changes of 10 or more points are sometimes reported. Now for the results . . .

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Testee</th>
<th>Score 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>&quot;Pretty darned good&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>&quot;????????????&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bellinda</td>
<td>&quot;Disappointing&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charmaine</td>
<td>&quot;Better than pretty darned good&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dan</td>
<td>&quot;Well, he is a boy&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danielle</td>
<td>&quot;Wowee zowee&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pam</td>
<td>&quot;Better than average. Not great.&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I'm still working on the other part of my research, calculating the correlations between IQ and physical characteristics. It's quite fascinating, really. Who would have thought that the angle of deviation of the last joint of the little finger would serve as the key?! Your cousin, Jennie, came up with that one. She really is a genius. I'll keep you posted on my work.

Thank you again for your assistance with my thesis. I hope you found the experience educational and thought provoking.

Cheerio,
Uncle Peter

P.S. If your father changes his mind, just let me know.

---

3My actual uncle reported our IQ's to us in numerical terms. For the present purposes, these verbal descriptions seem quite sufficient.
Dear Uncle Peter,

Thank you very much for sending us the results of the IQ tests—finally. As you might have imagined, I should have been able to see, while some of us were quite delighted with our test scores, others of us were not. Despite my repeated requests for the results, maybe it would have been best if you’d kept the results to yourself. After all, you’re the one who is supposed to be the adult here.

All the same, helping you with your thesis research was educational and thought provoking. It provoked me to ask you the following couple of questions.

First, what is it that IQ tests measure, anyway? I know they are supposed to measure “intelligence.” However, several of the questions on your test would have been much easier for people from certain backgrounds to answer than for people from other backgrounds. Could it be that what these “intelligence” tests measure is simply how closely the knowledge possessed by the “testee” matches the knowledge possessed, and regarded as important, by those who make up these tests—in other words, by you? Furthermore, there may be certain people who are able to answer your questions but, for whatever reason, don’t want to.

Second, what is the ultimate purpose of the research that you are doing? I want to know why. Related to this question, are there any potential benefits to this research that outweigh the potential harm it may be doing to our family?

I would appreciate answers to these questions as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Pam

P.S. Did our clever little cousin come up with that question about the colour of earwax, too?

P.P.S. Dad says he will never, ever, take your stupid test.

P.P.P.S. By the way, Danielle traced her drawing of a man from a Fred Flintstone colouring book.
PART 2:
THE DECADES

If decade after decade the truth cannot be told, each person’s mind begins to roam irrevocably. One’s fellow countrymen become harder to understand than Martians.

Solzhenitsyn, Cancer Ward
The SIXTIES

The Ascendancy of the Sons
(and of those Daughters who were like these Sons)
The positive contribution of developments within Western universities during the decade of the Sixties to the acceptance of postmodernism within these institutions seems to have been minimal, and mostly indirect at that. However, to set the stage for developments in subsequent decades that clearly did make positive contributions in this regard, and also perhaps to clear up an exaggerated sense on the part of some of my readers concerning the extent to which developments within Western universities during the Sixties contributed positively to the acceptance of postmodernism within these institutions, I am devoting a chapter of this work to this decade.

During the decade of the Sixties, there were two distinct, yet conceivably related, major developments within the Western academic Family. First, Western universities underwent a major expansion, that continued into the Seventies. Between the mid-Sixties and the mid-Seventies, in Canada in particular, full-time university student enrollment approximately doubled, from roughly 300,000 to roughly 600,000 (Skolnik, 1989, p. 1068). The number of Canadian university professors also approximately doubled during this period, from roughly 17,000 to roughly 31,000 (ibid.). To accommodate this burgeoning Family, the number of universities in this country increased during this period from 57 to 66, or thereabouts (depending upon the specific years that are included in the period and how exactly "university" is defined) (ibid.), and the capacity of existing universities was increased. This expansion was part of an expansion of the Western system of higher education on the whole, that included not only universities but also colleges and technical schools.

Second, Western universities experienced the rise of a student counterculture, that was part of a much larger youth rebellion during this period, that included the hippie movement and the anti-war movement. This student counterculture challenged prevailing mores within universities and within society at large adopting a "Leftist" (with quotation
marks) stance. The category of social class played a significant role—at least outwardly—in the "Leftism" of the Sixties' student counterculture. Against a broad-scale political backdrop of continued tensions between capitalist and communist countries, including the Vietnam War in which Americans were then directly involved, many university students in Western capitalist countries (including Canada and the United States) expressed sympathy towards the working class, or the Left (without quotation marks), taking as their models leaders of far-ranging Leftist political movements, including Marx, Mao, Castro, and Ché Guevara. However, the "Leftism" of this student counterculture involved not only the category of social class. The student "Left" of the Sixties waged its war against the Right through an eclectic, curious, mixture of high-sounding "Leftist" political rhetoric, and sex, drugs, and rock-and-roll, associated with the youth counterculture in general of this period. The wide-ranging nature of Sixties' student "Leftism" in general itself suggests that, beneath the surface, even in the case of the more "serious" political activists among students of this era, social-class considerations may have played a less significant role than appearances might suggest.

For reasons which will be outlined below, neither of these developments, the expansion of Western universities and the rise of a "Leftist" student counterculture, seem to have made a significant direct positive contribution to the acceptance of postmodernism within our universities. In overall terms, these developments (the first of which is broken down below into two main parts, increased student enrollment and expanded infrastructure) may actually have retarded the acceptance of postmodernism within the Western academic Family relative to its acceptance within society at large.

The Expansion of Western Universities

Increased Student Enrollment

The major growth of the Western academic Family during the Sixties did not, as might be expected judging from the numbers alone, go hand in hand with a substantial
increased diversification in the perspectives represented within this Family. As I
introduced previously, especially from a present-day perspective, Western university
students of the Sixties were a highly homogenous group. It is true that, by the Sixties,
Western university students were by no means uniformly "White, male, and middle-
class", as university students of yore commonly have been described in recent academic
literature. By now, female students, especially those who were White and from middle-
class (or, for reasons previously given, the term I prefer, upper-class) backgrounds, were
strongly represented on most Western university campuses. Members of racial minorities
by now also were gaining some ground; however, unlike the situation today, the vast
majority of these students were born in, and had received their early educations in, the
West. Since we are dealing here especially with those members of visible minorities who
had been sufficiently successful academically early on to be accepted into Western
universities, it seems fair to say that even those student who were not of European
descent were Westernized, at least with respect to their academic endeavours. Also, an
increasing number of Western university students were from working-class (or lower-
class) backgrounds although, as previously discussed, special financial incentives did not
draw as many such students as might have been expected. Thus, despite greater
superficial differences than in the past, the vast majority of Western university students of
the Sixties, like preceding generations of the Western academic Family (and those
Westerners who were not part of this select group), did possess some key commonalities:
most possessed a basic Western metaphysical philosophical perspective, and most were
from upper-class backgrounds.

Among these relatively homogenous students, the basic Western metaphysical
philosophical perspective seems to have manifested itself in one of two distinct, yet
integrally related, ways. In the period leading up to the Sixties, when only males who
were White and from upper-class backgrounds directly contributed to Western academic
discourses, only two main variations of the basic Western metaphysical philosophical
perspective received broad recognition. The first was the Socratic perspective, exemplified by the perspective of the classical Greek philosopher Socrates (understood to be a non-ironic, serious, philosopher), the philosophical Father of the Western academic Family, and associated with the Right. The second was the anti-Socratic perspective, exemplified by the perspective of the 19th Century French philosopher, Henri Bergson, one of the philosophical Uncles, and associated with the "Left"—with quotation marks. (Bergson's "Leftism" extended to many branches of the philosophical tree associated with Western metaphysics, but it did not happen to extend to the branch associated with social class. In contrast, the more circumscribed "Leftism" of Karl Marx did happen to include the branch associated with social class and, indeed, was centred upon this branch.) Within the Western academic Family in the period leading up to the Sixties, the Socratic perspective was dominant. Nevertheless, even in the pre-Sixties period, the anti-Socratic perspective (encompassing one, or many, branches of the philosophical tree) already was present to some extent, in capitalist as well as in communist countries.

During the Sixties, the underlying philosophical perspectives of even the relative newcomers to the Western academic Family, including women, members of racial minorities, and members of the working class (and combinations thereof), appear to have been limited to one of the two established options, Socratic and anti-Socratic. Indeed, in seeking greater inclusion within the academy, many of these newcomers appear to have assumed a dominant, Socratic, perspective, at least with respect to certain key issues—even though the groups of which they were members were typically associated with the non-dominant, anti-Socratic, side of Western metaphysics. Most notably, the main kind of feminism that emerged on Western university campuses during the Sixties was associated, or at least appeared to be associated, with a Socratic, masculine, perspective.

Among the leading spokeswomen for this early variety of contemporary feminism were Simone de Beauvoir, Betty Friedan, Germaine Greer, and Gloria Steinem. Since the Seventies, when another main kind of feminism emerged (others were to follow) and it
started to become necessary to make a distinction between different kinds of feminism. The kind of feminism that predominated during the Sixties came to be commonly known as "liberal" feminism. Liberal feminism stressed greater equality for women, essentially on prevailing masculine terms. For example, especially as it manifested itself in the academic context, this kind of feminism was associated with women gaining entry to professions previously dominated by men (including the academic profession itself) that both paid more and, in general, within the Sixties' context, carried greater prestige than areas of work traditionally dominated by women (including homemaking). Another key issue was the sexual liberation of women. With the invention in the Sixties of the pill, for the first time in history there was a (fairly) reliable method of birth control that gave women control over their reproductive lives. Ties between sex and reproduction were loosened, as were traditional close ties between sex and marriage. Women were now potentially much more independent, economically and sexually, of men than they had been in the past; yet the ideal that guided Sixties' liberal feminism remained a masculine ideal. In demanding greater equality for women, based on prevailing masculine norms, this kind of feminism inevitably also involved, either implicitly or explicitly, a rejection of traditional feminine roles for women. The strong resistance to major changes in roles for women during this period, at both the personal and political levels, as well as at the underlying structural level, associated with Western metaphysics, that bridged the personal and political, required the adoption of a hard-line, Socratic, stance.

Although the feminism of the Sixties outwardly appeared to be associated with a Socratic perspective, appearances can be deceptive. In the Eighties, feminist standpoint theorists such as Sandra Harding, began to articulate a distinctively female (according to feminist standpoint theorists) dual perspective that combined Socratic and anti-Socratic elements or, translated into feminist terms, masculine and feminine elements. The acknowledgment of this dual perspective (that will be discussed in greater depth later in this work) was to have important implications for the eventual transition of many
academic feminists (and perhaps others) to a postmodern outlook. Since there were various factors that could have impeded female members of the Western academic Family from articulating such a perspective, had they then possessed such a perspective, in the Sixties, and even into the Seventies, it is conceivable that such a perspective existed, beneath the surface, among many, if not most, female members of the Western academic Family (and other Western females) in the Sixties—and even before this decade. Related factors could have impeded members of visible minorities and members of the working class from articulating comparable dual perspectives, had they possessed such perspectives, for an even longer period. (I am not aware of any specific work to date paralleling that of Sandra Harding that deals with the categories of race and social class, although I suspect that, by now, some such work has been done.) In contrast, even though he was not a member of what would normally be considered a "minority", yet probably largely because his higher status gave him greater freedom to do so, the White, male, and upper-class psychologist, Carl Jung, articulated a similar sort of perspective even before the Sixties. (Jung's relevant work also will be discussed in greater depth later in this work.)

Besides the fact that the vast majority of Sixties newcomers to the Western academic Family were Westerners, whose perspectives were bound to a Western metaphysical philosophical framework, two of the key factors that could have served to contain the underlying philosophical perspectives (or what appear to have been the underlying philosophical perspectives) of various Sixties' newcomers within prevailing academic norms (i.e., the Socratic or the anti-Socratic perspective, with the Socratic perspective generally favoured over the anti-Socratic perspective) are as follows. First, elaborating upon a point I made above concerning Sixties' academic feminists, the various newcomers to the Western academic Family during the decade of the Sixties were in a very vulnerable position. In order to obtain full inclusion in a realm from which, until recently, they had been excluded, they had to prove themselves "worthy"—based, to be
sure, upon prevailing standards. For a large proportion of these students, the sense of needing to prove themselves was likely to have been intensified by the fact that they were first-generation university students. Another probable contributing factor was that, during the Sixties, there was a heightened sense within society at large that universities were important institutions, and an associated increased status for university students. In their discussion of university students of the Sixties in Canada and the United States, Simpson and Phillips (1976) point out that, in these two countries, during the late Fifties and continuing into the Sixties, higher education was "symbolically redefined as more central and important to the goals of society" (ibid., p. 64). As these authors suggest, the orbiting of Sputnik by the Soviet Union was a critical turning point for the redefinition of higher education in North America. Given the especially high status of universities during this period, particularly those students from minority groups and who did not come from families in which there was a tradition of attending universities, were likely to feel quite awed by universities. They also were likely to relish their new high status (despite the strings that were attached to it), leading them to refrain from doing anything that might jeopardize it.

The increased status of universities and of the university student, in combination with the massification of higher education during the Sixties, had a somewhat different effect upon many of those students who were members of the most well-established group of university students during this period, namely those who were White, male, and upper class and, moreover, who were not first-generation university students. Many, if not most, of the leading student activists in North America during the Sixties seem to have fit this basic profile. As shall be demonstrated when I focus on "Leftist" student radicals of the Sixties, just as the backgrounds of these students closely resembled those of the academic Fathers, the underlying philosophical perspectives of even these students more closely resembled those of the academic Fathers than many of these students (and,
for that matter, many academic Fathers of the Sixties) probably would have cared to admit.

The main positive contribution of increased student enrollment, in and of itself, to postmodernism eventually gaining some acceptance within Western universities would seem to be that an increased number of students from minority groups, of one kind or another, did prove themselves during this period and, thereby, gained increased power and authority within the academy, and also within society at large, outside of universities. In subsequent decades, following in the footsteps of these trail blazers, other members of such groups, whose perspectives more significantly diverged from the perspectives of the academic Fathers and Uncles, were able to make their own marks within Western universities, and within society at large. In addition, to be sure, the perspectives of many of those Western university students and professors of the Sixties who remained part of the Western academic Family through the decades changed (or appear to have changed) with the times.

*Expanded Infrastructure*

During the Sixties and continuing into the early Seventies, the academic infrastructure was significantly expanded to accommodate increased student enrollment. By "academic infrastructure", I am referring to physical facilities, personnel (including professors, support staff, and various professional associations and regulatory bodies), and the rules and regulations that undergirded the expanded system.

The expansion during this period of physical facilities and personnel or, in other words, those components of the academic infrastructure that involved ongoing expenditures, could be seen as having made certain positive contributions to postmodernism eventually making some inroads in our universities. Once the tidal wave of baby boomers that hit our universities in the Sixties had subsided, it was necessary to maintain high student enrollments in order to sustain these components of the academic infrastructure—or, more to the point, to avoid closures and layoffs. Particularly in recent
years, as government funding for universities has declined, our universities in general have become increasingly dependent upon revenue from students; however, even back in the mid-to late-Seventies, various smaller, less prestigious, universities, and certain programs offered at a wide range of institutions whose popularity began to decline during this period (especially certain programs in the humanities), probably were beginning to feel under increased pressure to pull in students. Conceivably due at least in part to the need to maintain high student enrollments in order to sustain these components of the academic infrastructure, following the Sixties' surge our universities started to actively recruit students from increasingly diverse groups—including older students (extending in age as far as senior citizens, and also including mid-career students), and foreign students from increasingly diverse regions of the world (either for special exchange programs or for regular degree programs). These students were to bring increasingly diverse perspectives to the Western academic Family. On the other hand, in particular jurisdictions, where certain conditions have prevailed, the significant expansion of the academic infrastructure on the whole during this particular period appears to have significantly delayed the acceptance of postmodernism within universities relative to the acceptance of postmodernism within universities in other jurisdictions, and also relative to the acceptance of postmodernism in society at large. In Canada on the whole, the expansion of its universities in the Sixties was part of the major expansion of its entire system of higher education, including not only universities but also colleges and technical schools. As a relatively young and geographically expansive country, up to the Sixties not only had its universities been few and far between but also other forms of higher education were not well established. Thus, during the Sixties and early Seventies, as Canadian universities were undergoing an major expansion, critical decisions were being made, on a province-by-province basis since higher education in Canada is under provincial jurisdiction, concerning the relationship of universities and other forms of higher education, then also undergoing a
major expansion. In certain Canadian provinces, critical decisions in this regard made in the Sixties and early Seventies, that were entirely consistent with the spirit of the times, have left a legacy that has impeded postmodernism from making serious inroads within their systems of higher education on the whole, relative to systems of higher education in other Canadian provinces and also, so it would seem, relative to Canadian society in general.

In wealthier and more populous provinces of Canada that made especially heavy investments in their systems of higher education on the whole during the Sixties and early Seventies, in keeping with an ethos that apparently was not unique to these provinces during this period, systems of higher education emerged in which there was a strongly-defined hierarchical relationship between universities and other institutions of higher education, with universities clearly higher on the hierarchy than those institutions that offered applied, practical, training. For example, during this period, the province of Ontario, that was then riding high financially and that then was (and continues to be) Canada's most populous province, had both the wealth and the population base to undertake the construction not only of several new universities but also of several new institutions devoted to teaching practical, job-related, skills. Plenitude made it possible, and the philosophical and political ethos of the era made it reasonable, to have two entirely separate sets of institutions, universities and what are known in Ontario as Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology (or CAAT's), that operated entirely independently. Beginning during the period of major expansion in the Sixties and early Seventies, various vested interests become woven into the academic infrastructure in such systems, fortifying their dualistic and hierarchical structure—even as the philosophical framework that traditionally supported these systems came into question, and the social-class divisions that inhered to such systems came more sharply into focus.

In contrast, in the province of British Columbia, only one new university, Simon Fraser University, was constructed during this period. This brought British Columbia's
total number of universities to three where, apart from a small private institution with religious affiliations that gained university status in the interim, the total remained until the early Nineties. Even if British Columbia had wanted to develop a system closely akin to the Ontario system, which may well have been the case, its relatively low, relatively dispersed, population during the period in question would not seem to have warranted the expense involved in constructing additional institutions devoted exclusively to university programs. If only through default, because there were relatively few universities in British Columbia at the time and only limited expansion in this area was immediately forthcoming, the new community colleges that sprouted up across the province during this period were given a very broad mandate—to provide technical and applied training as well as academic courses equivalent to "lower-level" undergraduate university courses (i.e., courses offered in the first two years of a standard four-year degree program).

Subsequently, apparently due in large measure to decisions that were made back in the Sixties, British Columbia's universities proved to be relatively accommodating to postmodernism. Given the free flow of students between British Columbia's community colleges and its universities, that has been a feature of British Columbia's system of higher education for over twenty years, it has been relatively easy for British Columbia's universities to adjust to the breakdown of traditional divisions between theoretical and practical knowledge, or between "high-class" and "low-class" knowledge, associated with postmodernism—or, in effect, to the "de-class-ification" of Western academic knowledge. (This subject will be explored in greater depth in one of the latter chapters of this work.)

It recently has been suggested by the prominent Ontario social analysts, Richard Gwyn (a newspaper columnist with The Toronto Star) and Michael Adams (president of the Canadian polling firm, Environics), that Canadian society on the whole (including, presumably, Ontario society) has come to be distinguished by a distinctively postmodern outlook. If this is the case, and if discrepancies between provinces of the variety that I
have introduced above do exist, then it would be expected that, broadly speaking, at present, Canadian university students in general would find that there was a greater consistency between their own outlooks and the policies and practices of universities in some Canadian provinces than in others. Later in this work, I will be presenting evidence, including summaries of the views of Gwyn and Adams, which suggests that this is the case—and which further suggests that contemporary Canadian society on the whole differs markedly from contemporary American society on the whole with respect to its acceptance of postmodernism . . . or perhaps the difference is not so much in the acceptance of postmodernism but more in how postmodernism manifests itself in these two societies.

Since the major expansion of Western higher education beginning in the Sixties, an obvious example of those whose interests have become woven into the academic infrastructure (or infrastructures, taking into consideration differences between jurisdictions) is the many new professors hired during this period. The interests of this group have been so closely interwoven with the academic infrastructure(s) that they themselves could be seen as part of it. Given the high demand for university professors in the Sixties and early Seventies, a large proportion of professors hired during this period were relatively young, straight out of graduate school or, in some cases, still finishing up graduate degrees. (Mature students, in their thirties, or forties, or older yet, were still a rarity.) Of the many young professors hired during the major expansion of Western universities in the Sixties and early Seventies, a significant number had been active members of the student "Left" of the Sixties, and others positively identified with the "Left" even if they were not personally involved with student demonstrations and so on. As this cohort of professors has proceeded through the academic ranks, to the point where, at present, most of today's senior-level university professors and administrators are members of it, it has exerted a profound influence within Western universities. Its influence, both positive and negative, on the receptivity towards postmodernism within
our universities will be addressed in conjunction with my discussion in the latter portion of this chapter of the influence in this regard of the student "Left" of the Sixties.

Yet it is by no means only those who have been employed by universities through the decades, whose livelihoods have depended upon universities, who have had strong personal investments in universities and, more generally, in systems of higher education, as conceived in the Sixties. Many of those who passed through universities as students in the Sixties, and perhaps even well past the Sixties, seem to remain strongly attached to a Sixties' conception of the university. Yet the personal investments of those who in the Sixties were drawn to the lofty idea of the university, when the status of universities was at its highest, but who themselves never had the opportunity to attend university, and who have little familiarity with the significant changes that have occurred within our universities in recent decades, may in certain respects be even stronger.
Dear Dad,

If you and Mum hadn't enrolled in a special savings program when I was just a young kid in order to be able to help me with my university expenses if and when I was ready for university, I may never have started a B.A. all those years ago, let alone be working on a Ph.D. now. The money that you gave me then wasn't a great deal—about enough for books and tuition for the first year. (Unfortunately, that savings program didn't take into account the high rate of inflation from the time that you enrolled in the program to when I turned eighteen.) But, in symbolic terms, it was a weighty amount indeed. Because you had scraped together that money for me, your oldest child, to attend university, I felt a heavy responsibility to attend—even though, when I turned eighteen, you gave me the money and said I could use it for whatever purposes I wanted. It so happens that I didn't use specifically that money for university. I used it to help finance six months of travel in Europe. But as soon as I got back from my travels, I started working like crazy (two waitress jobs, plus teaching kids' puppetry on Saturdays, all at once) to recoup my losses and raise additional funds so that I would be able to start university the following September.

On the one hand, I'm very grateful to you for providing me with that early financial assistance, that kick started my university education. But, on the other hand, the price that both of us have had to pay over the years in terms of our relationship has been much steeper than probably either of us could have imagined when I handed over my cheque for my tuition for my first year of university. Initially, your feelings towards me attending university seem to have been entirely positive. At least you didn't show any negative feelings about it back then. But, as time went on, your ambivalence towards universities, and towards me as a university student, that you shared with your parents, especially Gran (you father passed away before I began university), became very clear.
As an early example, in which Gran was directly involved, I still clearly recall that incident when you took us kids to visit Gran for a weekend the summer after I had finished my first year at U.B.C. I was sitting out in the sun reading a novel—just light summer reading. She walked past me and, as she was doing so, she commented, loud enough so that everyone else, including you, could hear, "Ya readin' Spinoza again?" Everyone laughed heartily, including you, at my expense. It was strange that you should have taken Gran's side, because you, yourself, were a big reader of novels. Gran was a big reader, too, back when her eyesight was good enough for it, although she seemed to read mostly books about politics. I never have, nor will I ever, read any of Spinoza's work, although, since that time, I have read the work of many other philosophers, out of curiosity—and many, many, other novels.

As another early example, in which Gran wasn't directly involved and in which you took a more active role, about a year later, you had taken us kids out to Smallville, where we used to live, for a Sunday drive. We drove past a house that you had helped your old friend Ted build. You met him through the community theatre group in Smallville. Ted was younger than you, but you both came from working-class backgrounds and both had an interest in theatre, and he became one of your good pals. When he got married and decided to build a house for him and his new wife, he turned to you for assistance. (You were the one who designed and supervised construction of all the sets for your theatre group.) You began by reminiscing about the good times that you'd shared with Ted. But then your mood changed and you started to talk about how, in his mid-twenties, Ted decided to go to university, and had ended up becoming one of Them, which put an end to your friendship with him. There I was myself a university student, and you were talking about how people who attended university were Them, and not Us. Had I, too, become one of Them? But, at the same time, a part of you seemed to admire Ted for going to university and for going on to become a high-school teacher—and perhaps also me.

Such examples could suggest simply that you (and Gran) were jealous of people who had the opportunity to attend university. Thinking of you in particular.
although you never finished high school, when you were a young kid, you were an exceptionally good student. Defying conventional expectations about the academic achievement of children from the working class, when you were a young kid, you were even put ahead a couple of years. (When you eventually quit high school before graduating, you were only fifteen, and had to lie about your age to get your first job.) The reverend of our church, who of course had attended university himself, even told you once that you had the intellectual capacity to be a university professor—and you didn’t refrain from telling this story to others. You’d also mentioned on a few occasions that you’d always wished that you’d become a teacher (the profession that Ted entered), but you had to settle for teaching your own kids.

I remember, back when I was helping Uncle Peter with his research about IQ’s, you sat me down and taught me about nature versus nurture. You said you thought intelligence involved mostly nurture, although nature seemed to be involved too. (You never actually questioned the concept of "intelligence", however.) You also were teaching us, albeit indirectly, from your refusal to take that test—although it didn’t stop me from administering the test to other family members. (I was very young.) Even though you were from a working-class background and had never finished high school, I doubt very much that you refused to take the test because you were scared that you wouldn’t do well enough on it. (If you were scared at all about how well you would do on the test, it seems more likely that you were scared of doing too well—better than working-class males were supposed to do on such tests.) It was probably mainly because you didn’t want to be manipulated by that pompous know-it-all—or have your children manipulated by him—that you refused to take the test. Was it you who came up with the idea that because Danielle was so young, and was upset that her drawing of a man was less sophisticated than the drawings done by her older siblings, that she should be allowed to submit for the draw-a-man portion of her IQ test a tracing of Fred Flintstone? If it wasn’t, it should have been. We all had a good laugh over what Uncle Peter thought of that drawing.

But, getting back to what I was saying earlier, more than jealousy seems to have
been involved there. You (and Gran) seem to have been deeply suspicious of the social-class biases of our universities, of which your working-class background apparently had made you highly sensitive. While you apparently had come to believe, like most people in the Sixties, that universities were institutions worthy of great respect, you apparently continued to suspect that universities were designed for the middle-class (or upper-class) and excluded a working-class perspective. As I see it, such a suspicion was entirely justified, up to and including the Sixties; however, since then, beginning around the time that I began university, our universities have changed considerably—or at least the attitudes towards universities of most university students of recent decades appear to be quite different than those of their predecessors.

I didn't begin university until well into the Seventies. When the Berkeley Free Speech movement was in progress. I was only in Grade 4. By the time that I began university, due to the massive expansion of higher education in the Sixties and early-Seventies, university degrees were commonplace. Having a university degree was just about as common as having finished high school back when you were the age that I was then. Thus, many of us who entered university in the Seventies seem to have done so at least as much to ensure that we were employable in a job market in which more and more jobs required at least a B.A. as for any other reason.

Also, various other significant changes had occurred within Western society as a whole in the period leading up to when I began university, that were likely to have resulted in those of us who entered university in the Seventies possessing a different attitude towards universities than that possessed by our predecessors. This may have been true to a greater extent among those of us who took some time out between high school and university, as I did myself, than among those who went straight from high school to university.

Did you ever read the bestseller by the American, Alvin Toffler, Future Shock, first published in 1970? Even though you tended to prefer fiction to non-fiction, I suspect that you did read it, or at least heard about it. In this
book. Toffler addressed such changes. As you may recall, Toffler's basic argument in *Future Shock* is that the accelerated rate of change that he observed in Western society in the period leading up to the time he wrote this book had resulted in a profound change of outlook. In Toffler's own words:

> We have in our time released a totally new social force—a stream of change so accelerated that it influences our sense of time, revolutionizes the tempo of daily life, and affects the very way we "feel" the world around us. We no longer "feel" life as men did in the past. And this is the ultimate difference, the distinction that separates the truly contemporary man from all others. For this acceleration lies behind the impermanence—the transience—that penetrates and tinctures our consciousness, radically affecting the way we relate to other people, to things, and to the entire universe of ideas, art and values. (1970, p. 17)

From my present perspective, the "changed consciousness" to which Toffler refers in this quotation seems strongly reminiscent of the a shift—or at least the beginning of a shift—from a Western metaphysical philosophical outlook to a postmodern outlook. At least many of us who began university in the Seventies, like many others within Western society at that time, seem to have moved beyond Western metaphysics, to at least some extent.

Of direct relevance to education, according to Toffler, our increasingly transient relationships with various "images of reality" (ibid., p. 155), as he put it, had a profound effect upon our entire knowledge system. To quote Toffler once more:

> The entire knowledge system in society is undergoing violent upheaval. The very concepts and codes in terms of which we think are turning over at a furious and accelerating pace. We are increasing the rate at which we must form and forget our images of reality. (ibid.)

Within such a context, books, traditionally the very backbone of the academy, that were studied for the "truth" that they presumably contained, lose much of their former stature. As Toffler states:

> The incredible expansion of knowledge implies that each book (alas, this one included) contains a progressively smaller fraction of all that is known. The book thus approaches the transience of the monthly magazine. Indeed, many books are no more than "one-shot" magazines. . . . We are creating and using up ideas and images at a faster and faster pace. Knowledge, like people, places, things and organizational forms, is becoming disposable. (ibid., pp. 161-162)
Future Shock made a very strong impression on me when I first read it. Owing at least as much to the circumstances under which I first read it as to the book itself. In my trek through Europe before beginning university, I got as far as Greece. It was when I was staying in a pensione (a step above the usual youth hostel fare) in the heart of Athens that I first read Future Shock, that had been left behind by a fellow traveler. From the roof of the pensione, where there were several old wooden deck chairs for the use of guests and where I read most of this book, there was a spectacular view of the Acropolis, where Socrates and Plato had once stood. I doubt that there could have been a more fitting place to read Future Shock. Furthermore, I doubt that there could have been a more fitting preparation for university for a young person entering university at the dawn of the postmodern era than reading Future Shock in this setting. While the entire knowledge system of Western society outside of universities was then undergoing, as Toffler had put it, "violent upheaval", as those university students entering our universities in the Seventies were to learn, inside our universities, the Acropolis (or what it represented in philosophical terms) still stood tall. Those of us who entered university in the Seventies, who held no strong vested interests in the past and who were making an investment for our future, read the Acropolis against a backdrop of Future Shock, that as the decades proceeded, was increasingly upon us.

I haven't done a very good job in the past of communicating to you what my experiences as a university student at the dawn of the postmodern era have actually been like. It was hard to express to you what these experiences have been like because I recognized that, by attending university, in certain respects I was fulfilling your dream, bred in the Sixties, of attending university yourself, and I didn't want to dash that dream. In addition, you had helped me financially when I was beginning an undergraduate degree (there has been further financial assistance since then), and I didn't want to seem ungrateful. Also, there have been some less altruistic reasons. I acknowledge that I sometimes did benefit from you (and others) putting universities, and university students, on a pedestal, even though I didn't see universities, or myself, in this manner. But it seems that.
until I do clear this up with you, there will always be a good measure of distrust mixed in with your love for me, following the pattern of your love/hate relationship with universities—and I will always feel a lingering resentment for being seen by you as someone other than who I know myself to be.

I remember the good old days, hanging out with you at the theatre in Smallville, helping you to build sets, or watching rehearsals, for all those shows, and I wish that we could still have the kind of relationship that we had back then.

Love,

Pam
As the Twig Bent, so Bent the Tree (but Nothing Broke): Impact of the Rise of the Sixties' Student Counterculture on the Acceptance of Postmodernism within Western Universities

The Rise of the Sixties' Student Counterculture in Retrospect

If "Leftist" student activists of the Sixties had possessed the perspective of members of the working class, as opposed to simply identifying with what they conceived to be this perspective, the rise of the Sixties' student "Left" may very well have set the wheels in motion back in the late Sixties for the acceptance of postmodernism within Western universities. Not only did the "Leftism" of student activists of the Sixties not actually represent the perspective of members of the working class but also, beneath the surface, the branch of the many-branched tree associated with Western metaphysics upon which this "Leftism", in even its most high-sounding, serious, forms, was centred apparently was not that of social class but, rather, was a far less weighty branch of this tree essentially associated with age, where youth was juxtaposed with maturity. The high level of activity on this small offshoot had the effect of shaking up the entire tree, so to speak. All the same, it did not pose a serious threat to Western metaphysics.

A key characteristic of Western university students of the Sixties in general that is commonly overlooked in the accounts of events on Western university campuses during the Sixties of those who formerly numbered among these students is that, unlike today, the vast majority of these students were very young and, inevitably, inexperienced in the ways of the world. Given the average age of these students, and the necessarily greater average age of university professors of the day, and given the various common features of Sixties' university students and professors (or the various common branches associated with their positions within the Western philosophical framework), it is not condescending to suggest that these students, in general, filled the roles of children, or of Sons and

---

4Given the hiring boom of the Sixties, the average age of professors and administrators of the Sixties was likely to have been less than it ever had been, and less than it ever would be again. Even so, the students of this era were, on average, very young.
Daughters, within the Western academic Family of the Sixties, while professors of the day filled parental roles, or roles very similar to parental roles. Within this Family, that up to and including the Sixties was highly patriarchal, Fathers and Uncles predominated over Mothers and Aunts (the female counterparts of Uncles, as previously defined), both numerically and in terms of the power they wielded. Even though, on a formal level, the concept of *in loco parentis*, that traditionally had guided relationships between university students and professors, was widely challenged through the Sixties, on an informal level, inevitably, parent-child relationships persisted.

Taking into account the age factor and resulting Familial roles, and some of the distinguishing characteristics of members of the Sixties' student "Left" (including characteristics that these students shared with other students of this era), and the fact that the student uprisings of the Sixties occurred against a backdrop of major expansion of Western universities, it seems reasonable to view the rise of the Sixties' student "Left" as consisting, at bottom, of generation conflict between mostly Fathers and Sons, and certain Daughters who possessed many of the characteristics of these Sons, within an otherwise close-knit Western academic Family. More specifically, it may be seen as an attempt by the Sons, and certain Daughters, to ascend to more responsible, adult, roles within this Family, to which they felt that they were entitled, yet that circumstances denied them.

Before I put together the various pieces of this puzzle, I am going to summarize some of the key characteristics especially of members of the Sixties' student "Left", as viewed by those who possessed greater first-hand knowledge than myself of the goings on in our universities in the Sixties—albeit as viewed by me, from a Nineties' perspective.
Special Characteristics of Sixties' "Leftist" University Students

Family backgrounds

Regarding the family backgrounds of "Leftist" university students of the Sixties, various views have been put forward. Even in a single work by a single author, such as *The Closing of the American Mind* by Allan Bloom (1987), various views may be found.

Bloom's mixed views in this regard put forward in *The Closing of the American Mind* provide a good introduction to the collective division concerning the family backgrounds of these students among commentators on the Sixties (who individually tend to be more consistent than was Bloom). In addition, given that Bloom wrote this book some time after the Sixties, they may be seen as illustrating certain problems associated with talking about the past from a more recent perspective, especially during a period of significant political and philosophical change, that are relevant to this work as a whole. For both of these reasons, this section will commence with a relatively lengthy discussion of Bloom's mixed views, including some basic background information about Bloom.

As those of my readers who have read *The Closing of the American Mind*, or are otherwise familiar with Bloom, will be aware, Allan Bloom was not only a philosophical descendant of Socrates but also had devoted much of his academic career, going back at least to the Sixties, to studying and teaching Plato's works. (As such, Bloom provides a superlative example of a philosophical descendant of Socrates.) Throughout *The Closing of the American Mind*, Bloom refers extensively especially to Plato's *Republic*. In keeping with a Socratic outlook, throughout this book, Bloom's interpretation of this dialogue is (at least outwardly) bound to a Western metaphysical philosophical tradition. Bloom does not clearly distinguish between the perspectives of Plato and Socrates and, furthermore, does not distinguish at all between his own outlook as a 20th Century Western philosopher steeped in a Western metaphysical philosophical tradition and the perspective of Plato/Socrates. Towards the end of this book, Bloom offers the following reason for having drawn so heavily upon this dialogue: "Throughout this book I have
referred to Plato's *Republic*, which is for me *the* book on education, because it really explains to me what I experience as a man and as a teacher" (ibid., p. 381). Although this probably was the case for Bloom back in the Sixties, it may not have been the case by the time that Bloom was writing *The Closing of the American Mind*. It seems possible that Bloom drew so heavily upon Plato's *Republic* in *The Closing of the American Mind* as a way of reviewing his own past scholarship, and perhaps even his life in general, as the ground upon which he had formerly stood was being swept away.

When considering Bloom's views concerning events on American university campuses during the Sixties put forward in *The Closing of the American Mind*, it would seem important to keep in mind that Bloom was still a relatively young man when these events transpired, probably not much older than most of his students, yet this book was written quite some time later, when Bloom was nearing retirement age. Writing about the "Sixties" from a considerably later vantage point, Bloom appears to be telling two distinct stories about this decade. One of these stories would seem to be generally consistent with the views of an academic Father of the Sixties, situated in the Sixties. The other story that Bloom tells would seem to be strongly coloured by events that transpired on American university campuses subsequent to the Sixties, that Bloom nevertheless associated with the Sixties, a decade that seems to have taken on great symbolic value for many of those who experienced academic life during this period. To further complicate matters, although Bloom devoted portions of *The Closing of the American Mind* specifically to the Sixties (or "Sixties"), the general argument that Bloom put forward in *The Closing of the American Mind* is not confined to this decade. It covers a period beginning in the Sixties and continuing up to the time that he wrote this book, presumably in the mid-Eighties. Bloom sometimes didn't make it clear as to what period he was referring—although, at several such junctures, this probably was not clear even to him.

In overall terms, in *The Closing of the American Mind*, Bloom presents an extremely unflattering portrait of "Leftist" American university students of the "Sixties",

*Class Encounters of the Third Kind*
and of their family backgrounds. Bloom argues at some length that "Leftist" students from the Sixties (and subsequent decades) were seriously ill-effects by the breakdown of the American family, presumably beginning in the Sixties. Bloom suggests that it is mothers, in particular, who are to blame for this breakdown, especially the increased number of mothers who worked outside the home. (Incidentally, also in *The Closing of the American Mind*, Bloom states his approval of "women" pursuing university educations, including in areas that would prepare them for demanding careers outside the home, such as medicine. Presumably, he is referring here, like Socrates, only to certain women.)

Closely interwoven with Bloom's argument concerning the breakdown of the American family and its supposed ill-effects on students, Bloom decries the loss of religion in American life, as in the following quotation:

> There is nothing left of the reverence toward the father as the symbol of the divine on earth, the unquestioned bearer of authority. Rather, sons and daughters will calculate what they have benefited from their parents' care, which prepared them for the freedom they enjoy, and they will be grateful, although they have no reciprocal duty . . . (ibid., p. 114)

On the surface, Bloom is referring here (and in other similar passages) only to the actual families within which the university students in question were raised. Yet it may be inferred that the "family" under consideration here is as much the Western academic Family as these actual families, and that the "father" under consideration here, who Bloom suggests ought to be revered as "the symbol of the divine on earth", is at least as much Bloom himself, in his capacity of academic Father, as any regular father.

This story that Bloom tells about the "Sixties" seems to have been heavily influenced by events on Western university campuses, and probably also within American society in general, subsequent to the Sixties—and by parallel changes in Bloom's own outlook subsequent to this period. By the mid-Eighties, the rise of a particular kind of feminism associated with a high valorization of femininity, probably as well as, by that time, the rise of "non-Western culture" (a particularly Western concept),
on our university campuses, in addition to factors within the broad society, posed a much more serious threat to Bloom's paternal authority within the Western academic family— and more—than any events that transpired in the Sixties. By this time, since Bloom's starting point within the Western metaphysical philosophical framework had been a Socratic, masculine-dominant, position, it is probable that at least a part of Bloom had ventured beyond the Western metaphysical philosophical context into postmodern terrain. This part of Bloom would have been able to see that this kind of feminism (in addition to related factors) posed a serious threat to Western metaphysical philosophy on the whole—something that probably had not yet occurred to many of Bloom's harsh critics, whose starting point in the transition to postmodernism had been an anti-Socratic, or "Leftist", position. (I shall be addressing in depth discrepancies of this nature in the following chapter.) It seems likely that Bloom's fears in this regard provided him with the impetus to lash out at this juncture at American university students from the Sixties onward, in addition to their families (especially their mothers)—when the real target may actually have been an aspect of himself, very much situated in the Eighties.

In contrast, Bloom sometimes presents a much more favourable view of American university students of the Sixties—and, indirectly, of their family backgrounds. Bloom suggests at one point that, despite their proclamations of Leftist ideals, these students were driven by elitist aspirations to gain power for themselves, which Bloom fully condones. Bloom suggests that American student activists of the Sixties possessed a close kinship with the many young men of Plato's dialogues who, according to Bloom, "passionately desire political glory and believe that they have the talent to rule" (ibid., p. 329). It may be inferred that Bloom also recognized a close kinship between these students and himself, who also had once been a young follower Socrates—at least when he was viewing Sixties student activists from his Sixties' perspective (or what remained of this perspective at the time that Bloom was writing *The Closing of the American Mind*).
To be sure, from even this vantage, Bloom sees aspects of the behaviour of Sixties' "Leftist" activists as being very distressing, referring to this behaviour as "irrational" (a common put-down by "rational" Socratics). Yet, as Bloom quite sympathetically suggests here, it was the youthful naiveté of these students that was at the root of their "irrationality", presumably leading them to accept what Bloom maintained was the central fallacy of modern democracy, namely that the rule of the many is more just than the rule of a exclusive elite (ibid., p. 330). (Whether or not they actually did accept this is another matter.) At this point in his argument, Bloom does not lay any blame for the "irrational" behaviour of these students on their family backgrounds.

Another view of the family backgrounds of "Leftist" students of the Sixties, that is not included in Bloom's multi-faceted argument, is that these students came from overly authoritarian family backgrounds and, as a result, harboured hostility towards authority figures, such as university professors, and the institutions they represented. According to Metzger (1970), who takes exception to this view, this view was quite popular in the Sixties. Metzger presents a very different view of the families of these students, as follows.

[The] families of student radicals ... are generally not repressive or authoritarian, but permissive and democratic, and exhibit, rather than caesuras, a great deal of intergenerational continuity, especially in the sphere of values and beliefs. (1970, p. 574)

Thinking especially of leaders of the Sixties' student "Left", since these students possessed leadership abilities that would have been more likely to develop in environments where they were at liberty to exert a fair amount of initiative and, moreover, where they received a fair amount of support for exerting some initiative, this basic view seems most reasonable.

Metzger goes on to say that, it would be erroneous to assume, as have some commentators on the Sixties who have subscribed to the view that these students came from highly authoritarian backgrounds, that universities of the Sixties served as "a stage for the playing out of family psychodramas" (ibid.): however, it seems that, even if, as
Metzger suggests, these students did come from "permissive and democratic" (see above) backgrounds, a certain transference of family dynamics may have been in operation. As Metzger fails to consider, assuming that the leaders of the student movement in North America did come from supportive family backgrounds, it may have been largely because these students could not find within the Western academic Family of the Sixties the kind of support, and sense of membership, to which they were accustomed within their own families, and to which they felt that they were entitled, that they rebelled.

*High intellectualism/Attraction to larger schools*

Anecdotal evidence, as well as statistical studies that address this subject, support the idea that there was a strong correlation between high intellectualism, by which I essentially mean high academic achievement, and "Leftist" student activism of the Sixties.

