Exploring Profeminist Masculinity Studies through Postmodern Literature: Youth Engagement,

Fictional Practice and Feminist Pedagogy

Raziyeh Javanmard

Department of Integrated Studies in Education

McGill University

Montréal, Québec, Canada

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Preface

I verify that this work is solely mine. I have completed my whole research under the supervision

of my supervisor, Dr. Claudia Mitchell.

Abstract

Antifeminism is one of the persisting tendencies in feminist classes that alienates the majority of adult male students, especially in countries with conflicting models of behavior, like Iran, from the advocacy of women's rights, and perpetuates misogyny in educational contexts. To overcome (the male) students' resistance to feminism, the present study uses literary study techniques to create a safe conciliatory space in classrooms for promoting more inclusive and more flexible feminist discussions among students. The research starts with analyzing the impact of literature in activating critical thinking of students, and explains how literature helps learners to question patriarchy from within. To have a more effective literary study in feminist pedagogy, the study focuses on incorporating profeminist masculinity studies and postmodern fiction in curriculum, and it elaborates on how their intersubjective approaches to sexism take students beyond the essentialist gender-war mentality to help them scrutinize gender inequity in relationship with class, race, and sex discriminations. For further practice-based elaborations, the study proposes alternative strategies for reading Julian Barnes' *Arthur & George* to show how profeminist studies on a postmodern work of art can motivate students to challenge gender hierarchies, and to accept their own role and responsibility in the development of social justice.

Résumé

L'antiféminisme est l'une des tendances persistantes dans les classes féministes qui éloigne la majorité des étudiants adultes de sexe masculin, en particulier dans les pays aux modèles de comportement conflictuels, comme l'Iran, de défendre des droits des femmes et perpétue la misogynie dans les contextes éducatifs. Dans le but de défaire la résistance des étudiants (masculins) au féminisme, la présente étude utilise des techniques d'étude littéraire pour créer un espace de conciliation sureté dans les salles de classe pour promouvoir des discussions féministes plus inclusives et plus flexibles parmi les étudiants. La recherche commence avec analyser l'impact de la littérature sur l'activation de la pensée critique des étudiants en expliquant comment la littérature soutien les apprenants à remettre en question le patriarcat de l'intérieur. Pour arriver à une étude littéraire plus efficace en pédagogie féministe, l'étude se concentre sur l'incorporation des études de masculinité proféministe et de la fiction postmoderne dans le programme d'études, et elle explique comment leurs approches intersubjectives du sexisme emmènent les étudiants au-delà de la mentalité essentialiste de guerre entre les sexes pour les aider à scruter l'inégalité entre les sexes. En relation avec les discriminations de classe, de race et de sexe. Pour d'autres élaborations basées sur la pratique, l'étude propose des stratégies alternatives pour lire Arthur & George de Julian Barnes sur une œuvre d'art postmoderne afin de dévoiler comment des études proféministes peuvent motiver les étudiants à remettre en question les hiérarchies de genre et à accepter leur propre responsabilité dans le développement de justice sociale.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Scholars of gender schema theory and cognitive developmental studies agree that gender-based practices and behaviors are learnt culturally, and reinforced through modeling others and enacting the expectations defined by the prevailing ideologies of the society (Bussey & Bandura, 1999; Warin, 2000; Zurbriggen 2002). The ways human beings take to regulate themselves as males/ females, and the strategies they develop to understand, endorse and enact gender roles are highly influenced by the value systems functioning in their specific sociocultural contexts. In each society, it is the regulations imposed by the legal, political, economic, educational, and religious institutions of power that continually modify individuals' definitions of their own masculine/ feminine selves and their perception of interpersonal relationships. According to socialization theorists, in countries with conflicting models of behavior, this process of modification creates perplexity, and poses a continuing difficult dilemma for individuals to decide between enacting the acceptable or the unacceptable (Dietz, 1998; Lips, 1989). As studies indicate, in such puzzling situations, people display stronger tendency for conforming to the conventional set of gender norms rather than the deviant due to the common understanding that the deviation or departure from the established sexual ideologies and predefined roles can result in denigration, penalty, or even aggression and violence (Lips, 1989; Zurbriggen 2002).