Based on my own encounters with Canadian university professors beginning in the mid-Seventies, a significant number were university students in the Sixties, identified with the "Left" when I met them, and presumably also did so in the Sixties. An article published last year in *University Affairs*, a publication of the Association of University and Colleges of Canada, concerning Sixties' student radicalism in Canada provides some examples of former Canadian student activists who went on to become prominent Canadian academics (as well as other examples of those who gained prominence in politics, including the union movement) (Stoffman, 1997). Bruno Bettelheim, in his article to which I earlier referred, offers a related, double-edged, view, noting that those leaders of the student "Left" who he had known personally "might be categorized as having their intellectual abilities developed very highly at much too early an age, at the expense of their emotional development" (1969, p. 513). (Bettelheim assumes here a division between intellect and emotion consistent with being situated within a Western metaphysical philosophical framework.)
Statistical evidence in this regard tends to be confounded with other factors, but may be interpreted as pointing in the same direction. Various studies have reported that those universities that experienced the most serious disruptions in the Sixties were universities that attracted academically high-achieving students and that were large institutions (e.g., Blau & Slaughter, 1971; Flacks, 1967; Hodgkinson, 1970; and Scott & El-Assal, 1969). (With respect to the size factor at least, a Canadian exception that comes immediately to mind is Simon Fraser University.) As Blau and Slaughter (1971) point out, since various distinctive features of larger universities that attract more intellectual students, over and above the high intellectualism of their student bodies, conceivably contributed to student radicalism at such institutions, it is difficult to clearly separate the contributions of high intellectualism and size of institution. For example, as these authors point out, such universities tend to be located in, or near to, large urban centres. These universities therefore would have been likely to attract a disproportionate number of students looking for excitement, not necessarily only of the intellectual and cultural varieties.

A related point, that these authors fail to address, is that such universities also tend to be located near major media outlets. In the Sixties, this would have included outlets for the then relatively new medium of television, that seems to have played a considerable role in Sixties' student activism. As noted by Allan Bloom in *The Closing of the American Mind*, "this was the first revolution made for T.V. . . . All the world had become a stage, and [the student activists] were playing leads" (ibid., p. 328). An awareness among students at larger universities located near major media outlets, especially television stations, that their more dramatic protests might be covered by the media may have contributed to the intensity, and possibly also the frequency, of demonstrations at such schools—as well as some smaller schools. (Disruptions at S.F.U., a relatively small school, yet close to an urban centre, received significant television coverage, as well as other media coverage.) Perhaps students situated in the Sixties didn't
see their demonstrations in quite the "theatrical" manner that Bloom, and I, came to see them from later perspective; however, some of them did seem to have quite a bit of "media savvy", even back then. (An especially good example is the American student activist, Jerry Rubin.)

Another possible confounding factor that Blau and Slaughter do acknowledge is that at larger universities, in general, students would have been likely to experience a greater sense of alienation than at smaller universities in general. For example, at larger universities, classes would have been larger than at smaller universities, especially at the undergraduate level. (This is still commonly the case.) Lending credence to this point, as Blau and Slaughter point out, there were fewer demonstrations at universities, both large and small, where students were allowed to evaluate faculty (ibid., p. 482). All the same, according to these authors, larger schools that were not associated with high intellectualism tended not to experience as much disruption as those that were both large and that were associated with high intellectualism. Conceivably, as I shall explore in the concluding section of this chapter, due to factors associated with their high intellectualism, these students reacted even more strongly to the greater alienation associated with larger universities in general than did students who were less intellectually inclined.

As a final point here, as Blau and Slaughter also mention, not only were leaders of the Sixties' student "Left" apparently high achievers academically but also the majority of students active in the student "Left" of the Sixties apparently were enrolled in more "intellectual" areas of study, in the humanities and social sciences, as opposed to more practical areas of study, in the natural sciences and professional programs, that more directly prepared students for careers, other than strictly academic careers.

**Gender**

In keeping with the pattern that then prevailed throughout Western society, including at the domestic level and at the faculty level within universities, the majority of
leaders of the Sixties' student "Left" were male. However, in the late Sixties, student
feminist organizations emerged that offered opportunities for certain academic Daughters
of the Sixties to assume leadership roles.

* A Case of Generation Conflict between Academic Fathers and Sons (and those
  Daughters who were like these Sons)*

As suggested by the above summary of key characteristics of "Leftist" student
activists of the Sixties, in combination with characteristics that these students shared with
other university students of the Sixties that I outlined at the beginning of this chapter,
these student activists seem to have had more in common with the academic Fathers of
the Sixties than they probably would have cared to admit. The majority of these students,
like the majority of their professors, were male, White, from relatively high-income and
probably relatively supportive families, intellectually inclined and, to be sure,
philosophically situated within a Western metaphysical philosophical framework. A key
difference between these students and their professors was age and, related to the age
difference, the fact that these students had not yet secured for themselves adult roles
within society whereas their professors had done so. Within the academic community in
particular, that for many of these students would have been their first significant exposure
to society outside of their home environments, these students were mere children. What
under normal circumstances would have been an awkward transition from youth to
maturity seems to have been made all the more difficult for these students by a number of
factors.

A factor I haven't previously addressed, that seems to deserve some mention here,
is that relative to the age at which the parents and grandparents of the majority of Sixties'
university students assumed adult roles and responsibilities, the onset of adulthood for
Sixties' university students in general was considerably delayed. The major expansion of
higher education in the West in the Sixties had resulted in a significant increase in the
average years of formal education of this generation of young people relative to the
average years of formal education for preceding generations. Bruno Bettelheim, in his
previously-cited paper, suggested that this increase in average years of formal education,
in and of itself, contributed to a prolonged adolescence for Sixties' university students
and, in turn, that this prolonged adolescence was at the root of Sixties' student unrest. He
further suggested that a similar mechanism was at the root of the student unrest in
Germany in the Thirties. According to Bettelheim, in both cases, students rebelled against
"the fact that society keeps the next generation too long dependent in terms of mature
responsibility and striving for independence" (1969, p. 512). Accounting for how the
same basic adolescent rebellion could have come to be associated, in one instance, with
the Left (Bettelheim didn't use quotation marks) and, in another instance, with the Right,
he further stated:

The mainspring of their action is their wish to prove themselves strong,
rather than any particular political conviction, which is superimposed on
their self-doubt and hatred of a society that they feel left them out in the
cold. (ibid., p. 513)

Bettelheim's basic argument here seems to have some merit, although he omits some
important points.

First, from Nineties' perspective, it is clear that these students did not rebel due
simply to having reached adulthood in physical terms, as Bettelheim suggests, in
combination with adult roles being denied to them. Today's university students are, on
average, older than university student in the Sixties, yet today's university students tend to
be less rebellious than their Sixties' counterparts. Comparison with preceding generations
would seem to have contributed at least as much to the "prolonged adolescence" (in the
minds of these students and/or the minds of observers such as Bettelheim) as increased
years of formal education.

Not only did these university students apparently expect to assume adult roles and
responsibilities at a relatively young age but also, in the Sixties, the expectations about
what university students might achieve, over and above simply achieving adulthood, were
great. As earlier discussed, in the Sixties, the status of universities, and of university students, was at an all time high. In keeping with the Enlightenment narrative, these students were seen as, and apparently saw themselves as, heroes of knowledge. Although expectations were great for the entire Sixties' generation of university students, expectations would seem to have been especially great for those students who most closely fit the profile of dominant members of society as a whole during this period, namely those who were White, male, members of the upper-class (as defined in this work), and who were held in high regard by their parents.

Bettelheim also failed to take into consideration that factors in addition to increased years of formal education may have prevented university students of the Sixties from assuming adult roles and, for the more ambitious, leadership roles within society, as early as they anticipated. One of these factors was the relative affluence of the West during the Sixties—a factor that seems to have significantly contributed to the youth movement in general, including the hippie movement, of this decade. Thinking of university students in particular, as earlier discussed, for university students who did not receive adequate financial support to attend university from their parents, generous government financial assistance for students was then available. Unlike many of today's university students, of all ages, who hold down part-time, or even full-time, jobs while attending university, the majority of university students of the Sixties attended university on a full-time basis. Not only were these students denied a sense of being full adults while they were students through being financially dependent upon their parents, government funding agencies, and so on, but also they were denied roles within the community at large associated with employment that could have provided them with a clear sense of being members, of any rank, in this community.

Another probable contributing factor was certain conditions within universities themselves associated with the major expansion of higher education in the West in the
Sixties. Levitt (1979) quotes a former German student activist of the Sixties describing the situation encountered by the Sixties' cohort of university students as follows:

While more children get the chance to go to the institutions the latter must necessarily change and they lost much traditional middle-class (bürgerliche) room for maneuvering, i.e., that in an advanced seminar of seven students meeting over tea with a professor at his home, all manner of things could be discussed. This could not occur in large seminars where future prospects at the same time were called into question (even though not in today's conscious manner). (quoted in Levitt, 1979, p. 647)

Students were likely to experience the frustration described by this former student activist most keenly at universities that were larger and that did not provide opportunities for students to have input on issues that affected them as students. At such universities, those students whose backgrounds most inclined them to believe that they belonged in the inner circle, sipping tea with professors, yet who were relegated to outsider status, mere juvenile roles, were likely to feel especially frustrated. It is understandable, therefore, that universities that were larger, that did not provide adequate opportunities for student input, and that tended to attract more intellectually-inclined students, should have experienced the most severe disruptions during this tumultuous period in the history of Western universities. Also, perhaps it was, at least in part, because students studying in areas that did not directly prepare them for careers, other than as academics, would have felt their outsider status more profoundly than those who were studying in more career-oriented areas that students in the humanities and social sciences were more strongly represented among student activists of the Sixties than students in the natural sciences and professional programs.

From within a Western metaphysical philosophical framework, it might be assumed that it was due to students who were highly intellectual being inherently "smarter" than other students that they came to assume leadership roles within the Sixties' student "Left". However, once we abandon the notion of absolute "truth", other interpretations become available. Perhaps, due to various commonalities between these students and those who controlled intellectual discourses, including university professors
of the day, these students were especially well-equipped in terms of the background knowledge they possessed, and their orientation towards this knowledge, to excel in intellectual endeavours. These students weren't necessarily especially "smart". Yet some of them were undoubtedly very streetwise (especially considering their age). They recognized how, within the academic context of the Sixties, in which a major expansion had resulted in many students being denied the recognition that they felt they deserved, and the possibility of gracefully making the transition from youth to adulthood when they expected, they might gain greater recognition, and exert their budding manhood.

Within this context, the adoption by these students of a "Leftist" stance was of strategic advantage in undermining, in the hope of supplanting, the prevailing ruling elite. At that time, not only within our universities, but also within North America and Europe in general, this ruling elite happened to be associated mainly with the Right (which is to say, they favoured capitalism over communism and/or socialism). What seems to have been essentially an effort on the part of younger members of the Western academic Family to wrest greater power from older members of this Family came to be portrayed by many of the younger members in particular as a struggle between the Left and the Right. The "Leftism" of these students was not associated with the perspective of the working class—even though, to be sure, certain members of the Sixties' student "Left" came from working-class backgrounds. (Where students who came from working-class backgrounds were concerned, there seem to have been certain parallels between their "Leftism" and the kind of feminism that prevailed during the Sixties, that was not necessarily associated with the perspective of women.) Nor did this "Leftism" generally seem to involve a heartfelt identification with the working class. As noted by Marty, "That the radicals were a counter-elite is apparent from their failure, despite numerous programmatic attempts, to link up with workers, blacks, or other proletariat" (1974, p. 105). Many leaders of the Sixties' student "Left" seem to have identified more with charismatic leaders of Leftist movements in distant lands, of which they generally seem
to have had little personal familiarity, than with local workers. To be blunt, being a "Leftist" radical, in pursuit of social justice, seemed a whole lot more impressive than being a "Kid", in pursuit of being an adult.

Some older members of the Western academic Family clearly didn't buy into the interpretation of these students. As I already have discussed here, two academic Fathers of the Sixties, Allan Bloom and Bruno Bettelheim, both of whom, in the Sixties, viewed the Sixties' student uprisings from a Socratic, or Right-wing (pertaining to a wide range of issues), perspective, recognized that the youthfulness of these students played a more significant role in their "Leftism" than they cared to admit. It is interesting to also consider the views concerning these students of the "Leftist" Uncle, the late Canadian historian, George Woodcock. In a paper he wrote in the late Sixties about student activism in Canada (Woodcock, 1969), Woodcock attempted to put considerable distance between himself and these students, suggesting that, in general, the "Leftism" of these students wasn't the "real" thing—as his presumably was. The following quotation provides a good example.

[Recent events at Canadian universities] have shown that in Canada we are not behind the rest of the world in a type of radical activism which pretends to be libertarian but is in action authoritarian and in prospect totalitarian. Because this development has appeared on the "left" and among the young, we have been reluctant to recognize its true character, and especially its disturbing resemblances to the formation of fascism. (1969, p. 58)

Woodcock does acknowledge that, among these students, "some are libertarian socialists more or less in the Orwellian tradition" (ibid., p. 60), as he was himself—but only "some". At no point in this paper does Woodcock directly suggest that any of the student "Leftists" of the Sixties were younger versions of himself, perhaps employing tactics very similar to those he employed when he was a youth to gain entry to the inner circle. Yet he seems to know these students all too well when he states, "The authoritarian student radical is an elitist, believing that he alone bears the truth needed by other students (and by the workers as well)" (ibid., p. 61).
Woodcock further condemns students activists of the Sixties for, according to Woodcock, misunderstanding universities to be "places of propaganda" (ibid., p. 60) as opposed to "places of disinterested scholarship" (ibid.). Woodcock apparently believed that one could be a "Leftist" without disturbing the academic status quo. Yet this was a luxury that was available only to those who already had been accepted into the inner circle, who possessed a close kinship with the academic Fathers, whether or not they cared to admit it. Those who were members of groups that, in the Sixties, were excluded from this inner circle, yet who wanted to be included, such as many of the more ambitious students who were part of the greatly expanded Western academic Family of the Sixties, did not have this luxury.

Even though the "Leftism" of student activists of the Sixties was not associated with the perspective of members of the working class, and even though, in general, it even fell short of being the kind of intellectual "Leftism" that academic Uncles of the Sixties, such as George Woodcock, favoured, it so happens that "Leftist" student activists of the Sixties did accomplish a great deal in areas that directly affected them. As some examples, students fought for, and gained, greater student participation in the governance of universities. Students living in university residences fought for, and gained, greater freedom from "parental" authority. In the area of course requirements, students demanded that certain course requirements be dropped and that new courses, dealing with issues that they saw as being more socially-relevant, be added to the curriculum, and it came to pass. In short, students fought for, and gained, greater access for themselves—and for future generations of university students—to the inner circle. Indeed, as previously noted, many went on to become university professors, or to assume positions of leadership outside of universities. Also worthy of note, student activists of the Sixties involved in anti-war activism may have helped to bring about the end of the war in Vietnam.

Yet, despite these (and other) victories, the student "Leftism" of the Sixties did not threaten the dualistic and hierarchical philosophical framework that traditionally had
supported Western universities. With this framework stripped to its underlying, many-branched, skeleton, this "Leftism" seems to have been centred on only a small offshoot of other branches. Thinking especially of the disruptions on Western university campuses in the Sixties, I generally see this offshoot leading out from masculinity, associated with gender, in turn leading out from upper-class, associated with social class, the latter branch being nearer the base of the tree; however, also thinking of these disruptions, I sometimes see the branch associated with gender being closer to the base of the tree than that associated with social class, with this offshoot associated with age leading out directly from upper-class. (The configuration of the various branches of this tree would seem to be highly variable, depending upon the situation under consideration, as well as upon one's perspective at a given time. I shall elaborate in the following chapter.) Sixties' student "Leftism", in and of itself, did not positively contribute to postmodernism eventually making inroads in our universities. On the contrary, as will be further addressed in the following chapters, it may actually have retarded the acceptance of postmodernism within our universities relative to its acceptance within Western society on the whole.

As discussed in the first part of this chapter, certain developments within Western universities in the Sixties did provide a fertile ground for postmodernism to eventually make inroads in our universities. These developments include certain developments in the area of infrastructure (more so in certain sectors than in others) and the fact that students from various minorities in the Sixties proved themselves to be just as capable in the academic arena as students from more traditional backgrounds, albeit in traditional terms. Thanks to such students, in the decades to come, other members of minorities (as well as, in some cases, these former Sixties' student activists themselves) would have greater freedom to express their own perspectives within the academic context.

As it was, the beginnings of the acceptance of postmodernism within Western universities had to wait at least a decade, until the perspective not of the working class
Left but, rather, of another significant minority, namely women, began to be articulated within the academy by women themselves—and, in turn, until men, too, began to reassess their position regarding gender.
LETTERS BETWEEN AN "OUTSIDER" AND AN "INSIDER"
Dear Pamela,

Thank you for your very interesting letter. I found your letter so interesting that I read it aloud to the class I teach at the university, and we had a very stimulating class discussion about it.

Regarding your first question, some of my students did bring it to my attention that I probably should have given greater consideration to the fact that you live in a foreign country. However, since your mother is English, you shouldn't have found the questions too difficult. Besides, I've heard that Canada has become quite cultured in recent years. If there are any biases of the kind to which you refer inadvertently incorporated in the tests, I'm quite sure their effects are not statistically significant.

Your second question was particularly stimulating, bringing out the philosophers in all of us. The basic reason we do this kind of work, as all of us eventually agreed, is simply because it is in man's nature to want to find out more about ourselves and our universe. Many ordinary people think that the kind of work that we do in universities is unimportant or, worse yet, a waste of time and money. But don't let them mislead you. Those of us in universities are so fortunate to be engaged in man's highest calling, the pursuit of truth.

The questions that you asked in your letter are very thoughtful questions for a young girl. There are more and more girls now attending university, and you should think about trying to get into university yourself when the time comes. With your IQ, you shouldn't find university too difficult, if you're prepared to work hard.

I'm sorry if some of your family members were hurt when they learned their IQ score. As I see it, it's much better that people find out what their strengths and weaknesses are early on. I would hope that, if you've learned anything about science from helping me with my thesis research, it's that a good scientist cannot be scared of the truth. If you and any other members of your family would like more information on the subject of IQ's, I would be pleased to provide you with a copy of my thesis, once it's finished. It's a big job.

Cheerio,
Uncle Peter
THE SEVENTIES

The Ascendancy of the Mother
As discussed in the preceding chapter, as part of the major expansion of Western higher education during the Sixties, that continued into the early Seventies, there was a significant increase in the number of female university students as well as in the number of female university professors. By the early Seventies, women had gained sufficient power within Western universities for those who were so inclined to be able to raise within these institutions the issue of the devaluation of femininity. This issue was at the centre of the second basic kind of contemporary feminism, to which I will be referring here as cultural feminism, to be distinguished from liberal feminism, that predominated in the Sixties. Cultural feminism was to play a major role in postmodernism making inroads in Western universities, beginning in the Seventies.

Although women spearheaded cultural feminism, it was certain male members of the Western academic Family upon whom the increased status of femininity, associated with cultural feminism, apparently had the most significant impact in philosophical terms. Postmodernism made its first, tentative, inroads in Western universities in the Seventies under the leadership of certain male academics, abetted by certain early, male, postmodern artists (some of whom, such as Milan Kundera and John Cage, were associated for varying periods with universities as lecturers or artists in residence). An increase in the status of femininity apparently had the effect of readily propelling these ground-breakers from a Western metaphysical philosophical context to a postmodern context. Other factors also were likely to have come into play, such as the changes within Western society in general discussed by Alvin Toffler in Future Shock, that continued into the Seventies; however, the increased status of femininity seems to have been the factor that had the most significant impact philosophically during this period specifically.

As time passed, it would be recognized that this was femininity as constructed within a Western metaphysical philosophical framework. Unless otherwise specified, throughout this chapter, both “femininity” and “masculinity” are intended to be understood in this sense.
upon members of the Western academic Family, who were relatively sheltered from these other factors (as well as upon some non-academics).

Other male members of the Western academic Family also were significantly affected in philosophical terms by the increased status of femininity during the Seventies, but not to the same extent as those discussed above. This second group, that seems to have consisted of a significant number of male former members of the Sixties' student "Left", who by now had gained access to the inner circle yet who retained a "Leftist" identity, made it only as far as the previously introduced pre-post-modern context. Nevertheless, unable to distinguish, due to where they were philosophically situated, between postmodernism and pre-post-modernism, some of them (not all of them) came to regard themselves as postmodernists. Some of the most influential "postmodernists" within Western universities in the Seventies, some of whom continued to be highly influential in certain university faculties (including faculties of education) into the Nineties, appear to actually have been situated in a pre-post-modern context, and not in a postmodern context, as I am defining it in this work.

In contrast, female members, in general, of the Western academic Family of the Seventies seem to have languished behind philosophically, even as they gained increased strengthpolitically. No female members of the Western academic Family with whom I'm personally familiar made it all the way to postmodernism in the Seventies. A considerable number, and perhaps even the majority, were in a position where they were likely to have had intimations of postmodernism, if they had bothered to attend to them. Some did attend to them, especially those involved in areas in which they were likely to have received significant exposure early on to postmodern ideas, or to "postmodern" ideas (most notably, the Fine Arts and Literature), and even came to see themselves as postmodernists. However, the majority had other priorities during this period, including trying to further increase the status of femininity, and of women in general, on Western
university campuses. In the Seventies, particularly within the academic sphere, postmodernism (or what was called "postmodernism") was associated mainly with males.

The phenomenon of the increased status of femininity having a different impact upon different groups, with certain men tending to be directly propelled by such an increase into a postmodern context, and with other men, and women in general, tending to get only as far as the pre-post-modern context, if that, may be most readily understood in underlying structural terms. In the rest of this chapter, I will be devoting a considerable amount of attention to structural considerations. In the following portion of this chapter, I will be discussing the impact of the increased status of femininity on the previously introduced basic Socratic position (associated with the Right) and the basic anti-Socratic position (associated with the "Left"). In the latter portion of this chapter, I will further discuss the dual position, articulated by feminist standpoint theorists such as Sandra Harding in the Eighties, that would seem to have been possessed by many, and possibly even the majority, of Western women even before it was articulated in the Eighties, and then discuss the impact of the increased status of femininity on this position.

In addition to the value that thinking in underlying structural terms has for the argument I am making in this chapter (and, for that matter, for this work as a whole), it seems that thinking in such terms provides a useful way of classifying different kinds of feminism during the present period of philosophical pluralism. In recent decades, feminism has evolved into what itself could be regarded as a many-branched tree, with the perspectives of self-described "feminists" differing to a great extent. A key factor—although not the only factor—that distinguishes today's many different kinds of feminism is the philosophical positions with which they are associated (or with which they appear to be associated), that may be reduced, it seems, to certain underlying structural characteristics. Such a system of classification would allow for greater consistency, and greater precision, than we have today. For example, what I am calling here "cultural" feminism, that some people today, including those who have influenced me, will know by
this name, others may not know by this name. In addition, as shall be illustrated in the latter portion of this chapter, even just thinking in basic structural terms, there are different varieties of cultural feminism. (Particular historical and political factors have produced further varieties.) In the latter portion of this chapter, as part of my argument concerning how an increase in the status of femininity beginning in the Seventies seems to have affected the philosophical position(s) of Western women (and/or the interpretations they have given to the positions in which they are situated), a classification scheme is presented that may have applications beyond this work, as such.

As a final point here, in the Eighties, the increased status of "non-Western culture" (that is to say, the Western concept) seems to have had effects that closely parallel the effects of the increased status of femininity in the Seventies; however, different groups were affected differently by the increased status of femininity and non-Western culture, respectively. For example, while the increased status of femininity in the Seventies seems to have had the most profound impact upon certain men, readily propelling them into a postmodern context, the increased status of non-Western culture in the Eighties, or thereabouts (as previously discussed, in this work, the decades should sometimes be understood in a loose sense), would seem to have had the most profound impact upon certain women, especially women of European descent who, in the Seventies, proceeded no further than the pre-post-modern context. I will be further discussing such issues in the following chapters focusing on the Eighties (if you will recall, there are two such chapters): however, since the pattern does seem to closely parallel the pattern I will be discussing in this chapter, I won't be going into as much detail concerning such issues in the following chapters as I am in this chapter. Readers may wish to consider as they are reading this chapter some of the possible parallels between the effects of the increased status of femininity and the increased status of non-Western culture—as well as, perhaps, the possible combined effects of these two factors on different groups.
Branching Out: Impact of the Ascendancy of the Mother on the Acceptance of Postmodernism within Western Universities

Impact of an Increase in the Status of Femininity on Two Basic Positions Within the Western Metaphysical Philosophical Framework, the Socratic and anti-Socratic Positions

(i) The Socratic (or Masculine-dominant) Position

There are basically three options in terms of how those initially situated in a Socratic, or masculine-dominant, position may have responded to the increase in the status of femininity within Western universities that began in the Seventies.

The first of these options was to both acknowledge this increase and to offer relatively little resistance. From those initially situated in a Socratic position who responded in this manner to the increased status in femininity during this period, the early postmodernists (as I am defining "postmodernists" in this work) of the Seventies emerged. Virtually all, if not all, of these early postmodernists appear to have been male.

As might be expected, especially in the early years of postmodernism, artists, including some who have been associated with universities in various capacities, generally seem to have had an easier time making the transition to postmodernism than have university professors. For example, Milan Kundera's novel, The Book of Laughter and Forgetting, first published in 1979 and written between 1976 and 19786, provides good documentation of the transition to a postmodern outlook of a Western artist, who apparently began his transition in, basically speaking, a Socratic position (Kundera is, to be sure, a novelist by profession, and not a Socratic philosopher) and whose transition appears to have been heavily influenced by the increased status of femininity during the Seventies.

---

Various autobiographical points included by Kundera in this novel (as previously noted, Kundera has incorporated various forms of writing, including personal essays, in his novels, including this one) suggest that, through his youth and early adulthood, Kundera unquestioning accepted many traditional masculine values. Also pointing in this direction, the central character of this novel, Jan, who appears to closely correspond to Kundera in several key respects, prior to the time period covered in the novel seems to have unquestioningly accepted such values. The central plot of The Book of Laughter and Forgetting, if indeed there is one, could be seen as Jan/Kundera attempting to come to terms with his new postmodern awareness, associated with the increased status of femininity that had occurred within Western society, and within himself, in the preceding years. More specifically, Jan/Kundera attempts to come to terms with the breakdown of various "borders", a recurring motif in this book, that formerly were firm—most centrally the border between masculinity and femininity itself.

Various comments made by the female character, Edwige, to Jan, and Jan's responses to these comments, in addition to remarks made by Kundera about a book by a French feminist, Annie Leclerc, at a juncture when Kundera is speaking in the first person, indicate that, by the time that Kundera was writing The Book of Laughter and Forgetting, Kundera not only had been exposed to cultural feminism but also had taken a considerable interest in it. Nevertheless, as is most readily apparent from Kundera's remarks about Leclerc's book, Parole de femme (Woman's Word), published in 1976, Kundera had certain reservations about this kind of feminism. In her book, according to Kundera (I haven't read this book myself), Leclerc argued that masculine sexuality "is devoted to fleeting moments of erections and thus fatally engaged with violence, annihilation, and extinction" (Kundera, ibid., p. 79), and exhalted feminine jouissance (or joy) over masculine sexual desire. Kundera acknowledges that Leclerc's "manifesto of joy", as he calls it (ibid., p. 80), possesses an undeniable attraction; however, he cautions that there are dangers in the "mysticism" (ibid.) of Leclerc's feminine perspective, that
may be just as great as the violence associated with masculinity that Leclerc denounces. Although Kundera had taken a considerable interest in a variety of feminism that highly valorizes femininity, and by no means regarded it as entirely specious, as someone who apparently didn't have strong vested interests in this form of feminism (unlike, for example, many women), he was able to maintain a critical distance from it.

Related to this point, as previously discussed, within a Western metaphysical philosophical framework, femininity is associated with the Left, in a broad sense. The increased status of femininity beginning in the Seventies seems to have caused some Westerners who initially leaned to the Right (or who were in a Socratic position) to lean to the Left (or to adopt an anti-Socratic position), politically and otherwise, at least as an interim position. This pattern seems to have been most common among men who, in general, haven't possessed the same degree of personal investment as have women, in general, in feminism, of any kind. (I shall provide an example shortly.) It apparently further served to consolidate the "Leftism" of many long-standing male academic "Leftists", who also apparently didn't have a strong personal investment in feminism. (Examples of this variation shall be provided later in this chapter.) In contrast. Milan Kundera possessed no illusions about political Leftism (or "Leftism"). Kundera was a Czechoslovakian who had lived through the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia. He found conditions under Soviet rule to be so intolerable that he eventually fled to France. (He began writing The Book of Laughter and Forgetting shortly after he arrived in France. On one level, this book consists of a indictment of political idealism, of any kind.) Kundera's first-hand knowledge of what it was like to live under a Leftist political regime probably helped him to retain a critical distance from the political Leftism (or "Leftism") with which, in underlying structural terms, the variety of feminism that gained prominence in the Seventies was related.

In the absence of any strong identification on the part of Kundera with femininity combined with not only a lack of identification with but apparently also a strong
antipathy towards political Leftism (or "Leftism"). the increase in the status of femininity in the Seventies seems to have readily propelled Kundera to a postmodern context. Thinking in terms of the "tree" underlying Western metaphysics, it could be said that a significant shift in balance on one of its main branches, associated with gender, brought down the entire tree—including even the branch associated with social class. Also, to be sure, the relative freedom that Kundera possessed as an artist to explore beyond the Western metaphysical philosophical framework seems to have hastened his transition to postmodernism. For Western academics, presumably engaged in the pursuit of "truth", the matter was somewhat more complicated.

The second basic option for those initially situated in a Socratic, or masculine-dominant, position in light of the increased status of femininity beginning in the Seventies was to acknowledge this increase and to respond by adopting a lean to the Left (or "Left"), at least as an interim position. In the absence of a strong positive identification with the Left (or "Left"), before long, the individual concerned was likely to proceed to a postmodern context. This basic pattern—with certain idiosyncrasies—can be found in the work of the American academic, Stanley Fish.

Fish began his academic career doing traditional, "objective", literary scholarship, specializing in Milton; however, in the late Seventies, his work took a dramatic turn. In his now-classic book, *Is There a Text in this Class?* (Fish, 1980), Fish argued in favour of what he called "reader-response theory". The basic premise of reader-response theory is that the meaning of a text resides within readers and not within the text itself, as had traditionally been assumed by academic literary theorists. This basic premise is associated with an anti-Socratic, or "Leftist", or subjectivist, stance. Yet, as indicated by various essays in his collection of essays, *Doing What Comes Naturally* (Fish, 1989), by the mid-Eighties, if not before (several of the essays in this book were written quite some time before their publication in this book), Fish already was flirting with postmodernism—or perhaps had even completed the transition to a postmodern context.
To complicate matters, in both this book, and in his subsequent collection of essays, *There's No Such Thing as Free Speech* (Fish, 1994), Fish candidly discusses the necessity (as he sees it) of sometimes pretending to possess a position that one might not actually possess in order to protect one's interests. (Although Fish doesn't explicitly connect this discussion to his views concerning academic professionalism, some of the main points of which I earlier mentioned, there does seem to be a connection.) What appears to be a lingering attachment to "Leftism" in *Doing What Comes Naturally* could very well be a rhetorical ploy on the part of a postmodernist, as it clearly is in some of his more recent work. At any rate, it would appear that, by the mid-Eighties, if not before, Fish was at least very close to completing the transition to postmodernism.

In a wide-ranging interview with Fish included at the end of *There's No Such Thing as Free Speech*, Fish makes various comments about feminism that indicate that he had paid close attention to, and had been profoundly influenced by, feminism in recent decades. Going back at least to the first surge of cultural feminism in the Seventies. The following block quotation provides a very good illustration of this—yet, at the same time, seems to be a little off-base. While admirably illustrating the main point I wish to make here, this quotation also seems to provide a further example of the pitfalls of talking about events from some time ago from a present-day perspective during a period of major philosophical change, which I discussed earlier in reference to the views of Allan Bloom concerning the "Sixties"/Sixties. Maybe you'll pick this up, too.

"The questions raised by feminism, because they were raised not in the academy but in the larger world and then made their way into the academy, have energized more thought and social action than any other "ism" in the past twenty or thirty years, including Marxism, which may have been in that position in an earlier period but is in our present culture no longer in that position. Now what is that position? It is the position that in my view marks the true power of a form of enquiry or thought: when the assumptions encoded in the vocabulary of a form of thought become inescapable in the larger society. For example, people who have never read a feminist tract and who would be alarmed at the thought of reading one are nevertheless being influenced by feminist thinking or ways of which they are unaware or are to some extent uncomfortably aware. (Fish, 1994, p. 294)"
What I find "a little off-base" about this quotation is Fish's suggestion that the questions raised by feminism originated outside the academy. It seems to me that the same questions were being raised outside and inside the academy at roughly the same time, with certain questions being raised perhaps even earlier inside the academy. Nevertheless, I don't dispute that feminism, especially of a variety that highly valorized femininity, has helped to bridge the gap between the academic inside and outside, particularly in the case of those for whom this variety of feminism helped to propel them to a postmodern context, as seems to have been the case with Fish. Fish made these observations about feminism "of the past twenty or thirty years" from a postmodern perspective. His observations were likely to have been quite different twenty or thirty years ago.

Speaking of Allan Bloom, the third basic option for those initially situated in a Socratic, or masculine-dominant, position was to fail to acknowledge for as long as possible the increased status femininity and, eventually, when there was no choice but to acknowledge it, to respond. In such a case, the response was likely to be a defensive one. Allan Bloom apparently managed to put off the inevitable until the mid-Eighties, when he started writing The Closing of the American Mind.

As I noted in the preceding chapter concerning the Sixties, Bloom apparently didn't perceive the variety of feminism that prevailed on American university campuses in the Sixties as a threat. This form of feminism, that was essentially associated with achieving equal opportunities for women, albeit on prevailing masculine terms, was consistent with Bloom's Socratic perspective. However, he seems to have perceived the basic variety of feminism that emerged in the Seventies, associated with the increased status of femininity, as a far greater threat—once he got around to giving it serious attention.

In The Closing of the American Mind, Bloom adamantly rejected the idea associated with cultural feminism (or at least certain varieties of it) that men should, in effect, become more feminine. More particularly, he rejected the idea put forward by Nel
Noddings in her widely-read book, *Caring* (1984), published a few years before the publication of Bloom's book, that men should "care" more, with "caring" understood in a distinctively feminine sense. Implying that men are inherently (or, in more scientific parlance, genetically) incapable of succeeding in a role traditionally associated mainly with women, Bloom states, "It is indeed possible to soften men. But to make them care is another thing, and the project must inevitably fail" (Bloom, 1987, p. 129). Bloom's condemnation of working mothers, which I mentioned in the preceding chapter, could be seen as being largely a product of Bloom's concern about the resulting increased responsibilities of men in the area of feminine caring, or in what Jane Roland Martin called the "reproductive" dimension of life, as opposed to the "productive" dimension of life (Martin, 1985).

One possible interpretation of Bloom's comments here, and at other junctures where he adopts a defensive posture towards cultural feminism, is that Bloom was defending himself against simply a perceived threat to his own masculinity and, in a related vein, to his paternal authority; however, as I began to discuss in the preceding chapter, in addition to—and over and above—this possible threat, by the mid-Eighties, when Bloom presumably was writing *The Closing of the American Mind*, Bloom may have perceived an increased status in femininity as a threat to Western metaphysical philosophy on the whole.

Taking as an initial starting point a Socratic, masculine-dominant, position within the Western metaphysical philosophical framework, such as that which Bloom apparently held through most of his career, with a significant increase in the status of femininity, the transition to postmodernism is likely to be a relatively straightforward one. (This is assuming that gender has a relatively significant place in one's overall conceptual scheme or, in other words, that it is an important "branch" on one's philosophical "tree".) As exemplified by the case of Stanley Fish, when one in proceeding to postmodernism from a Socratic position, there may be an interim period during which one leans to the Left (or
"Left"), but this isn't likely to last long. By the time that Bloom wrote *The Closing of the American Mind*, it seems likely that a part of Bloom already had proceeded to a postmodern context, even as another part of him strongly resisted postmodernism. This would account for his very pronounced defensiveness. If this were the case, perhaps *The Closing of the American Mind* should actually be viewed as an attempt by Bloom to *close his own American mind*, out of fear of what was emerging therein at the time that he wrote this book.

In contrast, for those initially situated in positions other than the Socratic position, for whom, as shall be described below, the transition to postmodernism is likely to be a more round-about, more prolonged, affair, the increased status of femininity beginning in the Seventies would not have posed a serious threat to Western metaphysics. The majority of Bloom's many strong critics, who were situated in positions other than the Socratic position, may have had no idea why Bloom was actually so upset—and may have been just as upset as was Bloom if they could have seen what Bloom was able to see, on the other side of the border. (This includes the many women who, in the Sixties, appeared to have been situated in a Socratic position yet who, I would suggest, probably were not actually situated in this position, whose transition to postmodernism will be addressed separately, in the latter portion of this chapter. One indication that they were not actually situated in this position is that their transition to postmodernism seems to have followed a very different course than that of males initially situated in a Socratic position, such as the three examples I employed in this section.)
(ii) The Anti-Socratic (or Feminine-dominant) Position

Politically or philosophically, there would be little reason for anyone initially situated in a basic anti-Socratic position, including academics, to resist an increase in the status of femininity. Thus, in underlying structural terms, the increased status of femininity beginning in the Seventies seems to have had fairly consistent effects upon those initially situated in this position—unlike the varied effects upon those initially situated in a Socratic position, as discussed in the preceding section. However, the interpretations given by those initially situated in a basic anti-Socratic position of where they ended up following the increase in the status of femininity—that is to say, where they saw themselves as being situated—varied considerably.

As previously outlined, in the basic anti-Socratic position, femininity has a high status and masculinity has a low status, albeit against a backdrop in which the dominant configuration, with masculinity having a higher status than femininity, prevails. Beginning in this position, the foreground configuration would be reinforced. At the same time, in the background, there would be an increase in the status of femininity and, in turn, a shift towards a postmodern orientation, following the basic pattern outlined in the preceding section concerning the effects of the increased status of femininity on those initially situated in a Socratic position. (Since there would be little reason for resistance, the pattern of Kundera's transition is probably the best model.) In overall terms, the result would be a divided, yet relatively stable, position, somewhere in between a Western metaphysical philosophical context and a postmodern context, or what I call a pre-postmodern position.

As previously introduced, a pre-post-modern position assumes an observer who has proceeded beyond this position, who possesses a postmodern perspective. From such a perspective, it may be observed that this position is an inherently "contradictory" position. First, beginning with a shift in the background configuration, masculinity and femininity now have roughly the same status—even though, in this instance, since one
began in an anti-Socratic position, one is likely to continue to outwardly favour femininity over masculinity. Second, someone situated in this position would express views associated with Western metaphysics (outwardly favouring anti-Socratic views over Socratic views, even though both come into play) and, at the same time, *might* express certain distinctively postmodern views that are fundamentally inconsistent with their views associated with Western metaphysics—or otherwise indicate that there is a part of them that has proceeded to a postmodern context. On the other hand, if they have chosen to interpret where they are now situated in a manner that is strictly associated with Western metaphysics, there may be no indication that a part of them has proceeded to postmodernism.

Before I discuss the various possible interpretations of this position of those who arrived in this position from an anti-Socratic position, it is worth pointing out that, in underlying structural terms, this is essentially the same position that is reached by those who begin their transition to postmodernism in a Socratic position, before they finally loosen their grip on Western metaphysics (if they ever do get that far). The main point of difference is the interpretation that is given to this position. For example, in both cases, both Socratic and anti-Socratic views are expressed; yet those who began their transition to postmodernism in a Socratic position would outwardly favour Socratic views over anti-Socratic views whereas, for those who began their transition in an anti-Socratic position, the reverse would be the case. In addition, those who reached this position from an anti-Socratic position would be less likely to view postmodernism as a threat than those who reached this position from a Socratic position (since the latter don't have a strong positive identification with femininity that anchors them to Western metaphysics). Thus, as some of the examples I will give below illustrate, those who reached this position from an anti-Socratic position are likely to show a greater receptivity towards postmodern ideas (to the point of perhaps even interpreting their position as a postmodern position) than those who reached this position from an anti-Socratic position. Although,
in underlying structural terms, there is only one basic pre-post-modern position, it is useful to have different names to distinguish the two basic political orientations associated with this position. I generally call those who outwardly favour anti-Socratic views "liberal pre-post-modernists". (Other names that might be used are "Leftist", or just anti-Socratic, pre-post-modernists.) I generally call those who outwardly favour Socratic views "conservative pre-post-modernists". (Other names that might be used here are "Right-wing", or just Socratic, pre-post-modernists.) If Allan Bloom were a pre-post-modernist when he was writing *The Closing of the American Mind*, in the Eighties, as I suspect he was, he would have been a pre-post-modernist of this second variety. (Some more obvious examples of this variation will be provided later in this work.)

In the Seventies, as the status of femininity increased in Western universities and elsewhere in Western society, many male academics who possessed an anti-Socratic perspective, apparently including many male former members of the Sixties' student "Left" who had gone on to become university professors, proceeded to a pre-post-modern position—more specifically, a liberal pre-post-modern position.

In some cases, they interpreted their position in a manner that was strictly associated with Western metaphysics. In the Seventies, there was an increased interest among some male professors and students (and some men not associated with universities) in the work of the Swiss psychologist Carl Jung. Some of the characteristics of Jung's work suggest that, when he was doing this work, he himself was situated in a pre-post-modern position. Most notably, as I pointed out when I was introducing some of the early ancestors of the Western academic Family, especially the later work of Carl Jung entails some fundamental "contradictions". Like Henri Bergson, who seems to provide an ideal example of an early academic Uncle, Jung placed a high value on femininity (and things associated with femininity); however, whereas Bergson placed a high value on femininity and at the same time placed a low value on masculinity (which indicates what I am generally calling in this work an anti-Socratic position), Jung valued
masculinity and femininity equally. Although Jung sometimes managed to get around outwardly "contradicting" himself by, for example, separating "Woman" from actual women (I earlier provided examples to illustrate that, even though Jung placed idealized, feminine, "Woman", on a pedestal, he could be very insulting to actual women), there are many clear "contradictions" throughout Jung's later work that are a product of masculinity and femininity having roughly the same status. All the same, there are no indications in Jung's work of which I'm aware that a part of Jung had proceeded beyond Western metaphysics, even though it is reasonable to suppose that this was the case (even though Jung was dead before the word "postmodernism" had been coined). Those who in the Seventies were attracted to Jung's work apparently didn't see this as a shortcoming. Like Jung, they were interpreting the position in which they were situated strictly in terms of Western metaphysics.

A second possible interpretation of the pre-post-modern position available to those who had begun their transition in an anti-Socratic position was to interpret this position basically in terms associated with Western metaphysics and, at the same time, to acknowledge postmodernism without taking responsibility for the postmodern part of their perspective. The example that I will provide shortly should make what I have said here clearer. This example emphasizes the category of social class and not that of gender. However, given the intimate relationship of various categories in the Western metaphysical philosophical framework (or various "branches" of the "tree" associated with Western metaphysics) and the period from which this example issues, it is reasonable to suppose that an increase in the status of femininity had some effect upon the views concerning social class of the individual concerned. If you haven't already guessed, the example I will use here for this second possible interpretation is Bourdieu's conception of social class from the essay that I earlier discussed in the course of presenting an overview of different ways of understanding "social class" (Bourdieu, 1987).
If you will recall, Bourdieu's conception of social class from this essay involves two main components, a primary and a secondary component. The primary component is what he calls a "structural", or "relational", conception. Even though Bourdieu claims to reject both objectivist and subjectivist (associated with masculinity and femininity respectively) conceptions of social class, he is not entirely prepared to entirely let go of either. Thus, in this conception of "social class," even if social classes are not "real", a set of relationships pertaining to social classes is conceived to be "real"—albeit often invisible. (This "contradiction" is of a somewhat different order than "contradictions" involving a direct clash between two elements of a binary pair, such as masculinity and femininity, that more commonly distinguish the work of pre-post-modernists. Nevertheless, this "contradiction" appears to have the same root cause as these other "contradictions".) In addition, Bourdieu demonstrates a sympathy towards two conceptions of social class that appear to reflect a postmodern perspective. From a postmodern perspective, these two conceptions, "social class" understood as "folk categories" and social class understood as practical classifications, may be readily rolled into one (i.e., from such a perspective, the stories we tell ourselves inform social practice, and vice versa). Yet Bourdieu does not specifically integrate these additional conceptions, or conception, of social class into his theory. It is only the structural component, associated with Western metaphysics, for which he apparently takes personal responsibility.

The third way those in a pre-post-modern position who began in an anti-Socratic position may interpret their position is to see themselves simply as postmodernists. In the Seventies, especially within English departments, a variety of what I would call pre-post-modernism that was then simply known as postmodernism (and that in some quarters is still known as such) started to gain favour. Among the key figures associated with this "postmodernism" were the French intellectuals, Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, and Jacques Lacan. Although these three authors continue to receive a considerable amount of
attention in North American universities, including by now in Faculties of Education, apart from a basic sketch below of the underlying structural characteristics of the work of these three authors, considered in conjunction. I'm not going to be discussing their work in this chapter or elsewhere in this work. With the exception of some of Derrida's work (such as his highly innovative book, *Glas*), I don't consider the work of these authors to be representative of postmodernism, as I understand it, nor do I otherwise find it particularly interesting. However, in a subsequent chapter of this work, that concerning the Nineties, I will be discussing in some detail the "postmodernism" of two contemporary American "postmodernists" among educational theorists, Stanley Aronowitz and Henri Giroux, who claim to have been heavily influenced by Foucault and Derrida in particular, and whose work I do find interesting if only because it has been highly influential in North American educational circles of late.

Feminist ideas figured prominently in the work from the Seventies of Foucault, Derrida, and Lacan (as well as in that of their sympathizers from the Seventies onward, including Aronowitz and Giroux); however, the apparent effect of the increased status of femininity on the outlooks of these three French intellectuals was quite different than its apparent effect on the outlooks of Kundera, Fish, and others of their ilk—including, I venture to say, another Frenchman, Jean-François Lyotard, whose outlook when he was writing *The Postmodern Condition*, in the late Seventies, was, in underlying structural terms, apparently more like the outlook of Kundera and Fish than the outlook of his compatriots, although he makes no reference in this book to feminism.

The work of the French triumvirate from the Seventies (and beyond) incorporates some distinctively postmodern ideas. For example, these authors all purport to be "antiessentialists". Nevertheless, it also incorporates ideas that are firmly bound to Western metaphysics, including both anti-Socratic and Socratic ideas, with the former outwardly favoured over the latter. (Foucault, in particular, often appears to be just a

---

7 "Antiessentialists" are opposed to the essentialist view that things possess an eternal, universal, essence.
typical "Leftist".) In the work of these authors, there appear to be two quite different, yet related, kinds of "contradictions" those involving a clash between two different philosophical contexts and those involving a clash between "masculinity" and "femininity", that distinguish a pre-post-modern position. Yet, beginning in the Seventies, in part due to the influence of these authors, this position has come to be commonly seen within North American universities as a "postmodern" position.

Technically speaking, since the literal meaning of "postmodernism" is "beyond modernism"—a mid-Twentieth Century Western movement in the fine arts and philosophy that was wholly bound to Western metaphysics—these authors (and their sympathizers) have as much right to call themselves "postmodernists" as anyone else. They indeed have ventured—in part—beyond modernism. However, this variety of "postmodernism" seems to owe its existence largely to a fundamental oversight. During the Seventies, an increase in the status of femininity within our universities was beginning to correct a significant gender imbalance that had existed for so long within these institutions. But before a balance was achieved, Western academics started to make the transition to "postmodernism"—that is to say, what they individually understood by "postmodernism". In turn, they began to construct discourses concerning the transition to "postmodernism". These discourses concerning the transition to "postmodernism" reflected the continuing gender imbalance of our universities during the Seventies. They were very one-sided, focusing on the effects on masculinity (and rationality and objectivity, both associated with masculinity), within a two-sided philosophical system in which masculinity and femininity are integrally related. In these discourses, it is suggested that one has completed one's philosophical transition if one has loosened one's

8The situation with Derrida may be somewhat more complex. Derrida's * Glas*, a recurring theme of which is crossing borders (as with Kundera's *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting*), suggests to me that, by the time Derrida was writing this book, originally published in 1974, he had completed the transition to postmodernism; however, ironically, some of his more recent work suggests to me that, when he was writing this work, he still had one foot in a Western metaphysical philosophical context. Lending further support to this view, he is reported to have insisted only a few years ago that there was one "correct" way to interpret all his work. Maybe Derrida has been adopting an absolutist position in recent years merely as a rhetorical stance, as Stanley Fish sometimes seems to do. Or maybe not.
grip on masculinity (and things associated with masculinity); however, if one begins one's transition in a position other than the Socratic, masculine-dominant, position, this simply isn't so. If one recognizes that this oversight is wrong, as I do, then it seems that it also is wrong to use the term "postmodernism" in this context. In underlying structural terms, and in fundamental political terms, this "postmodernism" may actually have more in common with the "conservatism" of Allan Bloom than with the postmodernism of Kundera, Lyotard, and so on. Furthermore, before the term "postmodernism" was widely employed in academe, it was widely employed in the fine arts (including architecture), where a meaning associated with the collapse of both sides of Western metaphysics prevailed. Using the terminology I introduced above, with the possible exception of Derrida, the three French intellectuals introduced above, and their sympathizers from the Seventies and beyond, would actually seem to have been pre-post-modernists, especially of the liberal variety.

Another possible reason for the widespread use of the term "postmodernism" to refer to what I call liberal pre-post-modernism especially within American universities is that certain structural constraints within the American political system may have prevented many Americans from proceeding beyond pre-post-modernism. Apparently, in European intellectual circles, presumably including European universities, these European authors are not taken nearly as seriously as they are in American universities — or, for that matter, in Canadian universities, that continue to be strongly influenced by American universities. I will be addressing this issue in more detail in a subsequent chapter of this work, when I discuss the work of the Americans Stanley Aronowitz and Henri Giroux.

In the Seventies, due to an increase in the status of femininity during this decade, a significant number of Western male academics who began in an anti-Socratic position made it as far as the liberal pre-post-modern position, that they interpreted in diverse ways (including as postmodernism itself). Conservative pre-post-modernism seems to
have been a somewhat later phenomenon, associated with the period after postmodernism had made significant inroads in our universities, and elsewhere, and it was no longer possible to avoid dealing with it, and/or with the increased status of femininity with which, especially within the academic context, postmodernism has been closely associated. . . . Or maybe it also was around in the Seventies, but because of where I was then philosophically situated, I wasn't able to see it.
Dear Mum,

I miss receiving your long, chatty letters, filling me in on all the family news, and responding with my own chatty letters. There were some things I greatly enjoyed about our relationship back then, including those letters. I think it was largely because of my fear of losing those good things that I put up with the misunderstandings, and the false accusations that sometimes went hand-in-hand with the misunderstandings, for so long. But a couple of years ago, you just went too far, and I had to take a stand, even if it meant some possible losses. Since then, our correspondence has been reduced to occasional, business-like, notes and greeting cards. Perhaps my inclusion of letters in my thesis is, in part, a way of me trying to compensate for all those letters that we used to write to each other—although the content of these letters is quite different than our usual chit-chat. I think it’s about time we sorted out some of these misunderstandings, beginning with some misunderstandings that you seem to have had about how attending university has affected my attitudes towards you and other members of the family.

Even though you and Dad encouraged me to go to university by saving up some money beginning when I was a young kid to help me with my university expenses, neither of you seems to have felt entirely comfortable with me attending university. Whereas, in Dad’s case, his ambivalence seemed to have been due mostly to his working-class loyalties, in your case, it seems to have been due mostly to you being a woman from a generation of women who saw marriage and having kids as being a top priority, who didn’t see universities as being for them. With respect to social class, as such, you should have had relatively little problem with me attending university.

I would generally categorize myself as having come from a working-class background; however, there’s a surprise element in that “working-class” background—namely you. Although your family wasn’t rich, growing up, you
were comfortable financially. For example, you could always afford nice holidays, including holidays in Europe that you told me about. Moreover, through your schooling, you rubbed shoulders with people who did have a lot of money, who were bona fide members of the English upper class (in the conventional English sense). As a kid, you attended a posh private (or, as they say back in England, "public") school for girls schools in London, on a scholarship. Ironically, your younger sister, who ended up with two university degrees (and a husband who ended up with three university degrees), didn't do well enough on the entrance exam to even be accepted into that school, while you never even finished the English equivalent of high school. To be fair, your "high school" education was disrupted by the war. Your sister, on the other hand, was over ten years younger than you, so her early education was not similarly disrupted. With your educational background, and with Dad's history of high academic achievement when he was a young kid, and the support that he provided in terms of helping us with our homework and so on, it's no wonder that I excelled in school and, when the time came, had no problem being accepted into university. (Quite a bit more seems to have been involved than just that I was "smart".)

While many people in your social circle back in England attended university, when you were a young woman, universities attracted many more men than women. You seem to have regarded universities as very masculine places where, as a woman who placed a high value on femininity, and on being feminine, you didn't belong; however, by the time that your sister was beginning university, in the Sixties, this was changing. Many more women were attending university than in the past. There were further changes by the time that I began university.

By the time that I began university, not only was femininity beginning to have a much higher status within our universities, as it then was in Western society on the whole, but also, largely as a result of the increased status of femininity, the philosophical framework that traditionally supported our universities, that was supported by, and in turn supported, a strict division between masculinity and femininity, as well as between upper class and working class, and even between smart and stupid, was beginning to be seriously questioned, including by myself.
If I were to date when I began to recognize certain inconsistencies between my own philosophical outlook and the philosophical framework that supported our universities. I would say that it was during those two years that I was working after I had completed my first two years of undergraduate studies at U.B.C. I never doubted that I would one day finish a B.A.; however, an excellent job opportunity came along after my two years at U.B.C., doing community organizing work for Herschel Harden's media lobbying group, the Association for Public Broadcasting in British Columbia, and it seemed that university could wait. After about a year, when I started to make plans to return to university, I gave careful consideration to what my program of studies should be for the final two years of my B.A. and, as I was doing so, began to see these inconsistencies.

(I had read Toffler's *Future Shock*, that addressed related issues, before I began a B.A. and, as I was reading it, I had a great deal of sympathy for much of what Toffler was saying; however, I needed to have some experience of university, and then step back from that experience, before I could start to recognize the relevance of *Future Shock* to our universities.)

By then, as I can now see, I had already, as the novelist, Milan Kundera, put it, "lost the certainty of truth"—or at least was close to having done so. I remember thinking, as I was giving consideration to what my program of studies should be, all of our knowledge, including even our "hard" scientific knowledge, seemed to boil down to stories that we told ourselves about our world. It therefore seemed fitting that I should continue my study of literature (which I would have done even if I weren't in university), in order to expand my knowledge of our stories. At the same time, in the course of finishing my B.A., I wanted to increase my practical, job-related, skills in the areas of communications and educational media, areas to which I'd been exposed working for Herschel's group. McGill University, in Montreal, offered a program in its English Department that would allow me to combine courses in literature and courses in communications, that were as practical as any then being offered by a Canadian university. It was mainly because of this program that I chose McGill. It also didn't hurt that attending McGill would provide me with the opportunity to learn
first-hand about Quebec politics that were then making headlines, and to practice my French. (When you were a student, French had been one of your favourite subjects.) It also didn't hurt that this university had a very good reputation. I didn't necessarily believe that I would receive a superior education by attending a university with a good reputation. I was more concerned about how having a degree from a university with a good reputation might put me in a better position to compete for interesting jobs; however, looking back, I would have to say that I did greatly benefit from the high level of intellectual confidence of my fellow students and my professors at McGill, associated with McGill having a good reputation. 

My fellow students at McGill tended to be students who had little difficulty obtaining good marks and, thus, tended to be willing to take some risks intellectually when they saw fit, and who also were relatively politically aware. (For many of my fellow students, who came from all across Canada and the United States, as for myself, learning first-hand about the Quebec political situation was a big part of the attraction of McGill.) Generally speaking, my professors also tended to be very intellectually confident, without being cocky. For the most part, students and professors alike at McGill were not fearful of the increase in the status of femininity that was then occurring within our universities. Postmodernism was a more touchy topic, especially for some professors; but other professors with whom I had dealings, as well as many of my fellow students at McGill, already were giving serious consideration to postmodernism, back in the Seventies. It seems that wasn't the same level of fear about these new developments that one would encounter at a university that didn't possess such a good reputation, where professors and students had less reason to be confident in themselves.

An exception among my professors was the professor that I had for a required "Theory of Criticism" class. The first couple of sessions of that class were devoted to going over why traditional approaches to literary criticism, including the Historical, Sociological, and Biographical approaches, had to be rejected, since it was now widely recognized that they didn't meet the criteria of being
objective. There was general agreement in the class on that point. But then, rather than introduce us to subjectivist approaches, such as reader-response theory, or some of the new so-called postmodern approaches, this professor introduced us to the approach that he favoured, a variation of Structuralism that drew upon the ideas of the American linguist, Chomsky, concerning "deep structure" and "surface structure". It all boiled down to mathematics. To demonstrate this approach, in one of our classes he assigned each student a different sound (or "phoneme") and we were required to count up the number of times that this sound occurred in each line of a poem. (The poem was several verses long, so just the counting took a large portion of the class.) Then he pooled our "data", did some statistical calculations, and fashioned graphs presumably of the "sound structure" of the poem.

Most of the students in that class were not overly impressed by the statistics, even if we were humanities students, and even if at least half of us were female. It seemed ridiculous to address the problem (if it could be called that) of the lack of objectivity of traditional approaches to literary criticism by, in effect, eliminating the meaning(s) of a text. Rather than turn to more feminine subjectivist, or "postmodern", approaches, this professor was intent on retaining masculine objectivity at all costs. Yet, if one thought about it, even this sort of pseudo-scientific, mathematical, work incorporated various human biases.

For my major paper for that class, I did the best that I could under the circumstances. I did a statistical analysis of the "sound structure" of one of Dylan Thomas' poems, "After the Funeral", in which I went all out on the statistics and graphs. (I still wanted a relatively good mark for the class and, besides, I'd always enjoyed playing with numbers. You used to say that I should be an accountant.) All that was missing from my paper was a conclusion. In lieu of a conclusion, I presented a quotation from Dylan Thomas, that expressed the view that you can hack a poem to pieces, you can analyze it to death, but even after all that, you're still left with the "mystery" (his word). The professor was quite annoyed about what I had done—although he never addressed the central problem squarely. When he asked me to come to his office for a private meeting
with him about my paper. He spent most of the meeting giving me the third degree regarding the sources of my statistics, insinuating that I had plagiarized the statistical work. I told him that I had done the work by myself. He didn't believe me—or at least he didn't want to believe me. As long as he was able to think of me as inept at statistics (it was only very basic stuff) or, in effect, "stupid", and a cheater to boot, it would have been relatively easy for him to dismiss the point I was trying to make by having no conclusion other than that quotation. Eventually, he handed me my paper (the cover of which was ripped down the middle) and let me go, slamming the door after me. Thanks in large measure to the TA for the course (a woman) who wrote on the paper. "All that is missing from this excellent paper is a conclusion." I got an okay mark for the paper—but at what cost?

As I now realize, there probably was considerably more involved in the reluctance of that professor to consider subjectivist, or "postmodern", approaches, and in his anger regarding my paper, than mere male chauvinism. Because of where he initially had been positioned within the Western metaphysical philosophical framework, the implications of an increase in the status of femininity would have been more serious than for those of us who initially positively identified with femininity. What he understood by "postmodernism" probably was quite different than what we understood by "postmodernism". (If you want further details, I'll show you the thesis I'm now working on.) But even so.

And you probably thought that I always enjoyed being a student. It's not so. Furthermore, you probably thought that it was because I so enjoyed being a student that I eventually returned to university to do graduate work. Nope. I was doing a B.A. when major philosophical changes were beginning in our universities, which were creating some serious problems. Although I generally had a very good time at McGill, given the nature of the issues involved in that incident with that professor, it seemed that it was hardly an isolated incident. After that incident, I thought to myself that, in about ten years, when the philosophical changes that were then beginning within our universities were further along, and after I'd gained more experience in the wider world, including more
professional experience. I was going to return to university to help with the changes that would be required to make our universities more consistent with this wider world. It seemed ridiculous that students should have to put up with this kind of nonsense in order to earn a basic B.A., the possession of which was becoming increasingly essential to obtain even an entry-level position. (By now, almost twenty years later, one needs a B.A. for even many basic secretarial jobs.) I eventually did return to university, primarily for that reason.

As I was to become increasingly aware in the course of doing graduate work, the problems associated with the philosophical changes occurring within our universities were not confined to universities. University students (and recent graduates) and those members of their families who had little awareness of the changes that had been occurring within our universities beginning in the Seventies seemed to be having increasing difficulty communicating. It wasn't just you and me.

I admit that I haven't done a good job of communicating to you what my experiences as a university student have been like. But, on the other hand, you haven't expressed a great deal of interest in this subject. I suspect that you may have been making certain assumptions about what my experiences as a university student have been like, and about attitudes that I possess relating to having attended university, based on what you know of other women who have attended university—including your sister. But these assumptions may not apply in my case.

I began university about fifteen years after your sister began university, and much had changed in universities in the intervening years. Also, although your sister is English and attended university in England, I'm a Canadian, and attended university in Canada. Furthermore, although she married a man who presumably has amassed the largest collection of family-related 78's in the entire world, I never did any such thing. Although your sister may have looked down on you for not having attended university, and for having married a man with a working-class background (and then divorcing him, and taking up with another man who
was from a similar sort of background). I'm not your sister. Come to think of it, perhaps even your sister is no longer the woman who she once was, who you assume she still is.

I'd be interested in your comments.

Love,

Pam
Impact of an Increase in the Status of Femininity in the Seventies on the Philosophical Positions(s) of Female Members of the Western Academic Family, and/or their Interpretations of their Position(s)

One starting position?

In her 1991 book, Whose Science? Whose Knowledge? Speaking from Women's Lives, the American academic feminist, Sandra Harding, discusses what she calls "the contradictory social locations" of women. The essentializing tendencies in Harding's basic argument in this book indicate her continued strong attachment to Western metaphysics at the time that she was writing it. Assuming that all women of the world possess a similar perspective associated with their female gender, Harding argues that women in general possess a perspective that is distinctively female, or distinctively feminine. (She employs these words interchangeably.) Further assuming that all men of the world possess a similar perspective associated with their male gender, Harding argues that men in general possess a perspective that is distinctively male (or distinctively masculine). In addition, according to Harding, since women in general live in a world that traditionally has been, and to a great extent continues to be, dominated by men, women in general possess not only a distinctively female perspective but also the distinctively male perspective of the dominant group in society. As Harding sees it, women in general possess two perspectives, that are contradictory, whereas men in general possess only one perspective.

The primary example that Harding employs, that of female scientists, is close to home for her as a female academic engaged in academic research. While Harding is a social scientist and not a physicist or a chemist, the argument that she makes could be seen as applying to herself. (Indeed, in the Nineties, her argument did perhaps apply more to female social scientists than to females working in the physical and applied sciences. I shall be addressing changing practices in the physical and applied sciences associated with the transition to postmodernism, and associated changing attitudes towards the
physical and applied sciences, in a section of this work dealing specifically with that period.) As Harding points out, science traditionally was, and to a great extent continues to be, dominated by men. Thus, according to Harding's reasoning, a masculine perspective prevails within the field of science. Female scientists must necessarily be familiar with the masculine norms that prevail in science, or, in other words, bring a masculine perspective to bear upon their scientific work, at the same time that they possess a distinctively feminine perspective. According to Harding, this supposed distinctively feminine perspective cannot be put aside in the professional lives of female scientists and, similarly, their supposed distinctive masculine perspective cannot be put aside in their personal lives. As Harding suggests, the lives of female scientists, and of other women, are rife with contradictions.

Harding goes on to argue that, despite certain drawbacks, there are political advantages in being able to see things from both sides, as it were—or, since hierarchies also enter into her argument, from both sides and from the top and the bottom. The supposed political advantages of being in a contradictory position comprise the crux of feminist standpoint theory, and of Harding's book. However, for my present purposes, I am more interested in the philosophical position associated with feminist standpoint theory as described by Harding—and as otherwise revealed by her own work. (I frankly also am not convinced that it is politically advantageous to be situated in this position. As my following discussion may illustrate, the position associated with feminist standpoint theory can be a very politically vulnerable position.)

It is noteworthy that, even as Harding discusses the contradictions in the lives of women, she apparently fails to recognize various "contradictions" (as seen from a postmodern perspective) in her own work. First, there are various very basic "contradictions" throughout Whose Science? Whose Knowledge? of the variety that she discusses, associated with masculinity and femininity having roughly the same status in her conceptual scheme. For example, specifically concerning Western science, Harding
claims to have a high regard for the "objectivity" (associated with masculinity) of Western science. On the other hand, she decries the failure of Western science to adequately incorporate a feminine perspective. In the same vane, she calls for "strong objectivity" in science, that is presumably more objective than objectivity itself, that does adequately incorporate a feminine perspective.

Another variety of "contradictions" also runs through her work. Since this was the early Nineties, the subject of postmodernism could not be easily avoided. Harding devotes a full chapter of Whose Science? Whose Knowledge? to defending feminist standpoint theory against the criticisms of various feminist postmodernists. For example, a common criticism of feminist standpoint theory of feminist postmodernists that she addresses is the criticism I myself raised at the beginning of this section, that it assumes that there is one perspective shared by all women and, at the same time, one perspective shared by all men. Although Harding begins this chapter dismissive of these criticisms, in the course of the chapter, Harding develops an increasing sympathy towards postmodernism. Her defense concludes in a very different key than the key in which it starts, with Harding proposing that contemporary feminists might profitably employ feminist standpoint theory in conjunction with feminist postmodern approaches (ibid., p. 187).

As indicated both by what Harding says about the position associated with feminist standpoint theory, and by these further characteristics of her own work, the position in which Harding was situated when she was writing Whose Science? Whose Knowledge? appears to have been a variation of what I have been calling in this work a pre-post-modern position. Up to now, the examples that I have employed have all been drawn from the work of males, especially males from the Seventies onwards, who appear to have reached this position largely due to the increased status of femininity beginning in this decade. (An exception is Carl Jung, who appears to have been in this basic position well before the Seventies.) Harding's book that has been the subject of discussion here
was written subsequent to the Seventies, and it is very likely that the increased status of femininity beginning in the Seventies influenced the argument that she made in this book. However, it is reasonable to suppose, based in part on Harding's argument concerning the genesis of the contradictory social locations of women, that a basic pre-post-modern position (albeit without an observer situated in a postmodern position who was able to discern this position) has been present among many, if not most, Western women for a very long time, as long as Western metaphysical philosophy has prevailed in the West. In other words, whereas some Western men arrived in a pre-post-modern position in the Seventies due to the increased status of femininity, many, if not most, Western women may have been there all along—at least insofar as the category of gender is concerned.

In the case of Western women, it could be said that the increase in the status of femininity beginning in the Seventies influenced not so much their philosophical position(s) as it did the interpretations that they gave to their position(s). It is a subtle distinction (the only actual difference may be one of degree), but it may be a useful distinction. For example, it may help to explain what seems to have been greater flexibility in outlook among Western women in general than among Western men in general in past periods in Western history (I shall provide an example from the relatively recent past shortly), although this is no longer necessarily the case. Although, as I previously pointed out, there is an intimate relationship between the various branches of the tree underlying Western metaphysics, as I shall discuss in the following chapter, the increase in the status of non-Western culture seems to have had quite a different impact in philosophical terms on White women of European descent than the increase in the status of femininity. (At the same time, the increase in the status of non-Western culture was likely to have an impact upon those members of minority races and cultures operating within a Western metaphysical philosophical framework that was similar to the impact of the increase in the status of femininity upon White women of European descent.)
Below, I have outlined some of the possible interpretations of Western women (including White women and women of minority races and cultures operating with a Western metaphysical philosophical context) of the pre-post-modern position, relating to gender in particular, from the Sixties onward. I am illustrating my case with examples from feminist literature, with feminist literature dealing with Western science and specifically with education being especially strongly represented. Although I am focusing in this chapter on the Seventies, some of my examples here are from the Eighties, and a couple are even from the Nineties. These later examples seem to illustrate trends that began in the Seventies, associated with the increase in the status of femininity during this decade, yet that in some cases did not achieve "legitimacy" within academe until somewhat later on. (The work of Sandra Harding concerning the contradictory social locations of women is a case in point.) This overview begins with a brief review of an interpretation of this position available in the Sixties to female members of the Western academic Family.

**Interpretations of this position from the Sixties onward**

*Masculine-dominant, confined to Western metaphysics*

Going back to the Sixties, even the apparent masculine-dominant, Socratic, position of many academic feminists of this decade may be seen as an interpretation of a divided pre-post-modern position. This could help to explain why, for example, Sixties' student feminists, who outwardly favoured a Socratic position at least with respect to gender, tended to share many of the interests of members of the Sixties' student "Left" that, in overall terms, outwardly favoured a feminine-dominant, anti-Socratic, position, and, indeed, could even be said to have been a part of the student "Left" of this period. It also could help to explain why, in the Seventies (and continuing into the Eighties), many of those academic feminists who, in the Sixties, appeared to have been in a masculine-dominant, Socratic, position, appear to have done a radical about face. If one takes into
account that these women may have been situated in a divided position all along, then their shift in outlook wasn’t quite as radical as it may have seemed.

Feminine-dominant, confined to Western metaphysics

In the Seventies, owing to the increase in the status of femininity during this decade and, at the same time, contributing to a further increase in the status of femininity, some female members of the Western academic Family appear to have adopted a feminine-dominant, anti-Socratic, position, still firmly bound to Western metaphysics, specifically with respect to gender. This interpretation of a divided pre-post-modern position was manifested in a variety of feminism that highly valorized femininity and, at the same time, either explicitly or implicitly, placed a low value on masculinity.

My first two examples, included here specifically to illustrate the apparent radical shift that occurred during this period, consist of the work of two feminists who are not academics (although one of them does possess a Ph.D.) yet whose work has been so influential in the contemporary feminist movement as a whole that academic feminists could not have avoided being aware of it. The publication in 1984 of Germain Greer’s Sex and Destiny: The Politics of Human Fertility, an extensively researched book that reflects Greer’s academic background, in which Greer strongly supported women having children and, at the same time, condemned what she saw as the anti-mother, anti-child, bias in the West, shocked many of the fans of her earlier book, The Female Eunuch (1970), in which Greer articulated what was essentially a Socratic, masculine-dominant, form of feminism. Two widely-read books by the prominent American feminist, Betty Friedan, The Feminist Mystique, first published in 1963, and The Second Stage, first published in 1981, follow much the same pattern, involving a shift from what appeared to be essentially a masculine-dominant position to what appeared to be essentially a feminine-dominant position.

Within the academy, associated with the increase in the status of femininity during this period, the masculine bias of various academic practices began to be exposed.
This included the underlying masculine biases of Western science itself, that served as a model for academic research across the academic disciplines. This basic type of work was not necessarily associated with a feminine-dominant interpretative framework confined to Western metaphysics. (In her book that I earlier discussed, Sandra Harding recognized various masculine biases in Western science, yet this book is not associated with this interpretative framework. Nor is a further example that I shall provide in a following section.) However, as one variation of the feminist critique of science that got underway in the Seventies, some feminists not only recognized that Western science incorporated various masculine biases but also suggested that a feminine form of science would be superior to current Western science.

A paper by Donna Wilshire (Wilshire, 1989) typifies such work. Wilshire suggests in this paper that the Nobel Prize winning plant geneticist, Barbara McClintock, had used a special feminine scientific approach when she was conducting her research concerning the mutations of corn seed kernels. As Wilshire states,

> When doing her revolutionary experiments, McClintock abstained from the traditional scientific, legalistic, pharisaical method, that determines objectively with one's detached mind what the rules of science are and then superimposes them on one's work. Instead McClintock became emotionally involved with her corn seed kernels. She listened and watched patiently, without ego. letting the corn reveal itself to her, 'allowing' what was immanent within the seed kernel to teach her about itself. (ibid., p. 104)

According to Wilshire, the key to McClintock's scientific success was that she employed what essentially amounted to feminine intuition in conducting her scientific research. Presumably, if all scientists were to rely more on "feminine intuition", they could all win the Nobel Prize. All of the scientific knowledge in the area of plant genetics that McClintock brought to her research, including all of her years of experience working in the field of plant genetics before she won a Nobel Prize, is discounted by Wilshire.

Wilshire, and other similarly inclined feminists in the social sciences and humanities, had little to offer practicing scientists in the natural and applied sciences as to how they might conduct their research. Research practices in the natural and applied
sciences did not change during this period—although the politics of science did begin to change during this period. There were, however, some new developments in research practices in the social sciences and humanities during this period associated with the increase in the status of femininity.

In the social sciences, beginning in the Seventies, some feminists turned away from quantitative research methods that hitherto had predominated in their field, and towards new qualitative research methods. By now, in the Nineties, the term "qualitative research" is commonly employed to refer to a very broad range of research methods, including even various postmodern approaches. However, in the Seventies, when the term "qualitative research" started to be widely employed, qualitative research was confined to subjectivist approaches, especially researchers going out and conducting personal interviews with research subjects, who were generally "less privileged" than the researchers, who were expected to reveal their "true selves" to the researchers who, in turn, were expected to report "truthfully" about what their subjects said, or otherwise revealed to the researcher. During this same decade, ironically, there was a shift among some male humanists, whose academic research up to that point had been confined to the "reading and writing" basic variety of research traditionally associated with the humanities, to more quantitative approaches. Many of their female counterparts strongly resisted this new trend in the humanities.

Associated with the increase in the status of femininity that began in the Seventies, there was an increasing use among both humanists and social scientists in the use of the first-person in academic writing. By the mid-Eighties, some feminists in both the humanities and social sciences were incorporating extended personal anecdotes in their academic scholarship. But it was extremely rare, if not unheard of, to write an entire academic paper in the form of personal anecdotes. Such techniques tended to be employed in combination with more conventional approaches, even by those feminists who outwardly heavily favoured femininity over masculinity.
Taking the feminine-dominant approach to Western science a step further, beginning in the Seventies, some feminists, both inside and outside of academe, rejected Western science altogether. Of the various forms of what came to be known as ecofeminism that began to emerge during the Seventies, some offered a simplistic, back-to-nature, alternative to science, that sometimes incorporated a Goddess-worship aspect. (For a critical discussion of the conjunction of ecofeminism and Goddess-worship, see Biehl, 1991.) Sandra Harding's *Whose Science? Whose Knowledge?* consists, in part, of a defense of Western science against these extreme negative views towards Western science, that were not uncommon among feminists in the social sciences and humanities in the Seventies and, in some cases, well beyond the Seventies.

For many Western academic feminists, a feminine-dominant interpretation confined to Western metaphysics was just a short-lived phase, their first response to an increase in the status of femininity. They readily moved on to other interpretations, that I shall discuss below—further indicating that, while they may have appeared to have been situated, like Bergson and other more recent male anti-Socratics, in an anti-Socratic philosophical position they may actually only have been applying an anti-Socratic interpretation to what was actually a divided philosophical position. Other academic feminists apparently have held to a feminine-dominant interpretation bound to Western metaphysics even to the present, to the extent that it might as well be called their position.

1. **Mixed-dominance, confined to Western metaphysics, interpretation**

A second possible interpretation of the divided pre-post-modern position that was available to female members of the Western academic Family from the Seventies onwards closely corresponds to Carl Jung's interpretation of such a position. Masculinity and femininity are seen as being of roughly the same status and, in addition, the interpretation is confined to Western metaphysics.

A well-known example from the educational literature that illustrates this interpretation is Jane Roland Martin's *Reclaiming a Conversation: The Ideal of the*
Educated Woman (1985). As Martin argued in this book, drawing upon ideas that had been brewing among feminists through the Seventies, to allow, as did Socrates, that a minority of females, who are able and willing to behave like certain masculine-identified males, may participate in an education designed for such males, that reinforces their strengths and overlooks their weaknesses, is not the same thing as endorsing equal educational opportunities for males and females. According to Martin, in Socrates' conception of an education befitting "Guardians", in which he allowed that a minority of females could participate, the "productive" dimension of life (that is to say, participation is public life, including employment outside the home), traditionally associated mainly with males, is emphasized, and the "reproductive" dimension (understood by Martin to include not only giving birth and raising children but, rather, caregiving and nurturing in all domains), traditionally associated mainly with females, is not simply overlooked but is outwardly denigrated. As Martin concluded in this book, the productive and reproductive—or masculine and feminine—dimensions of life should receive equal attention in our systems of education.

Nel Noddings' previously mentioned book, Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education (1984), generally falls into the same category. Noddings' book differs somewhat from Martin's book in that Noddings suggests in her book that, in effect, femininity had been present in the Western system of education all along, despite various masculine biases in the Western system of education—including the masculine biases of male educational theorists who had failed to recognize the presence of femininity. According to Noddings, "caring", that she associates with a broad range of positive emotions ranging from simple interest to spiritual ecstasy, and that she further associates with femininity (in keeping with the association of femininity and the emotions within the Western metaphysical philosophical framework), inevitably plays an integral role in teaching and learning. Nevertheless, as Noddings argues, once this integral role is recognized by educators, "caring", and "caring" educational approaches, may be
employed in a more optimal manner, in conjunction with rationality, and "rational" educational approaches. In her book, Noddings generally advocates a balance between femininity and masculinity. However, especially when she is discussing specifically the issue of morality, she has a tendency to favour femininity over masculinity, in keeping with the traditional association in the West of femininity and moral superiority. (As Allan Bloom recognized, advocates of feminine caring, including not only Noddings, generally wanted men to become more caring and, in effect, more feminine.)

Noddings' *Caring* and Martin's *Reclaiming a Conversation* both seem to reflect the same underlying structural characteristics with respect to gender as does Jung's work. Furthermore, anyone reading *Caring* who was somewhat familiar with Jung's work probably would immediately recognize that Noddings' conception of femininity in this work had been directly influenced by Jung. Yet, neither in *Caring* nor in *Reclaiming a Conversation* is there any open acknowledgment of an indebtedness to Jung, or even an acknowledgment of certain parallels with Jung's work. In *Caring*, Noddings even goes so far as to explicitly distance herself from Jung, pointing out that Jung was sometimes very demeaning towards women.  

In their respective, above-discussed, books, both Noddings and Martin manage to avoid outwardly demeaning women or femininity; however, given that both these books, like Jung's work, are associated with an interpretive framework in which the status of femininity and that of masculinity are roughly equivalent, inevitably, at an implicit level if not outwardly, women and femininity are sometimes demeaned, just as men and masculinity are sometimes outwardly demeaned (and also sometimes implicitly demeaned).

For some feminists, a mixed-dominance interpretation confined to Western metaphysics also was just a passing phase. For example, judging by Martin's article published a few years ago in the feminist journal, *Signs*, "Aerial Distance, Esotericism,

---

9In a paper written after *Caring* was published in which Noddings responded to various criticisms of this book (Noddings, 1985), she did acknowledge that her conception of femininity in this book not only closely paralleled that of Jung but also had been directly influenced by Jung's work.
and Other Closely Related Traps" (Martin, 1996), by the time that she was writing this paper, Martin had completed the transition to postmodernism. In this paper, Martin basically argues that, in recent decades, Western academic feminists (including herself), inadvertently have been guilty of exactly the same things that they have accused men, especially Western male academics, of being guilty. On the other hand, judging from a talk that she gave at OISE/UT last year, it appears that Noddings is still drawing upon the same basic interpretive framework upon which she drew when writing Caring.

Mixed dominance with respect to gender; also mixed philosophical contexts, but outwardly favours Western metaphysics over postmodernism

An example from the feminist literature that could be seen as roughly corresponding to Bourdieu's interpretative framework when he was writing the previously discussed paper about social class is the interpretive framework of the American feminist, Carolyn Merchant, when she was writing her still widely-read book, The Death of Nature, first published in 1980. This book falls into the general category of feminist scholarship critical of science that was associated with the increase in the status of femininity beginning in the Seventies. In this book, Merchant exposed the pro-masculine and, in many cases, also clearly anti-feminine, biases of various influential Western scientists through the ages. This book was, however, somewhat unusual among feminists works concerning science from this period in that, while Merchant is critical of the pro-masculine, anti-feminine, bias of Western science, she doesn't suggest in this book, as did some feminists in the Seventies and thereafter, that a feminine science would be superior to a masculine science. Nor does she suggest, as did Sandra Harding a decade after the publication of The Death of Nature, that Western science should value femininity and masculinity equally. Furthermore, Merchant in no way suggests in this book, as have some other feminists, that Western science on the whole must be rejected.

It may be that it was due simply to the historical emphasis of this book that Merchant did not address in it where science ought to be going at present. In other words, perhaps she did have views in this regard but refrained from expressing them in this
primarily historical work. On the other hand, or perhaps in addition, it could be that Merchant's own dawning postmodern awareness at the time that she was writing this book prevented her from taking her critique in a direction more typical of feminist works concerning science from this period. Although Merchant doesn't discuss postmodernism, as such, in this book, and although, on the surface, the outlook with which this book is associated is confined to Western metaphysics, a dawning postmodern awareness could be seen as being present in this work, albeit still out in the wings, as it were, instead of being centre stage, as seems to have been the case in Bourdieu's paper about social class. As indicated by Merchant's more recent book, *Radical Ecology: The Search for a Livable World*, published in 1992, by the time that she was writing this second book, she had completed the transition to postmodernism. This second book clearly bridges the academic "inside" and "outside". While this book is apparently directed mainly to an academic audience (she incorporates various conventions of academic writing, and so on), Merchant includes in the book an extensive directory of environmental organizations throughout North America operating "outside" of universities, and suggests to her readers that, if they are interested in the environment, they should get involved with such organizations.

Sandra Harding's *Whose Science? Whose Knowledge?* more clearly reflects a mixed dominance, mixed philosophical contexts, interpretation of a divided pre-postmodern position than does Merchant's *The Death of Nature*. Yet, ironically, in her book, Harding could be seen as taking even less personal responsibility for the postmodern part of her own divided perspective than did Merchant when she was writing *The Death of Nature*. In *Whose Science? Whose Knowledge?* even though Harding outwardly expresses an awareness of postmodernism, she generally does her utmost in this book to keep postmodernism and, in turn, the "outside" world, at bay.
Mixed dominance with respect to gender; also mixed philosophical contexts, but outwardly favours postmodernism over Western metaphysics

In the Seventies, some female members of the Western academic Family who appear to have been situated in a divided pre-post-modern position started to think of themselves as postmodernists—just as, in the Seventies, some male members who were situated in this position, who began their transition to postmodernism in an anti-Socratic position, started to think of themselves as postmodernists. In the Seventies, those women situated in this position who were most likely to think of themselves in this manner, like their male fellow "postmodernists", were concentrated in areas where postmodernism (and "postmodernism") made its earliest inroads in our universities, especially the fine arts and literature departments.

Since I will be discussing this general pattern in some of its more recent manifestations in a later chapter of this work, using as my prime examples the work of some contemporary educational theorists, including males and females alike, I won't be extensively discussing this pattern here. I will, however, mention a name here that I identify with this pattern among contemporary academic feminists. An example of a female counterpart of the Americans Stanley Aronowitz and Henri Giroux, to whom I earlier referred, is the American educational theorist, Patti Lather, especially as she presented herself in her 1991 book, Getting Smart: Feminist Research and Pedagogy With/In the Postmodern (1991). The first part of the title of this book itself suggests her continued attachment to Western metaphysics at the time that she wrote it. I will be further discussing Getting Smart in conjunction with a further discussion of the work of Aronowitz and Giroux later on. (Since Lather, like Aronowitz and Giroux, is American, it is possible that her apparent continued attachment to Western metaphysics at the time that she wrote this book was due in part to certain distinctive features of the contemporary American political system, that also will be addressed later in this work.)

Although, beginning in the Seventies, some White males, including some White male, academics, seem to have been influenced by the increased status of femininity to
proceed directly to postmodernism, for those of us who identified positively with femininity, the increased status of femininity during this period seems to have actually held us back from completing the transition to postmodern. Our transition to postmodernism did not occur due to a significant shift in balance on the branch of the tree underlying Western metaphysics associated with gender. As the status of femininity increased, beginning in the Seventies, we seem to have remained in a pre-post-modern position, although through this period our interpretations of this basic position changed, in the manner outlined above. Our transition to postmodernism instead occurred due to a significant shift in balance on other branches of the tree, generally subsequent to the Seventies. For many White women of European descent (such as myself), the main branch of the tree involved seems to have been that associated with race and culture, upon which I shall be focusing in the chapter to follow.
LETTERS BETWEEN AN "OUTSIDER" AND AN "INSIDER"
Dear Uncle Peter,

You may be surprised to hear from me after such a long time.

I finished an undergraduate degree at McGill University in Montreal a few months ago. (I did go on to university, as you suggested.) I generally enjoyed my years at McGill—although I don't think I'll be returning to university for graduate work any time in the near future. Since I have more time now for letter writing, and since I've been thinking about you and your work concerning IQs lately, I thought I'd drop you a line.

As long as the designers of IQ tests and those to whom these tests are administered are from the same basic culture, the notion of IQ might seem credible enough. Even those members of the culture whose outlooks differ in certain respects from the outlooks of those who designed the tests may still do quite well on the tests. For example, despite certain differences between the outlooks of males and females within our own culture, and despite the fact that most standardized IQ tests have been designed by males, females tend to do just as well as males on these tests—if not better. But when such tests are administered to those who are not from the same culture as those who designed the tests, the whole concept of IQ starts to break down.

I'm presently working with kids on a Native reservation in northern Quebec, just north of James Bay, in a place called Great Whale. You may have heard of Great Whale, even over there in England. Great Whale is the site of a proposed new dam in the massive James Bay hydro-electric project. There's been quite a bit of publicity recently about this project, some of which may even have reached you. There's a great deal of concern about the environmental damage that the project could cause, if it's completed according to plan. But I'm at least equally concerned about the destruction of a community that is unique in cultural terms.

Great Whale is the cross-roads for four different cultures. On the Western, White, side, there are both French Canadians and English Canadians. On the non-Western, Native, side, there are both Cree and Inuit. In this small community, four different languages are regularly used. (I'm improving my French here, and I've also learned a little Cree and Inuktut!) Taken the wrong way, what I am about
to say could confirm your worst assumptions about Canada: but it's occurred to me that this little village, where four different cultures come together, may be the cultural centre of Canada. We do have bigger cities in Canada, of course, with lots of "culture", including universities, art galleries, symphony orchestras, and so on. (An evening's entertainment here in Great Whale is more likely to consist of watching the northern lights. There's not even television here.) But given that Canada is an officially multi-cultural country, and given that, in Great Whale, four of the main cultures of Canada, English, French, Cree, and Inuit, come together (there's also a sizable whale population here), Great Whale could be seen as our cultural centre. For that reason alone, it would be a tragedy if Great Whale were wiped out by a dam. (There's still some question as to whether a dam will be built here.)

Concerning I.Q.s, it's bad enough that I.Q. tests should be used to inferiorize individuals and groups within our own culture. But to suggest that entire races of people other than Whites are intellectually inferior to Whites based on I.Q. tests designed by Whites and for Whites is simply absurd. It has been done here in Canada, with Canada's Native people. Such tests have been part of the ammunition used by Whites in Canada to assert their own "superiority" over Canada's aboriginal people—and, in turn, to lay claim to the land once presided over by these people. The same thing has been done to members of non-Western cultures around the globe. Yet if those being tested with these tests don't have the same basic cultural background as the Whites who designed the tests, it's inevitable that they won't do as well as Whites on the tests. To go a step further, even within our own culture, there may be certain "cultural" differences that effect performance on these tests (although gender doesn't seem to be one of them).