In Islamic countries, like Iran, heterosexist religious ideologies play a pivotal role in constructing and normalizing sexualities and defining the best possible course of action for men and women (Kazemzadeh, 2002; Keddie & Baron 1993). Since 650 AD that Arabs forced Iranians to follow Islam, there have been great power struggles for restoring the pre-Islamic Iranian roots and defying the Islamic conventions, such as globalization and the westernization movements of

Reza Shah a part of which concerned Women's Awakening especially in the years between 1936 and 1941 (Moghadam 2011). Following the Islamic Revolution of the 1979, women's awakening movements were banned in Iran, and the oppression against women highly increased through the legislation of public dress code for women, highlighting gender binaries, enforcement of Islamic laws against women (such as polygamy and stoning) and insistence on male supremacy in a variety of educational, occupational, social and interpersonal domains (Keddie & Baron 1993). In spite of the oppositions put up by the Islamic government, since the late 1980s leftist organizations and groups have been developed throughout the country to continue the women's movements, to support fundamental reforms in the family and administrative laws, and to raise awareness about women's rights through establishing campaigns and promoting feminist events (Sedghi 2007).

The conflict between the radical leftists and the ruling Islamic regime in Iran has puzzled the people of different age groups about whether to maintain or to go against the traditional patriarchal gender ideologies. Despite the existing differences rooted in the class-based structure of the Iranian culture and despite the diversity of ethno-linguistic groups in the country, a majority of women of the upper and middle-class families from different ethnic backgrounds have presently joined each other in struggling to overcome the gender hierarchies established by the ruling Islamic regime (Chavoshian, 2010). Yet, there still exist families mainly from the lower class or the far-right Islamists who respect biological determinism in their social and personal relationships, and show acceptance for sexual exploitation and harassment of women. Among this group of the society, girls are sexually objectified and forced to follow stereotypical sexual behavior propagated by Islam, and these result in early forced marriages and substance use of the females (Kazemzadeh, 2002; Moallem, 2006).

The violation of women's rights is also one of the main ongoing problems in the educational system of Iran. Based on the surveys conducted in 2010, the rate of academic achievement among women has considerably increased since the mid-1980s, but the gender differences in education are still huge, specifically in science and technology (Moghadam, 2011). The problem with gender bias continues after graduation, and negatively impacts the lives of Iranian girls and women in workplaces. In spite of their excellent educational achievements, the females usually fail to get engaged in their desired jobs, especially in well-paid careers, because of the gender stereotypes and prejudice that exist against women (Moallem, 2006). Compared to men, women are usually hired for inferior jobs, and need to go through difficult and continuous processes to attest their efficiency for getting promotion. Considering these difficulties, steps are taken for extending women's rights in Iran, in different fields.

The attempts have become, however, ineffective because of the recent development of antifeminist tendencies in the society. Despite the educational and socioeconomic advances Iranian women have made in the past few decades, as the sociological studies point out (e.g. Chavoshian, 2010; Moghadam 2011), the movements established for the development of the women's rights are recently suppressed by the opponents of feminism, at the excuse of harming the image of the Iranian manhood and for provoking the crisis of masculinity (Keddie & Baron 1993). The idea imitates the claims made by Western antifeminist men's movements, disregards the developments in women's scientific and professional skills, and encourages the educated successful Iranian women to re-embrace domesticity and re-assume the role of the angel in the house (Fotouhi 2014). Considering this confusing conflict over the rights of men and women, and considering the negative impact the confusion can have on the perspective of the youth toward the inclusive social justice movements, I believe there is an urgent need for educational centers to encourage students,

in countries like Iran, to take a critical view on mainstream sexual politics and gender-based cultural trends, to enable the students to challenge patriarchy from within, and to turn the youth from passive consumers of the sexist culture into active interpreters of the prevailing culture.