If you had the opportunity to visit Great Whale, I'm fairly certain that even you would begin to see that I.Q. scores in general reflect nothing more than one's ability to do I.Q. tests, and that this ability is based on cultural factors and not on heredity.

Yours truly,
Pam

P.S. Please say "Hello" for me to Aunt Jane and my cousins.
THE EIGHTIES
(from the "Inside")

The Ascendancy of Other Families
By the late Seventies, due in large measure to the increase in the status of femininity during the Seventies, and the varied effects of such an increase as discussed in the preceding chapter, there was already considerable philosophical diversity within the Western academic family. In the Eighties, this philosophical diversity was compounded by the increase in the status of non-Western culture.

Through the Sixties and Seventies, and continuing through the Eighties and Nineties, members of cultural minorities, by which I basically mean those not of European, or Western, cultural ancestry (I shall be more specific below), became an increasingly strong presence on Western university campuses. Just as, once women had achieved sufficient power within Western universities, those who were so inclined were able to raise the issue of the devaluation of femininity, once members of cultural minorities had achieved sufficient power with these institutions, those who were so inclined were able to raise the issue of the devaluation of non-Western culture. (In using the singular here, I am assuming a Western metaphysical philosophical framework, which was the philosophical framework in which this issue was first raised.) The increase in the status of non-Western culture followed closely on the heels of the increase in the status of femininity. The increase in the status of non-Western culture appears to have had effects that closely parallel the effects of the increased status of femininity except, of course, in this instance, the effects were related to where one was positioned along the branch of the tree underlying Western metaphysics associated with culture, where Western culture was opposed to non-Western culture, that was closely intertwined with the branch associated with race, where White was opposed to non-White, instead of where one was positioned along the branch associated with gender.

I am not going to be repeating in this chapter all the points that I made in the preceding chapter, substituting non-Western culture for femininity—nor am I going to be
doing a two-factor analysis, extrapolating from the single-factor analysis that I did in the preceding chapter. (Readers who are interested in that kind of thing can figure it out for themselves.) However, in the first part of this overview, I will be discussing some key similarities and differences of the effects of the increase in the status of femininity and the increase in the status of non-Western culture, and give one example involving two factors. Then I will move on to some other points, including introducing the contents of the rest of this chapter.

Earlier in this work, I discussed how, due to the intimate connection between the various branches of the tree underlying Western metaphysics, one would generally be similarly positioned with respect to its various branches. (Indeed, this point comprises a central premise of my general argument in this work that views concerning social class among Western university students and professors have changed in recent decades largely as a result of changes that have occurred along other branches of the tree underlying Western metaphysics.) There are, however, exceptions, some of which I pointed out in an introductory section of this work. Another exception is the position of White women in general operating within a Western metaphysical philosophical framework with respect to gender and their position with respect to culture/race. As I discussed in the preceding chapter, women in general, including not only White women, operating within this framework would be likely to be in a distinctively divided position with respect to gender. On the other hand, with respect to culture/race, as members of the dominant group in this regard, generally speaking, White women would be in a position that was similar to the Socratic position with respect to gender of many dominant males—especially males such as Kundera and Fish who, while initially situated in what would appear to have been a Socratic position, were flexible enough to move beyond this position. In contrast, White males would be expected to be similarly positioned with respect to culture/race and gender. Just as the increase in the status of femininity beginning in the Seventies would seem to have had the most pronounced effect in
philosophical terms on those men initially situated in a Socratic position with respect to
gender, the increase in the status of non-Western culture would seem to have had the
most pronounced effect in philosophical terms on those Whites, including both men and
women, who were initially situated in a Socratic position with respect to culture/race.
Assuming many such men proceeded directly to a postmodern context due to the increase
in the status of femininity (or, as seems to have been the case with Allan Bloom,
proceeded as far as a conservative pre-post-modern position due to such an increase and
were unlikely to proceed any further due an increase in the status of non-Western
culture), it would have been mostly White women for whom the increased status of non-
Western culture, in and of itself, had the most pronounced effect in philosophical terms.

Turning to members of cultural minorities, those members of cultural minorities,
including both males and females, operating within a Western metaphysical philosophical
framework would be likely to be in a divided position with respect to culture/race, just as
females in general, including members of cultural minorities, would be likely to be in a
divided position with respect to gender. Paralleling the pattern outlined in the second half
of the preceding chapter, it seems that, for those members of cultural minorities operating
within a Western metaphysical philosophical framework, an increase in the status of non-
Western culture, in and of itself, could result in a significant interpretive shift, but would
not alter their basic philosophical position. Just as, for many White women, the increase
in the status of femininity may actually have held them back from proceeding to
postmodernism while other groups forged ahead, based on this model, for many members
of cultural and racial minorities, the increase in the status of non-Western culture may
have held them back, by strengthening their attachment to Western metaphysics.

Considering now the interaction of the increase in the status of femininity and the
increase in the status of non-Western culture, as predicted by this model, generally
speaking, female members of cultural minorities operating within a Western metaphysical
philosophical framework would be likely to retain a strong attachment to Western
metaphysics long after other groups, including other females and other members of cultural minorities, had proceeded to postmodernism. An example from the academic literature that could be seen as confirming this predication is the work of Gayatri Spivak, a prominent American professor of English and cultural studies, and both a member of a cultural minority and a woman. Spivak has emerged as a leader of what has been called "the victim's revolution" on American university campuses (her work also is widely read in Canadian universities) by adhering to her hard-line stance. As she has argued, qualities such as tolerance cannot be reasonably expected of minority victims. In her words,

Tolerance is a loaded virtue because you have to have a base of power to practice it. You cannot ask a certain people to 'tolerate' a culture that has historically ignored them at the same time that their children are being indoctrinated into it. (Spivak, 1989, p. 46)

Even well into the Nineties, as more and more Whites and members of cultural minorities—including some female members of such minorities—proceeded to postmodernism, Spivak apparently remained strongly attached to Western metaphysics.

Within the academic context, this general pattern (there are always exceptions) among members of cultural minorities operating within a Western metaphysical philosophical framework would seem to have applied in both the United States and Canada (and probably elsewhere in the West); however, for reasons which will be addressed later in this work, since the Eighties, outside of universities, there are likely to have been some significant differences between American and Canadian members of cultural minorities.

Further contributing to the philosophical diversity of the Western academic Family, by the mid-Eighties, there were a great many students on Western university campuses who not only were non-Western but also were not operating within a Western metaphysical philosophical framework, and never had operated within this framework. I am thinking especially of the many students from Asian countries who were then studying in Western universities, including many students from the People's Republic of China, that in the early-Eighties started to once again allow its students to study in
Western universities. The presence of such students drew attention to the fact that, up to that point, the great majority of "non-Western" students and professors on Western university campuses had been operating, at least in part, within a Western metaphysical philosophical framework. Either they had been born and raised in the West, or they had otherwise received significant exposure to Western culture before attending university. (An example of the latter case is those East Indian students from India who had received a British-style education in India, a remnant of British colonialism in that country. Dinesh D'Souza, who figures prominently in some of the examples I will be providing later in this chapter, has such a background.) These "non-Western" students and those students with little or no previous exposure to Western culture, who by now also comprised members of the Western academic Family, were likely to possess very different philosophical outlooks. (I will be elaborating shortly.)

By the mid-Eighties, the philosophical (including interpretive) diversity among members of the Western academic Family was sufficiently great and, at the same time, not yet sufficiently understood, and not yet sufficiently taken into account in academic policies and practices, that it was causing some serious communication problems within this Family. In the first part of this chapter, following this overview, I will be discussing some of these communication problems. The examples I will be using here involve either an increase in the status of femininity or an increase in the status of non-Western culture, or both. (Some of these communication problems within the Western academic Family associated with increased philosophical diversity seem to have parallels within my own family.)

Amidst all of this confusion, there was one shining beacon. As Westerners proceeding to postmodernism, they were likely to recognize the folly of traditional Western conceptions of Asian cultures. Operating within a Western metaphysical philosophical framework, in keeping with the dualistic and hierarchical constraints of this framework, Asian cultures in general are seen as comprising a unitary "Eastern culture"
or, more broadly yet, as comprising part of "non-Western culture", that may be seen as comprising all cultures other than European, Western, culture, all of which within this framework are seen as having many characteristics in common. From a postmodern perspective, it can readily be seen that this is not how members of Asian cultures perceive themselves. In the final portion of this chapter, I will be addressing, in very basic terms, the potential for improved communication between people from Asian cultures not operating within a Western metaphysical philosophical framework and Westerners, not only within the academic context, associated with the philosophical transition now occurring in the West. Indeed, during the present period of philosophical transition in the West, those Western university students and professors who have completed the transition to postmodernism may find that, in terms of their basic philosophical outlook, and their basic attitudes towards higher education, they have more in common with students and professors from Asian cultures, who have been in the West for only a short time, than they do with many of their fellow Westerners.

In addition to these developments in the area of communications among members of the Western academic Family, associated not only with the Eighties but with the entire period of philosophical transition in the West, there were other important developments in Western universities in the Eighties associated with this philosophical transition. Through the Eighties, many of our universities began to make various changes that were consistent with a shift towards a postmodern outlook among many members of the Western academic Family—as well as among various other stakeholders in our systems of higher education (including taxpayers). Some institutions began to offer programs, especially in the humanities, that specialized in a postmodern, and/or "postmodern" (that is to say, with strong traces of conventional "Leftism"), orientation. A prime example is the English program at Duke University in North Carolina, headed by Stanley Fish, who in 1985 was brought in from another university to head Duke's English department, and then proceeded to bring in other professors who shared his basic outlook. (Based on what
I've read about this program, it combines postmodern and "postmodern" aspects—which, for reasons which will be addressed in a subsequent chapter, is consistent with it being offered in an American university.) By now, in the Nineties, Brown University, another elite American university, offers a full undergraduate humanities curriculum that assumes a postmodern, and/or "postmodern", perspective. In Canadian universities in general, as well as in most American universities, the trend has been to try to better accommodate philosophical diversity within existing programs—including, in some cases, by incorporating in these programs some elements that echo long-standing practices in Asian systems of higher education. Also in the Eighties, in keeping with the significant increase in the use of computers within Western society on the whole during this period. the use of computers on Western university campuses greatly increased during this period. I will be discussing such changes, that have continued into the Nineties, mainly in the chapter of this work concerning the Nineties.

As a final point in this overview, the natural and applied sciences seem to have been much less seriously disrupted by the ongoing shift towards postmodernism than have the humanities and social sciences. Despite the absolutist rhetoric still commonly employed in the natural and applied sciences, these areas have proven in recent decades to be relatively accommodating, at least at the level of research and pedagogy, to diverse philosophical outlooks. Even as an assault was being launched against science by many humanists and social scientists (including, as discussed in the preceding chapter, many feminists), scientists have continued to engage in productive research, and an increasing number of students have been drawn to these areas. Nevertheless, in communication about science by scientists if not at the level of scientific practice, and perhaps also in general communication among scientists concerning non-scientific matters, the same basic problems that will be addressed in the following portion of this chapter, using mainly examples from the humanities and social sciences, seem to have existed. Similarly, the potential for improved communication between Westerners and people
from Asian cultures associated with the shift towards a postmodern outlook in the West that I will be discussing in the latter portion of this chapter pertains as much in the natural and applied sciences as in the humanities and social sciences. (Also later in this work, I will be exploring why, on a certain level, the natural and applied sciences apparently have been able to more readily accommodate increased philosophical diversity associated with the transition to postmodernism, and postmodernism itself, than have the humanities and social sciences.)

Communications across an Expanding, Changing, Family Tree

Some Problems in Communication

To begin this section, I am going to discuss two different kinds of potential communication problems that both are associated with the inability of individuals who are still strongly attached to Western metaphysics to recognize that others who have proceeded beyond Western metaphysics have done so.

The first kind of potential communication problems to be discussed here involves a failure to recognize the different consequences of the increase in the status of a subordinate member, such as femininity and non-Western culture, of various dyads associated with Western metaphysics, depending upon where one is initially philosophically positioned.

The problem that I discussed in the preceding chapter of "postmodernism" coming to be defined in two distinct ways, associated with two distinct philosophical positions, owing to the one-sidedness of our discourses concerning the transition to postmodernism, could be seen as falling into this category. I might add here that not only do these discourses assume a Socratic position with respect to gender but also they assume a Socratic position with respect to culture/race.

Also in the preceding chapter, in the course of discussing the probable effects in philosophical terms of the increase in the status of femininity on Allan Bloom, I
mentioned that those for whom the effects of the increase in the status of femininity were likely to be less pronounced, including probably most women, may have misunderstood why Bloom was so strongly opposed to certain feminist ideas. The increase in the status of femininity, in and of itself, may actually have been far less upsetting to Bloom than the loss of the certainty of "truth", with which Bloom was likely to have associated the increase in the status of femininity. Many of Bloom's critics were likely to have found the loss of the certainty of "truth" just as upsetting as did Bloom; yet, due to where they were initially philosophically positioned, they wouldn't have recognized this as a consequence of the increased status of femininity.

Similarly, in those cases where individuals were receptive to various feminist ideas and, based on where they were initially philosophically positioned in combination with their receptivity to these feminist ideas, then proceeded relatively swiftly to postmodernism (in general, such individuals would have been men), their feminist friends and associates may have had great difficulty understanding why these individuals, who formerly shared their feminist ideals, eventually lost much of their feminist ardour. They may even have felt somewhat betrayed. On the other side of the coin, in such situations, those who had completed the transition to postmodernism may have had difficulty understanding why their feminist friends and associates adhered to a hard-line feminist stance for as long as they did—assuming, of course, that the former also were not aware of the different consequences for different individuals of the increase in the status of femininity depending upon where one is initially philosophically positioned. Those who had completed the transition to postmodernism and who did recognize that different philosophical contexts were now involved would at least have the advantage of being able to understand why they were being misunderstood.

Getting back to the two characters, Jan and Edwige, from Kundera's The Book of Laughter and Forgetting, who I previously mentioned in the course of discussing the probable contribution of the increase in the status of femininity to Kundera's transition to...
postmodernism. Jan, who apparently shares many of Kundera's characteristics, describes being commonly misunderstood by Edwige, who expresses strong pro-feminist (especially of a variety that highly valorizes femininity) sentiments. The basic dynamics described above may serve to explain, at least in part, why Edwige misunderstood Jan. Jan seems to be aware (as Kundera would be) that different philosophical contexts are now involved, and have contributed to these misunderstandings. His understanding helps him to live with the misunderstandings, although it seems that he was bound to eventually become quite frustrated.

Both of these variations of communication problems involving a failure to recognize different consequences of the increase in the status of a subordinate member also are likely to have arisen due to the increase in the status of non-Western culture. Nevertheless, examples of the first variation, that closely parallel the example involving Allan Bloom's anti-feminist sentiments in *The Closing of the American Mind* and responses to these anti-feminist sentiments by feminists who place a high value on femininity, are difficult to find in the academic literature. A precise parallel would be something written by a White, female, academic in the Eighties or Nineties (that is to say, once postmodernism had started to make serious inroads in Western universities) railing against the perceived negative effects of the increase in the status of non-Western culture, and members of non-Western cultures taking extreme exception to her views. But I can think of no such example. I can't even think of a good example of this pattern involving a White male as the protagonist. I am led to conclude that, within the academic context, although one might still have been able to get away with spouting anti-feminist, anti-women, sentiments, even in print, well into the Eighties (and, perhaps, in some quarters, even to this day), by the Eighties (if not before), there were much stronger prohibitions against spouting equally insulting sentiments about non-Western culture(s)—especially if one were White, which most members of the Western academic Family still were in the Eighties (and still are in the Nineties).
Dinesh D'Souza, a member of a visible minority and not, strictly speaking, an academic, does openly express such sentiments in both *Illiberal Education* and *The End of Racism* and, for doing so, he has incurred the wrath of many members of non-Western culture(s). But even if D'Souza were White (I wouldn't require that he be a woman, too, or that he be employed as a university professor), the pattern with his work doesn't precisely parallel the pattern with Bloom's work. As shall be further addressed later in this section, D'Souza strikes me as much more confused regarding the philosophical change occurring around (and within) him than scared about the implications of postmodernism, as seems to be the case with Bloom.

In various other books from this period written by White males, including academics and non-academic alike, about our universities, concerns are raised about the increased politicization of these institutions in recent decades. (I can't think of any corresponding works by females, White or non-White. Not even Camille Paglia’s *Sex, Art, and American Culture* [1992], which shares some of the characteristics of these works, really fits into this category.) In these books, politics relating to culture/race and gender come under consideration. Such books include two books by Americans, published not long after the publication of *The Closing of the American Mind*, Charles Sykes', *Prof Scam* (1988), and Roger Kimball's *Tenured Radicals: How Politics has Corrupted our Higher Education* (1990). A more recent book by a Canadian academic, Peter Emberley's *Zero Tolerance: Hot Buttons in Canada's Universities* (1996), falls into the same general category. Perhaps these authors, and others who produced similar works during this period, were motivated to some extent by a fear of the possible consequences of the increased status of non-Western culture and that of femininity. Nevertheless, all of the authors named above seem to have been more concerned about what they perceived as problems in the here and now associated with the increased politicization of academic life (some of which, such as the communications problems I am discussing here, I also
recognize as problems) than about long-term consequences—if indeed this was one of their concerns.

Despite the dearth of good examples in the academic literature (including literature about universities by non-academics), a great deal of material has been produced in recent decades that doesn't fall into this narrow category that is clearly hostile towards non-Western cultures and/or that is explicitly racist. During this same period, similar sentiments have often been expressed in acts of violence towards members of visible minorities—including on Western university campuses. Such sentiments expressed during this period may have the same root causes as such sentiments expressed prior to the dawn of postmodernism. On the other hand, it may be that at least some of these more recent manifestations of the denigration of non-Western culture(s), and of racism, are related to a fear of postmodernism. In other words, just as the increase in the status of femininity, in and of itself, may have been less upsetting to Allan Bloom than the loss of the certainty of "truth" that he was likely to associate with such an increase, perhaps the increase in the status of non-Western culture, in and of itself, was less upsetting to these hatemongers than the loss of the certainty of "truth" that they associated with the increase in the status of non-Western culture—even if others didn't make this association. It seems that this is a subject worthy of further exploration.

Examples of the second variation, paralleling communication problems between the characters Jan and Edwige in Kundera's *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting*, that involve an increase in the status of non-Western culture instead of an increase in the status of femininity, are easier to come by in the academic literature. By the late Eighties or early Nineties, various established White, female, academics, whose published work up to that point had reflected a basic cultural feminist stance (including the different variations discussed in the preceding chapter) started to seriously explore postmodern ideas. In some cases, evidence is available in their previous published work that the increase in the status of non-Western culture probably played a significant role in their
transition to postmodernism. (Having addressed in their previous published work issues pertaining to race and culture, in conjunction with feminist issues—as many White, and non-White, feminists did during the Eighties—could be seen as evidence in this regard.) In other cases, it may be surmised that the increase in the status of non-Western culture probably did have some effect. When these White feminists started to seriously explore postmodern ideas, there were hard feelings on the part of other feminists—including feminists who were members of cultural/racial minorities. Jane Flax, a prominent White American, academic feminist, who by the late Eighties or early Nineties apparently had completed the transition to postmodernism, describes these hard feelings—as viewed from her early-Nineties' perspective—at the outset of her paper, "The End of Innocence" (Flax, 1991). Flax appears to believe that these hard feelings among many feminists were mainly related to a fear of postmodernism and its consequences. (She goes on to address some possible fears of this nature.) Although this may very well have been the case for some of these feminists, I would suggest that others, including a large proportion of those who were members of cultural/racial minorities, were still strongly attached to Western metaphysics, and their hard feelings were due to something else entirely. Those who were still strongly attached to Western metaphysics were likely to have interpreted the shift in position of White feminists such as Flax as an act of betrayal.

A second basic variety of communication problems involving the inability of individuals who are still strongly attached to Western metaphysics to recognize that others who have proceeded beyond Western metaphysics have done so, that overlaps to some extent with the variety discussed above involving a failure to recognize different consequences, deserves a brief mention here. This kind of problem basically involves the lumping together of very philosophically (and sometimes also politically) diverse individuals and groups, under the assumption that they all share the same basic outlook. The failure of those self-identified "postmodernists" with one foot still squarely situated in a Western metaphysical philosophical context to differentiate between their own
position and that of other postmodernists, such as Kundera, Fish, Jane Flax from the early Nineties onwards, and so on, may be seen as an example of this phenomenon. An example involving the lumping together of a much more diverse group is the conception of "the academic Left" in *Higher Superstition: The Academic Left and its Quarrels with Science* (Gross & Levitt, 1994).

This book basically consists of a defense of Western science of two American academic scientists, Paul Gross and Norman Levitt, in response to various critiques of Western science by academic humanists and social scientists in the period leading up to when they wrote their book. Through this book, Gross and Levitt fail to distinguish between postmodernists, pre-post-modernists who identify themselves as postmodernists, pre-post-modernists who identify themselves as Leftists, and conventional academic Leftists (or, as I would say, "Leftists"). Gross and Levitt, who are themselves still strongly attached to Western metaphysics, perceive all of the above as conventional "Leftists". Adding to the confusion, probably due in part to the fact that some members of this diverse group called themselves "postmodernists" and perhaps also because these authors wished to suggest that they themselves were *au courant*, Gross and Levitt refer collectively to this diverse group, all of whom they perceived as conventional "Leftists", either as "Leftists" (as in the title of their book), or as "postmodernists"—which *some* members of this diverse group actually were!

To further complicate matters, the position of the authors of *Higher Superstition* when they were writing this book does not seem to have been a simple conservative position associated with Western metaphysics, as they imagined their position to be. Rather, it seems to have been a divided, inherently "contradictory" pre-post-modern position—like the underlying position of many of their supposed adversaries. Illustrating yet another variety of communication problem associated with the increased philosophical diversity of members of the Western academic Family, through *Higher Superstition*. Gross and Levitt lash out at many individuals whose underlying outlooks
closely correspond to their own outlooks. In such instances, these authors could even be seen as lashing out at aspects of themselves. This additional variety of communication problem—that is the last variety I will be discussing here—essentially entails the inability of pre-post-modernists to recognize their commonalities with other pre-post-modernists who interpret their position differently than they do. It is also likely to involve a more fundamental failure to recognize the existence of the divided position that I call a pre-post-modern position. Such problems also are evident in Dinesh D'Souza's two books, *Illiberal Education: The Politics of Race and Sex on Campus* (1991) and *The End of Racism* (1995), and various responses to these books that I will use to illustrate in greater detail this variety of communication problem. (Since the former book deals specifically with higher education, it will receive more attention here.)

As D'Souza himself couldn't help but be aware after reading the strangely mixed reviews for *The End of Racism*, in particular, in which he was strongly attacked by both American "liberals" and "conservatives" and, at the same time, was applauded by members of both groups, there was something odd going on here. As D'Souza stated in the preface to the paperback edition of this book, responding to the response to the original hardcover version.

I say one thing, and some people hear me saying exactly that, but others take me to be saying something quite different, even the precise opposite. I present a position in one way, intending to generate a certain type of intellectual curiosity and provocation, and am seen by some to harbour entirely different motives. (ibid., p. xv)

I would suggest, at an underlying structural level, the confusion surrounding D'Souza's two books stems from two, main, related factors. First, D'Souza's own position when he was writing these books apparently was not a conventional conservative position, as has been commonly assumed, including apparently by D'Souza himself. Rather, it seems to have been a divided pre-post-modern position, involving both conservative and liberal aspects, albeit with a primary identification with conservatism. In addition, more clearly in *The End of Racism* than in *Illiberal Education*, there are certain postmodern aspects.
On the other side of the coin, many of D'Souza's "adversaries", including both parties who he attacks in these books as well as various parties who attacked D'Souza after these books were published (including some who were attacked in these books), apparently saw themselves as conventional liberals. Yet they, too, apparently actually were situated in a divided pre-post-modern position, albeit with a primary identification with liberalism or, in some cases, with postmodernism. At a more fundamental level, thinking of the human dimension of all this, both D'Souza and his mirror-image "adversaries" apparently had been swept up by the philosophical, and political, change that was then occurring in the West, not only within Western universities, yet were prepared to go only so far.

In D'Souza's case, in particular, this seems to be owing largely to D'Souza's special vulnerabilities relating to his "outsider" status in the United States—or at least what he perceived to be his "outsider" status—in combination with his desire to be a "success", within a context in which "success" was defined in absolute terms—or so it would have appeared to D'Souza so long as he remained strongly attached to Western metaphysics. Yet, ironically, during this period, owing in large measure to the increased presence on university campuses in the United States, and elsewhere in the West, of members of cultural/racial minorities, including D'Souza himself, and in turn the increased status of non-Western culture in the West, many members of less vulnerable groups, including some of the most "successful" members of society, understood in conventional terms, were proceeding to postmodernism—if they weren't already there.

Adding to the confusion surrounding D'Souza's books, some of D'Souza's "adversaries", as seen from D'Souza's perspective, were among those who had completed the transition to postmodernism. (One example is Stanley Fish.) However, like Gross and Levitt when they were writing Higher Superstition, D'Souza is unable to clearly distinguish between those possessing postmodern outlooks and those possessing entirely different outlooks. (In the preface to the paperback edition of The End of Racism, there are indications that, by the time he was writing this preface, D'Souza was starting to be
able to make this distinction. Those criticisms of this book that revolved around D'Souza's tendency to essentialize "Black culture" probably helped him to see the light—or at least to catch glimmers from time to time.) However, I won't be saying much about this secondary problem in D'Souza's work, since I want to concentrate now on the problem of pre-post-modernists with different interpretations of their position failing to recognize their commonalties and, underlying this problem, the problem of pre-post-modernists in general failing to recognize that they themselves are situated in a divided position.

Starting with Illiberal Education, that D'Souza wrote shortly after completing an undergraduate degree in the humanities, some of the views expressed by D'Souza in this book are undeniably conservative. For example, as the title of this book indirectly suggests, D'Souza is, generally speaking, in favour of a traditional Western "liberal" education for undergraduate humanities students. This basically amounts to a great books approach, such as that favoured by Allan Bloom. Like Bloom, D'Souza maintains that not only should undergraduates study a core curriculum comprised of ancient and classical Western works but also the "correct" meaning of these works is inherent to the works. Consistent with his reverence of ancient and classical Western works, D'Souza opposes then-recent efforts on certain American university campuses to create an undergraduate humanities curriculum that incorporates a broader spectrum of works, including works by women and by members of non-Western cultures. His primary example in this regard is the sequence of required courses on "Culture, Ideas, and Values" (CIV) that in 1989 replaced the former required Western culture course at Stanford University. As reported by D'Souza, the latter incorporated works mainly by White males (ibid., p. 67)—and apparently mostly dead ones at that. In defending the former required course, D'Souza unfavourably contrasts some of the works in the new curriculum (especially I, Rigoberta Menchu, by the Guatemalan social activist by the same name) with some of the courses in the old curriculum. Going a giant step further, he argues that Western culture on the
whole is inherently superior to the cultures with which non-Western works in the
curriculum are associated. He carries forward the point he makes in *Illiberal Education*
concerning the supposed inherent superiority of Western culture to *The End of Racism*, in
which he argues that Western, White, culture is inherently superior to "Black culture".

On the other hand, getting back to *Illiberal Education*, particularly when D'Souza
turns his attention to his own East Indian heritage, he adopts a far more liberal stance. For
example, following his discussion of the "inferiority" of certain books included in the
new curriculum at Stanford, D'Souza does an about face, and discusses the merits of
certain East Indian works in particular—especially Valmiki's *Ramayana* and Tagore's
*Gitanjali*. D'Souza maintains that each of these books would be a "valuable addition to a
great books curriculum" (ibid., p. 73). Once he has tapped into his own cultural heritage.
D'Souza concedes that there are various other non-Western works, from a variety of
cultures, that also would make valuable additions to such a curriculum—providing they
were studied with sensitivity to the culture in question (ibid., p. 74).

Expanding upon this point in the concluding chapter of *Illiberal Education*,
D'Souza points out that non-Western works in the new CIV courses at Stanford were
often being taught by Western professors who didn't possess sufficient knowledge of the
cultures in question to be teaching these works and who used these works to further their
own Western political agendas. In D'Souza's own words,

As the case of Stanford illustrates, an uncritical examination of non-
Western cultures, in order to favourably contrast them with the West, ends up as a new form of cultural imperialism, in which Western intellectuals
project their own domestic prejudices onto faraway countries, distorting
them beyond recognition to serve political ends. Even where universities
make a serious effort to avoid this trap, it remains questionable whether
they have the academic expertise in the general undergraduate program to
teach students about the history, religion, and literature of Asia, Africa,
and the Arab world. (ibid., p. 255)

Here, not only does D'Souza sound more like a liberal than a conservative but also he
makes those he criticizes, who are likely to have viewed themselves as liberals (including
liberal postmodernists), sound more like conservatives than liberals.
Although, in certain respects, *Illiberal Education* clearly does reflect a conservative outlook, as seen from a postmodern perspective, the underlying dynamics in this book by no means involve simply a conservative attacking liberals and liberalism, which is how this book has commonly been portrayed. Through *Illiberal Education*, D'Souza awkwardly shifts between conservatism and liberalism, and sometimes also stumbles into postmodern terrain, from which he hastily retreats, opening "contradicting" himself as he goes along. This ungainly footwork is accompanied by him outwardly striking out at supposed liberals for their liberalism and sometimes also, as in the above example, for their underlying conservatism. However, since D'Souza's own outlook incorporates both conservative and liberal aspects, in addition to a dawning postmodern awareness, as D'Souza strikes out at others, he is also striking out at aspects of himself. It may be that, at bottom, it is himself who is his own real target. Conceivably, the conservative part of D'Souza, that identified with Western culture, wanted to send packing the liberal part, or more specifically the East Indian part, that identified with non-Western culture, so that the former could claim America as its own turf. On the other hand, the East Indian part of D'Souza continued to hold its ground, getting in a few good jabs itself. This same pattern, but in reverse, could be seen as underlying the many angry attacks in recent decades of supposed liberals on conservatives, or supposed conservatives—including the angry attacks of supposed liberals (including many members of cultural and racial minorities) on D'Souza following the publication of *Illiberal Education* and *The End of Racism*.

As seen from such a perspective, the D'Souza of *Illiberal Education*, in particular, seems to be more deserving of sympathy than of condemnation. As seen from this perspective, the D'Souza of *Illiberal Education* reveals himself, through his awkward, ungainly, dance, to be a confused, vulnerable, young man, caught in a confusing period in the history of Western higher education, and in the history of the West in general, who didn't deserve to be attacked as he was for writing this book. In the writing of this book,
D'Souza apparently already had beat himself up quite sufficiently to make up for any damage his attacks in this book on others may have done to them.

I have less sympathy for the D'Souza of The End of Racism. This D'Souza also strikes me as confused, but by now also something of an opportunist. Having achieved a considerable amount of "success" for Illiberal Education, apparently based largely on the common misconception that this book reflected merely a conventional conservative outlook, in The End of Racism, D'Souza seems to much more carefully control his performance to fit the conservative mold. No longer do the various parts of D'Souza overtly jostle with each other for dominance, resulting in one clear "contradiction" after another. There are still some key "contradictions" in The End of Racism, indicating that this book issued from the same basic divided position as Illiberal Education; however, the "contradictions" in the later book tend to be more subtle, and more controlled, than those in Illiberal Education. Adapting one's behaviour in this manner to conform to how one is perceived by others by itself would be a source of sympathy; however, I can't help but suspect that D'Souza presents himself in this manner in this book at least in part to ensure his continued "success" as a "conservative" American author. Yet, at the same time, I don't think he quite realized how much harm this could do, to others and to himself. As he apparently tried to mold his behaviour to better fit how he was commonly perceived by others, communication between the various parts of himself seems to have broken down almost completely. In The End of Racism, the East Indian part of D'Souza has almost completely disappeared from the scene. Instead of the Westernized, "White", part of D'Souza beating up the non-Western, East Indian, part, and vice versa, we now have essentially a monochromatic "White" D'Souza unremittantly taking shots at African Americans—on whom he seems to be projecting his lingering, now repressed, self-hatred. And to think that all this may have started with a vulnerable young man being misunderstood by others—many of whom appear to have been situated in virtually the same position as D'Souza, except that they saw themselves as liberals.
Dear Belinda,

In the past, you've sometimes struck me as being very White. That may seem like a very strange thing for me to say since, in terms of physical characteristics, I'm as White as you are. Yet, going back as far as when I came back to the South after working in Great Whale, I had been aware of some differences in our outlooks, that I associated with you being White. My more recent cross-cultural experiences seem to have reinforced your Whiteness. It's not that, through these experiences, I came to see myself as Cree, or Inuit, or Black, or Chinese, or Vietnamese, and so on, as were the people with whom I had been dealing. Yet, apparently largely as result of these experiences, I did come to see some of my fellow Caucasians, including you sometimes, as being very White—which is to say, still firmly footed in the culture in which I myself was brought up, where everyone was White. (The image of the congregation at the Sunday sermon at Dunbar Heights United Church back in the early Seventies just came to me. It seems like a perfect example.) Maybe if you and I were both Black, and if I had a fair amount of cross-cultural experience whereas you didn't. I would have come to think of you as very Black—or maybe not. Maybe, even then, I'd think of you as very White.

As part of your Whiteness, you still seem to very conscious of social class and, in turn, you still seem to assume that people who have attended university, such as myself, necessarily possess traditional middle-class views. It's not the case.

I don't recall ever having thought of other members of the family as being especially White, although their views about social class, and about higher education, may be similar to your views. Maybe I think of you in this way largely because I have talked with you more than with others in the family about my experiences working with Native people, in particular, and have wanted you to understand how these experiences have affected me, but you didn't seem to get it.
Maybe, in the past, I didn’t do a very good job of explaining myself. Let me try this again.

Shortly after my job in Great Whale had finished I came to visit you in Toronto for a couple of days. I was suffering from what I then interpreted as a severe case of culture shock, and I hoped that visiting you might help me get over it. I remember telling you about some of my experiences in Great Whale, and in other places I visited in the James Bay region as part of that job. As I realize now, I was probably putting the emphasis in the wrong place. The real problems started when I came back to "civilization".

I remember, the evening after I got back to Montreal, getting together with a male friend, an experimental film-maker, who also had just returned to Montreal, from a vacation in New York, where he had immersed himself in Art. Prior to going up North, I would have been very interested in hearing what he had to say about the New York Art scene. (During my years at McGill, I had made films, including that experimental film that won an award at the Canadian Student Film Festival.) But, at that point, I had no interest at all in this subject, and he had no interest at all in Great Whale. It was a bizarre evening. Also relating to Art, also in that first week back, I went to see a modern dance performance, in which one of the instructors I’d had at McGill was performing. I hoped that seeing this performance would help to bring the old me back; but it made me feel more alienated than ever.

There were other friends that I had a hard time relating to, too. I found it difficult to relate to friends from McGill, especially those who were still attending university—even though I had been a university student myself less than a year ago. My attitudes and their attitudes towards Knowledge, with a capital ‘K’, now seemed to be very different. (More than ever, I realized that, if I were ever to attend graduate school, it wouldn’t be for some time yet.) I also had a hard time relating to my female friends who were actively involved in the feminist movement, as I had been myself before going up North. These women seemed so sure about what was best for all women. I was now far less sure.
As I realize now, I wasn't then suffering from cultural shock so much as I was suffering from "philosophical shock", associated with resituating oneself philosophically within one's own culture. When I was in Great Whale, I began to seriously reassess various ideas associated with feminism that, through my university years, I had accepted unquestioningly. In Great Whale, I began to recognize the extent to which these feminist ideas were bound to a particular culture and, furthermore, the extent to which they served only certain women within that culture. I had received a considerable amount of exposure to postmodern thought prior to going up to Great Whale, through my involvement with Art and also through what I had read of postmodern literary theory up to that point. I even thought of myself as a postmodernist prior to going up to Great Whale. But it seems that, as long as I had remained in my own culture, I had remained, in part, strongly attached to Western metaphysics. My cross-cultural experience in Great Whale seems to have triggered a process in that part of me that was still strongly attached to Western metaphysics of starting to let go. As traumatic as my experiences were when I returned to "civilization", the letting go process that did not occur in one fell swoop. When I was up at S.F.U. doing an M.A. in education, I realized there were parts of me that even by then still hadn't let go. Apparently, it was because, when I visited you in Toronto after coming back from Great Whale, you were still strongly attached to Western metaphysics whereas I had at least started that process of letting go, that you sometimes struck me as being very White.

More than ten years later, when I arrived in Toronto from Vancouver to begin a Ph.D. at O.I.S.E., and stayed with you and your husband for a few weeks while I was getting settled, you generally seemed less white than you had in the past. You now seemed to be taking a greater interest in other cultures. But there was one issue that invariably raised that old specter, namely the issue of me having attended university and, at that juncture, being about to embark on a Ph.D.

You had always been very insecure about your "intelligence". You didn't do well academically as a kid, that you then associated, and apparently continued to
associated, with being of "low intelligence"—or as kids would say, with being "dumb". Making the matter worse, I and your two other sisters had done very well academically through elementary and high school, bringing home the honour rolls for our respective classes most years. I, although not your other sisters, also had gone on to university. You apparently associated these accomplishments with us being of "high intelligence" or, as kids would say, with being "smart". You apparently also believed that I felt the same way as you felt about these matters.

I admit that, back when I was a kid, I did believe that there were differences in our "intelligence", by which I mean supposed "inherent intellectual ability". That was what I had been led to believe by our teachers, and by a variety of other people—including Uncle Peter. However, even back then, I thought that there were other factors involved in our different academic performance. I honestly then believed that you simply weren't interested in competing academically. You had other things that you did very well, including your singing, where you outshone me. You also were very popular with the boys when you were young. Back then (it's probably still true to some extent), doing well academically could have severely decreased your popularity in this area and, it seemed possible to me that, being aware of this, you chose not to shine academically. Another factor that may have contributed to your low academic achievement, that came into the equation when you were about twenty, was that you were then diagnosed with a fairly severe vision problem, that may have been present for many years, going back to when you were a young kid, without being diagnosed.

As an adult, including while I was doing an M.A. in education, my ideas about "intelligence" further evolved, to the point where I came to question the very notion of "intelligence". Traditional Western conceptions of intelligence (including IQ scores) assume absolute standards regarding what is "right" and what is "wrong". But when other cultures are taken into consideration, it's possible to see how standards vary from culture to culture and, furthermore, from group to group within a single culture. When I was staying with you prior to beginning a Ph.D., I recognized that your ideas about "intelligence" had not similarly evolved.
When I was staying with you, any time the subject of me having attended university, or of me being about to embark on a Ph.D., came up, you became very defensive. Your defensiveness flowed over into any other subject that might come up. There were many minor put-downs, that I just let pass. You seemed to feel that you had to knock me off the pedestal upon which you had placed me. There were also outright attacks, that were less easy to overlook. If I disagreed with you in any way, there was a good chance you'd pick a fight with me.

Sometimes it happened even when I agreed with you completely. Within the White framework in which you appeared to be operating, one of us—the one who was "smart"—was necessarily "right", while the other one—the one who was "dumb"—was necessarily "wrong". Once I figured out what was going on, I did my best to altogether avoid the subject of universities, and we all generally got along well through the rest of my stay. However, after I began my program at O.I.S.E., it became exceedingly difficult to altogether avoid this subject.

When you and your husband visited me for the first time in my new apartment, when I was about a month into my program at O.I.S.E., the problems between us reached a new level of intensity. You seemed to have your back up even before you knocked on the door. As soon as I let you in, you glared at my bookcases filled with books, including university texts, and the beginnings of a paper for one of my courses on my desk. From then on, even before O.I.S.E. had been mentioned, you interpreted even the most innocuous comments that I made as if I were trying to show you up. You in turn tried to prove that I was "wrong" on every point, and that you were "right", in an increasingly aggressive manner.

Eventually, after only about half an hour, even you seemed to realize that you had gone too far this time, and stormed out, dragging your poor husband out with you.

A few days later, I tried talking with you on the phone about what had happened, but you wouldn't talk about it. You dismissed your behaviour—and how I may have felt in that situation—by saying that you just had a bad day. When I began to explain to you what my beliefs were now about "intelligence", and that the terms "smart" and "dumb" no longer fit into my conceptual categories,
you cut me off by stating emphatically, "I am not dumb!" Huh?

Through the remainder of my Ph.D. program. I've been cool towards you. If you weren't prepared to deal with the problems between us relating to universities, and if I was going to be engaged for the next few years in intense graduate work, there didn't seem to be any choice. But this is not to say that I haven't been thinking about you—and that I haven't sometimes missed you. I wish that things could have been different.

As some of the things I have said in this letter may help you to understand, not only do I not think of you as "dumb", but the terms "smart" and "dumb", as we used these terms when we were kids, simply don't fit into my conceptual categories anymore, and haven't for many years. When you thought that I thought of you as "dumb", that was just you, projecting your conception of yourself, associated with a White way of thinking, onto me.

You seemed to think it was strange that, during my years at S.F.U., some of closest friends were Chinese. This included a woman from mainland China, who was a fellow M.A. student in education at S.F.U., and her husband, who was then doing a Ph.D. in biochemistry, also at S.F.U., as well as a girl from Hong Kong, newly arrived in Canada, who was just beginning an undergraduate degree at S.F.U., who I tutored for a few years. This wasn't strange at all if you recognize, first, that there is now a huge Chinese population in Vancouver, and second, there are some close parallels between the basic philosophical outlooks of Chinese people and Western postmodernists. For example, Chinese people also don't think of intelligence in absolute terms. In recent years, even most of my White friends, including those I've met in university and elsewhere, haven't had traditional White outlooks.

To go a step further, I find it difficult to believe that you have sincerely believed for a great many years, perhaps even going back before I visited you after working in Great Whale, that you weren't "smart", even if this may have been the case when you were a young kid struggling in school. You aced both of those high-school courses that you took at night-school to complete your high-school
diploma—shortly after you began to wear glasses. In addition, on that cocktail
waitressing test that you had to take when you were working at the Keg several
years ago, when you were between jobs in musical theatre, that involved
memorizing the contents of hundreds of different drinks and different servicing
procedures, you got the highest mark to date in the history of the Keg! It wasn’t
astrophysics but, still, it’s quite remarkable. (I don’t recall that you were ever a
heavy drinker, so that wouldn’t explain it.) You’ve accomplished many other
things in your life since when you were a young kid that also have indicated that
your mental faculties are fully intact, even if you didn’t get marked on them.
Furthermore, since I was aware of these various accomplishments, and you knew
I was aware of them, how could you possibly have thought that I sincerely
believed that you were “dumb”?

Love,

Pam
Some Potential Improvements in Communication

The increased interaction in recent decades between Westerners and members of Asian cultures has made it increasingly important that Westerners possess a sound, basic understanding of how members of Asian cultures view the world. Once the basic framework is there, the details fall into place, and/or follow logically from their place within the framework. This is true not only for the increasing number of Westerners who interact with members of Asian cultures on their own soil, who do business in Asia, and so on. The Asian populations of Western nations, including Canada and the United States, have greatly increased in recent decades. Thinking especially of Western universities, in recent decades an increasing number of students from Asia have come to the West to study in our universities. In the Eighties, in keeping with China's then-new open door policy, students from China became part of the ever-growing contingent of students from Asia on Western university campuses. Just in order to be able to get along with our new neighbours from Asia, co-workers, classmates, students, and so on, Westerners in general now need to possess this basic understanding.

As long as the perspectives of Westerners are constrained by the Western metaphysical philosophical framework, Westerners inevitably will have a very distorted picture of how members of Asian cultures view the world. Operating within this framework, Westerners have viewed all cultures of Asia as comprising essentially just one culture, that of Eastern culture—or simply "the East", that refers as much to a mythical, monolithic, culture as it does to a particular geographical region. The dualistic and hierarchical constraints of this framework made this lumping together of all Asian cultures inevitable. Given the constraints of this framework, not only diverse Asian cultures but also everyone else other than White, upper-class, males, was squeezed into the same basic mold. This included White, upper-class, females in general (those who met the criteria of "Guardians" were a possible exception); White males and females from "working-class" backgrounds; and all members of diverse cultures of the world other than
Western, "White", culture—including Asian cultures. Within this scheme, essentially only certain superficial distinguishing characteristics (most notably geography and certain distinctive physical characteristics of Asians) separated "Eastern culture" from other cultures that fell into the category of non-Western culture.

The close parallels between how Carl Jung portrayed idealized, feminine, Woman, and how he portrayed "the East", especially in *Psychology and Religion: West and East* (Jung, 1938/1969), are not at all surprising if one recognizes the constraints of this framework, and the fact that, assuming a constant perspective within this framework, these two groups are similarly positioned within the framework (albeit along different branches of the multi-branched tree underlying the basic dualistic and hierarchical structure). Jung, who himself positively identified with femininity, portrayed both idealized, feminine, Woman and "the East" in a highly flattering manner. Although, as previously discussed, Jung often "contradicted" himself when discussing women, as opposed to the feminine, ideal, Woman, in the above-mentioned book, Jung doesn't "contradict" himself in a similar manner regarding Asian cultures, or members of Asian cultures. Given the framework within which he was operating, Jung potentially could have held certain racist, derogatory, views towards Asian cultures, or members of Asian cultures, that paralleled his misogynist, derogatory, views towards women. However, quite conceivably, Jung had never had close enough relationships with actual Asian people to ever see "the East" in other than an idealized, disembodied, form.

In addition, Jung associates both idealized, feminine, Woman, and "the East" with intuition, with intuition being understood in this case as essentially the opposite of rationality, or objectivity, associated with both masculinity, and "the West" in general. For example, in the following quotation, Jung contrasts the supposedly "objective" West with the supposedly "intuitive" East, judging the latter to be superior to the former.

In the West, there is a mania for "objectivity", the asceticism of the scientist or the stockbroker, who throws away the beauty and universality of life for the sake of the ideal, or not so ideal, goal. In the East, there is
the wisdom, peace, detachment, and inertia of a psyche that has returned to its dim origins, having left behind all the sorrow and joy of existence as it is and, presumably, ought to be. (1938/1969, p. 493)

Jung is by no means the only Westerner to have characterized "the East" including individual members of Asian cultures as highly intuitive, like idealized Woman. This common characterization is a product of Asian cultures being viewed from within a dualistic and hierarchical philosophical framework. Indeed, within this framework, not only "the East" but also other diverse, cultural/racial, groups that fall into the broad category of non-Western culture are commonly characterized as highly intuitive.10

In the past, members of Asian cultures have brought it to the attention of Westerners that this is not how members of Asian cultures view themselves. For example, in an essay by the Chinese scholar, Shih Hu (1967), in which Shih addresses why China did not develop a science of the Western variety on its own and, as part of his argument, disputes prevailing Western views in this regard, Shih states,

The bifurcation of East and West is unhistorical and untrue as far as the intellectual history of the East is concerned. In the first place, there is no race or culture "which admits only concepts by intuition". Indeed, there is no man who "admits only concepts by intuition." Man is by nature a thinking animal, whose daily practical needs compel him to make inferences for better or for worse, and he often learns to make better and better inferences. . . . I repeat, there is no culture "which admits only (the so-called) concepts by intuition" and which "is automatically prevented from developing science of the Western type". (ibid., p. 105)

However, as long as Westerners have continued to view Asian cultures, including Chinese culture, within the constraints of Western metaphysics, the efforts of Shih, and probably many others like him, to correct Western misconceptions about Asian cultures seem to have been largely in vain.

Moving beyond Western metaphysics into postmodern terrain lays open new possibilities for Westerners in terms of understanding Asian cultures. I'm not going to be

---

10For example in certain educational literature concerning supposed differences in learning styles, and the relationship of these supposed differences to academic performance, the relatively poor academic of many African American children and many Native North American children is said to be caused by them relying too heavily on intuition, supposedly because they come from highly-intuitive cultures, at the expense of rationality. Thinking in such terms, the relatively high academic performance of many supposedly highly-intuitive Asian students is an anomaly.
going into detail here about this subject, but I will give a couple of examples of areas where it seems greater understanding may be achieved. As my first example, it becomes more understandable why there has been such a strong resistance to democracy in China. Even if China eventually were to adopt a "democratic" political system, democracy in China would never manifest itself in the freewheeling manner in which it manifests itself in the United States, for example. Besides particular historical differences between the United States and China, that would incline these two countries to adopt different forms of democracy, the basic philosophical outlook, or basic world view, of Chinese people would not support an American form of democracy. Similarly, although Mao Tse Tung was heavily influenced by Karl Marx when he brought communism to China, communism in China was likely to have manifested itself rather differently in China than in Western nations. One reason is that certain communal sentiments would seem to follow from the basic Chinese world view, whereas such sentiments could even be seen as antithetical, in certain respects, to Western metaphysics. These Chinese communal sentiments would cross what we in the West would view as different social classes, that Marx, a Westerner, viewed as discreet and in a constant state of conflict. As my final example here, it also is more understandable why the Chinese system of higher education on the whole is very practical in its orientation, and why there are close alliances between Chinese universities and various professional communities operating outside of universities. (It also seems reasonable that Western universities should move more in this direction in the postmodern era.)

The advantages of a postmodern outlook in the area of Westerners potentially being able to achieve a better understanding of how members of Asian cultures view the world would seem to outweigh any disadvantages in the area of Westerners experiencing communication problems among ourselves during the present period of philosophical transition, such as the problems I discussed earlier in this chapter. These problems won't last forever—not if I have anything to do with it.
LETTERS BETWEEN AN "OUTSIDER" AND AN "INSIDER"
Dear Pamela,

I was quite surprised to receive a letter from you after all these years. I'm glad to hear that you enjoyed your studies at McGill University. I knew you could do it, if you applied yourself. It sounds like you're having a very nice time working with the Indians and Eskimos. I don't doubt that the northern lights are quite fascinating, although I think you may be exaggerating somewhat to suggest that Great Whale is a "cultural centre". I personally much prefer an evening at the symphony.

Regarding what you said in your letter about IQs and different cultures, I, of course, have heard that argument before. May I suggest an article written by the American, Arthur Jensen, that appeared a few years ago in the American magazine, Psychology Today, entitled "The Differences are Real" (Jensen, 1973). Jensen has done some very interesting work concerning the IQs of Negroes in the United States. Jensen concedes in this article, as I myself do, that the genetic hypothesis has not yet been put to any direct tests by the standard techniques of genetic research (ibid., p. 81). Nevertheless, he argues that it must be seriously considered, for two main reasons, as follows:

1) because the default of the environmentalist theory, which has failed in many of its important predictions, increases the probability of the genetic theory; 2) since genetically conditioned physical characteristics differ markedly between racial groups, there is a strong a priori likelihood that genetically conditioned behavioral or mental characteristics will also differ. Since intelligence and other mental abilities depend upon the physiological structure of the brain, and since the brain, like other organs, is subject to genetic influence, how can anyone disregard the obvious probability of genetic influence on intelligence? (ibid.)

I would strongly recommend that you read the entire article, a copy of which you shouldn't have much difficulty getting your hands on.
A book that deals with related issues that you may enjoy reading, also by an American, is Richard J. Herrnstein's *IQ in the Meritocracy*. In this book, Herrnstein considers race and social class in relation to IQ.

Then there's Canada's very own Philippe Rushton, who works the University of Western Ontario, in London, Ontario. Rushton has done some excellent statistical work involving the relationship of different physical characteristics of different races and their IQs. Rushton's work clearly indicates that the differences in IQs of different races are real. I realize that Rushton's work may be somewhat difficult for you to follow since you're not a scientist; however, you may be able to get something from it all the same. I would imagine that, among most Canadians, as among most civilized people of the world, Rushton's views, that are very similar to my own views, are far more popular than your views.

Cheerio,
Uncle Peter

P.S. Your aunt and your cousins say "Hello" to you, too.
THE EIGHTIES
(from the "Outside")

The Children Venture into the "Outside" World
Dear Charley,

You seem to have assumed that I see you as an academic "outsider" to a greater extent than I actually see you in this manner.

For a start, you've sometimes behaved with me in a manner that suggested that you believed that I doubted your intellectual ability. I don't think that you yourself ever doubted your intellectual ability. The excellent marks that you received through elementary and high school, and your various accomplishments since finishing high school, should have given you a high level of confidence in this area. Nevertheless, some of your behaviour—especially picking fights with me over very minor issues that wouldn't have been worth fighting about unless you believed that there was much more at stake—has suggested to me that you believed that I didn't respect you intellectually.

Now, I know full-well that you excelled academically when you were younger—and you know full-well that I know this. So, the only explanation I've been able to come up with for your behaviour is that you believe that those of us who have attended university view ourselves as intellectually superior to those who haven't, simply by virtue of having attended university. In other words, we presumably see ourselves as "insiders", possessing certain "inside information" that those who have not attended university don't possess, who we presumably see as "outsiders". (It's a somewhat different story with Belinda, who struggled through school when she was younger. Not just the fact that I attended university, whereas she didn't, but also the fact that I earned marks in high school that made it possible for me to be readily accepted into university, whereas she didn't, could be seen as setting us apart.)

I doubt very much that you yourself see it this way—or that you have seen it this way for many years now. I can't see how you could have avoided the major philosophical changes that have been occurring within Western society in recent
decades, that have important implications for the relationship of universities and society as a whole. Yet you seem to have assumed that I do see it this way. Perhaps, at the same time that you saw me taking you for a fool, you were taking me for a fool—an "overeducated" fool.

I haven't spent my entire life on the "inside". During most of the Eighties, I was working and had little to do with universities. In addition, I took some shorter breaks along the way, a year or two here and a year or two there. Also, most of my graduate work was done on a part-time basis. Much of my knowledge that I most value was acquired on the "outside", through practical, hands-on, experience, and through reading books on my own. Even if I had spent my entire life on the "inside", by now it would have been impossible for me to entirely avoid the philosophical changes that have been occurring in our society in recent decades.

You've always been a big reader yourself. In the past, you've told me about several books that you've enjoyed. Through what you've told me about these books, and also through reading some of them myself keeping in mind what you've said about them, I've learned a lot about you that I didn't previously know. I thought I'd tell you here about some of the books that I've read in recent years that were part of my "outside" reading that I've enjoyed. All of these books address, in one way or the other, the philosophical transition presently occurring in the West to what is commonly called postmodernism (you probably already knew that). That has been in progress for the past twenty-five years or so (you probably knew that too).

Through what I have to say to you here about these books and, perhaps, from you eventually reading some of them (you may already have read some of them), you may come to see that I am quite aware of these changes and, in turn, that I no longer see a firm division between the academic "inside" and the academic "outside". Maybe you'll also come to see that I'm not quite as much of a fool as you may have thought I was. All of these books are readily available in public libraries and/or good general bookstores. Some of them also are now available in university libraries and bookstores. I'm sticking for the time being to works that would commonly be categorized as non-fiction. There also are works that commonly would be categorized as fiction, that deal with related issues, that I would highly recommend.
To kick this off, have you ever read anything by the American writer, Alvin Toffler? I suspect that you have, or that you’ve at least heard about his work. This isn’t esoteric, ivory-tower, stuff we’re talking about here. The three books in his trilogy that began with Future Shock, the books by Toffler that I will discuss here, all have been bestsellers internationally. I first read Future Shock, first published in 1970, back in the Seventies. Since then, I’ve also read The Third Wave (must reading for a Third), first published in 1980, and Power Shift, the concluding book in this trilogy, first published in 1990. (Toffler seems to have had a thing for decades.) These books are not about philosophical change, as such. Toffler isn’t a philosopher. (In the latter two of these books, Toffler employs a loose economic framework: yet he doesn’t seem to be a trained economist either.) Moreover, the word “postmodernism” doesn’t appear in any of these books. Yet Toffler’s observations of wide-ranging changes around him in recent decades, and apparent changes in Toffler’s own perspective over the period during which these books were written, seem to provide an excellent chronicle of the major philosophical change that has been occurring in the West in recent decades. (Toffler’s observations are not confined to the West; however, his perspective is that of a Westerner.) There are some important differences between Canada and the United States in the most recent phase of this philosophical change, that I will be addressing when I get to this phase; however, for the initial phases, Toffler’s books admirably chronicle the philosophical journey of both Americans and Canadians, and Westerners of other nationalities.

I first read Future Shock during the period when I took some time out between finishing high school and starting university, when I was traveling in Europe. This book made a very strong impression on me then. It spoke to me about some of my feelings during this period. However, when I was first reading it, I didn’t yet see this book as being about the philosophical shift to postmodernism. We—Toffler and I, and the many other readers of this book who made this book the international bestseller that it became—were still in the early phase of the transition to postmodernism. Besides, the term “postmodernism” wasn’t even invented yet.

Toffler’s basic argument in this book is that there has been an acceleration in the rate of change in the world (that is to say, in the surrounding “outside” world)
since the Industrial Revolution and, more particularly, in the decades leading up
to when he was writing his book, and that this accelerated rate of change caused a
state of mind that he called "future shock". When I first read this book, back in the
Seventies, I took it at face value. I—or at least a part of me—then still
assumed a firm division between the "inside" and the "outside", as did Toffler—or
at least a part of Toffler.

I first read The Third Wave, the second book in Toffler's trilogy, in the early
Eighties, when I was back in B.C. working with kids on Native reserves, after
having finished an undergraduate degree at McGill. I also enjoyed this book. By
then, Toffler and I, and presumably the millions of people worldwide who were
interested enough in what Toffler was saying to also read this book, had proceeded
somewhat further in our philosophical transition. As I now see it, we were then in
the middle of our transitions, somewhere in between postmodernism and Western
metaphysics.

This book begins with Toffler's observation that the world around us (or the
"outside" world) had become increasingly "demassified" in recent decades, by which
he essentially meant increasingly decentralized, or fragmented. To account for this
observation, Toffler put forward his theory concerning how different methods by
which wealth is produced, that he associates with three sequential "waves", cause
the demassification or massification, as the case might be, of societies. In Toffler's
theory, the First Wave is agricultural; the Second Wave is industrial, beginning
with the Industrial Revolution; and the Third Wave, that he maintains
predominates worldwide at present, is information-based. According to Toffler, the
Third Wave is a product of new information technologies, including broadcast
television and computers (that, when Toffler was writing The Third Wave,
were not being used nearly as extensively as they are now). As Toffler suggests,
Second Wave methods of wealth production produce a massified society, whereas
Third Wave methods of wealth production produce a demassified society. (What
Toffler calls the First Wave is almost extraneous in this book. Through his book,
the Second and Third waves receive considerable more attention than this First
Wave. Toffler's cursory discussion of the First Wave suggests that it has more in
common with the Second Wave than with the Third Wave—or, perhaps, that what Toffler calls the First Wave and the Second Wave are actually one and the same."

Once again, when I first read this book, in the early Eighties, I took it at face value. Even then, even after I had worked with Native people for a few years, there was a part of me that still assumed a division between the "inside" and the "outside", just as there was a part of Toffler that still assumed such a division—although, at least in my case, that division was steadily breaking down.

I first read the third and final book in Toffler's trilogy, Power Shift, after I had finished my MA in education at Simon Fraser University, before I began a Ph.D. at OISE. In Power Shift, Toffler carried forward many of the ideas that he introduced in The Third Wave. He still employed his "Wave" terminology, and he still talked about "massified" versus "demassified" societies. However, whereas in The Third Wave, he had talked about different waves in relation to a wide range of issues—including consumer trends, employment (including changing workplace arrangements), various political developments, and so on—in Power Shift, Toffler focuses on shifts in power on a global level, linking these shifts to new methods of wealth production that rely heavily upon the ready exchange of information. Despite the close parallels between Power Shift and The Third Wave, I was far less satisfied by Power Shift than I had been by The Third Wave, and by Future Shock, when I first read these two earlier books.

As I've come to see, my dissatisfaction with Toffler's Power Shift—and, after reading Power Shift, with the two earlier books in Toffler's trilogy—may be explained largely by the different cultures in which Toffler and I were immersed when he was writing/ I was reading Power Shift. In the Eighties, around the time of the fall of the Berlin Wall, certain differences between Canadian culture and American culture seem to have started to become much more pronounced that they had been prior to this period. Before I say anything more about Toffler's three books, I am going to briefly discuss a few books by some Canadian authors, as well as a couple of related newspaper articles that have appeared in Canadian newspapers, that like Toffler's books address the issue of the transition to
postmodernism but that are written from a Canadian as opposed to an American perspective. All of these books and articles were written in the early- to mid-Nineties, around the time that Toffler was writing Power Shift.

In Nationalism Without Walls: The Unbearable Lightness of Being Canadian (1996) (the second part of the title of which was inspired by the title of one of Milan Kundera’s novels, The Unbearable Lightness of Being”). The Canadian, Richard Gwyn, observes that what we have now here in Canada is a distinctively postmodern society, that is unique in the world today. As he mentions in this book, he first made this observation after returning to Canada in the early Nineties, after living in Europe for several years. According to Gwyn, the basic structure of the Canadian political system is highly consistent with postmodernism. For example, Gwyn draws attention to the high degree of decentralization in Canadian politics, with various regions having a considerable degree of autonomy. He further suggests that Canada’s policy of official multiculturalism is consistent with postmodernism. This policy, instituted in the Seventies largely to appease Canada’s large francophone population centred in the province of Quebec, has significantly influenced how Canada has dealt in recent decades with waves of new immigrants to Canada, including many who don’t speak either French or English as their first language.

Comparing Canada to various European nations, and to the United States, Gwyn suggests that Canada may now be better equipped that all these nations to deal effectively with the increase in cultural diversity that has occurred within all these nations in recent decades, as well as with the related increase in the interaction among various cultures on a global level. In a lengthy feature article that appeared 1994 in The Toronto Star (for which Gwyn writes a weekly column), in which Gwyn addressed some of the same themes that he addressed in the above-mentioned book,12 Gwyn stated:

---

11 I said earlier that I wasn’t going to be recommending any fiction here, but I’ll recommend this book nonetheless. All of Kundera’s novels are well worth reading.

12 This article comprised a revised version of a speech that Gwyn gave at a graduation ceremony at Brock University. At the beginning of his book, The Unbearable Lightness of Being Canadian, Gwyn notes that this book originated with this speech.
So far as nation-states are concerned, political postmodernism means that the normal condition is going to become one of multiple loyalties among their citizens, of individuals possessing multiple identities, and of an ever-shifting balance between the opposed virtues of unity and divisions, of solidarity and segregation. I can think of no nation-state better fitted to cope with these 21st century challenges than the curious, fractured, radically decentralized, nation-state of Canada. (Gwyn, 1994, p. 85)

There are some Canadians who would have disagreed with Gwyn's view of the Canadian political system. In Power to Us All: Constitution or Social Contract? (1991), the late George Woodcock presented a view of the structure of the Canadian political system that is, at least outwardly, diametrically opposed to that presented by Richard Gwyn only a few years later. Responding to the then-recent constitutional debates, Woodcock argued that the Canadian political system on the whole already is too centralized and too rigid, and that the adoption of a formal constitution would exacerbate these problems—which is to say, what he saw to be as problems. Picking up on a major theme of these debates, the distinctiveness of Quebec society, Woodcock sided with Bill Vander Zalm, the then-premier of British Columbia (the province where Woodcock resided for most of his adult years), who suggested that all the major regions of Canada, including the province of British Columbia, are viable distinct societies (Woodcock, 1991, p. 105). Woodcock concludes that, instead of adopting a formal constitution, Canada should adopt as its model "open confederation," which Woodcock described as involving greater power for the regions and greater responsiveness within the system as a whole to ongoing social change (ibid., p. 16).

The differences in the views of these two Canadian writers could be explained, in part, by the fact that Woodcock was a Westerner, whereas Gwyn resided in Toronto, in central Canada, and, it follows, that Woodcock's views may have been coloured by the "Western alienation" that has been expressed by many Western writers and politicians, whereas Gwyn's views were not similarly coloured. However, even if this were a factor, more seems to have been involved. Woodcock had been a prominent Canadian intellectual "Leftist" going back at least to the Sixties. Even in the latter portion of his life, Woodcock apparently continued to see the world largely through the prism through which he observed it in the Sixties.
Precedent on Michael's work. The column that appeared in The Globe and Mail included the section that appeared on the border. The prominent and clear,จำกมือความ บน The Globe and Mail, แสดงความ บน The Globe and Mail.

In this study, we sought to determine the role of... Unfortunately, the study also included a section that appeared in The Globe and Mail before we began our study at the OSIE.

Before we began our study at the OSIE, the study included a section that appeared in The Globe and Mail, and this...
Mail was written by Adams. Among the findings from this study that Adams mentioned in this column were the following:

In our research, Canadians emerge as much more sovereign—or more prone to question institutional authority—than are their American cousins. For example, they appear to be more critical of, and less ideological or dogmatic in their attitudes toward, such fundamental institutions as organized religion, the family and government. ... Moreover, the rejection of the Charlottetown accord in last fall's referendum proved once and for all that Canadians no longer depend on their elites—the political and business leaders who formed the backbone of the "Yes" side—to determine what is best for the nation. (Adams. 1993, p. A22)

As reported by Adams, the various findings from the study support the following basic conclusion about Canadians at the time that the study was conducted.

Canadians have what might be termed postmodern values: they do not totally reject the authority of traditional institutions, but they are more detached and autonomous than the stereotype suggests" (ibid.).

Not only does Adams state that Canadians in general possess postmodern values but also he suggests that Americans in general don't possess postmodern values. Adams makes this point more explicitly in his book, Sex in the Snow: Canadian Social Values at the End of the Millennium (1997), based on work he had done with Environics, including presumably the above-mentioned study comparing Canadians and American values. Adams argues in this book that Canadians in general possess postmodern values, whereas Americans in general don't.

This seems to me to be an oversimplification. As is readily apparent from the work of various American postmodern artists, postmodernism is alive and well in the United States. However, due to certain differences between the Canadian and American political system, including those observed by Richard Gwyn, it is reasonable to suppose that, in general, postmodernism would manifest itself somewhat differently in Canada than in the United States. Due to certain "constraints" in the American political system, as seen from a Canadian perspective, in the United States, postmodernism generally would manifest itself in a manner that, especially to a Canadian, is likely to look more like a Western metaphysical philosophical outlook than postmodernism, as we Canadians know it. (In general, artists tend to be less strongly bound to such constraints than other
people.) In other words, an American who, to a Canadian, may appear—at least at first, to not be a postmodernist may actually be a postmodernist. But, on the other hand, due to the "constraints" to which I referred above, more Americans than Canadians do actually seem to get stuck at some point in the transition to postmodernism, somewhere in between postmodernism and Western metaphysics. It's a subtle distinction—sometimes, with Americans, one can never know for sure which is the case—but an important distinction nonetheless. As I see it, Alvin Toffler is one of those Americans who, continuing into the early Nineties, remained stuck in between postmodernism and Western metaphysics. Even though, earlier on, our transition to postmodernism had followed much the same course, by the time that Toffler was writing! I was reading Power Shift, we seem to have gone our separate ways.

As I was now able to see, Toffler's observations of a mainly "demassified" world in Power Shift, and in his previous book The Third Wave, were due as much to Toffler's own state of mind when he was writing these books as to conditions in the "outside" world. By this time that Toffler was writing these books, a part of Toffler seems to have proceeded well into postmodernism—or, using Toffler's terminology, was swept up by the Third Wave. One of the key distinguishing characteristics of postmodernism is a decentering of the self, that predisposes one to see the world as being decentered, or "demassified". Yet another part of Toffler seems to have lingered behind, in a Western metaphysical philosophical context—or, again using Toffler's terminology, continued to be deluged by the Second Wave. For this part of Toffler that lingered behind, there was still a firm separation between the "inside" and the "outside" whereas, in my case, the part of me that had formerly lingered behind had by now caught up with the rest of me, and I no longer saw a firm division.

I now also was able to see that Toffler's observations of an unsettled, chaotic world in Future Shock were due as much to Toffler's state of mind when he was writing this book as conditions in the "outside" world. As I now recognized, when Toffler was writing Future Shock, he was probably actually suffering from an early case of what I call "philosophical shock", involving a clash between two different philosophical perspectives. In this book, Toffler himself suggests that it is
philosophical perspectives that are at stake when he states, assuming a causal relationship between certain changes in the "outside" world and his present state of mind, that these changes are "radically affecting the way that we relate to other people, to things, and to the entire universe of ideas, art, and values" (1970, p. 17). Even so, I didn't fully realize the import of this statement, or that Toffler may at that time have been experiencing what I have come to call philosophical shock, until after I myself had experienced a fairly severe case of it when I returned to the "South" after working in Great Whale, and after I had proceeded far enough beyond this critical juncture to recognize where I had been. (When I was in the midst of my own philosophical shock, I interpreted it as a simple clash between cultures, just as Toffler interpreted his own case as a simple clash between rates of change.)

As a Canadian, I probably would have completed my transition to postmodernism even earlier than I did were it not for the fact that I'm a woman, and positively identified with femininity, understood in an absolute sense. When I was working on my MA thesis up at SFU, I figured out that the transition to postmodernism for men and women, even within the same culture, is likely to be somewhat different and, in turn, seem to have finally completed my own transition to postmodern. But this evidently was not the factor that was holding back Toffler. (Actually, in Toffler's case, an increase in the status of femininity beginning in the Seventies may have made a significant positive contribution to Toffler's philosophical transition, even though he doesn't discuss this factor in any of the three books in his trilogy. If you can't figure out for yourself why this may have been the case, you might want to read that thesis.)

In The Third Wave, Toffler himself draws attention to certain "flaws" that he sees in the American political system. Towards the end of this book, he puts forward a lengthy critique of the two-party system that dominates American politics, in which one party, associated with Liberalism, or the Left, is pitted against another party, associated with Conservatism, or the Right. According to Toffler, this political system was an outmoded relic of the Second Wave and, moreover, was at the root of various tensions in the United States, including in the area of race relations. As Toffler states in this regard, "it is the lack of
appropriate political institutions today that necessarily sharpens conflict between minorities to the knife edge of violence" (ibid., p. 438). Toffler is no less critical of socialism and communism. In the course of criticizing the American two-party system, he makes the point that

In many Western European countries, socialism and communist parties claim to speak for the "working masses". Yet the farther we move beyond industrial mass society, the less tenable the Marxist assumptions. For both masses and classes lose much of their significance in the emerging Third Wave civilization. (1980, p. 436)

As Toffler suggests, socialism and communism are as much bound to Second Wave thinking as the two-party American system.

Through his critique, Toffler presents himself as someone who is not bound to Second Wave thinking. However, as seen from a Canadian postmodern perspective, when Toffler was writing this book, a part of Toffler seems to have been much more strongly attached to Second Wave thinking, and to the two-party American political system, and to conventional notions about social class—that could be seen as providing a basis for not only socialism and communism but also the two-party American political system—than he was able to see. In hindsight, this critique, and even The Third Wave on the whole, could be seen as one part of Toffler that had proceeded into postmodern terrain, challenging another part of himself that remained bound to Western metaphysics, or to what he called the Second Wave. At the same time that Toffler failed to recognize the Second Wave part of himself, he apparently failed to recognize that part of the contemporary American political system that is not strictly Second Wave, that allows diverse voices to be heard, that permitted Toffler to proceed as far as he did into postmodern terrain when he was writing The Third Wave. Even after the fall of the Berlin Wall, when Toffler was writing Power Shift, the American political system in general, and Toffler, seem to have remained strongly divided in underlying philosophical terms.

An American who has completed the transition to postmodernism as Canadians in general would be likely to know it, yet whose work may sometimes suggest that this is not the case, is Stanley Fish. Fish is employed as a professor at Duke University. In North Carolina. He began his career in the field of English
literature; however, in recent years, he also has undertaken work in the field of legal theory, bringing to this work the postmodern perspective that he brings to his work concerning literature. In the past few years, while I've been a student at OISE, I've read several books by Fish. It's quite likely that you've heard of Fish—or have even read some of his books. Even though Fish is a university professor and I happen to have read his books while I've been a university student, Fish's books have attracted considerable interest both "inside" and "outside" of universities, in both Canada and the United States. With much of his work, Fish seems to have deliberately gone after a broad audience, which is consistent with his view that the role of the university professor in the postmodern era should be that of public intellectual. I've found all of the books by Fish that I've read interesting—which is not to say that I've agreed with everything that he has said in these books. However, I'm reserving my discussion here to just one of his books Doing What Comes Naturally: Change, Rhetoric, and the Practice of Theory in Literary and Legal Studies (1989), a collection of essays written by Fish during the Eighties. More particularly, I will be discussing here just a key idea from this book, that is echoed in some of his more recent work. In this review of various books, and related written works, that have served as important landmarks in my philosophical transition in recent years, this is the final item I will be discussing.

As the subtitle of this book indicates, the subject of rhetoric plays an important role in this book. Much of what Fish says in this book about rhetoric is old-hat, and relatively uncontroversial. As he points out, and as anyone who has worked in public relations or advertising, or who has been involved with politics, or anyone else with a shred of common sense, would already have known, how something is said may be just as important as what is said. So what? It is when Fish addresses the "rhetorical strategy"—if it may be called that—of misrepresenting oneself philosophically in order to achieve one's ends that Fish enters far more controversial terrain.

In a nutshell, Fish suggests that, in certain situations, postmodernists such as himself who have proceeded beyond a Western metaphysical philosophical context simply have no choice but to pretend that they are still situated in this context.
Fish's main example is theoretical disputes in the academic realm. According to Fish, to effectively challenge an argument that is being made from a "Right-wing" perspective, one has no choice but to adopt what he calls a "lean" to the "Left". Conversely, to effectively challenge an argument that is being made from a "Leftist" perspective, one has no choice but to adopt a "lean" to the "Right". I have no problem with the idea that, during the present period of philosophical transition, a postmodernist doing academic work may sometimes be obliged to appear to possess a philosophical outlook that he or she doesn't possess. What I do have a problem with is that Fish suggests that pretending to be someone other than who one is a viable, long-term solution to the philosophical change that has been occurring within our universities and within Western society on the whole. At no point in this book does Fish suggest that what he is proposing is merely a temporary solution. On the contrary, he likens this "rhetorical strategy" to various rhetorical strategies that have been employed through the ages, and that inevitably will continue to be employed, by politicians, court-room lawyers, and so on. Presumably, Western universities could remain essentially unchanged indefinitely—except that, whereas people in universities formerly unanimously sincerely believed in what they were doing, at least a large proportion of them, or perhaps even all of them, would not pretend that they believed. What Fish is talking about here is not simply a "rhetorical strategy", although he suggests that it is: what he is talking about is "philosophical misrepresentation". At no point in this book does Fish address the fundamental incompatibility of the activity of theoretical disputation with postmodernism. From a postmodern perspective, scholars "leaning into" each other to achieve theoretical preeminence can look a lot like schoolyard bullying. Also on the subject of morality, Fish at no point addresses the morality of appearing to continue to assume a firm division between the academic "inside" and the academic "outside", which goes hand in hand with assuming a firm division between the "Left" and the "Right", when one no longer actually perceives either. (It would be doubly insidious to at the same time claim that one sees oneself as a public intellectual.)

Perhaps I'm being too harsh with Fish. After all, he is an American. Perhaps, given the present structure of American politics (which, as I earlier discussed,}
would seem to be strongly divided in underlying philosophical terms) Americans such as Fish who possess a postmodern perspective are sometimes obliged to pretend that they are garden-variety "Leftists" or "Right-wingers"\(^{13}\)—and to further pretend that they respect traditional divisions between the "outside" and the "inside".

Come to think of it, there may be various circumstances where even Canadian postmodernists have no choice but to pretend that they see a firm division between the "inside" and the "outside"...
(Reprise, from the Outside In)

By the late Seventies, due in large measure to the increase in the status of femininity during the Seventies, and the varied effects of such an increase as discussed in the preceding chapter, there was already considerable philosophical diversity within the Western academic Family. In the Eighties, this philosophical diversity was compounded by the increase in the status of non-Western culture.

Through the Sixties and Seventies, and continuing through the Eighties and Nineties, members of cultural minorities, by which I basically mean those not of European, or Western, cultural ancestry (I shall be more specific below), became an increasingly strong presence on Western university campuses. Just as, once women had achieved sufficient power within Western universities, those who were so inclined were able to raise the issue of the devaluation of femininity, once members of cultural minorities had achieved sufficient power with these institutions, those who were so inclined were able to raise the issue of the devaluation of non-Western culture. (In using the singular here, I am assuming a Western metaphysical philosophical framework, which was the philosophical framework in which this issue was first raised.) The increase in the status of non-Western culture followed closely on the heels of the increase in the status of femininity. The increase in the status of non-Western culture appears to have had effects that closely parallel the effects of the increased status of femininity except, of course, in this instance, the effects were related to where one was positioned along the branch of the tree underlying Western metaphysics associated with culture, where Western culture was opposed to non-Western culture, that was closely intertwined with the branch associated with race,
where White was opposed to non-White, instead of where one was positioned along the branch associated with gender.

I am not going to be repeating in this chapter all the points that I made in the preceding chapter, substituting non-Western culture for femininity—nor am I going to be doing a two-factor analysis, extrapolating from the single-factor analysis that I did in the preceding chapter. (Readers who are interested in that kind of thing can figure it out for themselves.) However, in the first part of this overview, I will be discussing some key similarities and differences of the effects of the increase in the status of femininity and the increase in the status of non-Western culture, and give one example involving two factors. Then I will move on to some other points, including introducing the contents of the rest of this chapter.

Earlier in this work, I discussed how, due to the intimate connection between the various branches the tree underlying Western metaphysics, one would generally be similarly positioned with respect to its various branches. (Indeed, this point comprises a central premise of my general argument in this work that views concerning social class among Western university students and professors have changed in recent decades largely as a result of changes that have occurred along other branches of the tree underlying Western metaphysics.) There are, however, exceptions, some of which I pointed out in the introductory section of this work. Another exception is the position of White women in general operating within a Western metaphysical philosophical framework with respect to gender and their position with respect to culture/race. As I discussed in the preceding chapter, women in general, including not only White women, operating within this framework would be likely to be in a distinctively divided position with respect to gender. On the other hand, with respect to culture/race, as members of the dominant group in this regard,
generally speaking, White women would be in a position that was similar to the Socratic position with respect to gender of many dominant males—especially males such as Kundera and Fish who, while initially situated in what would appear to have been a Socratic position, were flexible enough to move beyond this position. In contrast, White males would be expected to be similarly positioned with respect to culture/race and gender. Just as the increase in the status of femininity beginning in the Seventies would seem to have had the most pronounced effect in philosophical terms on those men initially situated in a Socratic position with respect to gender, the increase in the status of non-Western culture would seem to have had the most pronounced effect in philosophical terms on those Whites, including both men and women, who were initially situated in a Socratic position with respect to culture/race. Assuming many such men proceeded directly to a postmodern context due to the increase in the status of femininity (or, as seems to have been the case with Allan Bloom, proceeded as far as a conservative pre-post-modern position due to such an increase and were unlikely to proceed any further due an increase in the status of non-Western culture), it would have been mostly White women for whom the increased status of non-Western culture, in and of itself, had the most pronounced effect in philosophical terms.

Turning to members of cultural minorities, those members of cultural minorities, including both males and females, operating within a Western metaphysical philosophical framework would be likely to be in a divided position with respect to culture/race, just as females in general, including members of cultural minorities, would be likely to be in a divided position with respect to gender. Paralleling the pattern outlined in the second half of the preceding chapter, it seems that, for those members of cultural minorities operating within a Western
metaphysical philosophical framework. An increase in the status of non-Western culture, in and of itself, could result in a significant interpretive shift, but would not alter their basic philosophical position. Just as, for many White women, the increase in the status of femininity may actually have held them back from proceeding to postmodernism while other groups forged ahead, based on this model, for many members of cultural and racial minorities, the increase in the status of non-Western culture may have held them back by strengthening their attachment to Western metaphysics.

Considering now the interaction of the increase in the status of femininity and the increase in the status of non-Western culture, as predicted by this model, generally speaking, female members of cultural minorities operating within a Western metaphysical philosophical framework would be likely to retain a strong attachment to Western metaphysics long after other groups, including other females and other members of cultural minorities, had proceeded to postmodernism. An example from the academic literature that could be seen as confirming this predication is the work of Gayatri Spivak, a prominent American professor of English and cultural studies, and both a member of a cultural minority and a woman. Spivak has emerged as a leader of what has been called "the victim's revolution" on American university campuses (her work also is widely read in Canadian universities) by adhering to her hard-line stance. As she has argued, qualities such as tolerance cannot be reasonably expected of minority victims. In her words.

Tolerance is a loaded virtue because you have to have a base of power to practice it. You cannot ask a certain people to 'tolerate' a culture that has historically ignored them at the same time that their children are being indoctrinated into it. (Spivak, 1989, p. 46)

Even well into the Nineties, as more and more Whites and members of cultural minorities—including some female members of such minorities—proceeded to
postmodernism, Spivak apparently remained strongly attached to Western metaphysics.

Within the academic context, this general pattern (there are always exceptions) among members of cultural minorities operating within a Western metaphysical philosophical framework would seem to have applied in both the United States and Canada (and probably elsewhere in the West): however, for reasons which will be addressed later in this work, since the Eighties, outside of universities, there are likely to have been some significant differences between American and Canadian members of cultural minorities.

Further contributing to the philosophical diversity of the Western academic Family, by the mid-Eighties, there were a great many students on Western university campuses who not only were non-Western but also were not operating within a Western metaphysical philosophical framework, and never had operated within this framework. I am thinking especially of the many students from Asian countries who were then studying in Western universities, including many students from the People's Republic of China, that in the early-Eighties started to once again allow its students to study in Western universities. The presence of such students drew attention to the fact that, up to that point, the great majority of "non-Western" students and professors on Western university campuses had been operating, at least in part, within a Western metaphysical philosophical framework. Either they had been born and raised in the West, or they had otherwise received significant exposure to Western culture before attending university. (An example of the latter case is those East Indian students from India who had received a British-style education in India, a remnant of British colonialism in that country. Dinesh D'Souza, who figures prominently in some of the examples I will be providing later in this chapter, has such
a background.) These "non-Western" students and those students with little or no previous exposure to Western culture, who by now also comprised members of the Western academic Family, were likely to possess very different philosophical outlooks. (I will be elaborating shortly.)

By the mid-Eighties, the philosophical (including interpretive) diversity among members of the Western academic Family was sufficiently great and, at the same time, not yet sufficiently understood, and not yet sufficiently taken into account in academic policies and practices, that it was causing some serious communication problems within this Family. In the first part of this chapter, following this overview, I will be discussing some of these communication problems. The examples I will be using here involve either an increase in the status of femininity or an increase in the status of non-Western culture, or both. (Some of these communication problems within the Western academic Family associated with increased philosophical diversity seem to have parallels within my own family.)

Amidst all of this confusion, there was one shining beacon. As Westerners proceeding to postmodernism, they were likely to recognize the folly of traditional Western conceptions of Asian cultures. Operating within a Western metaphysical philosophical framework, in keeping with the dualistic and hierarchical constraints of this framework, Asian cultures in general are seen as comprising a unitary "Eastern culture" or, more broadly yet, as comprising part of "non-Western culture", that may be seen as comprising all cultures other than European, Western, culture. all of which within this framework are seen as having many characteristics in common. From a postmodern perspective, it can readily be seen that this is not how members of Asian cultures perceive themselves. In the latter portion of this chapter, I will be addressing the potential for improved communication between people from Asian cultures not
operating within a Western metaphysical philosophical framework and Westerners, not only within the academic context, associated with the philosophical transition now occurring in the West. Indeed, during the present period of philosophical transition in the West, those Western university students and professors who have completed the transition to postmodernism may find that, in terms of their basic philosophical outlook, and their basic attitudes towards higher education, they have more in common with students and professors from Asian cultures, who have been in the West for only a short time, than they do with many of their fellow Westerners.

In addition to these developments in the area of communications among members of the Western academic Family, associated not only with the Eighties but with the entire period of philosophical transition in the West, there were other important developments in Western universities in the Eighties associated with this philosophical transition. Through the Eighties, many of our universities began to make various changes that were consistent with a shift towards a postmodern outlook among many members of the Western academic Family—as well as among various other stakeholders in our systems of higher education (including taxpayers). Some institutions began to offer programs, especially in the humanities, that specialized in a postmodern, and/or "postmodern" (that is to say, with strong traces of conventional "Leftism"), orientation. A prime example is the English program at Duke University in North Carolina, headed by Stanley Fish, who in 1985 was brought in from another university to head Duke's English department, and then proceeded to bring in other professors who shared his basic outlook. (Based on what I've read about this program, it combines postmodern and "postmodern" aspects—which, for reasons which will be addressed in a subsequent chapter, is consistent with it being offered in an American university.) By now, in the Nineties, Brown University, another elite American
university, offers a full undergraduate humanities curriculum that assumes a postmodern, and/or "postmodern" perspective. In Canadian universities in general, as well as in most American universities, the trend has been to try to better accommodate philosophical diversity within existing programs—including, in some cases, by incorporating in these programs some elements that echo long-standing practices in Asian systems of higher education. Also in the Eighties, in keeping with the significant increase in the use of computers within Western society on the whole during this period, the use of computers on Western university campuses greatly increased during this period. I will be discussing such changes, that have continued into the Nineties, mainly in the chapter of this work concerning the Nineties.

As a final point in this overview, the natural and applied sciences seem to have been much less seriously disrupted by the ongoing shift towards postmodernism than have the humanities and social sciences. Despite the absolutist rhetoric still commonly employed in the natural and applied sciences, these areas have proven in recent decades to be relatively accommodating, at least at the level of research and pedagogy, to diverse philosophical outlooks. Even as an assault was being launched against science by many humanists and social scientists (including, as discussed in the preceding chapter, many feminists), scientists have continued to engage in productive research, and an increasing number of students have been drawn to these areas. Nevertheless, in communication about science by scientists if not at the level of scientific practice, and perhaps also in general communication among scientists concerning non-scientific matters, the same basic problems that will be addressed in the following portion of this chapter, using mainly examples from the humanities and social sciences, seem to have existed. Similarly, the potential for improved communication between Westerners and people from Asian cultures associated with
the shift towards a postmodern outlook in the West that I will be discussing in the latter portion of this chapter pertains as much in the natural and applied sciences as in the humanities and social sciences. (Also later in this work, I will be exploring why, on a certain level, the natural and applied sciences apparently have been able to more readily accommodate increased philosophical diversity associated with the transition to postmodernism, and postmodernism itself, than have the humanities and social sciences.)...
... But, on the other hand, there are times when it's necessary to drop the defenses.

From where I'm now philosophically situated, I have a sense that, despite the very different paths that we've followed, you and I may have more in common than we've formerly realized.

About ten years ago, you started to distance yourself from me. Up to then, despite certain problems that may have existed between us, we muddled through; but at that point, you seemed not to want to have much to do with me anymore. Phone messages weren't returned; when we did talk you claimed to be too busy to get together; and so on. I thought at that time that you were just distancing yourself from me, relegating me to the "outside", as seen from where you were positioned. However, as I was later to learn, around that time, you started to distance yourself from various members of the family. Could it be that you started to distance yourself from various family members because, by that point, your perception of yourself no longer consistent with the perception that other family members had of you—or, more precisely, with what you perceived to be their perception?