What makes me feel the urge for encouraging critical thinking in students, is the confusion I observed in my own students about gender binaries and sexual discriminations, because of which some of my students refused involvement in feminist discussions. A few years ago, while I was working as a faculty lecturer at an Iranian university, some of my colleagues told me about the resistance of some students (especially the males) to discussions on women's rights, and explained how this had disappointed them from teaching courses related to feminism in classrooms. I asked one of these colleagues about her method of teaching feminism, and while she was explaining, I thought about finding a way for presenting discussions on gender and sexuality in an indirect way to prevent tension. But, at that stage, I had no idea how to make it indirect. Later, when I was looking for some up-to-date teaching strategies for my Women's & Gender Studies course in the department of English Language and Literature, I learnt about literary study techniques, and the positive impact literary texts could have on improving the quality of education.

Based on my earlier studies on English Literature and feminism, I decided to adopt literary study strategies by including classic feminist fiction in my curriculum. I was thinking that with this method, my students would easily gain and develop greater awareness of the unfair situation of women in heterosexist societies. I believed that literature of any type would work as an indirect tool to lower the resistance of my students to feminism and it would encourage them to accept innovative gender ideologies more easily. Due to the prevalence of sexual discrimination in our country and the familiarity of the topic to my students, I expected feminist literary reading/

discussion/ writing sessions to increase students' active participation in the class, and motivate them to participate in feminist causes.

To prevent the confusion sophisticated texts could create in literary studies, at that time, I selected a set of realistic short stories like Ernest Hemingway's "Cat in the Rain," and book chapters from famous novels like *Jane Eyre,* so that my students could easily digest the material, connect it to the real-life examples of women's suppression, and enjoy the reading and writing exercises. According to the online sources that I was at that time using for literary studies, the inclusion of the realistic stories could, at the same time, facilitate language acquisition, sharpen problem-solving skills of learners in the real life, and give them a chance to openly express empathy for the depicted characters in the stories. The idea convinced me that by teaching feminist literature I would enrich the English reading/ writing skills of my students, and simultaneously help them devise innovative solutions for the problem of the oppressed females.

At that time, following the instructions that I found from online websites on literary studies, I planned pre-reading, during-reading and post-reading activities to make the sessions as effective as possible. In the first session, students randomly formed several groups of almost equal sizes. Before reading, they were asked to write down the advantages and disadvantages of being a woman, and then to discuss their own responses with their peers in small and bigger groups. During the reading, they were required to underline and look up 3-4 new words, reflect on one interesting phrase or sentence, and to write short answers to the questions I had prepared about the humiliating situation of the female protagonist of the selected story. Then they exchanged their own findings and commented on each other's notes. After the reading, students were expected to individually write a two-paragraph reflection on the text they had read, and to propose a solution for the observed problem of women.

Things seemed to go very well in the first two or three sessions. Based on the feedback that I received after the initial classes, almost all participants, especially the students of science and technology enjoyed reading literary texts, and building vocabulary or practicing reading/ writing based on the story of some imaginary characters. For them, it was like focusing on the fictional for factual purposes. For some female students, the idea of reading and writing about the difficulties of women was like a kind of attempt to discover and express their own true selves. Some students were so excited about reading literature that they asked if I might include parts of their favorite novels about women in the next reading assignments, or if they could invite their friends to participate in the next sessions as guests. These positive reactions encouraged me to continue literary studies.

In spite of the initial interest of almost all students in my new teaching method and feminist subjects, as the time passed, the idea turned into a source of trouble. Tension arouse between group members over the socially-accepted rights of men and women. Some young men, for instance, called tasks like nurturing, raising children, expressing emotions, etc. as "the natural duties of women" which angered my female students and provoked quarrels. Gradually, I found gender inequality to be a very sensitive topic to be discussed in classrooms. It was not easy to encourage students to speak calmly about an oppressed female character when some of the students identified themselves with the oppressors, or when some were themselves victimized by an oppressive system similar to what the story described. My selected literary narratives were not as effective as I expected. They were so realistic that students couldn't distance themselves from the real-life impressions of the texts, to adopt a proper and broader perspective upon sexuality and gender.