Beginning shortly after you had finished high school, within the family, your role had come to be that of "The Working-Class Heroine". Apart from that computer course you took at a local community college, you never pursued formal education beyond high school, yet you had managed to do very well financially. Shortly after you finished high school, you were offered an apprenticeship in the field of stage management at the Charlottetown Festival. (Through high school, you had been doing backstage work for various amateur theatre groups, and had acquired a very good reputation.) You took off for Charlottetown shortly after I took off for Montreal, to begin my studies at McGill. Since then, you had been working steadily in that field. It's a field of work that, even under normal circumstances, when one is working on a show that stays in one place, pays very well, because the field traditionally was dominated by men and because, where professional shows are concerned, it's unionized. When travel is involved, which had been the case for many of the shows that you worked on, the salary goes up considerably, and it can pay extremely well. Our brother also works in a "male" unionized, field, but he never made as much money as you made. Still in your twenties, you already possessed
the two main symbols of working-class success, a house and a car (neither of which I possess, even now). You were the great success story in the family. "The Working-Class Heroine"—or at least certain family members seem to have thought of you that way. But, perhaps, even though you may have once seen yourself in these terms, by the time that you started to distance yourself from various members of the family, you no longer did.

That was soon after you had worked as a stage manager at Expo in Vancouver, that brought together so many cultures and, at the same time, brought Canadian culture into focus. Over a relatively short period, you worked backstage on a variety of shows, with performing groups from around the world, from a variety of cultures. Could it be that this experience working with people from various cultures led you to experience at that juncture philosophical shock, similar to the philosophical shock that I experienced after working with Cree and Inuit people in Great Whale? Or perhaps this experience merely helped you to complete the transition to postmodernism. A few years earlier, you had worked as the stage manager for a cross-Canada tour by the Moscow Circus. Perhaps it was when you were working for the Moscow Circus, which was before the fall of the Berlin Wall, that the wall within you, that formerly clearly separated the "inside" from the "outside", began to break down—even though, ironically, you working side-by-side with citizens of the former Soviet Union, and learning to speak Russian to boot, seemed to have reinforced the perception among certain family members that you were a solid member of the proletariat.

By the time that you began to distance yourself from various family members, perhaps the role that you had been accorded within the family was just as inconsistent with your perception of yourself as the role that I had been accorded within the family was to become inconsistent with my perception of myself. By virtue of having attended university whereas nobody else in the family had done so, my role within the family seems to have been that of somebody to be looked up to, who at the same time looked down on others in the family or, in other words, "The Fount of Knowledge/Enemy of the People". Within a postmodern framework, neither the role that you were accorded nor the role that I had been accorded fits. It can be very disconcerting to be perceived in a way that not only doesn’t agree with
one's perception of oneself but also doesn't comfort one's philosophical framework. Although neither role fits into this framework, if I had to choose between "The Working-Class Persona" or "The Product of Knowledge," I would choose the former. I fully expected when I was younger that you would one day follow me to university. As I now suspect, it may have been in part because you recognized some of the problems that I had with various members of the family since I started university that you never did go. So, you seem to have made a very good life for yourself.

There's something else that we seem to have in common, that just occurred to me. If you put together, with the help of generalists in Great Britain, the history of our family that you sent me the album that you sent me, the album that I'm now working on also concerned family, and the image of a family tree for my thesis from your project. As I said, it was a few years ago now that we put these ideas together, with the help of generalists in Great Britain, the image of a family tree for my thesis, and also the family tree remained an important image throughout. I don't think I got those ideas from your project. It seems more likely that both just happened to be thinking about family quite a bit more than the amount of contact that either of us have had with most family members in recent years might have suggested, and that we independently decided to undertake projects relating to family.

The more I think about this, the more likely it seems that, despite the very different paths we've followed, we may actually have a great deal in common more than we've been able to see ourselves. And also considerably more than other family members, who have provided us with most of our information about each other in recent years, have been able to see.
LETTERS BETWEEN
AN "OUTSIDER"
AND
AN "INSIDER"
Dear Uncle Peter,

When I was back in Vancouver, I did a Master's degree in education. After working for a couple of years after finishing the M.A., I recently moved to Toronto to begin a Ph.D., specializing in higher education, at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, affiliated with the University of Toronto.

I thought of you again in one of my classes here this semester, when we were discussing the subject of academic freedom, and Philippe Rushton and his work concerning the relationship of IQ's and race was used as an example. Rushton's work has stirred up a great deal of controversy in Canada, particularly in this province, which is the province where Rushton lives and works. Such strong negative feelings had been voiced here about Rushton's work that the former premier of the province of Ontario recommended Rushton's dismissal from his position as professor at Western University; however, the premier was overruled by members of the academic community, who argued that Rushton was entitled to his academic freedom. We were asked to give consideration to academic freedom in light of this example.

Among the students in that class, who were mostly Canadian, mostly from the province of Ontario, and mostly employed in Ontario's system of higher education, virtually all seemed to be extremely uncomfortable with Rushton's basic conclusions—although apparently nobody in that class had actually read any of Rushton's scientific papers. Yet, of the handful of students in that class who spoke up specifically about Rushton's work in relation to academic freedom, all maintained that the value of academic freedom exceeded the problems associated with Rushton's work, and that dismissing Rushton would be setting a dangerous precedent. According to these students—who apparently had not read any of Rushton's scientific papers—what was problematic about Rushton's work was that it consisted of "bad science". Without academic freedom, there would be a risk of "good science" being jeopardized by outside interference.
Class Encounters of the Third Kind

225

I was somewhat surprised to hear that argument being employed by these Canadian students. Unlike these students, I personally don’t assume that Rushton’s work consists of “bad science”.

The views that were expressed in that class made me feel like somewhat of an “outsider”, even in my own country. The couple of visiting students from China in that class almost assuredly also felt like “outsiders”—despite Rushton’s claims that Asians have the highest IQ’s of any race. However, I suspect that many other Canadian students in that class who remained silent, as I did, in addition to these Chinese students, who also remained silent, held views in this regard that were more similar to my own.

I’ll keep you posted.

Sincerely,

Pam

Swallows-droppings
ENGLAND

Winter, 1994/1995

Dear Pam,

If you like Philippe Rushton’s work so much, something else you might enjoy is a new book by Richard Herrnstein and Charles Murray, entitled The Bell Curve: Intelligence and Class Structure in American Life (1994). (You may recall that Herrnstein is the author of IQ in the Meritocracy, written about twenty years ago, also well worth reading.)

I’m glad you find your university courses interesting.

Cheerio,

Uncle Peter
Dear Uncle Peter,

You misunderstood me. When I said that I didn't assume that Rushton's work consists of "bad science", I didn't mean that I liked Rushton's work. Since Rushton's work is highly regarded by other psychologists who do the same basic kind of work, including you, without having read Rushton's scientific papers myself, I am more inclined to believe that Rushton's work consists of "good science"—assuming we understand "science" in conventional Western terms, associated with Western metaphysics. But there's the rub. In this day and age, this conventional view of science, upon which Rushton's work is predicated, is likely to seem very politically naïve.

As part of his political naïveté, Rushton apparently has failed to distinguish between contemporary Canadian and contemporary American politics concerning race and culture. There apparently are still many Americans who are inclined to believe that there is a relationship between IQ and race—including members of the American organization that provided Rushton with financial support for his program of research, in addition to the publishers of the American academic journals in which Rushton apparently has published most of his research. This is not to say that all Americans today share this view, but apparently a fair number still do. In contrast, probably very few Canadians today would be inclined to believe that there is a relationship between IQ and race. Such a notion could even be said to be antithetical to contemporary Canadian, multi-cultural, values. This seems to be why Rushton has encountered such strong opposition to his work here in Canada and, at the same time, has had so few supporters—other than those who have defended Rushton's work on the grounds of academic freedom, even if they are otherwise opposed to it.

There are some close parallels between Rushton's work concerning the supposed relationship between race and IQ and Herrnstein's and Murray's work concerning the supposed relationship between social class and IQ, including their recent book, The Bell Curve—which I did get around to reading. Indeed, in their book, Herrnstein and Murray devote quite a bit of attention to race and, in so doing,
comment favourably upon some of Rushton's work. However, I find The Bell Curve far less disturbing than Rushton's work. Beginning with the reference to America in the subtitle of this book, this book clearly is situated in contemporary American society. The explicit American focus in this book itself suggests, to me at least, that this book ought to be interpreted simply as a story about social class in contemporary American society, told from the perspective of two American citizens. Canadians reading this book would be unlikely to assume that what Herrnstein and Murray have to say about the supposed relationship of social class and IQ was equally applicable in Canada ... although perhaps certain people from Ontario, including some of my fellow students now, who work in Ontario's system of higher education, would be more inclined to see The Bell Curve as having relevance in Canada than people from British Columbia, such as myself ... and that may partly explain why those students that spoke up that day regarded Rushton's work as "bad science", without having even read it.

I'm starting to run on here. This letter could easily turn into a long essay, or even a thesis. Before it does, I had better close it off.

Thank you very much for recommending the book.

Sincerely,

Pam

Swallows-droppings
ENGLAND

Spring, 1995

Dear Pam,

I'm glad to hear you liked The Bell Curve, too ... I think.

If you meant to imply that my work concerning IQ is only a "story", of relevance only in England, that's simply not the case.

Cheerio,

Uncle Peter
THE NINETIES

Mid-Career Students
Come "In" from the "Outside"
Since the Seventies, there has been a steady increase on university campuses in North America of older students.\footnote{So there is no confusion about who I'm referring to here, I mean by "older students" all those students roughly over thirty years of age—which is to say students older than those Ph.D. students whose formal educations had never been significantly interrupted.} (This also has been the case in other parts of the West; however, my discussion in this chapter will be focused on North America.) In the Seventies, older university students seem to have comprised mainly women who had stayed at home for several years to raise families and/or who had worked only in relatively low-skilled, low-paying, jobs prior to beginning university, or prior to picking up where they left off in their university studies, as the case might be. Feminism no doubt sparked this trend. However, as time progressed, an increasing proportion of older university students, males and females alike, already possessed a considerable amount of professional experience and, in some cases, continued to hold down responsible positions in the "outside" world while they were attending university. The increased presence of professionally-experienced, or mid-career, students on our university campuses has been due to various factors. On the student side, mid-career students were facing an increasingly competitive job market, associated with a downturn in the economy in the Eighties, in combination with more and more people now earning university degrees. On the university side, many North American universities were now making a considerable effort to attract such students, in some cases offering programs designed especially for such students, to offset their own declining revenues. Mid-career students, in particular, seem to have significantly contributed, in two main ways, to postmodernism gaining increased recognition and acceptance within our universities.

The first of these two main ways is associated with the different rates at which different communities responded to postmodernism—defined here in broad terms.
associated simply with the collapse of Western metaphysics, as I have been defining this term throughout this work. (There are different manifestations of postmodernism, including those that I will be discussing shortly, that should not be confused with postmodernism itself.) Through the Seventies and Eighties, and perhaps also to some extent in the Nineties, mid-career students who were members of professional communities that readily responded to changes in Western society associated with the transition to postmodernism, that started to acknowledge postmodernism relatively early on, and who undertook university studies in sectors of academe where the response to these changes was slower could be seen as having contributed to the greater acceptance of postmodernism, again understood in broad terms, in these areas. For example, artists in general (ranging from struggling self-employed artists to successful novelists such as Kundera, and even including practitioners of various applied arts such as the creative personnel in advertising agencies) were starting to acknowledge postmodernism by the mid-to late-Seventies, around the same time that many professors in English departments were starting to acknowledge postmodernism (or "postmodernism"), yet quite some time before postmodernism received wide recognition in other academic areas, including faculties of education. Mid-career students, with professional reputations and perhaps also relatively high incomes (and mortgages, and everything else that goes with relatively high incomes) on the line, and who were members of professional communities that readily accommodated postmodernism, would be expected to have been strong defenders of postmodernism within the academic context. Yet, by the early Nineties, despite the holdouts, postmodernism, understood in broad terms, already had gained a fair measure of acceptance among members of the academic community on the whole, so we mid-career students of the Nineties shouldn't give ourselves too much credit for bringing postmodernism, defined in broad terms, to our universities.

As I have elsewhere discussed, due to certain distinctive characteristics of the thesis, including the fact that this document may be made available to the general public, such mid-career students who are required to produce a thesis may be even less shy about revealing their postmodern perspectives in the thesis than in other student work.
By the early Nineties, postmodernism had undeniably arrived in our universities. Many books were being published by Western academics, especially those working in the humanities and social sciences, that incorporated the term "postmodernism" in their titles (a sampling of which covered a large table that was the centrepiece of a special display of such books at the University of Toronto bookstore a few years ago). Students and professors alike were using this term liberally—even if some of them had only a vague understanding of what it meant. As discussed in earlier chapters of this work, in the Seventies and Eighties, influenced largely by the increase in the status of femininity and the increase in the status of non-Western culture on Western university campuses, many members of the Western academic Family appear to have completed the transition to postmodernism, while others at least made it half way. In addition, our universities were never completely shut off from various developments outside of universities in the decades leading up to the Nineties, such as those discussed by Alvin Toffler in his trilogy beginning with *Future Shock*, associated with a shift towards postmodernism. By the early Nineties, any member of the Western academic Family who hadn't yet completed the transition to postmodernism (or was close to having done so) probably wasn't going to be influenced to proceed to postmodernism simply by students, even if the students in question were mid-career students. Thus, in the Nineties, probably the greatest contribution of mid-career students to the transition to postmodernism within our universities was that many of us brought to our university studies not simply perspectives that were postmodern, defined in broad terms, but postmodern perspectives that were invested with the interests of the professional communities of which we were members, other than the academic profession. These interests included not only professional interests, in the narrow sense. (Since professional communities are immersed in the broad society, their interests inevitably will incorporate the values of the broad society, in addition to the specific values of the professional community in question.)
To clarify, postmodernism, as I have defined this term throughout this work, is not associated with any particular political orientation. An increase in the status of things associated with the "Left" (such as femininity and non-Western culture) will propel one to postmodernism, but only if we assume as a starting position a dominant, Socratic, position. (In addition, the completion of the transition to postmodernism requires a willingness to let go of Western metaphysics.) It is due to the one-sidedness within a two-sided philosophical system of prevailing discourses concerning the transition to postmodernism that postmodernism has come to be commonly associated with the "Left" (or what is commonly known simply as the Left, without quotations). Related to this one-sidedness, as previously introduced there have been many academic "Leftists" who have ended up stuck in-between Western metaphysics and postmodernism, yet who have seen themselves as postmodernists, and have promoted their distinctively "Leftist" form of postmodernism. (I will be providing more detailed examples later in this chapter.) Instead, postmodernism opens up an infinite array of political potentialities. Postmodernism may manifest itself in an infinite number of ways, depending upon the particular political orientation or, more generally, the interests, of the postmodernist(s) in question. It may be helpful to consider here that, while China has undergone major political upheavals in this century, the basic world view (or, in Western terms, the philosophical outlook) of the Chinese people has remained consistent throughout. There has been interaction between this world view and various political systems adopted in China, with the result that political systems that also have been adopted in parts of the West (most notably Marxism) have manifested themselves somewhat differently in the Chinese context than in the Western context. (Western-style democracy may never be appropriate in the Chinese context—and also may not be appropriate much longer in the West.)

Older university students who are already members of professional communities other than the academic profession are just one of the various channels through which the
interests of professional communities other than the academic profession have entered our universities in recent years. In certain respects, even many younger, professionally inexperienced, students have been bringing to their university studies professional outlooks. In this era of high unemployment for young people, combined with increasing university fees, many younger university students are being highly selective about the kinds of university programs in which they enroll, choosing programs that offer good chances for solid employment upon graduation, linked to specific needs in the current job market, over general programs in the humanities and social sciences. Allan Bloom despaired about this shift in priorities among younger students in *The Closing of the American Mind*—while comfortably employed as a university professor in the humanities, the kind of job that very, very, few members of this younger generation of students could reasonably expect to one day obtain. Even a young Allan Bloom wouldn't stand much of a chance today. In addition, various professional communities operating outside of universities whose members receive their professional training in universities have been putting pressure through their professional organizations on universities to better accommodate the current values of clients served by their members and, in turn, to better accommodate the current interests of their members, and future members. For example, the medical community has exerted pressure upon some medical schools to change medical education to better prepare new physicians to practice medicine in the current climate, in which the paternalistic approach that was formerly commonly employed by physicians, that paralleled the paternalistic approach of the academic Fathers, is likely to put off many people requiring medical care. Another channel through which the interests of professional communities other than the academic profession have made it "inside" from the "outside" in recent years is through corporate donations and sponsorships, that almost invariably have some strings attached. Nevertheless, it is mid-career university students who have been on the front-lines, so to speak, as postmodernism invested with the interests of parties from "outside" of universities has
been making its way to the "inside" while, at the same time, academic knowledge that formerly was reserved for an elite minority has been getting into the hands of more and more people on the "outside", further blurring traditional divisions between the academic "inside" and "outside".

As academic knowledge has expanded in the postmodern era to encompass the knowledge of professional communities from "outside" of universities, as representatives of their (our) professional communities, mid-career students have played a role in determining what constitutes valid academic knowledge—even as they themselves are being evaluated by their professors. Addressing academic evaluation within a postmodern context, Kvale (1990, 1996) has pointed out that, within such a context, academic evaluation consists of the evaluation of knowledge itself, as much as it does of the evaluation of the student. Assuming only the interests of members of the academic profession were to be taken into consideration in the postmodern era, which is an assumption Kvale makes in his above-cited papers, then only members of the academic profession (or, more narrowly, where Kvale places the emphasis, representatives of the various academic disciplines) would have a say in the evaluation of academic knowledge even in the postmodern era. Yet because other "outside" interests are now being taken into greater consideration, more so in some sectors of academe than in other sectors, mid-career students, as representatives of their professional communities, may also sometimes be seen as playing a role in this process.

In the rest of this chapter, I will be providing an "evaluation", of sorts, of different manifestations of postmodernism within the academic context, as seen from my perspective as mid-career, Canadian, university student, with a background in the fine arts, who eventually ended up doing work in education. In the first part of this chapter, following this overview, I will be discussing manifestations of postmodernism (or "postmodernism") within the academic context that I've encountered as a student that are not consistent with my perspective, that I see as running contrary to my interests. In this
section, I will be using as my key examples the work of certain American educational theorists whose work has been highly influential in the Nineties in faculties of education in both the United States and Canada. Since these examples involve the work of American educational theorists, whereas I am a Canadian, it is possible that broad cultural differences between Canada and the United States at present have contributed to my unease with the postmodernism (or "postmodernism") of these theorists as much as different professional interests, in a narrow sense. Although the postmodernism (or "postmodernism") of these educational theorists is different in certain respects from that of Stanley Fish (that, as I've observed, has not had a great deal of impact in faculties of education to date), there are some commonalities, which could be attributed to the shared nationality of these educational theorists and Fish. On the other hand, as I shall elaborate later in this chapter, there are some American postmodernists, including some American academic postmodernists whose work with which I am familiar, whose take on postmodernism is highly consistent with my own. In the latter portion of this chapter (following the letter that falls between its two main sections), I will be discussing various manifestations of postmodernism within the academic context that are more consistent with my perspective, that I support.

Some Different Branches of Postmodernism Within the Present Academic Context

Some Manifestations of Postmodernism (or "Postmodernism") within our Universities that are not Consistent with my Postmodern Outlook

Generally speaking, compared to English departments, faculties of education have been relatively slow in starting to acknowledge postmodernism, at least on an explicit level (which is to say, in published academic writing, at conferences, in classes offered in faculties of education, and so on). On the practical level, especially in those faculties of education with close ties to the teaching profession operating "outside" of universities, the situation may have been quite different. In such faculties, various developments on a
practical level associated with the transition to postmodernism—including some of those that I will be discussing in the latter portion of this chapter—may even have preceded postmodernism first being addressed explicitly. Through at least the first half of the Nineties (a shift is presently in progress, about which I shall say more at the conclusion of this section), in North American faculties of education, when the term "postmodernism" was employed, it generally seems to have been understood in much the same way—or inter-related set of ways—that it was generally understood back in the Seventies in our English departments. (Such ways of understanding "postmodernism" persist in English departments to this day.) A short summary follows immediately below (all of these different ways of understanding "postmodernism" have at least been touched upon earlier in this work), after which I will present some specific examples.

During this period, among the strongest supporters of postmodernism/"postmodernism" within our faculties of education were those who seem to have been situated in a liberal, or "Leftist", pre-post-modern position, in part still strongly attached to Western metaphysics. What they called "postmodernism" was likely to incorporate various conventional "Leftist" elements—to the extent that their "postmodernism" was sometimes barely distinguishable from conventional "Leftism". In contrast, among the strongest opponents of postmodernism were those who may have been among those who most clearly recognized postmodernism for what it was, who didn't possess a strong attachment to the "Left" and who therefore wouldn't have got hung up at this intermediate stage (that's why I didn't use quotation marks here), yet who feared its implications. Others with a negative view of postmodernism—or, in this case, actually "postmodernism"—apparently were situated in virtually the same divided position as many of its supporters. The one difference was that the supporters identified primarily

---

16In the early Nineties, I had a run-in with a "conservative", White, male, professor of education that seems to have closely paralleled my run-in with a "conservative", White, male, professor of literary theory back in the Seventies. This professor of education, like my earlier professor of literary theory, seemed to have been disproportionately antagonistic towards certain kinds of feminism (and towards me), which I came to see was probably because he associated these varieties of feminism with postmodernism, whereas I then didn't. (I have more sympathy for him now than I did back then.)
with the "Left" whereas those in the opposing camp identified primarily with the "Right". Through this period, in faculties of education as in departments of English beginning some time earlier, both many supporters of postmodernism/"postmodernism" and many its opponents confounded postmodernism (involving a collapse of both sides of Western metaphysics), pre-post-modernism (involving a collapse of one side of Western metaphysics) and basic "Leftism".

A good example of what seems to have been the dominant conception of "postmodernism" among its supporters in North American faculties of education in the first half of the Nineties is the work concerning "postmodernism" from this period of the American educational theorists, Stanley Aronowitz and Henri Giroux. In their collection of essays, *Postmodern Education: Politics, Culture, and Social Criticism* (1991), Aronowitz and Giroux, in one of their co-authored essays in the collection, refer to the French theorists Foucault and Derrida, who I mentioned in the chapter of this work concerning the Seventies were highly influential in some North American English departments in this decade, as "the leading theorists of antiessentialism" (1991, p. 151)—or, in other words, as the leading postmodern theorists. (Nowhere is there any mention of their compatriot, Lyotard.) Consistent with the work of Foucault and Derrida from the Seventies onwards, throughout this book Aronowitz and Giroux espouse a form of "postmodernism" that is not far removed from conventional "Leftism", that they call "critical postmodernism". Summing up what these authors see as the value of critical postmodernism, these authors state, "At its best, a critical postmodernism signals the possibility for not only rethinking the issue of educational reform but also creating a pedagogical discourse that deepens the most radical impulses and social practices of democracy itself" (ibid., p. 187). As this quotation explicitly illustrates, these authors did not relinquish their "radical", "Leftist", ideals, even as they proceeded, in part, to a postmodern context.
The following long quotation, in which Aronowitz and Giroux describe their vision of a "postmodern" (as they understand "postmodern") high school, aptly illustrates the "contradictory" (as seen from a postmodern perspective) tendencies in the so-called "postmodernism" of these authors. Before I further comment on the quotation, I will present the quotation in full. (After you've had a go at it on your own, you can compare your conclusions with my conclusions.)

One can imagine a postmodern high school. One of its more distinctive features is that what is to be studied is a matter for local decision making. Higher bodies—state and local school boards, principals and department chairs—may propose courses, texts, and pedagogies. And parents may express their concerns and try to influence what is taught and how. But the students and teachers have final authority. The accountability criteria established by legislatures, according to which curricula must conform to standards established by administrative and political bodies, are rescinded. There are no requirements imposed from above. Instead, students and teachers negotiate which courses, if any, are to be required. Students may propose courses and pursue them as self-studies and teachers may offer courses. Whether students choose to study math, science, literature, or any other course or sequence of courses is subject to extensive planning in which they have an equal role with teachers. Moreover, they engage in curriculum discussions with teachers during which teachers and administrators try to persuade them to follow a regimen of study. The classroom is not routinely organized in the traditional monovocal format, with a lecture, questions and answers after the lecture, and workbooks. In fact, the normal class (the length and frequency of which are indeterminate) now resembles an open classroom where small groups of students are simultaneously studying different aspects of the course subject matter, and others are engaged in individual tutorials with the teacher or another knowledgeable person. Frequently, these groups are to be found in a library or doing field work. And they are obliged to study fewer things than are required by the typical secondary school curriculum. They may study deeply in one or two areas of knowledge for an entire year. The teacher employs a wide variety of pedagogic styles, including lectures to the entire group or to small groups. (ibid., pp. 20-21).

I don't find the first part of this quotation at all odd. It seems entirely reasonable to me that, in the postmodern era, greater decision-making regarding educational issues would occur at the "local" level—or at least what I understand by the "local" level. In first reading this passage, I was reminded of Lyotard's use of the term "local" in The *Postmodern Condition*, when he argued that, in the postmodern era, "grand metanarratives" are relinquished in favour of "local narratives". However, as this passage proceeds, it becomes apparent that what these authors understand by "local" is not
entirely the same as what I understand by "local" (and, for that manner, what Lyotard apparently understood by "local"). The views of Aronowitz and Giroux in this regard are very mixed. On the one hand, they acknowledge that "higher bodies", encompassing elected bodies at various levels and school authorities, as well as parents, may have some say in what goes on in such a classroom. I have little difficulty with these various groups being included among educational decision-makers in the postmodern era—although, as I shall explain shortly, I believe that there is a vital link between the various "higher bodies" mentioned here, and parents who also are mentioned, that is missing from this section. On the other hand, in the second half of this passage, Aronowitz and Giroux suggest that, in the final analysis, teachers and students themselves should have the final say. In certain parts of this second half, they even suggest that the opinions of students should carry greater weight than those of their teachers. For example, discussing the dynamics between teachers and students, Aronowitz and Giroux state, "they [i.e., students] engage in curriculum discussions with teachers during which teachers and administrators try [italics mine] to persuade them to follow a regimen of study." (These are, lest we forget, only high-school students that are being considered here.) This is "local" decision-making at the extreme, at the level of the individual student. The second half of this passage strongly echoes liberal, child-centred, views on education that were the rage in the Sixties (that, in turn, echo Rousseau's liberal, child-centred, "organic", view of education put forward in *Emile*). This level of "local" decision-making, that appears to be associated with the "Leftist" aspect of the divided, pre-post-modern, position of these authors, is very difficult to reconcile with other kinds of "local" decision-making to which they earlier referred, that seem to be associated with the distinctively postmodern aspect of this position—and with a democratic political system.

Getting back to a point I made in the overview of this chapter, it doesn't follow from postmodernism itself that various elected bodies and parents would have greater say in the education of children; however, it does seem to follow from a combination of
Clars 
Encounters of the Third Kind

postmodernism and a democratic political system (such as the political systems in Canada and the United States) that this would be the case. Democratic politics is what links the different parties that Aronowitz and Giroux acknowledge in the first half of this passage may be entitled to greater say in the education of high-school students in the postmodern era. Within a postmodern and democratic context, it seems reasonable that members of the voting public (including parents) and their elected representatives should oversee public education. It is conceivable that these overseers of public education would choose to hand over all control of public education to education specialists, including classroom teachers and presumably also professors of education, and students themselves, or perhaps just students, although this doesn't follow from postmodernism itself nor does it necessarily follow from postmodernism within a democratic political context—nor do either of these scenarios seem very likely. Another possible scenario that Aronowitz and Giroux don't bring up is that parents could be given the greatest (perhaps not all) power in deciding how their children should be educated—which seems to be more likely than either of the two above scenarios. Considering what Aronowitz and Giroux say about the relationship of critical postmodernism and democracy in the shorter quotation from Postmodern Education with which I concluded my introduction to their work (if you will recall, they suggest that critical postmodernism "deepens the most radical impulses and social practices of democracy"), it is highly ironic that these authors give such short shrift to democracy in their vision of a "postmodern" high school.

One interpretation of the failure of Aronowitz and Giroux to adequately address the issue of democracy here (and of similar tendencies among other "postmodern" academics) is that it was a deliberate ploy on their part to protect their professional interests. However, even though the approach of Aronowitz and Giroux does serve to protect their professional interests, I doubt very much that this was the case here. At least at the time that these authors were writing Postmodern Education (almost a decade has passed since this book was first published), they seem to have had one foot (each)
squarely situated in a Western metaphysical philosophical context and, as such, sincerely believed, in part, in the existence of absolute, apolitical, "truth", even though the part of them that had proceeded to postmodernism, with which they most closely identified, neither believed in "truth" nor recognized that there was a part of them that still did believe.

Turning to why, when they wrote this book, Aronowitz and Giroux apparently each had one foot still stuck in a Western metaphysical philosophical context, there seem to have been somewhat different factors involved for each of these authors. Based on the essays included in *Postmodern Education* written independently by Aronowitz, it seems that Aronowitz was heavily influenced by "Leftist" student politics in the Sixties and, indeed, was probably a member of the Sixties' student "Left". For example, in one of these essays, addressing the popular misconception that postmodernism is associated with an apolitical, nihilistic, approach to life, Aronowitz argues that university professors and students continue to have an important role to play in politics in the postmodern era. I agree with Aronowitz on this basic point; however, if I were making this argument myself, I would have done so in a very different manner than does Aronowitz. In arguing this point, Aronowitz refers to the French student revolt of May 1968, considerably predating postmodernism as I understand it, and commends the students in question for having "detonated a process that threatened the existence of the authoritarian Gaullist regime" (ibid., p. 152). (If I were making this argument myself, I would have pointed out that, even though postmodernists in general, unlike the French students involved in the 1968 uprisings and their North American sympathizers, would *not* subscribe to conventional "Leftist" views, or conventional "Right-wing" views, this is not to say that they/we are apolitical.) Similarly, in another essay written independently by Aronowitz concerning the teaching of popular culture in the Nineties, Aronowitz fondly reminisces about the Sixties. According to Aronowitz,
For the real innovation in teaching popular culture is the reintroduction of a theme raised in the midst of 1960s political and educational movements: the idea that we are all authors of the text and that art should [italics mine] be popularly produced. (ibid., p. 165)

It is noteworthy that Aronowitz uses the word "should" here, in keeping with an absolutist, "Leftist", or anti-Socratic, outlook as opposed to the word "may", that would seem to be more in keeping with a postmodern outlook within a democratic political context.

In contrast, even though Giroux is male, his lingering attachment to Western metaphysics seems to be more closely associated with feminism of a variety that highly valorizes femininity—or, seen from a somewhat different angle, this variety of feminism became the central focus for his "Leftist", oppositional, leanings (whereas "the Sixties" became the central focus for Aronowitz' similar leanings). In turn, the conception of "postmodernism" of Giroux, in particular, like that of many female "postmodern" educational theorists from the first half of the Nineties, closely parallels conceptions of "postmodernism" that began to gain favour in North American English departments in the Seventies, such as those of Foucault and Derrida, related to the increase in the status of femininity during this decade. This is readily apparent in the collection of essays edited by Giroux, *Postmodernism, Feminism, and Cultural Politics*, published in the same year as *Postmodern Education* (1991), both in his own writings included in this collection and in his choice of essays by other authors for the collection. Whereas, in *Postmodern Education*, it is suggested that postmodernism is necessarily associated with "Leftist" politics, in a general sense, in *Postmodernism, Feminism, and Cultural Politics*, Giroux is more specific. In his extended introduction to this book, responding to a growing awareness during this period among some feminists (and others) that feminism of a variety that highly valorizes femininity might not be entirely consistent with postmodernism, Giroux, apparently still with one foot squarely in a Western metaphysical philosophical context, attempts to reassure his readers by stating,
It is important to note that this encounter between feminism and postmodernism should not be seen as a gesture to displace a feminist politics with a politics and pedagogy of postmodernism. On the contrary, I think feminism provides postmodernism with a politics, and a great deal more. (ibid., p. 33)

If by "postmodernism" is meant liberal pre-post-modernism, half-way in between postmodernism and Western metaphysics, then there is little question that such feminist politics and "postmodernism" are highly compatible. (Indeed, in those cases where an increase in the status of femininity was directly responsible for propelling one as far as this divided position, they necessarily go hand in hand.) However, in the sense that I am using this term in this work, postmodernism and an absolutist feminism (there are other kinds) are not compatible at all. Patti Lather's book, *Getting Smart: Feminist Research and Pedagogy With/in the Postmodern*, also published in 1991, provides a good example of the work of a female "postmodern" educational theorist from this period that also assumes a compatibility between postmodernism and a variety of feminism still bound to Western metaphysics. (The first part of the title of this book itself suggests to me Lather's continued attachment to Western metaphysics when she was writing this book.)

A factor that may have contributed to *both* Aronowitz and Giroux remaining, in part, still strongly attached to Western metaphysics, that is likely to be more readily apparent to Canadians in general than to Americans in general, is that these authors are Americans and, moreover, live and work in the United States. As addressed in the preceding chapter, the contemporary American political system on the whole seems to be more closely bound to Western metaphysics than the contemporary Canadian political system on the whole. (I shall be providing an additional example of this shortly.) Thus, perhaps Aronowitz and Giroux were prohibited from proceeding any further than they did (at least at the time that they were doing the above-discussed work concerning "postmodernism") due to their internalization of certain "constraints" (as seen from a Canadian postmodern perspective) built into the American political system.
Perhaps such "constraints" built into the American political system also have played some role in the work of Stanley Fish concerning postmodernism from the Eighties and continuing through the Nineties. From my perspective, Fish more clearly has completed the transition to postmodernism than Aronowitz and Giroux, as they presented themselves in the above-discussed works. (For example, in his 1995 book, Professional Correctness: Literary Studies and Political Change, Fish expresses an awareness of some fundamental "contradictions" in work associated with the critical theory movement, the broad movement extending across various academic disciplines of which Aronowitz and Giroux are members, of which Aronowitz and Giroux, like other critical theorists, don't seem to be aware.) Yet, as I previously discussed, Fish has suggested that, within the academic context, the transition to postmodernism requires little more than a shift to a "performance mode", with professors and students now performing the roles of university professors and students of yore, when Western metaphysics supported our universities. As a Canadian and, moreover, one who has spent a considerable number of years "outside" of universities, I personally find this scenario quite appalling. Yet, from the perspective of many Americans, operating within a political system whose underlying structure closely replicates the underlying dualistic and hierarchical structure of Western metaphysics, this scenario might seem quite reasonable. I should add here, however, that this scenario might seem quite reasonable to Americans if it were to be realized in the American context. Even Stanley Fish—or perhaps I should say especially Stanley Fish, who clearly recognizes certain important differences between Canada and the United States—would be likely to have certain reservations about the realization of this scenario in the contemporary Canadian context.

As indicated in his previously-mentioned book, There's No Such Thing as Free Speech (1994), Fish is keenly aware of a significant difference between Canada and the United States at present in the area of our respective legal systems. In one of his essays in this book in which he situates the concept of free speech in a legal context, Fish observes
that Canada's legal system, based on the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (that came into effect in 1982), is more consistent with postmodernism in a democratic political context than is the legal system of the United States. Fish's primary example is the case of James Keegstra, the Alberta high school teacher who was found by the Canadian courts to have systematically denigrated Jews and Judaism. To summarize Fish's argument, the American the American First Amendment guarantees free speech to all Americans. It follows that, if Keegstra had been teaching in the United States, he probably would not have faced criminal charges. The Canadian Charter has its own version of the American First Amendment in Section 2(b), which states: "Everyone has the following fundamental freedoms . . . (b) freedom of thought, belief, opinion, and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication." However, Section 2(b), like every other section of the Canadian Charter, is qualified by Section 1: "The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantees the rights and freedoms set out in it subject only to such reasonable limits prescribed by law as can be demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society." Keegstra was found by the Canadian courts to have overstepped "reasonable limits". According to Fish, this added proviso is consistent with a central tenet of postmodern thought, that comprises the central theme of Fish's book, that we cannot escape our social locations and, thus, there is no such thing as complete freedom of speech. With its greater balance between individual rights and the exigencies of collective social life, that hinges on this added proviso, Fish sees the Canadian legal system as being more consistent with postmodernism within a democratic political context than the American legal system. (See Fish, 1994, especially pp. 104-105.)

If, as suggested here, Canadians in general are operating within a legal framework in which it is assumed that we cannot escape our social locations and, it follows, in which it is assumed that all knowledge incorporates human bias, then clearly the "postmodernism" of Aronowitz and Giroux, that assumes that knowledge is, at least in
part, free of human bias, is not consistent with contemporary Canadian values. The "postmodernism" of these authors, and of other prominent academics who share their conception of "postmodernism", might be attractive in the short-term to certain Canadians who get stalled temporarily in the in-between pre-post-modern position as they are proceeding to postmodernism, as defined in this work. (This group is likely to include many Canadian women who positively identify with femininity.) Yet, in the Canadian context, it doesn't provide a satisfactory, long-term, answer. Nevertheless, this basic variation of postmodernism/"postmodernism" has persisted in Canadian universities, particularly at the level of academic discourses concerning postmodernism (or what I previously called the "explicit" level, as opposed to the "practical" level, that will be addressed in the latter portion of this chapter), from the mid- to late-Seventies through to the present—probably due to a considerable extent to the strong American influence on Canadian university campuses.

Although Fish's basic understanding of what postmodernism comprises is more consistent with my own understanding (and presumably also the understanding of most Canadians today), it seems that Fish's views concerning how postmodernism should be taken up in the academic context are just as inconsistent with contemporary Canadian values as is the "postmodernism" of Aronowitz and Giroux. Within the American academic context in general, such a manifestation of postmodernism may indeed involve a recognition of certain "outside" interests that prevailed within American society on the whole; however, within the Canadian academic context in general, it is far more questionable whether "outside" interests would be served, other than certain American "outside" interests that made their way into our universities through academic, "insider", channels. While the interests of those Canadian members of the academic profession whose profession crosses national boundaries may be served, there is less likelihood that the interests of other Canadians, including Canadian university students in general, would be served. It seems that, for the majority of Canadians, for many years now, there have
been disadvantages to acting as though one were still strongly attached to Western metaphysics even though one wasn’t that have seriously outweighed any possible advantages. Yet, despite the incongruity of such a manifestation of postmodernism within the contemporary Canadian context, there may have been postmodernists on Canadian university campuses through the Nineties, and perhaps beginning before then, who have responded to postmodernism in the manner advocated by Fish, yet who have been more circumspect than Fish.

As I earlier noted, by the second half of the Nineties, some significant changes were afoot in how postmodernism was being addressed in academic discourses on North American university campuses, by both Canadians and Americans. Even though the American political and legal systems have retained their distinctive features, some prominent American academics have by now proceeded beyond the pre-post-modern context, that they formerly associated with postmodernism, and/or have realized that the possible disadvantages of acting as though one were strongly bound to Western metaphysics even if one weren’t outweigh the possible advantages. This includes some prominent American academic feminists, among others.

As a prime example, the publication in the influential feminist journal, Signs, in 1996 of a paper by the American educational theorist, Jane Roland Martin, entitled "Aerial Distance, Esotericism, and Other Closely Related Traps," seems to have been hugely significant for academic feminists, including not only those specializing in education itself, across North America (and perhaps elsewhere in the West). As I earlier discussed, Martin gained prominence in the Eighties for promoting a form of feminism that highly valorized femininity, including in her widely-read book, Reclaiming a Conversation: The Ideal of the Educated Woman (1985). By the mid-Nineties, Martin apparently had loosened her grip sufficiently on femininity, understood in absolute, essentialist, terms, to proceed to a postmodern context. In this paper, Martin acknowledges that, in the past, academic feminists such as herself had subscribed to the
same basic value system as those male academics of whom they had been critical, without being aware of it. As Martin puts it, this basic value system incorporated as a central tenet the possibility of "aerial distance", which is to say the possibility that one can escape one's earthbound social location. Translated into the terms I have been employing throughout this work, both academic feminists such as Martin and those male academics of whom they (we) had been critical had been operating within a dualistic and hierarchical Western metaphysical philosophical framework. As a result, according to Martin, practical, situated, knowledge has hitherto been denigrated to a great extent within the academy. (Martin recognizes certain broad differences between how the natural and applied sciences and the humanities and social sciences have accommodated practical knowledge.) As Martin proposes in this paper, practical, situated, knowledge, including presumably practical knowledge pertaining to professions other than the academic profession, should receive greater recognition within the academy on the whole. Ironically, in this paper, Martin is highly critical of feminist "postmodernists" — which is to say many self-identified feminist "postmodernists" who Martin accepts as being who they say they are—for doing highly esoteric work that, as Martin points out, assumes the possibility of "aerial distance" to the same extent as her own earlier work. I regard Jane Roland Martin, as she presents herself in this paper, as the postmodernist, and those feminist "postmodernists" of whom she is highly critical as liberal pre-postmodernists.

Other prominent American academic feminists who by the mid-Nineties (or a few years earlier) seem to have completed the transition to postmodernism, and/or who realized that the disadvantages of acting as though one were still strongly attached to Western metaphysics even if one weren't could outweigh the advantages (even in the American context), and who were by then voicing related views include Jane Flax (including as she presented herself in her 1992 paper, "The End of Innocence"); Carolyn Merchant (including as she presented herself in her 1992 book, Radical Ecology: The Search for a Livable
World, in which she includes a lengthy list of environmental organizations operating "outside" of universities in both the United States and Canada, and suggests to her readers that they get involved with such organizations; and, finally, Patti Lather (including how she presented herself in a lecture she gave at the University of Toronto a few years ago, that suggested she had moved considerably beyond where she was situated when she was writing her 1991 book, Getting Smart). On the male side, some of the relatively recent work of the American professor of literature and rhetoric, Richard Lanham, including his 1993 book, The Electronic Word: Democracy, Technology and the Arts, aspects of which I will discuss in the latter portion of this chapter, illustrate some of the same tendencies. Also by the mid-Nineties, Lyotard's book, The Postmodern Condition, the original version of which as I previously mentioned consisted of a commissioned report for the government of the province of Quebec presented in 1979 (the year I graduated from McGill University, in Montreal, Quebec), was receiving frequent mention in assorted published academic writing concerning higher education, and education in general, produced by various Americans—as well as also (finally) by some Canadians.

Even though it hasn't been until quite recently that the views of Lyotard, and of others who have shared his basic outlook, concerning the implications of postmodernism for Western higher education have received considerable recognition in academic discourses in North America concerning postmodernism, on a practical level, beginning in the Seventies, various significant changes have occurred, and continue to occur, within our universities, to a greater extent at some universities than at others, and also to a greater extent in some university faculties and departments than in others, that are consistent with these views. Given these significant changes, it is conceivable that many younger people today, including both those on the "inside" and on the "outside", but especially those on the "outside", who first became acquainted with universities after the gap between the academic "inside" and "outside" had considerable narrowed, may simply not recognize that there is, or ever was, a gap of this nature.
Dear Dan,

Amid all of the confusion within our family regarding me attending university, you've been one of my greatest sources of support. You never seem to have felt threatened by me having attended university. Yet, ironically, apart from Dad and, of course, his parents (and his siblings, our Canadian uncles and aunt, and so on), employing conventional categories and criteria, you generally would be seen as the most "working class" of us all. You're employed in the logging industry in a unionized job, and your job involves a lot of physical labour. To look at you in your work gear—hard hat, work boots, and all—you're a "real working-class guy". For recreation, you like doing outdoorsy things like fishing and camping. You also like having a few beers with the guys, although you seem to have eased up in that area since you got older. Cooking fits in there somewhere, too, although it doesn't exactly fit the male, working-class stereotype. (Unlike the rest of us, you never were directly involved with theatre.) Also, you have the least formal education of us all, having packed it in, and packed your suitcases for a job in northern B.C., before you finished Grade 12.