Our fifth session began with quarrels over grouping. Because of being disrespected, most of my female students refused to take the same random groups that they initially participated in. At

their insistence, I had to accept to divide them into two large groups of males and females, and this was the beginning of an increasing hostility within my classes. In contrast to my initial teaching objectives, feminist literary study techniques were escalating bitter gender wars among my male and female students who seemed to never arrive at a mutual agreement. Rather than motivating my students to support feminist causes, I was in fact reinforcing gender binaries by involving my students in discussions on women's problems. I thought about changing the assigned reading narratives. But I was too confused to decide on a proper text or to guess the probable reactions of the students to the new texts.

Due to my insistence on the need for preserving a friendly and respectful context for communication in the class, an uneasy peace finally prevailed the next few sessions, during which most of my female learners began to speak and write more confidently in defence of the oppressed fictional female characters, while the male students became resistant to contribute to the class discussions. The majority of males gradually turned into simple listeners, and lost their initial enthusiasm to participate in the reading / writing questions. When I asked for their reasons, one of my male students claimed that he and his friends had found it impossible to participate in feminist discussions as it was totally unfair to men. The other male student confirmed the idea and said: "Feminism is off balance. It dishonors men to value women….When we articulate our true opinions to defend ourselves, we put the class into disorder. … We've decided to keep silent because men's perspectives and needs are not mattered in feminist discussions".

After a while the male students asked me to change the course material "to be fair to all". Some of my female students, however, disagreed with the idea, and asked for the continuation of the same teaching method. The contrast between the opinions of my students was confusing me about applying literary study techniques. I returned to the websites based on which I had designed my

literary reading/ writing curriculum, and looked for the feedback of the teachers who had tried feminist literature before me. The provided online examples were simply limited to one-two sessions, and there was no detail about the reaction of the students after the initial sessions. Finally, out of helplessness, I stopped using feminist literature in my classes, and put aside the idea of literary studies. But the experience made me curious about the true reasons behind the students' objections, the possibility of men's engagement in feminism, and the type of literature and approaches that could inspire such an engagement, and lower antifeminism.

Later on, during my graduate work on English Literature, I learnt about the essentialist aspects of feminism, the consequent problem of masculinity, and the growth of anti-feminist men's movements, all of which reminded me of the frustration of my own male students. Based on profeminist masculinity studies (Whitehead 2007), however, the solution was not to put aside feminism or to deny sexism, but to go beyond the old gender-war mentality to open up feminism to negotiations on maleness and to explore sexism within the wider framework of power, and seeing misogyny in relation to class, religious, sexual and racial discriminations. As I continued my studies on literature, I found postmodern fiction a particularly appropriate domain for such an integrated approach to feminism, because the literature itself advocated for multiplicity and subjectivity.

Rationale

In my current research, I embark on a pedagogical project to explore how profeminist approaches to masculinity in postmodern literature could help educators and students to redefine sexual equality through the interrelationship between men and women, and the dissociation of manliness from patriarchy. I particularly focus on texts appropriate for senior secondary or CEGEP students (16-18 year olds) based on the potential of this age group for more active participation in

feminist causes. Considering the potential of interpretive feminist reading for contributing to identity explorations, in the present thesis, I ask the following questions:

1. How can profeminist masculinity studies integrate feminist pedagogies to address the alienation of the young people, especially males, from feminism?

2. How could postmodern fiction facilitate this revision in feminist pedagogy?

To answer these questions, my thesis is divided into five chapters. After the present introductory chapter, I conduct a literature review on the impact of literary studies on different pedagogical frameworks including feminist pedagogy, and the problems some educators experience in feminist education. The solutions and recommendations given on the reviewed literature is also explained briefly to give a general overview over what is done and what needs to be fulfilled. This way, I investigate on how essentialist approaches to gender equality in curriculum can alienate students from feminist debates and the need for tackling the problem. To further elaborate on this, I give examples from unsuccessful teaching attempts in feminist pedagogy in different countries to highlight the need for more anti-essentialist approaches to gender discriminations, and to emphasize on the necessity of a fundamental revision in feminist pedagogical design in adult education.

To recommend more effective strategies for feminist literary studies, after the literature review, I focus on the problem of antifeminism, and its relationship to the crisis of masculinity. I define antifeminism as a result of the confusion the males experience in the face of emancipatory movements especially feminism, and relate antifeminist tendencies of male students to feminists' inattention to socio-cultural discourses of masculinity. To propose an innovative pedagogical framework, I suggest to counter antifeminism by analyzing the problem of masculinity in the light of profeminist masculinity studies. To justify the appropriateness of the selected theory, the chapter

provides a historical review over the development of antifeminism, and the formation of profeminist masculinity studies which would help teachers go beyond gender binaries in their class discussions, and create interconnections between antifeminism and other discriminatory power structures. By scrutinizing the reasons behind the antifeminist backlash among students, I attempt to improve feminist pedagogy, and to emphasize on the need for developing post-patriarchal models of manhood.

After examining the pedagogical framework developed based on profeminist masculinity studies, I explore postmodern literature in dealing with the problem of masculinity, and the reconciliatory features of postmodern fiction for creating interrelationship between men and women, and for dissociating manliness from patriarchy. To make this social constructionist pedagogical framework more practice-based, I work with the example of Julian Barnes' prizewinning novel *Arthur & George* (2005) to analyze how the novel decenters the illusion of pure English masculinity by challenging hierarchies of gender, race and religion, and by highlighting the internal anxieties and conflicts of men. In this intersectional approach to feminist pedagogy, the pre/during/ and post reading activities are designed to be open-ended to contribute towards alternative feminist reading strategies, and they intend to increase the possibility of male participation in feminism.

The last chapter brings summary, conclusions and implications for further research.

By conducting the present research, I hope to draw attention to the causes of unsuccessful feminist education, to emphasize the need for improvements in feminist literature pedagogy (Nordvall & Wieslander, 2019), and to formulate alternative feminist reading strategies to increase the possibility of youth participation in social change, and support the creation of a more inclusive society.

Chapter 2

Literature review

Introduction

Because of incorporating literary devices, literature is used in educational contexts for a wide range of purposes. Works of fiction function as influential tools for conveying moral information, improving command of a language, and developing emotional intelligence of learners from different age groups. A review of literature indicates that to date, a great body of research has been devoted to studies on the positive influence of literature on the acquisition of language skills, and to how complexity of fictional practices extend learners' awareness of foreign languages and develops their communicative and linguistic competences. Relatively extensive studies are done, also, on the enormous potential of radical works of fiction for the improvement of critical pedagogy and emotional involvement of students in anti-oppressive education; these studies concentrate on how literature raises social consciousness of learners and questions their reactions to the dominant sociocultural stereotypes.

In spite of the extensive research on the positive impact of literature on language acquisition and on ethical and sentimental development of learners, there is little precedence in explorations on the impact of literary texts in improving feminist pedagogy, or more precisely, on including feminist literary narratives in curriculum for solving the problem of antifeminism that feminist instructors usually confront in actual classrooms. In fact, in literary studies on feminist pedagogy, majority of investigations are focused on successful cases, displaying how works of fiction help teachers to address sexism in their classes, or how the educators effectively increase students' participation in feminist agency through literary studies. In spite of the growth of antifeminism in

feminist classes, studies on fictional practices scarcely focus on the concept of "resistance" to feminism, and they rarely point at the ways feminist literary texts alleviate or intensify the problem of antifeminism.