I've thought about why you never seem to have felt threatened by me having attended university. Part of it may be just certain idiosyncrasies of your personality. You've always tended to be easygoing, with a good sense of humour, and able to get along well with a wide variety of people. (Perhaps almost being killed in a car accident when you were a teenager helped you to put things into perspective.) Perhaps also the fact that you are, at least by now, earning a relatively good income (more than a university-educated teacher just starting out) while, on the other side of the coin, I'm not exactly a multi-millionaire, has contributed to you not feeling threatened. In addition, gender may have been a factor. If I had been male, like you, and had attended university whereas you had not, things may have been quite different between us. More like they have been between me and some of our sisters. But, in addition, there may have been
something else going on here that didn't occur to me until recently. It's possible that you haven't felt threatened by me having attended university largely because you never perceived our universities, or me having attended university and you not having attended university, in traditional terms.

You had relatively little contact with universities and with university-educated people when you were growing up. When Mum and Dad split up and we moved with Mum to the city, in an area of the city very close to a university, you lasted with us there less than a year, and then moved back with Dad. Unlike the rest of us, you didn't go to a high school where probably well over half the kids had parents who had attended university, many of whom were actually professors at the university. During those younger years, virtually your only contact with university-educated people may have been with your teachers, and doctors and dentists and the like. During that period, when Western metaphysical philosophy still had a strong grip on our society, you probably did acquire some conventional views regarding social class; however, you may not have made traditional associations between social class and universities, simply because you had such limited contact with universities and university-educated people during that period. Then, by the age of seventeen, you were living in northern B.C., in an area where there then weren't any universities, or even colleges, for hundreds of miles around, and where the people who had attended university, or even college, were then probably still few and far between. Once you did start to become more aware of universities (if for no other reason than because I was attending university), you may simply have assumed that what went on in universities was, and even always had been, fully consistent with what by then was your postmodern perspective. Living in B.C., where the system of higher education has been relatively accepting of postmodernism, including relatively accepting of postmodern perspectives invested with the interests of professional communities other than the academic profession, would have helped you to think in those terms.

If you had had more contact with universities and with university-educated people when you were younger, yet knew little about what was going on in universities in recent decades, you might have assumed that today's university
students and recent graduates necessarily possess traditional "middle-class" outlooks. Like most Western university students and graduates of yore. (I think it would be more appropriate to call such outlooks "upper-class", since some university students, past and present, come from very wealthy backgrounds.) I think certain other family members have had problems with me attending university because they have assumed that I acquired such an outlook as a university students and, as a result, now look down on them. But, in your case, as someone who may have first come to see universities from a postmodern perspective, maybe you've just never had any old baggage of this nature. Could that be?

Perhaps a large number of today's younger people, under forty, who have had relatively little contact with universities and with university-educated people through the years assume that universities are simply places where people go to get trained for certain jobs that involve complex skills that, because of the greater complexity of these jobs, require more years of formal education. That by no means has always been the case. It used to be that the main goal of universities was, as the French philosopher, Lyotard, put it, "to train an elite capable of guiding the nation towards its emancipation" (1984, p. 43). Yeah, right. Like I'm supposed to lead you and a bunch of your lager buddies to your emancipation. If I tried something like that, it's possible that one of them would come at me with a chainsaw and down me like a skinny pine. When Lyotard said back in 1979, "[In the present context], universities and the institutions of higher learning are called upon to create skills, and no longer ideals—so many doctors, so many teachers in a given discipline, so many engineers, so many administrators, etc." (Ibid.), this was a novel idea. While I've been attending university on and off through the past twenty years, our universities have been in the midst of a major political and philosophical transition. If a younger person today who previously had very little contact with universities and with university-educated people were to enroll in university, they could be quite surprised. On the other hand, everything might meet their expectations. It would depend on the university they were attending, the kind of program in which they were enrolled.
and who their professors were. Today, there’s a considerable amount of variation in philosophical outlooks within our universities.

Of course, it’s been getting harder and harder over the years to avoid having considerable contact with university-educated people. There are so many of us now who have attended university. It’s even all over T.V. Even in situation comedies these days, more and more characters have attended university. Characters who haven’t attended university, like Rosanne and her husband, had kids who were attending university or college. Also, because of high unemployment rates for younger people, in particular, with university degrees, young people with university degrees are now applying for jobs that previously almost invariably would have gone to people who had never gone past high school, that traditionally would have been categorized as "working-class" jobs. Here in Ontario, I’ve heard of young people with degrees going after jobs on the assembly-line at automotive plants—and getting those jobs over people with less formal education who previously would have got the jobs. Such jobs are attractive to young people with university degrees in this age of high unemployment because they’re unionized jobs that pay relatively well—and they’re jobs, plain and simple. I suspect there has been a similar trend in your industry, even if most logging jobs are in areas far more distant from universities than are these automotive plants.

For example, there’s what happened to you a few years ago when you applied for that apprenticeship as an electrician with your company. You were really excited about it when you applied for it, and figured that you had a good chance of getting it. However, so many people applied for the apprenticeship that they could afford to be very selective. In addition to being a member of the union, they required a minimum of high-school graduation, including having passed Physics 12. Physics 12? It’s hard for me to imagine a bunch of loggers having Physics 12. From what I remember from high school, that course tended to be reserved for kids who were headed to university, and who were intending to major in engineering or physics itself. But, by now, there very well may be a considerable number of loggers who do have Physics 12, and who have gone on to university.
When you were telling me about not getting that apprenticeship and the reasons why, you said something to me that seemed very out of character for you. You said, "But I am smart," implying that you thought that I might have a low opinion of you intellectually. This had never been an issue between us before. At the time, these words didn't even seem like your words. I wondered if you might have picked up the idea that I thought of you in this manner from certain other members of the family, who seem to have assumed that I had a low opinion of them intellectually, and who may have given you the impression that I also thought of you in this manner. But maybe what was going on was that, by now, you yourself had had a considerably amount of contact with people with university educations, and had even personally experienced being excluded because you possessed less formal education than others, and by now you suspected that I, as someone who had attended university, saw you as "dumb". Even though you may have first learned to see universities from a postmodern perspective, maybe by now you were starting to get the hang of the place of universities within a Western metaphysical philosophical framework.

All the same, after I objected to what you said, unlike some other people, you quickly let it go, as if you didn't sincerely believe that I did have a low opinion of you intellectually but, rather, simply had been exploring that possibility. Since then—even after there was little doubt that you recognized what was at stake—you continued to be very supportive towards me.

Thank you, kiddo.

Love,

Pam
Some Manifestations of Postmodernism within our Universities that are Consistent with my Postmodern Outlook

In the remaining portion of this chapter, I have outlined, in point form, some manifestations of postmodernism within Western universities in recent years, focusing on the Canadian scene, that take into consideration the interests of professional communities operating "outside" of universities. Many of these examples are based on my personal observations as a student at four different Canadian universities, and as a visitor at others, over the past twenty years or so. With only a few exceptions, I haven't mentioned at what university, or universities, or even in what province, these developments have occurred. With all the changes that have been occurring in Canadian universities in the past few years, it's quite likely that something that I observed, or read about, that was once unique to a particular institution has by now expanded to various institutions, or will in the very near future. Nevertheless, I am from British Columbia, and it would be safe to assume that many of my examples are based on my knowledge of British Columbia's system of higher education. (Since British Columbia's system of higher education in general has been relatively responsive in recent decades to "outside" interests, some of the changes that I've mentioned here may still be unique to this province.) Other examples here, including some examples from countries other than Canada, are based on my readings or information obtained through friends and colleagues.17

A. Providing students with practical, job-related, experience as part of degree programs

- Giving university students academic credits for practical experience

At some Canadian universities, students who have been in the workforce for at least a few years and who are embarking on their first university degree in an area related to the area in which they were employed may receive advance academic credits for their work experience, acquired before they began university. This is consistent with a trend

17 An additional reason for my lack of specificity here is that this is not the appropriate place for me to be expressing preferences in this regard.
towards incorporating more practical, work, experience within academic programs, to be discussed in the following section.

- *Apprenticeship as part of degree programs*

In recent years, there has been a significant expansion of co-op education programs, involving universities and "outside" enterprises, including businesses, non-profit organizations, and so on, co-operating to provide students with training in specialized areas. In the course of their degree programs, students not only attend lectures but also receive considerable hands-on experience working within the broad community. In general, students work on-site and, when they are doing so, are treated very much like regular employees. (In the co-op education programs with which I'm most familiar, students are paid a modest salary for the work they do on-site.) As a variation, I'm aware of one degree program in computer science where businesses bring computing projects with which they need assistance to the university, and students do work for these businesses on-campus as part of their program. It seems that this is a trickier sort of situation. If students are not made to feel that they are "employees" of the businesses for which they do work, they are unlikely to possess the loyalties of employees and, thus, there may be problems with confidentiality.

Turning to teacher education, going back at least as far as when I was a young kid in school and student teachers paid us a visit every year, teacher education programs in general have involved a practical, apprenticeship, element. In recent decades, this has generally added up to a month or two of a year-long program. The new teacher education program at Queen's University, in Ontario, puts more emphasis on practical experience than has any teacher education program in Canada to date. Student teachers spend most of their program working in classrooms alongside experienced teachers.

As for graduate students in general (including graduate students in education), most university departments that offer graduate programs provide on-campus jobs for students, related to their areas of studies. In the past, such jobs generally have been
confined to teaching assistant or research assistant jobs, involving traditional academic work. These days, if the program in which a graduate student is enrolled places a high value on practical knowledge, as many university programs now do, there is a good likelihood that the jobs available for graduate students will include practical kinds of jobs, in addition to more traditional graduate student jobs. These jobs may provide an opportunity for mid-career students to put their professional experience to good use, and also to expand their skills in their areas of expertise, while they are doing graduate work.

Certain graduate programs in education in Holland about which I've been told essentially involve an extended apprenticeship for profit-making educational enterprises, with students being paid a modest salary throughout. Like contemporary Canadian society, contemporary Dutch society has various distinctive postmodern characteristics. (For example, both countries are known for being relatively tolerant towards minority perspectives.) Yet, generally speaking, Holland's system of higher education seems to have more readily adapted to postmodernism of a variety befitting a distinctively postmodern society than has Canada's system of higher education. I will be providing an additional example of recent developments in universities in Holland in keeping with a shift towards postmodernism that also take into account "outsider" perspectives, and elaborating upon the example I provided here, below.

B. Various options for the thesis

- Practical, professionally-oriented, projects in lieu of academic theses

Many faculties of education in Canada now award two different degrees at the Master's level and, in some cases, also at the Doctoral level. At the Master's level, these two degrees are the M.A. and the M.Ed. At the Ph.D. level, they are the Ph.D. and the Ed.D.

At the Master's level, in some faculties of education in this country, the differences between the two degrees may be essentially only quantitative. A large project counts towards an M.A. whereas a more modest project counts towards an M.Ed. In both
cases, it is required that the projects be distinctively academic in nature—although some more experimental written works are now being produced that also would fall into this category (including the thesis that you are now reading). Programs that offer two different degrees at the Master's level, yet in which the two degrees differ essentially only in quantitative terms, tend to offer only one degree at the Doctoral level, the Ph.D. degree, that requires the completion of a traditional (or relatively traditional) thesis. A student applying for entry into the Ph.D. program who has completed an M.A., that involved writing a full thesis, may be looked upon more favourably than one who has completed an M.Ed., that involved writing only an extended essay; however, this isn't necessarily so since, in this case, the difference between the two degrees is really only quantitative.

In other faculties of education in Canada, there is a clearer distinction between the M.A. and the M.Ed. degrees. The M.A. requires the completion of an academic thesis, whereas the M.Ed. involves the completion of a practical project related to education, that requires roughly the same amount of time and energy as the completion of a thesis. Such projects may comprise the production of curriculum materials (including educational computer programs or print materials), the design of a particular administrative system that could be used in schools, and so on. Established members of the teaching profession or other educational professionals working "outside" of universities knowledgeable in the student's area of interest may be included as part of the committee evaluating the project for academic credit. Those faculties of education that offer a practical, professionally-oriented, thesis option are, in effect, acknowledging the interests of education-related professions operating "outside" of universities. Nonetheless, among some professors of the old school, a practical project may not be viewed as highly as the M.A. degree requiring the completion of an academic thesis. Programs that offer two different degrees at the Master's level where there is a distinct qualitative difference between the two degrees are more likely to offer two different degrees at the Ph.D. level, where the same basic pattern is repeated.
It is reasonable to suppose that some graduate programs in other academic disciplines, in Canada and elsewhere, are now offering similar options to graduate students; however, I’m not personally familiar with any such programs. Returning to the example from Holland that I briefly mentioned above in the section concerning apprenticeship as part of degree programs, it seems reasonable that, if a major, independent, project were required of these Dutch students, that most students in such a program would produce a practical, professionally-oriented, project. At the same time, Holland, known for its tolerance of cultural diversity, has been a leader among Western nations in accepting more experimental forms not directly tied to existing professional practices for theses, and for other written assignments, in the social sciences and humanities. I shall say more about this in the following sub-section.

- Options in terms of writing style for theses, and other academic writing

I already said quite a bit about various forms now being employed in academic writing by postmodernists in the introductory section of this work. I have just a few more things to say about this subject in this sub-section.

During the present period of philosophical transition in Western universities, Holland has been a leader among Western nations in implementing very practical, apprenticeship-style, graduate programs and, at the same time, has been a leader in recognizing works, including theses, written in highly experimental forms, at least by traditional academic standards, as having academic legitimacy. This may at first seem somewhat incongruous; however, keeping in mind that Western higher education is now in the midst of a major philosophical transition, it actually isn’t. Thinking now of the more experimental works, in certain graduate programs in Holland\(^\text{18}\), a thesis may

\(^{18}\) I was informed about this by a professor in a faculty of education here in Canada, who I regard as a very reliable source yet who, unfortunately, wasn’t very specific. I have done a fairly extensive search of recent educational literature to find more specific information in this regard, but had no luck. Perhaps it would be against the spirit of such a development that it was well-documented. (I don’t doubt what I was told since, besides the trustworthiness of my source, this development is highly consistent with other features of contemporary Dutch society on the whole.)
include as little as one page written in a traditional academic style. This one page, required to supposedly establish academic authority, may even concern a subject entirely different than the subject of the rest of the thesis. The only requirement is that it be written in an authoritative, traditional academic, style. Like the recognition of more practical, professionally-related, projects as having academic legitimacy, the recognition of such experimental works as having academic legitimacy involves a recognition of the legitimacy of postmodern perspectives invested with interests other than strictly academic interests. It isn't only professional interests, in even the broadest sense, that may prompt students to produce works of this nature. Yet, in the case of mid-career students who have worked in areas where being "creative" is part of the job, they (we) may be inspired to produce more experimental works in part due to their (our) professional backgrounds.

Just as some of the practical, professionally-oriented, projects that I discussed above may be computer-based, more experimental works produced by students also may be computer-based (including works that use hypertext, computer graphics, and so on). The increasing use of computer technology in these areas is consistent with the increased use of computer technology across our university campuses in recent years, to which the following section is devoted.

C. Computer technology

- Increased use of computer technology by students on campus

In the past decade, there has been a two-way relationship between the increased use of computer technology by students on university campuses and the interests of professional communities in the "outside" world.

It has been just over a decade since computers broke out of those glass cages, that protected the old behemoths from dust as well as from tampering by unauthorized personnel, and started to become commonplace tools in businesses, schools, and homes. I started an M.A. in education when personal computers were just starting to proliferate in businesses and universities. The university I was then attending seemed to be
considerably ahead at that time of most businesses, and other "outside" enterprises, in being equipped with the latest computer technology and in providing training in the use of computers to its "personnel" including, since this was a university, professors, support staff, and students. Students had ready access to top-of-the-line computers in the various computer labs dotted around the campus, made possible in part through co-operative ventures with major computer companies, that seem to have realized that it could be in their interests to provide students at this university with ready access to their products, including their high-end products. (This particular university seems to have received especially good treatment from the computer companies during this period, which may have been due in part to the fact that a large proportion of its students were part-time, mid-career, students, many of whom already had a certain amount of clout in the businesses, and so on, for which they worked.) During this same period, computers were being heavily marketed in the business world, and it is quite likely the same saturation eventually would have been reached in this sector without the indirect (and also direct) marketing of computers that was done in universities in the mid- to late-Eighties; however, the additional marketing that was being done in universities during this period probably speeded up the process.

More recently, there seems to have been a shift in who has been taking the leadership role in this regard. We are past the stage when computers were a novelty and universities provided a first exposure to, and basic training in the use of, computers to staff and students. Students entering university today are likely to come equipped with basic computer literacy—and more. Mid-career students who have been working in medium- to large-sized businesses are likely to find that, in general, computers are being used in universities in a less sophisticated manner than that to which they are accustomed. Businesses, always trying to get ahead of their competitors, have been making optimal use of the computer technology that they have at hand, and also have been providing direction for further developments in this area. Younger university students today, fresh
from high school, are likely to have been working on computers since they were young kids. In addition, both mid-career students and younger students are now likely to own their own home computers and/or lap-tops. University research teams comprised of professors of computer science and their students continue to contribute to innovation in this general area; however, even university-based research in this general area has become increasingly driven by business interests. At the same time, the education of future computer specialists is being done increasingly in co-operation with business and other "outside" enterprises (as in the co-operative education programs I previously discussed).

Some universities are now playing catch-up, providing opportunities for students to more optimally employ new computer technology in the course of their studies, to better prepare them to assume responsible roles in the workplace, that are increasingly likely to involve the use of computers. For example, they are offering credit courses for students via the Internet; putting greater emphasis on Web-based research as opposed to library research; allowing students to do computer-based projects instead of standard written projects to fulfill their course requirements (and, at the graduate level, even thesis requirements); and so on. As suggested by Richard Lanham (1993), the use of these more sophisticated computer technologies by university students and professors has helped to further legitimize within the academic context postmodernism understood in general terms, at the same time that their use may be seen as reflecting the increased acceptance within this context of postmodern perspectives invested with the interests of professional communities other than the academic profession. I shall elaborate in the following subsection.

- The blurring of the academic "inside" and "outside" by new computer technology

Richard Lanham, author of *The Electronic Word: Democracy, Technology, and the Arts* (1993), whose name has cropped up earlier in this work, is an American professor of literature and rhetoric whose views regarding where our universities,
especially university humanities departments, ought to be headed in the postmodern era are highly consistent with my own views. Although Lanham deals in *The Electronic Word* more with what ought to be as opposed to what already is, which has been the focus of this portion of this chapter, some of the main points that Lanham makes in this book seem to be worth mentioning here. First, a bit of background about Lanham. Lanham's academic interests correspond in some key respects with those of another American academic who has figured prominently in this work, Stanley Fish. (Fish mentions in his 1994 book, *There's No Such Thing as Free Speech*, that he and Lanham are old friends—although I suspect their friendship has not been entirely without tension.) However, Lanham possesses certain areas of expertise that Fish apparently doesn't possess (and vice versa). One of Lanham's additional areas of expertise, that is reflected in *The Electronic Word*, is that Lanham possesses a good knowledge of how postmodernism has manifested itself in recent decades in the fine arts in general, including not only literature (one of his teaching specialties) but also music, painting, sculpture, film, and even advertising. Another of Lanham's special areas of expertise is the uses of new computer technology, the subject that ties together the various essays in his above-mentioned book. Lanham's additional expertise in these areas, in addition to another factor that I will mention below (and probably other factors that are beyond the scope of this summary), seem to have contributed to Lanham concluding, unlike Fish, that, in the postmodern era, our universities should give greater recognition to "outside" interests.

Lanham's basic premise in several of the essays in *The Electronic Word* is that various kinds of manipulations of a written text that are possible with today's computer technology have eroded the authority of the Word (with a capital "W", suggesting "the Word of God"). Some of the manipulations that Lanham discusses, that are all possible even with today's basic word processing programs, include moving words around with ease, as well as inserting and deleting words; changing fonts and font sizes, so that the
graphic design of words itself starts to convey a great deal of meaning; inserting other
graphic elements, as well as, with some programs, even sound, into a written text; readily
repeating passages using the "Copy" and "Paste" functions (perhaps with a slight
variation in each case), and so on. All of these possible manipulations, according to
Lanham, make written texts seem less authoritative—or less sacred—than they once did.
Discussing hypertext, that also is relatively basic by today's standards, Lanham
describes how the fixed, canonical text "simply explodes into the ether" (ibid., p. 31).
Lanham goes on to point out that, even before new computer technology made it possible
to easily manipulate written text in these various ways, many artists whose work has
come to be identified with postmodernism, or its antecedents (including Dadaism and
Italian Futurism), were experimenting with such manipulations of text before (in some
cases long before) postmodernism started to receive wide recognition in universities.
According to Lanham, just being able to manipulate text in ways such as those mentioned
above is likely to foster among users of computers a basic postmodern awareness. This is
the is component of his argument. (i.e., Lanham assumes that university professors and
students who use computers, in additional to other users of computers, would possess
basic postmodern outlooks by virtue of being users.) Moreover, according to Lanham,
since the authority of Western universities has depended to a great extent in the past on
the authority of the Word, it seems reasonable to him that, in an era in which the Word
has lost a great deal of its former authority, Western universities should be prepared to
relinquish some of their former authority, and turn increasingly to the "outside" for
direction. This is the "ought" part—about which I shall say more shortly.

As I discussed in the introductory section of this work, the authority of the Word
relative to what it had been was considerably weakened at another point in Western
history, namely between the 11th and 13th Centuries, in the period leading up to the

19 As I discussed in the introductory portion of this work, hypertext consists of a text that incorporates
multiple "layers", where readers are given the freedom to move among these different layers, and also
among different sections within a single layer. It seems that the work that you are now reading could
readily be adapted to a hypertext form.
founding of the first Western universities. In parts of Europe during this period there was a significant increase in literacy among members of the general population, including an increase in the use of writing for mundane purposes (including for personal letters). As I suggested in this introductory section, there may have been a relationship between the founding of the first Western universities, following close on the heels of this increase in literacy, and the loss of authority among certain powerful factions in society that had depended, at least in part, upon them being members of a literate minority (and/or being able to afford the services of members of a literate minority).

While he doesn't delve into the early history of Western universities in *The Electronic Word*, in this book Lanham does discuss how, at least in the recent period, there has been an intimate relationship between Western universities and the Word. As Lanham suggests, since authority is no longer associated with the Word in the way that it once was, it would be foolhardy for Western universities to attempt to preserve the authority of the Word and, it may be inferred, their own authority at this juncture in history. Thinking of the humanities in particular, the general area in which he has worked for many years, Lanham suggests that there should now be a greater emphasis in undergraduate humanities programs on promoting a high level of proficiency in the use of computers among humanities students which, as he points out, these students are now likely to need to obtain solid employment "outside" of universities, and less of an emphasis on the Word. (This is coming from a university professor who has devoted much of his professional life up to this point to the Word!) Lanham's beliefs concerning where our universities, especially humanities programs, ought to be headed also assume certain basic beliefs about democracy, that seem to be consistent with my own basic beliefs in this area—even though Lanham is an American whereas I am a Canadian.

Unlike his compatriots, the "postmodern" educational theorists, Aronowitz and Giroux, who, as discussed earlier in this chapter, also address in their work democracy and its supposed relationship with postmodernism (or "postmodernism"), and also unlike Fish,
Lanham suggests that it is simply consistent with postmodernism within a democratic political context that universities should take into greater consideration "outside" interests.

*The Electronic Word* was written a few years before use of the Internet really started to take off, greatly expanding the potential of personal computers. Had the use of the Internet been at the stage that it is now, a further justification that Lanham might have used in his book, also related to new computer technology, for universities taking into greater consideration "outside" interests in the postmodern era is that, as a television commercial from a few years ago promoting the Internet pointed out, "The Internet is about being free to cross borders." With more and more academic knowledge now being freely available on the Internet, including scholarly journals published in electronic form and even university course materials for some distance education courses (about which I shall say more below), in addition to so many other kinds of knowledge, the border between the academic "inside" and "outside" is one of those borders. As academic knowledge, traditionally associated with the upper class, has become less of a secret (and less sacred), the border separating "upper class" and "lower class" has further eroded.

**D. Special provisions for part-time, employed, students**

*Distance education*

Many of our universities are making it increasingly easy for students who are working off-campus to obtain university credits. Distance education courses are part of this trend. Such courses enable students to more readily fit their studies in with their other commitments, and also make it possible for students who live too far from a university, or too far from the university of their choice (I shall elaborate shortly), to pick up university credits.

The Internet has proven to be a valuable tool for distance education courses, making it easier for professors to communicate with students, and students to communicate with each other. In addition, many reference materials that students may
require for their courses are now available on the Internet. As the Internet has made
distance education programs increasingly attractive for mid-career students (and other
students), and distance has come to be even less of a restriction that it was with
traditional, correspondence-school type, distance education courses, distance education
programs for mid-career students have significantly expanded, and have been marketed
over an increasingly broad area. For example, various Canadian universities are now
offering distance education M.B.A. programs. (For most of these programs, a period of
residency, which may be only a few weeks, also is required.) Such programs are being
heavily marketed across Canada in the business community. Some of the more popular
programs are likely to have students living in various Canadian cities, from coast to coast.
It's very different from the old days when if one lived in, for example, Vancouver, and
was taking university courses, these courses were necessarily courses offered by U.B.C.
or S.F.U., or in the odd case, the University of Washington in Washington state. Now,
one can be living in Vancouver and be taking university courses towards an M.B.A. via
distance education from a university whose campus is thousands of miles away. The
competition that already exists among distance education M.B.A. programs is likely to
expand to other program areas.

- Increased accessibility of on-campus programs

Various accommodations have been made in recent years by many of our
universities to make it easier for people working off campus to attend university courses
on campus. More and more university courses are now being offered in the evenings and
on weekends, at times that are convenient for students who work a standard work-week,
Monday through Friday, during the day. In addition, more universities are offering a full
program on a year-round basis. At Simon Fraser University, that always has had a tri-
semester system and full program year-round, the busiest period of the year in the Faculty
of Education has been during the summer semester, since school teachers comprise a
large proportion of students studying in the Faculty, and many of these students have
found it more convenient to take university courses in the summer semester, coinciding with their relatively long summer vacations, than at other times in the year.

Some universities have been opening up satellite campuses in locations that are especially convenient for working students. S.F.U.'s "new" (by now almost ten years old) satellite campus in the heart of downtown Vancouver, convenient for students working in the downtown core, is a prime example.

- **Increased range of programs**

Special university programs designed for mid-career students that cater specifically to their professional interests have expanded in recent years. These programs include both credit programs, including degree programs as well as shorter certificate or diploma programs, and non-credit programs. This trend was forecast by Lyotard in *The Postmodern Condition*. The following long quotation both illustrates Lyotard's foresight in this regard, and also nicely sums up some of the interests that today's mid-career students are likely to bring to their university studies.

> [I]n addition to its professionalist function, the University is beginning, or should begin, to play a new role in improving the system's performance—that of retraining and continuing education. Outside the universities, departments, or institutions with a professional orientation, knowledge will no longer be transmitted en bloc, once and for all, to young people before their entry into the work force: rather it is and will be served "à la carte" to adults who are either already working or expect to be, for the purpose of improving their skills and chances of promotion, but also to help them acquire information, languages, and language games allowing them both to widen their occupational horizons and to articulate their technical and ethical experience. (1984, p. 49)

An important point raised by Lyotard at the end of this passage, that is sometimes overlooked in discussions of skill-oriented, or professionally-oriented, higher education, is that consideration of ethical issues comprises a vital part of such education.

**E. Increased integration of college and university programs**

In the province of British Columbia, from which I hail, and where I did half of a B.A. (in English/Communications) and all of an M.A. (in education, specializing in
educational philosophy), the close integration of programs offered at its universities and community colleges, including the transfer of credits from these colleges to its universities, is not controversial. Postmodernism was not an issue when B.C.'s community colleges first started sprouting up across the province. As I suggested earlier on, in the chapter of this work concerning the Sixties, had British Columbia then been a more densely populated, wealthier, province, it is quite likely that its new colleges would have had entirely distinct functions from those of its universities, as was the case with the new publicly-funded colleges that started sprouting up across Ontario around the same time. Nevertheless, in overall terms, British Columbia's system of higher education, in which the functions of its universities and community colleges have been integrated to some extent since its first community colleges were up and running, has proven to be very accommodating to postmodernism—especially of the variety that takes into account "outside" professional interests.

B.C.'s community colleges recently have been granted degree-granting status. The degrees that they award are not the same as the degrees awarded by B.C.'s universities, but they are degrees nonetheless. The new degree-granting status of these institutions serves as formal recognition of the increased status, especially within the British Columbia context, of applied, practical, knowledge, that traditionally throughout the West was viewed as inferior to academic, upper-class, knowledge.

In summary, as seen from the perspective of this mid-career student, by the Nineties, there had been various developments within universities across Canada, and elsewhere in the West, that were consistent with postmodernism invested with the interests of professional communities other than the academic profession. These interests included not only professional interests in the narrow sense, but also various national and, in some cases, also regional, interests. In contrast, beginning in the mid- to late-Seventies
and continuing through the Nineties, postmodernism has sometimes been taken up within our universities in a manner that preserves a firm boundary between the academic "inside" and "outside"—or at least that appears to do so. In certain political contexts, including the American context on the whole, perhaps this manifestation of postmodernism (or "postmodernism") does actually serve the interests of the population in general, including not only members of the academic profession. (Among Americans in general, including even among American academics, there seem to have been exceptions, especially as the decade proceeded.) However, in the Canadian context, such a manifestation of postmodernism (or "postmodernism") seems to be inconsistent with the values of contemporary Canadian society on the whole. Also through the Nineties, in some quarters of academe, postmodernism of any variety still had not received acceptance. In some cases, it was even outwardly rejected. Through the Nineties, at universities across Canada, including in some cases even within single university faculties or departments, all of these different responses to postmodernism (or "postmodernism") co-existed. In turn, mid-career Canadian university students with postmodern perspectives coming "in" from the "outside" were likely to find that responses to them (or to us) varied to a great extent.
LETTERS BETWEEN AN "OUTSIDER" AND AN "INSIDER"
Dear Uncle Peter,

I'm at the stage in my Ph.D. program now where I'm starting to seriously think about a topic for my Ph.D. thesis. I'm considering doing something about family, that would take me back full circle to my earliest experience of academic research, helping you with your Ph.D. thesis about the relationship of various inherited physical characteristics and IQ among members of our family, back when I was a young kid. Yet, despite family being central to both your Ph.D. thesis and what I have in mind for mine, the two works would be very different in terms of content and form.

Regarding content, I'm considering a project in which I would explore problems in communication between university students of recent decades and those who have had little contact with universities in recent decades, associated with the philosophical transition that has been occurring during this period within Western universities, and elsewhere in the West. I'd be focusing on such problems within one family, namely our family, with an emphasis on problems between me and members of my immediate family (that is to say my parents and siblings). The category of social class would receive special attention in the project. People who have had little contact with our universities in recent decades are likely to assume that today's university students necessarily either possess in advance, or acquire in the course of their university educations, traditional upper-class (or what are more commonly known as middle-class) views, like Western university students of yore. In recent decades, many Western university students seem to have possessed postmodern attitudes regarding social class, and the relationship of social class and higher education, while those who don't know what has been going on in universities in recent decades may not have been aware of this. IQ testing would fit in there somewhere, too.

Regarding the form of the work, the form would be related to the content. Various styles of writing (and perhaps also some printing) would be involved. I'm thinking about including some letters in it, one reason being that those letters you and I wrote to each other when I was helping you with your research comprised an integral part of my earliest experience of academic research. The form would be very different from the form of your Ph.D. thesis, that
was virtually all graphs and statistics, but there would be a relationship nonetheless.

Communication problems associated with the transition to postmodernism are not confined to university students and academic "outsiders". Many examples can be found in recent academic literature of established members of the academic community having difficulty understanding each other because they apparently have been situated in different philosophical contexts or, in some cases, because they have been situated in the same basic philosophical context, yet haven't been able to see this. In addition, university students today, who may be seen from an "outsider" perspective as "insiders" yet who may not see themselves entirely in this manner, may have problems of this nature with more established members of the academic community. For example, you and I have never seen eye to eye. Thinking of the project I have in mind, more established members of the academic community who aren't postmodernists, including you, may have some difficulty understanding the significance of a project concerning communication problems between university students who possess postmodern perspectives and those "outsiders" who have had little contact with universities in recent decades. They may even assume that such problems are merely a figment of my imagination. They also may have difficulty with the form. What is it that I could say to them to help them understand the project?

Sincerely,

Pam
Dear Pam,

You could talk about the philosophy of science since, whether or not they are scientists, it may be their loyalties towards Western science combined with a particular view of Western science, that has provided a major obstacle in their transition to postmodernism. You might begin by reassuring them that you don't have anything against Western science, per se. You could say that your problem is with the traditional Western view of science, dating back to the Seventeenth Century, associated with Western metaphysics. The traditional Western view is that scientific knowledge entails "objective" knowledge, free from human bias. Scientific knowledge was traditionally viewed in the West as the epitome of sacred/secret knowledge, and continued to be widely seen in this manner even after other kinds of knowledge increasing lost this status. As many Westerners now recognize, the control of variables, that is the core of the Western scientific method, that provides a basis for the replication of scientific experiments (assuming all the variables can be controlled), had been confused with the elimination of all human biases.

Yet it doesn't really matter a great deal to scientific practice—that is to say, practice in the natural and applied sciences—whether or not one subscribes to a traditional Western view of science, or whether one views scientific knowledge from a postmodern perspective. Science has continued to thrive amidst major philosophical change occurring within Western society because scientific research has practical applications in the broad society. Indeed, as seen from a postmodern perspective, the interest taken by members of the broad society in science, due to its practical applications, has helped to ensure that science has remained current, as Western society has undergone major change. In recent decades, as Western society has evolved, Western science has become more explicitly politicized than ever—while scientists have continued to engage in useful, practical, work.

Cheerio,
Uncle Peter
Dear Uncle Peter,

You've come a long way, Uncle Peter. Thank you for your suggestion.

That sort of argument could provide reassurance to many scientists working in the natural and applied sciences, enabling them to themselves proceed to a philosophical position from which they would be able to better understand my project; but it could be a very different story with many academic humanists and social scientists. The humanities and social sciences don't have the same broad, practical, applications as, say, finding a cure for cancer or building a bridge, that can compensate for the loss of the certainty of "truth" associated with postmodernism. Even more practical, applied, work in these areas serves only a particular political constituency. One of the means by which such work may serve a particular political constituency is by entirely obscuring its political dimension—including through the use of the scientific method, which itself is not necessarily bad, and, of much greater concern, through the use of the scientific method in a manner which suggests that human bias has been eliminated. (The manner in which the scientific method is employed in the natural and applied sciences also may still sometimes be of concern.) Very similar problems exist with "subjectivist" approaches, including some variations of qualitative research, that started to gain favour in the humanities and social sciences beginning in the Seventies. As I see it, politics itself isn't a bad thing. It's simply inevitable. However, it is questionable whether politicking should form the core of the university curriculum—especially in the guise of something other than what it actually is. While I probably would have been quite surprised to hear myself say this ten years ago or so, when I myself was in the midst of my own philosophical transition and was down on science to some extent, I now believe that the "social sciences" and the "humanities" (if, indeed, these would continue to be appropriate terms) ought to become more like the natural sciences, in their present incarnation. This would involve closer links with the "outside" world, as has been the case in recent decades with the natural and applied sciences, including with various professions operating in the "outside" world.

At least for some social scientists and humanists, a discussion about the philosophy of Western science could prove to be less than fully convincing. What is it, then, that I could say to you, a social scientist, that might help you to understand my project?

Sincerely,

Pam
Swallows-droppings
ENGLAND
Summer, 1996

Dear Pam,
Say something about family that would hit close to home.

Cheerio,
Uncle Peter

Toronto, Ontario
CANADA
Summer, 1996

Dear Uncle Peter,

A long time ago, I mentioned to you certain problems within my immediate family resulting from your research predicated upon Western metaphysics concerning IQs. That IQ research in turn may have contributed to more recent problems among us associated with philosophical change in the West and, more particularly, with philosophical change in relation to Western higher education. Out of fear of being seen as "dumb", certain members of my family who didn't attend university have remained strongly attached to Western metaphysics and have continued to see universities in traditional terms associated with Western metaphysics—or at least have acted as though this were the case. I wonder to what extent your research concerning IQs had ill-effects upon other branches of the family that were subjected to the same research, including within your own household.

I met my cousin, Jennie, for the first time a few years ago, when she came to Canada for a short visit. She was then in her second or third year of studies, at a small English university that I'd never heard of, and had a few weeks off after finishing her classes and before starting a summer job. I didn't spend a great deal of time with her, and all the time that I did spend with her was in the company of other family members, so I didn't get to know her well. In general, she seemed to be a very charming and composed young woman. Yet there was one indication that, beneath the surface, there might be something seriously wrong. Her nails were chewed right down to the middle of her fingers. I'd never before seen
anything like it. Sometimes she nibbled on her fingernails in our presence. Chewed down that far, to the bleeding point, it must have been very painful, although she didn’t reveal any outward signs of pain. She seemed to nibble on her fingernails especially when certain subjects came up—including your work concerning IQs and higher education.

As Jennie reported to us, the research for which our branch of the family had served as part of your sample, that I helped you with, was only the tip of the iceberg. She and her siblings had been subjected to ongoing testing through childhood and adolescence. (Nibble nibble...) I had to wonder what ill-effects that itself might have had. Then, after years of being told that she was extremely ‘smart’, Jennie applied to Oxford, and wasn’t accepted. (Gush.) She told us a story about not having been accepted at Oxford due to an inauspicious bad day combined with a technicality in the admission process at Oxford, that I found very hard to believe. As she explained, one may be accepted into Oxford based either on one’s marks in the final years of our equivalent of high school or the results of a special Oxford admission exam. According to Jenny, if one opted to sit the exam, one’s marks were entirely disregarded, as good as they might be. As she explained, even though she had marks in the final years of “high school” that were high enough to ensure her acceptance into Oxford, she chose to take the exam—she wasn’t at all clear as to why—and bombed out, supposedly because she had a bad day. Hmm.

Yet, despite not getting into Oxford, she said that she was very much enjoying her studies at the university that she was attending. I got the impression this really was the case, despite her ongoing nail-biting through her university years. The program in which she was enrolled seemed to be very practically-oriented. She was taking courses that would prepare her for a career in television broadcasting. She seemed to be doing well in her courses, and apparently was looking forward to a career in this field. She already knew quite a bit about the field because her older brother, another one of your children, was working as a television cameraman. After attending university (also not Oxford, although I never learned whether he applied), he’d trained to be a cameraman at a technical school. Jennie didn’t seem to be having any problems with her university program, per se, although she did seem to be having certain problems related to inconsistencies between how she viewed universities and how she was expected to view universities, or at least how she believed that she was expected to view universities, by others—including yourself. The subject of how
you and she, and you and your other children, got along didn’t come up, although I got the sense from those nails that something that was central in Jennie’s life, perhaps something relating to family, was seriously amiss. I got the impression that Jennie viewed university, and life in general, from a postmodern perspective (or at least something close to it) even though you probably weren’t aware of it.

That kind of approach, that hit close to home, might convince some more established members of the academic community of the significance of a project concerning communication problems experienced by recent university students associated with the transition to postmodernism. But there could be some cases where that also wouldn’t work.

Sincerely,
Pam

---

Swallows-droppings
ENGLAND

Summer, 1996

Dear Pam,

If all else fails, there’s always humour. Perhaps, just as Milan Kundera employs humour in his novels, a part of the project could be written in a satirical form.

Cheerio,
Uncle Peter

---

Toronto, Ontario
CANADA

Summer, 1996

Dear Uncle Peter,

Thank you for your suggestions. You may want to have a look at the project when it’s finished. I’ll keep you posted.

Cheerio,
Pam
PART 3:
A HYPOTHETICAL FUTURE

I'd like to get away from earth awhile
And then come back to it and begin over.
May no fate willfully misunderstand me
And half grant what I wish and snatch me away
Not to return.

_Frost, Mountain Interval, 'Birches'_

The Descent of the "Alien"
It was New Year's Eve in the final year of the Third Millennium, that is to say, the final hours of the year 2999 AD.

The setting was the campus of a university in Canada—that did manage to remain a country through the Third Millennium despite some earlier fears. This university campus had a large, open, field smack in the middle of it, in the shape of a circle. In the summer, a lush lawn covering served as an excellent surface for outdoor studying, or for a game of Frisbee (although not necessarily at the same time). In contrast, in the winter, since this was Canada, this circular field was covered with a thick cushion of snow. Tonight, in the middle of winter, this field admirably served as a landing pad for a spaceship in the shape of a flying saucer that was descending to Earth from outer space. It just so happened that this ideal landing pad was smack in the middle of the campus of a Canadian university.

A research team in the Department of Aerospace Science and Engineering at this university had traced the trajectory of the spaceship as it whizzed through space. Since the members of the research team were intimately familiar with the circular field in the middle of their campus, they had an advantage over the military and other potential interested parties in being able to precisely pinpoint where the spaceship would land. Because they possessed this advantage and, at the same time, were unfamiliar with appropriate protocols for this kind of thing (this studious group had little time for movies), essentially only members of the academic community were gathered in the circle that evening for the momentous event. Those gathered at the Circle that evening, to observe the first actual, scientifically-verified, landing on Earth of a spaceship from outer space, and to perhaps catch a glimpse of a being from outer space, and to ring in the new Millennium, comprised mainly a broad cross-section of members of the Western
academic community from the year 2999 AD, with faculty and students at the university in question being especially strongly represented.

There also was a television crew on hand. Perhaps a television station had been tipped off by someone from the university that a spaceship would be landing here and, more importantly, that this could be the first time that Earthlings would actually have contact with a space "alien". (That was the word that was then still most commonly used by we Earthlings to refer to those of us other than Earthlings.) On the other hand, even though this wasn't something they were inclined to share with their fellows, all of the members of the television crew had recently acquired an odd propensity to flatten their mashed potatoes on their dinner plates and then drop their bread plates in the middle of the mash. It hardly seems to have been a coincidence.

Among the member of the academic contingent, there was a young, female, university student from an extremely well-to-do, and what would commonly be regarded as upper-class, family. She was working towards her first university degree, studying literature and languages. Even though she generally got very good grades, she was experiencing certain problems as a university student. Some of her professors seemed to her to be quite unreasonable—like that professor who made her and her classmates count up all those syllables, who then had a fit when she merely did the work he asked her to do. Thankfully, such professors were in the minority among her professors. A more wide-ranging problem that she had at university was that she very seriously questioned the existence of absolute "truth" and, in turn, that university professors and students were actually engaged in the pursuit of "truth", as they were purported to be. However, her professors and fellow students did believe in "truth"—or at least they appeared to do so. If she were going to obtain a university degree, it seemed that she had to go along with them, so she did—within limits. (There was no way she was going to pretend to draw any conclusions about that poem from those statistics.) Fortunately, there were some very practical courses being offered in the faculty in which she was enrolled, particularly
courses in languages of all kinds, including the new computer languages. Some professors and students regarded such courses with disdain (or at least appeared to). But she took several such courses anyway. She liked learning practical things. Besides, in such courses, it didn't really matter whether or not one was a true believer, and she could relax a little. But these were the least of her problems since she began university.

Her biggest problems were with other members of her family, who had not attended university. Early on in the Third Millennium, people who came from very well-to-do family backgrounds had stopped attending university. If such people did wish to pursue formal education beyond high school, there were other options available to them, including private tutors, and independent learning through the Internet. This is not to say that, during the Third Millennium, there was a diminished respect for academic knowledge among members of the upper class. It was only that university attendance had by now become so common that they avoided it if at all possible. In the late Third Millennium, our young, female, university student was somewhat of an anomaly among her classmates, as well as among members of her own family.

By the end of her first year as a university student, she already could sense that her relationships with other members of her family were becoming strained. For example, there was that incident after she had finished her first year of university, when she and other members of her family were visiting Grandmama at her seaside estate. Everybody was relaxing out in the garden. She had brought along a novel, that she began to read. When Grandmama saw her reading a book, without having any idea what the book might be about, she made the crack, "Ya readin' Spinoza again?" She said it loud enough so that everybody else could hear her. It was hardly a simple question. Grandmama was letting everybody else know that she knew who Spinoza was, at the same time that she was mocking her granddaughter for mixing with the riffraff at university. The student didn't answer. Then Grandmama started to laugh, and everyone else who had overheard the exchange joined in—including even Papa.
When she was a child, she and Papa had been close allies. Papa was a theatre impresario. Of course, he didn't have to work for a living; however, he enjoyed theatre so much that he produced plays at his own expense, sometimes acting in, and sometimes even building the sets for, his lavish productions. When she and the other children in the family were growing up, they hung around his theatres with him. He and she had always been good pals. But now, since she had started university, even he seemed to have mixed feelings about her—even though he had encouraged her to attend university. (He didn't want to deny to his daughter something that he felt had been denied to him when he was younger.) Sometimes he'd act as though he were very proud of her for attending university: at other times, he'd act as though she were a traitor to him, and to her class. Her brother, the Duke, who enjoyed fishing and camping, as well as woodworking, appeared to be less strongly attached to an upper-class identity than some other members of her family. But even he was likely to get into a bit of tizzy if she broached the subject of universities. Members of her family were so protective of their upper-class standing. She didn't want to destroy any illusions that they possessed. She'd just have to be patient and let them figure this out for themselves. She hoped it would be soon.

She had a vague awareness that the problems that she was having in university and the problems that she was having with members of her family since she began university were related. But she hadn't yet come to realize that, until the problems that she was having at university were brought out into the open, the problems that she was having with her family could not be remedied. She had expected that going down to the Circle to greet the "alien" would block out of her mind these problems that she was having with her family and, at least initially, it did.

The team from Aerospace Science and Engineering had continued to track the spaceship as it approached the planet Earth and, as soon as the object became visible to the naked eye, as a small, twinkling, speck in the night sky, pointed it out to everyone congregated in the Circle. Everyone, including even our young, female, university
student, fixed their gazes on the speck, savouring their close encounter of the First kind, a sighting of a spaceship. They remained transfixed, until they all realized that it was going to be quite some time before the spaceship reached the planet Earth.

A group of musicians from the Faculty of Music had brought along some musical instruments, in case the "alien" happened to respond more readily to music than to Earthling speech, and because it was New Year's Eve, and New Millennium's Eve. The musicians commenced a New Year's dance medley, à la Guy Lombardo, a Western Earthling band leader from the late Second Millennium, associated especially with New Year's Eve festivities. Apart from the fact that far fewer very well-to-do people now attended university than in the past, very little had changed within the Western Earthling system of higher education during the Third Millennium from what it was like in the late Second Millennium—and, in certain respects, from what it was like long before that. Everybody just danced on, and on, and on.

To be sure, there had been certain quantitative changes over this long period of time. For example, thinking of Western Earthling universities, a trend that began in the late Second Millennium of an increasing proportion of those who attended university staying in university for an increasing period of time, earning degrees over and above a basic bachelor's degree even if they did not set their sights on an academic career, continued through the Third Millennium. By the end of the Third Millennium, it was not uncommon for those who attended university to earn a dozen degrees apiece. (To be sure, the average life span of Earthlings increased over this period from what it had been in the latter portion of the Second Millennium.) Even after all that, one was still not guaranteed of a good job.

With this proliferation of university degrees, it was academic publications that separated the winners from the losers among candidates for academic positions and promotions. By the end of the Third Millennium, an average assistant professor had published at least a couple of hundred "papers". A promotion to professor required the
publication of at least five hundred "papers", and several "books". (They weren't actually "papers" or "books" since, by the Third Millennium, most academic publishing was done in electronic form; however, the change in medium did little to change the manner of presentation. In many cases, the content of these publications also wasn't particularly original.) With increasing pressure on Western Earthling university professors to get published, during the Third Millennium, teaching became an increasingly low priority for most of them. At the beginning, teaching assistants replaced professors as teachers of some of the lower-level undergraduate courses. Eventually, even many teaching assistants were dodging their classroom duties. Actors were hired to replace the teaching assistants. By now, there were rumours that even certain graduate courses were being taught by holograms, of actors. Of course, it was impossible to know for sure.

Fees at Western Earthling universities skyrocketed during the Third Millennium, although the high fees deterred relatively few Western Earthlings from attending university. Unless one happened to be well-connected, possessing a couple of university degrees had become a basic requirement to be seriously considered for most jobs — although university degrees, in and of themselves, provided no guarantee that one would be successful in obtaining employment. Those who could least afford it were among those who were most intent on earning university degrees. What came to be known as black-cap-and-gown crime (the traditional academic garb also had been retained) had increased alarmingly over the past few centuries, if one looked back that far.

These quantitative changes had not occurred overnight, of course. They occurred over a long enough period such that, at the end of the Third Millennium, most Western Earthlings weren't aware of how much their universities had changed in the preceding Millennium — yet, at the same time, how much they had remained the same. When one is dancing, all one's cares disappear. Everybody just danced on, and on, to the strains of a virtual Guy Lombardo and his band — as the spaceship got closer and closer.
On the college side, a system of colleges that offered programs of up to two years in length that prepared student directly for employment flourished during the Third Millennium. Through the Third Millennium, graduates of these institutions were in increasing demand by employers, who were willing to pay top dollar for their services. Nevertheless, the overall status of these institutions relative to universities actually diminished during this period—or at least Western Earthlings acted as though this were the case. Thus, oddly enough, at the same time that the overall social status of those who attended institutions of this nature relative to the overall social status of those who attended university decreased, the economic status of those who had attended these colleges relative to the economic status of those who had attended university significantly increased. (That was, of course, unless one attended university and was from an extremely well-to-do family, like our young, female, university student.) Beginning in the late Second Millennium, these institutions attracted a considerable number of students who already possessed university degrees, yet who weren't able to obtain employment based simply on possessing degrees, as had been the case in days of yore. Attending such institutions was a blemish on their scholarly records but, unlike many people with a university degree, or two, or three, or more, and no practical skills, they did get jobs. Everybody just danced on and on.

During the Third Millennium, there also was a steady deterioration in the relationships between members of families. The problems that existed between our young, female, university student and members of her family since she began university were hardly unique. Actually, her situation was better than most. At least she and members of her family were still talking. Up to then, nobody seemed to recognize that there might be a relationship between the Western system of higher education and this deterioration. Everybody, including our young, female, university student, just danced on and on.
It must be mentioned that relationships between Western Earthlings and Eastern Earthlings also deteriorated during the Third Millennium. In the latter part of the Second Millennium, there had been increasing contact between Western and Eastern Earthlings, that continued into the first part of the Third Millennium. Western Earthlings then had the opportunity to observe Eastern systems (there wasn't only just one system) of higher education, and could have adapted their own system to make it more like these systems. But they didn't. Instead, they erected a huge wall, that circumscribed the entire globe, that decisively separated the West from the East. For the past five-hundred years or so, Western Earthlings and Eastern Earthlings had had virtually no contact. Yet everybody just danced on, and on, and on, with flashes of light from a mirror ball illuminating their dance floor.

That was until a member of the team that had been tracking the spaceship yelled out, "Hey, you goofs, that's not a mirror ball!"

Everybody looked up and saw the spaceship, that was by now hovering directly above the Circle, its lights flashing. Once the revelers had cleared from its landing pad, the spaceship let loose and belly-flopped into the snow, sinking into the deep accumulation (very deep, since this was Canada) until it was completely out of sight.

TO BE CONTINUED
Dear Danielle,

Have you, too, been holding back certain things about universities within a postmodern context?

I strongly suspect that you possess a basic philosophical outlook that is very similar to my own philosophical outlook (and that of certain other members of the family). One reason I would say that is that we were both in Vancouver during Expo 86, and visited the fair together a few times. You were able to go from La Scala to Inuit throat singing to Tutentuk’s tomb to trampoline artists to candy floss with considerable alacrity, too. In your case, in addition, even though you never attended university, it’s quite likely that you have a pretty good idea of what has been going on in universities in recent decades. When I was attending S.F.U., you decided to get more formal education yourself and, after considering various options, including university, ended up doing a two-year program at a community college in the town where you were then living that would qualify you to be a hospital lab technician. Have you perhaps known all along what I’ve known, although I didn’t let on, and you didn’t let on—at least to me?

Thinking back, there was one occasion when you may have been trying to get this out into the open with me. It was when we were both students, me at S.F.U. and you at your community college, and you came down to Vancouver for a weekend visit. We went out for dinner and, since we were then both students, one of our topics of conversation was our experiences as students. At one point in the conversation, you looked at me intently and asked, “What are you really doing up at S.F.U.?” I was quite taken aback. Could it be that you had come to see universities as I did, and suspected that I also might have certain mixed feelings about universities?
Perhaps, in deciding where and what you would study, you went through a thought process very similar to the thought process that I went through several years earlier when, after I had completed the first two years of a B.A. at U.B.C., I was deciding where I would finish my B.A., and the kinds of courses that I would take in the final two years of my B.A. Opting for a practical, job-related, program in the sciences offered by one of B.C.'s community colleges was fully consistent with a postmodern outlook. If there had been less pressure on me to attend university when I was younger, and if some of my favourite subjects in school had been math and chemistry, as was the case for you, I may have opted for a very similar sort of program. When I, the oldest child, turned eighteen, I got some money to help me with university expenses: when you, the youngest child, turned eighteen, you got a car. I didn't not like math and chemistry, but they weren't my favourite subjects: you didn't not like literature (you especially liked those science fiction stories in Omni magazine, that I also thought were great), but you always excelled in the sciences, and music (that, for the time being, you had to put on the back burner). These differences may have taken us in somewhat different directions in terms of our educational choices; yet the thought process underlying our decisions may have been quite similar. (If, at a later point, you did want to complete a university degree, since this was British Columbia, your community college program entitled you to several university transfer credits towards a Bachelor of Science degree at B.C.'s various universities.)

I strongly suspected from your question, and the way that you asked it, that you knew yourself what I knew, and that you suspected that I knew, and may have wanted to get this out into the open. Nevertheless, after quickly running through various options in my mind, I decided to act as though I interpreted your question in a purely innocent manner. I recall, after considering the various options, blunting out something about how, in the past, I had done a considerable amount of work related to education, including my work with Native kids and, since then, also some educational media work, which had been my original goal, and that I needed some kind of a credential in education to give me greater
Class Encounters of the Third Kind
that the person who got the job knew the other candidate (such a situation could arise when people who worked together were competing for a job within the company for which they worked). And personally believed that the other candidate was better qualified for the position, despite not possessing a university degree. By convincing oneself that the members of the hiring committee were strongly attached to Western metaphysics, and thereby assumed that because you possessed a university degree you were the superior candidate, even if you personally didn't assume this, it would be easier to accept what one sees as an unfair situation, that has worked to one's advantage. Heck, those members of the hiring committee are entitled to their philosophical outlook, even if I don't share their outlook. But it could very well be that the members of the hiring committee also were not strongly attached to Western metaphysics. Perhaps they made a simple mistake (such as mixing up your names). Alternately, perhaps they believed that their superiors were strongly attached to Western metaphysics, and saw it as being in their interests to continue to act as though they were, too—even though their superiors may actually have been postmodernists.

Even in our personal lives, Western metaphysics continues to offer certain advantages, mixed in with the disadvantages, to those of us who have attended university yet who possess postmodern outlooks. It sometimes may be to one's advantage to be seen by family and friends as very "smart," or in possession of some special knowledge that sets one above others, simply by virtue of having attended university. It may be that sometimes there also are certain advantages to be gained by just believing that family and friends are still strongly attached to Western metaphysics, even if they aren't.

But, as I was saying, when you asked your question, yet didn't pursue the issue any further than you did, perhaps you were protecting me, and certain illusions that you may have felt that I possessed.

On the other hand, by answering your question as I did, and then quickly changing the topic, perhaps I was protecting myself and certain illusions that I did possess.
Class Encounters of the Third Kind
to rely upon this phrase a great deal during the present period of philosophical transition. It could be that, in order to protect my own interests in Western metaphysics, I've overestimated the extent to which various family members were attached to Western metaphysics and, in turn, the extent to which they failed to recognize that I possessed a postmodern outlook.

But it seems that this also could work the other way around. During the present period of philosophical transition, even for those who don't possess university degrees and who possess postmodern outlooks, Western metaphysical philosophy may offer certain advantages, combined with certain disadvantages. In applying for jobs, even though one may be disadvantaged relative to candidates who possess university degrees because one doesn't possess a degree oneself, one may still be able to gain an advantage over others who didn't attend university by pointing out, for example, that one achieved excellent marks through high school (even without mentioning the specific content of the courses that one took in high school). Combining that with a heart-wrenching story about why one never proceeded to university might even put one ahead of certain candidates who do possess university degrees. There are, as I said earlier, some people around who are still strongly attached to Western metaphysics (or at least there appear to be). In addition, as is the case for those of us who have attended university, even for those who haven't attended university there may be certain advantages in terms of employment in just believing that others with whom one is dealing are still strongly attached to Western metaphysics, when they actually aren't.

Both also may be true in the personal lives of those who have not attended university, who possess postmodern outlooks. Even if one has not attended university oneself, it may sometimes work to one's advantage to be seen by family members and friends as one who sees people who have attended university as very "smart", or in possession of special knowledge that sets them above others, even if one doesn't actually see them in this manner. Assuming that the family members and friends in question are strongly attached to Western metaphysics, by implication, one also may be seen as "smart", and/or in possession of such knowledge. (This could be the case whether or not the family members and friends
had attended university. Furthermore, even for those who have not attended university and who possess postmodern outlooks, there could be certain advantages in simply believing that one's family members and friends are still strongly attached to Western metaphysics, when they're not.

For example, getting back to the problems that Belinda and I had been having, as the problems escalated, I eventually did make an effort to get this out into the open with her. I began to explain to her that the terms "smart" and "stupid" no longer fit into my conceptual categories. As I was doing so, she became very agitated, and eventually stopped me short with an indignant, "I am not stupid." Huh? (The problems between us only further escalated.) Even though, during our earlier, related, exchange, I got a strong impression that she wanted to get this out into the open with me, perhaps there was a part of her that didn't want to get it out into the open. That needed to believe that I believed that she was smart/not stupid. . . . Or perhaps her earlier "question" had just been a simple statement. Sometimes it's impossible to know for sure.

But back to you, you were somewhat more direct. I had little doubt when you asked me, "What are you really doing up at S.F.U.?", piercing my soul with the look that you gave me as you asked me that question, that you wanted to get this out into the open. But perhaps there was still a part of you that didn't really want to get this out into the open, that needed to believe that I believed that you were "smart"—even though, in your case, you never had any reason to doubt your intellectual ability. (If nothing else, the score that Uncle Peter gave you for that IQ test should have given you confidence in your intellectual ability.) That could be why, after I gave you the answer that I gave you, that assumed a purely innocent interpretation of your question, you didn't pursue the issue any further.

Perhaps, by you not pursuing the issue any further than you did, you were protecting yourself, and certain illusions that you possessed.

On the other hand, by answering your question as I did, and then quickly changing the topic after I had blurted out my response, I was protecting you, and certain illusions that I may have felt that you possessed.
Or could it be that all these things, you protecting me, and me protecting myself, and you protecting yourself, and me protecting you, were going on at the same time, putting us both in a stalemate position? Furthermore, could it be that all of us as a family have been in a stalemate position for many years now? Have we all been acting with each other as though we were still attached, to varying degrees, to Western metaphysics, when we actually weren’t, because of the various interests that we thought were being served by doing so?

Is it possible that we Third’s are all actually situated in a postmodern context—or, employing the term that was popularized by the American writer, Alvin Toffler, that we are all Thirds of the Third Wave—yet we’ve been acting otherwise? We’ve all had some experience as performers. In your case, through high school, you performed regularly on C.B.C. television, as a member of a kids singing group that was Canada’s answer to the Partridge Family, that backed up performers like Juliet and Stompin’ Tom Connors. After that, before going to college, you worked as a solo performer. It all goes back to hanging around theatres when we were kids with Dad. Speaking of Dad, I had been assuming that, based on what appeared to me to be his views concerning social class, and especially his views concerning social class in relation to higher education, that he was still strongly attached to Western metaphysics. However, even though Dad may be from a "working-class" family background (employing conventional categories and criteria), and even though he may have earned a living doing "working-class" work, repairing and maintaining various machines, his first love had always been theatre. Perhaps, at least for many years now, he has possessed a postmodern, theatrical, outlook, yet he assumed that, through having attended university, I had acquired a strong attachment to Western metaphysics, and acted with me accordingly. Perhaps we’ve all been assuming, and acting accordingly. But if we have been acting, it’s been a funny kind of acting that we’ve been doing. In this case, where different philosophical contexts are involved, we would have been acting as though we didn’t see life in a postmodern.
theatrical manner, when we very well did. Is it possible that in our family drama, we've all played our roles so effectively that even our relatively discriminating audience, comprised of each other, and perhaps even we ourselves, were sometimes deceived into believing that we really were the roles that we were playing?

During the present period of philosophical transition in the West, there may indeed be certain advantages in continuing to play out roles associated with a bygone era. I call this bygone era the era of class-ified information, since it was distinguished by knowledge passing much less freely between different groups, or "classes", of people than it is at present. But at a certain point, the possible disadvantages—including the possible breakdown of communication among family members, due to family members withholding vital information about where they are philosophically situated—outweighs the possible advantages. At a certain point, this information, like all the other formerly class-ified information that now freely passes between and among different groups, must be de-class-ified.

I'm not asking you, or any other members of the family, to "come out" as it were. It would be nice if you did, since I'd then have some company. But I'm not asking you to. This is something that I've had to do for myself—that I'm now ready to do. In the earlier stages of my university student career, I was more reluctant than I am now to publicly reveal where I was philosophically situated—and also to face up to certain illusions that I may have possessed concerning where others were philosophically situated. During the present period of philosophical transition, coming from a "working-class" background, yet having little difficulty with academic work (that, from a postmodern perspective, itself could be seen as a kind of performance), I had a lot to gain in those earlier stages by holding back. But now that I'm in the final stages of a Ph.D. program and, based on the degrees I've already earned am entitled to a certain amount of respect from others who judge people by the degrees they possess, regardless of what they may actually know and the kind of people that they are. I'm less reluctant. You may simply not be ready yet.
On the other hand, it could be that you actually are still situated in a Western metaphysical philosophical context, and actually believe that some people are indeed "smarter" than others, and so on. Furthermore, perhaps that question that you asked me was actually just an innocent question—and you happen to have had a piece of dust or something in your eye as you were asking it. If you actually do still possess a Western metaphysical philosophical outlook, I believe that you’re fully entitled to your outlook. But I—for one—no longer possess such an outlook. (Does that answer your question?)

Love,

Pam
THE STORY CONTINUES . . .

After only a matter of seconds, wisps of smoke began to ascend from the crater at the bottom of which sat the spaceship. A couple of chemists from Chemical Engineering and Applied Chemistry had had the foresight to bring along fire extinguishers, in case there happened to be a crash that resulted in a fire. Even though they felt some trepidation about what they might encounter at the bottom of the crater, they started to bound through the snow, with their fire extinguishers aimed and ready to extinguish.

Observing the fire brigade, our young, female, university student, who was up on her science fiction, was struck by panic. She began to bound after the fire extinguisher totin' chemists, screaming at them, "Don't do it!" and managed to stop them in their tracks when they were just short of the crater. When she reached them, she explained, "This alien might be very, very, different from you and me. For all we know, that might be it right there," she said, pointing to the wisps of smoke. She added, "We have to have some idea of what we're dealing with before we start spraying those chemicals."

"You look down there, then," one of the chemists returned.

"If you won't, I will," replied the girl.

"You can take this if you want," said the other chemist to the girl, offering her his extinguisher.

She turned towards the crater.

"That won't be necessary," she replied. "The fire isn't spreading. It's still just those few wisps of smoke."

"It could always come in handy to conk it on the head if it gives you any trouble," he returned.

The girl was already standing at the mouth of the crater, unarmed. She peered down into the smoldering pit.

A creature was standing on the roof of the space ship, apparently having evacuated through an opening in the roof. It was grasping a short, white, cylinder at the
end of one of its upper extremities, alternately holding the cylinder up to a mouth-like
orifice and then, from that same orifice, emitting smoke. As she observed the creature, the
girl was having a close encounter of the Second kind, gaining physical evidence of an
"alien" . . . maybe.

Those upper extremities of the creature did bear a resemblance to Earthling arms. In fact, come to think of it, the creature on the whole resembled an Earthling female, about forty years of age. . . . But it couldn't be, not if it was sticking that white cylinder with a glowing tip into its mouth, and then emitting smoke from its mouth! Besides, it was wearing strange clothes, and its hair was very weird—medium-length, auburn, with bangs, and a bit of a wave. (Shorter cuts were in this year.) It couldn't be an Earthling.

The creature then lifted its head towards the girl, and caught sight of her. Their eyes met. As they looked into each other's eyes, the girl felt that there was something strangely familiar about those eyes. But she didn't know any "aliens".

The creature interrupted the girl's thoughts by producing a strange utterance: "I've been dying for a smoke since two hours into the flight." Pointing to the craft at its feet, it added, "It's all non-smoking in there." The girl was experiencing a close encounter of the Third kind, contact with an "alien" . . . maybe.

These utterances were strange, but not entirely strange, since they were uttered in English, with a Canadian accent. It occurred to the girl that the "alien" might be able to automatically pick up languages, and accents, through a form of osmosis . . . although, as a student of languages herself, it seemed to her that this was rather unlikely.

"What's going on down there," shouted one of the chemists to the girl.

"We have contact," the girl shouted back. "There's one of them down there. It doesn't look dangerous—except for that second-hand smoke."

"Can we come over and have a look?" asked one of the chemists.

"It should be all right—unless you guys faint and fall into the pit," she teased them. "But come forward slowly. You might startle it." After a moment's pause, she
added, "I don't think we'll be needing the extinguishers, but you might as well bring them along, just in case there's trouble."

The chemists crept forward.

The girl's response was loud enough that the others assembled at the Circle that evening, including the television crew, overheard it. They all took it as a cue to approach the crater themselves—slowly—so that they might experience their own close encounter of the Third kind. There were gasps from various onlookers when they first looked down at the roof of the spaceship, and saw a strange creature standing down there, emitting smoke. When a few wisps that had risen to ground level appeared to be making a beeline for some of the onlookers, there were shrieks from the crowd, and a lot of jostling to avoid the approaching miasma.

The creature who, judging from that smoke, was assuredly an "alien", then produced another strange utterance: "I know there's no smoking inside any of the buildings on campus, but there's no rule against having a smoke outdoors."

There were further gasps and shrieks, this time not only from the onlookers assembled at the Circle but also from television viewers throughout the Western region of planet Earth. Their New Year's television programs had been pre-empted by a special, live, broadcast, coming from the Circle. Television viewers throughout the Western region of planet Earth then closely observed the "alien" butting out the cylinder on the roof of the spaceship (made of a sturdy, fire resistant, material), as it was thinking to itself, "Where is she?"

Its sister was supposed to be here to greet the craft when it landed, and provide transportation home. Where could she be? It checked its watch, and noticed that the watch had stopped. That was funny, since it had replaced the battery only a couple of weeks ago. "Is there somebody up there who would be kind enough to tell me the time?" it inquired of the crowd overhead.
The young, female, university student, who had observed in silence both the "alien" and the crowd assembled around the crater since was joined by the others, thought it couldn't hurt to tell it the time. She checked her own watch.

"It's about 11:30," she informed it.

"Thank you so very much," said the "alien" to the girl. Her sister should be along very soon.

"Only about a half an hour to go to the New Year, and the New Millennium," the girl added. She had said more than she needed to say, but she was trying to sound friendly.

"What's that you said about the New Year?" the "alien" asked. "New Year's was a couple of months ago."

"No, tonight's the night," said the girl, wondering how the "alien" apparently knew about Earthling holidays, yet had got the dates so mixed up.

"You said the New Millennium, too. What year is this anyway?" continued the "alien".


"No, no. I think you misunderstood. I didn't ask you the price of your watch. I asked you what year this is," it clarified.

"The year twenty-nine ninety-nine, AD," the girl elaborated.

"You're putting me on, right?" asked the "alien", suspecting this might not be the case.

"No," responded the girl. "The Fourth Millennium begins in about half an hour. You landed at a very opportune time."

The "alien" was silent. Talk about future shock! Another white cylinder would really be nice now. But no.
The announcer with the television crew broke the silence by asking the "alien", "Where are you from? Our viewers will want to know." He then gingerly lowered his microphone as far into the pit as his arm would reach.

"I'm from British Columbia. But, immediately before the flight, I was living out of province attending university, right here at this university," the "alien" answered distractedly. It was more concerned at the moment with *when* than with *where*.

A collective sigh of disappointment, centred around the crater, reverberated throughout the Western world.

The television announcer was among those who was most disappointed. He had strongly suspected from the very beginning that the creature wasn't an "alien". However, if it had been an "alien"—or even if his viewers believed that it was an "alien" even if it wasn't—it would have been such a coup for him. He wasn't prepared to give up just yet.

"But where are you from *originally*?" he inquired of the "alien".

"I was born in Vancouver," the "alien" answered.

Our young female, university, student was familiar with Vancouver. Her mother's side of the family had lived there for several generations. While it was quite far away, Vancouver wasn't in outer space. This creature at the bottom of the crater was an Earthling female, just like her.

Her voice rose above the murmuring crowd. "Let's get that poor woman out of there."

"Not so fast," the television announcer fought back. Now addressing the "alien" down below, he ventured, "Could you please explain to us what you are doing here, in the middle of this university campus, with a spaceship? Our viewers are probably also curious about that smoke you were emitting." He again extended his arm into the crater.

Addressing the Western Earthling population, the woman/"alien" explained, "The spaceship, as you call it, was a experiment that my sister and I worked on together. She was a scientist, and provided the scientific expertise. I helped her with the construction."
We were ready for our first test run back in '99. Nineteen ninety-nine, that is to say, towards the end of the Second Millennium. I volunteered to be the test pilot. We figured a couple of miles, a couple of minutes, tops. It seems that we got more than we bargained for." She added wistfully, "I guess my sister is gone now, along with other members of my family."

A professor from the Faculty of Anthropology, who was fully convinced that it was a Homo sapiens, of the female variety, at the bottom of the crater, answered, "We do live longer now than we did a thousand years ago but, unfortunately, not that long; however, some of your sister's descendants might still be around."

A professor from Communications added, "Perhaps one of them is watching this on television right now."

The woman at the bottom of the crater faced the camera. "If anyone out there thinks they may be related to my sister, and to me, please give the television station a call."

The young, female, university student began to recall a family legend involving one of her female ancestors who apparently disappeared from the face of the planet. But, before she could recall the details, the television announcer tried yet again.

"What about that smoke that you were emitting?" he inquired of the woman/"alien".

"It was just a simple cigarette," the woman/"alien" responded. "One of these," she added, as she pulled a package of cigarettes out of her pocket, then withdrew one of her few remaining cigarettes. "Do you still have these anymore?" she inquired.

With the exception of the two valiant chemists who stood firm and readied their weapons, one in preparation to blast and the other to conk, those assembled around the crater all drew back from its mouth. Even if she was an Earthling, those things seemed dangerous.
"I guess not," she answered herself, as she hastily stuffed the cigarette back into the package, and the package back into her pocket.

The assembled onlookers relaxed.

The woman surmised, "I guess this campus is completely non-smoking by now. I could see it coming even when I was a student here." She went on, "There must have been a lot of other changes at this university since I was a student here—although the Circle is still here, thank goodness."

The announcer still wasn't prepared to give up. "If you really were a student here a thousand years ago, then what were you studying?"

"I was studying higher education itself, especially the philosophical changes that were then occurring in Western higher education," she/it replied. "I could be more specific if you like."

"Please," the announcer replied.

"All right, then." She quickly reviewed in her mind her Ph.D. thesis, then sallied forth.

"I was a university student during a unique period in the history of Western higher education. Western universities were conceived within a Western metaphysical philosophical context. However, during the late Second Millennium, when I was a university student, an increasing number of Westerners, both inside and outside of universities, were moving beyond this philosophical context to what was then known as postmodernism." It occurred to her that by now, in the late Third Millennium, the term "postmodernism" could very well have been forgotten. She inquired of her audience, "Does anyone here know what that means?"

"That's what we call the present era," chirped up a professor from the English Department.

"I would have thought that, by now, that term would be obsolete," she mused.

"Not at all," the professor responded. "Postmoderism is the latest thing."
Although she was somewhat confused by this response, she continued. "Anyway, inside of universities, the increased diversification of the Western academic community, or what I call the Western academic Family, played a major role in this philosophical transition. From the inception of Western universities, through to the final Century of the Second Millennium, the Western academic Family was highly homogenous. This former homogeneity became readily apparent in the latter portion of the final decades of the Second Millennium, when the Western academic Family became much more diversified than it had been in the past. During a period of thirty years or so, various waves of newcomers, who differed in one way or another from most members of the Western academic Family of yore, hit Western universities. First, in the Sixties, and continuing into the Seventies, there was a significant increase in the number of females attending Western universities, some of whom went on to become university professors, with the result that there also was a substantial increase during this period in the number of female university professors. The fact that Western universities were formerly reserved for males now came into sharp relief."

She did a quick check of the crowd above her, and observed that there were roughly as many women as men in attendance. She then carried on.

"Second, there was a significant increase in the number of members of minority races and cultures who, by the Eighties, had become a major force to be reckoned with. It was now apparent that Western universities were formerly reserved not only for males, but for White males and, more particularly, White males with European, or Western, cultural backgrounds. Initially, the majority of members of minority races and cultures that entered Western universities had been brought up in the West, or otherwise previously had received significant exposure to Western culture. Thus, even these newcomers, like more established members of the Western academic Family, were essentially operating within a Western metaphysical philosophical framework. By the mid-Eighties, however, these members of minorities with strong Western ties, had been
joined by people of diverse races and cultures from distant parts of the globe, and some from much closer to home, who were not operating within the Western metaphysical philosophical framework."

She did another quick check of the crowd, and observed that there was a good representation of races and cultures. She continued.

"Third, by the Nineties, there also was a large number of Western university students who were significantly older than traditional Western university students of yore, many of whom had a significant amount of professional experience outside of universities. It was now readily apparent that, in days of yore, Western university students had been predominantly White males with European cultural backgrounds and who were very young and inexperienced, professionally and otherwise. These older students with a significant amount of professional experience outside of universities were, largely as a result of their professional experience, highly attuned to the philosophical changes that had been occurring in Western society outside of universities during the past thirty years or so—in part due to the increased diversification that also had been occurring in Western society outside of universities during this period—and, moreover, had professional reputations to protect. . . . How many of you are students?" she asked the onlookers.

More than half of the onlookers, including our young, female, student, raised their hands. The woman observed that those with their hands raised ranged from teenagers to seniors. She reasoned that many of the older students were likely to have significant professional experience outside of universities, which many of them did.

On the subject of professional reputations, the television announcer was by now becoming concerned about his own professional reputation. "Are you going to be much longer?" he asked the woman/"alien".

"Not much longer," she/it replied, and then returned to a summary of her/its Ph.D. thesis concerning philosophical transition in Western higher education.
"During this period, the Western academic Family did not become substantially more diversified in terms of economic background. As was traditionally the case, the majority of its members came from middle- and upper- income groups. However, the increased diversification in other respects that occurred in the Western academic Family during these thirty years or so was to have a significant impact on how many members of the Western academic Family came to view themselves in terms of social class."

The ears of our young, female, university student perked up. At university, she herself was an anomaly in terms of economic and social-class background; however, she was an anomaly because her family was extremely wealthy. What was wrong here? Then it occurred to her that the woman was talking about a period prior to when university attendance had become so common that people from family backgrounds such as her own, who were able to afford not to go, simply stopped going. This woman really had been away from the planet for a long time! Nevertheless, what she was starting to say about many members of the Western academic Family coming to see themselves differently in terms of social class made some sense to her. She listened intently as the woman continued.

"As various waves of newcomers crossed over the boundary separating the academic "inside" and "outside", the boundaries within many more established members of the Western academic Family also began to break down, in a parallel series of waves. This breakdown of internal boundaries signaled the beginning of their transition to postmodernism. Among the internal boundaries that broke down in the transition to postmodernism were the boundaries between the social classes—including the boundary between "upper-class" academic knowledge and "lower-class" practical knowledge. By the late Twentieth Century, for many members of the Western academic Family, including many of its more established members, as well as some of the latter waves of newcomers who crossed the threshold between the "outside" and the "inside" already
possessing postmodern perspectives, the era of the de-classification of Western academic knowledge was upon them. For others, this was not yet the case.

"And for some," the girl thought to herself, "this was still, even today, not the case."

"At the end of the Twentieth Century," the woman continued, "there was a great deal of confusion within the Western academic Family because its members were scattered over a broad philosophical spectrum. Some had completed the transition to postmodernism whereas others remained attached, to varying degrees, to Western metaphysics. Because members of this Family weren't always aware of where others were philosophically situated—and, in some cases, weren't aware of where they themselves were philosophically situated—there was a great deal of confusion and misunderstandings between its members during this period."

Our young, female, university student recognized that there were certain parallels between Western universities then and Western universities now. But, for her, what was most interesting about what was being said was its applications to the situation in her own family, at present. She herself had completed the transition to postmodernism and, as part of that, no longer saw firm boundaries between the social classes. Other members of her family, on the other hand, had remained attached, to varying degrees, to Western metaphysics, and to their upper-class identities. That was what had been causing all the problems between her and other members of her family since she began university—or at least that's what she then thought.

"As difficult as this sometimes made university life for students in the late Twentieth Century," continued the woman, "we were prepared to go along with it to a certain extent. In the final decades of the Twentieth Century, possessing a university degree was becoming increasingly essential to gain employment, of any kind."

"That was assuming, of course, that one had to work for a living," thought the girl, who would never have to work for a living, to herself.
"We also were prepared to put up with sharply mounting fees during this period because we needed those degrees," the woman continued. "There also were other inconveniences that we were willing to put up with, such as teaching becoming an increasingly low priority for many university professors, because increased demands were being made upon them to publish original research—at the same time that traditional notions about academic research here coming into question." Looking intently at the onlookers, she added, "But surely you've got all those problems sorted out by now."

Nobody said anything—although a couple of the onlookers did wink at her. The woman didn't flatter herself. She knew immediately what those winks meant. She was flabbergasted. These problems within the Western academic Family that had existed when she was a university student herself had not yet been sorted out.

The girl was thinking to herself that the problems between her and members of her own family that had begun when she began university had not yet been sorted out.

The television announcer, who possessed ten university degrees himself, plus a college diploma in broadcasting, who now had no doubt that the creature at the bottom of the crater was an Earthling woman, and who also now had no doubt that his viewers realized that this creature was an Earthling woman, had to change the direction of this interview somehow. He knew by now it was a lost cause, but he was desperate. "I can see that you've done some research about Western Earthling universities in the late Second Millennium. But that doesn't mean to say that you're one of us."

The woman at the bottom of the crater was about to shoot back to the announcer, "I am not an alien from outer space, you idiot." But, before she did so, she stopped herself.

At the same time, our young, female, university student was about to step in front of the camera and tell television viewers throughout the Western world, "From the very beginning, I suspected that this was not an alien, and now I'm positive it is not." But she also stopped herself.
It occurred to the woman that, if various waves of newcomers to the Western academic Family had propelled progressively more and more members of this Family from a Western metaphysical philosophical context to a postmodern context, then perhaps another wave of newcomers—or at least what appeared to be another wave of newcomers—could result in those members who had remained strongly attached to Western metaphysics through all these various waves, and for some time to come, completing the transition to postmodernism. If everyone were situated in the same philosophical context, then these problems that had existed for so, so, long in Western universities were likely to disappear. She had some acting experience. She might be able to pull it off.

At the same time, it occurred to the girl that, if various waves of newcomers to Western society on the whole had propelled progressively more and more members of Western society on the whole from a Western metaphysical philosophical context to a postmodern context, then perhaps another wave of newcomers—or at least what appeared to be another wave of newcomers—could result in those members who had remained strongly attached to Western metaphysics through all these various waves, and for some time to come, completing the transition to postmodernism. If everyone in her own family were situated in the same philosophical context, then the problems that had existed between her and members of her family for so, so, long were likely to disappear. She also had some acting experience.

These two really were one of a kind.

The woman at the bottom of the crater kicked it off. She took out a cigarette and lit up. She then took a deep drag on the smoldering cylinder, and exhaled slowly, punctuating its exhalation with a few smoke rings.

The "alien" then intoned, in a very "alien"-sounding voice, "You're right. I almost had you fooled, didn't I? I'm no Earthling!"

"It really is an alien!" the girl affirmed, trying to sound as convincing as possible.
"It seems that it may really be an alien!" the bewildered announcer exclaimed to his viewers.

"Really?" asked the professor of English.

"Really," intoned the "alien".

"Really," reiterated the girl/who believed in "aliens". "I believed from the moment I set eyes on the creature that it was an alien."

"Really and truly, it is an alien," declared the announcer, still somewhat bewildered, but now thinking of his ratings.

There were gasps and shrieks from onlookers assembled in the Circle that evening, as well as from television viewers throughout the Western world. Suddenly, after having appeared to reject the notion that the woman was an "alien", everyone was acting as though they actually did believe that she was an "alien" from outer space. Some even seemed to think that she might be the Second Coming. Both the woman at the bottom of the crater and the girl were surprised, and even shocked, that everyone had gone along with their ruse as readily as they did. The woman/"alien" and the girl/who believed in "aliens" looked at each other, and saw something very familiar in each other's eyes. They both knew, and knew that the other knew, that this was the kind of thing that had got both of them into trouble in the first place, and that it was by no means an answer to their problems. The answer to their problems wasn't to pretend to be someone (or something) other than who (or what) one was, and to try to change other people, as they were doing now. As they looked into each other's eyes, they both realized that the answer was simply to just be honest with oneself, and with others—although that was sometimes harder than it might seem.

The woman/"alien" butted out her smoldering "white cylinder", then leaned towards the microphone. Those assembled around the crater took this as a sign that the "alien" was about to speak, and quieted down, preparing to listen. Once she/it had their full attention, the woman/"alien" began speaking, in her normal voice.
"I'm sorry about all this. I thought that, by deceiving you, I was doing good. But, as I realize now, that wasn't the case. I'm just an ordinary person, like the rest of you."

The girl took her turn, saying, "I thought that, by playing along, I was doing good. But as I now also realize, that wasn't the case. This woman is no more an alien from outer space than I am."

The woman then added, "There's something I've been meaning to say for a very long time and, since I've now got everybody's attention, it seems that this is a very opportune time to say it. Although I've attended university myself, I personally don't believe that people who have attended university are necessarily "smarter" than those who haven't. Nor do I believe that people who have attended university possess special "insider" information that others don't possess, that makes them superior to other people. You can believe what you will, but that's what I believe. That's all I've had to say . . . but it sure took a long time to get it out."

Our young, female, university student stepped directly in front of the camera, to ensure that viewers at home—including, she hoped, members of her own family—would hear what she was now about to say. She then began, "There's something I've also been meaning to say for a very long time. Although I, too, have attended university, I don't believe that people who have attended university are necessarily either superior, or inferior, to people who have not attended university—or a combination of both. However, I must add here that there are opportunities available in today's universities to acquire useful, practical knowledge, mixed in with everything else, and it's possible that university graduates have acquired some such knowledge in the course of their university educations. For this, it seems, they should be respected. Yet universities aren't the only place where one may acquire such knowledge. People who have acquired such knowledge elsewhere also deserve some respect. You can believe what you will, but that's what I believe. . . . It feels good to get that out into the open." She added, "I think it's about time we got that poor woman out of there."
It should be kept in mind that this girl was from a very well-to-do family, and would never have to work for a living. Most other young university students were not as fortunate as she was. Even so, she was brave to have stepped forward as she did.

A hush descended upon the Western sector of planet Earth. Even our television announcer was dumfounded. Everyone was so stunned that they even forgot that midnight, and the New Millennium, was just seconds away.

The chimes in the university’s clock tower began to toll the arrival of the New Millennium. Those gathered around the crater, and around their television sets at home, couldn’t let this momentous occasion pass without celebration—despite what had just happened. Celebrate they did. A team from Physical Education began their celebration by rescuing the woman from the bottom of the crater, through erecting a human pyramid, up which she climbed, as "Auld Lang Syne" was being played and sung in the background. At ground level, she was greeted by our young, female, university student, who gave her a warm hug.

The television announcer also was on hand to greet the woman. His microphone was now replaced with a cellular telephone, that he held out to her. "We got a call for you from one of our viewers, who has some good news for you," he said to her as she took the phone. The women spoke briefly on the phone, after which she handed the phone over to the girl, who chatted with her mother. It turns out that the "alien" from outer space was actually the great, great, long, long, lost aunt of the girl who had been the first to have contact with her when she returned from her travels. Up close, the family resemblance was readily apparent. They both had the same eyes. Shortly after taking the phone call, the two departed for a family celebration.

In the next few hours, amidst the continuing celebration at the Circle, other members of the Western academic Family stepped before the television camera and expressed beliefs that were similar to those expressed by the woman and the girl. Those who did step forward tended to be mainly senior-level graduate students from a variety of
university faculties and departments, students at various levels enrolled in the natural and applied sciences, and both professors and students in various professional schools associated with the university. Relative to the overall number of students and professors gathered at the Circle that evening, who comprised a good cross-section of members of the Western academic Family, they were only a small minority. The reasons why others didn't step forward were probably varied. Some probably did still believe in the existence of absolute "truth", while others probably only appeared to still believe—or at least it appeared that way. Yet others may have needed more time to digest the events that had occurred that evening, and to figure out where they actually stood.

Although there had been hopes in some quarters that the arrival of the spaceship from outer space on the eve of the New Millennium would initiate some dramatic changes in the Western Earthling system of higher education, as you are probably aware, no dramatic changes have occurred in this area from then until now, several years later. There have, however, been some more modest changes. We have seen a greater harmonization between programs offered by universities and colleges that offer practical, job-related, training. For some professional degree programs, practical workplace experience now counts heavily towards a degree. Similarly, at some, although not all, of our universities, professional experience and teaching ability are now given greater weight in the hiring and promotion of professors. As university fees have continued to soar, and stiffer penalties have come into effect for black cap-and-gown crime, Western Earthlings are earning fewer degrees on average than in the past. Three or four is generally thought to suffice. Some Western Earthlings, who would readily be accepted into university if they applied, have decided to by-pass university altogether, opting instead for less expensive college programs. This decline in enrollment has been offset, to some extent, by an increase in the enrollment of the fabulously rich who, in recent years, have started to trickle back to Western universities. Our major universities continue to receive many more applicants than they can possibly accept, for the full range of
programs that they offer. We are, after all, only Earthlings—including even the "alien" from outer space that descended to Earth that evening.

An area where there has been fairly significant change in recent years is in family relations. Since the turn of the Millennium, family relations among Western Earthlings who have attended university and members of their families have improved significantly. It has become increasingly recognized in recent years that, in the area of family relations, above all areas, the disadvantages of being dishonest—or even just not being entirely honest, which is not the same thing as being dishonest—about where one actually stands philosophically in relation to Western higher education may seriously outweigh the advantages. This is regardless of one's family background. If you can't be honest with the people that you're closest to, you're going to go through life feeling like an alien from outer space—although perhaps you don't actually feel the way that we imagine you feel. We should have learned by now that we shouldn't make assumptions about the perspectives of others.

Since our recent first actual close encounter of the Third kind, it's anyone's guess where Western higher education is headed.
REFERENCES

or

FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES?


Fish, S. (1994). *There's no such thing as free speech... and it's a good thing, too*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.


Chs
Encounters of the Third Kind

319


Woodcock, G. (1969). A radical dilemma. In T. Reid & J. Reid (Eds.), *Student power and the Canadian campus* (pp. 58-64). Toronto, ON: Peter Martin Associates Ltd.