Due to the current limited and fragmented reviews on literary studies in addressing antifeminism, there is a compelling need for an overarching analysis to fill in the gap by integrating the related findings on literary studies, feminist pedagogy, and antifeminism. Findings from the present literature review develop a deeper understanding of the growth of antifeminism in feminist trainings and the proposed solutions for the problem. I start this literature review with defining the significance and the objectives of feminist pedagogy, and I develop it by giving examples for the problem of antifeminism that feminist instructors encounter in different parts of the world. After these, I review books and articles on the overall impact of literary studies, and the positive role works of fiction play in improving critical pedagogy. At the end, I focus on the potential of literary studies for dealing with gender issues and the resistance of students to feminist pedagogy in education.

General Perceptions toward Feminist Pedagogy and Antifeminism in Classes

Feminist pedagogy started with the second-wave feminist movement of the 1970s, and has tried to synthesize feminist theoretical perspectives with classroom practices (Accardi 2010). Initially the pedagogy was mainly concerned with validating women's viewpoints, raising consciousness among people of higher education about feminist activism, and opening a chance for hearing women's voices in different realms. In her "What is Feminist Pedagogy?" (1981), Berenice Fisher, one of the earliest theorists on feminist pedagogy, writes that this type of pedagogy "represents an important effort to incorporate some of the central features of the women's movement into the work of teaching" (p. 20). Due to the ubiquity of female

marginalization, feminist Pedagogy has gradually broadened its outlook to question and challenge various discriminatory power structures and sociocultural systems of oppression.

Feminist pedagogy is not merely focused on discussing feminist topics, but on the ways educators teach these subjects as well (Carillo 2007). It is about how an instructor deals with the challenges that come up in presenting feminist thoughts, or how the teacher facilitates feminist discussions in an effective way. Giroux (1989) makes the point that "a feminist classroom must instruct students in a way that makes them attentive to patriarchy as an ideology that is historically and socially constructed as part of an institutional discourse and material force designed to oppress women" (p. 7). Feminist pedagogy is a collaborative method for putting aside passivity, standing against hierarchies, and accepting the need for self-actualization of each and every student to encourage them to participate actively in the process of making the history.

Why Feminist Pedagogy?

Although feminist pedagogy is designed in the first place to oppose race, class, gender, sex and religious discriminations, the higher system of education is still dealing with the problem of hierarchical structuring (Accardi, 2010). According to Belenky et al. (1997), "conceptions of knowledge and truth that are accepted and articulated today have been shaped throughout history by the male-dominated majority culture" (p. 5). To tackle the prevalence of cultural, political and sexist prejudices that perpetuate and reproduce female marginalization at educational systems (hooks, 1994), feminist pedagogy needs to continue and get improved to promote active learning, and to raise consciousness about the present oppressive systems. It is needed to activate critical mind of the students and to open their eyes to their actual status quo.

According to hooks (1994), feminist pedagogy is designed to help students to go beyond cultural and political biases and to achieve a lasting reconciliation between all. In her *Talking Back* (1989) hooks defines the reconciliatory power of feminist pedagogy to paradoxically have its roots in a coinciding "sense of struggle" and "mutuality" between students, where teachers and students work together to overcome the alienation and the estrangement from themselves and the others. The emphasis on the juxtaposition of struggle and reciprocity, in this context, turns students into autonomous individuals who feel sympathetic towards each other, and this synthesis of sympathy and autonomy prepares the learners for understanding what the concept of "equality" means and how a "just society" should act. This seemingly contradictory state is empowering in that it educates students to recognize their own individual capabilities and to use them for reinventing a humane society. This mutual understanding connects all without trying to eliminate the distinctions between them (Bruce & Brown, 2008; Buikema, & Thiele, 2018; hooks 1989).

Problems in Feminist Pedagogy

Despite the capacity feminist pedagogy has for retaining individuality, autonomy, mutuality and interactivity among students and teachers, feminist instructors usually encounter a variety of problems. Carillo (2007), for example, explains that most of the students have got used to teacher-centered methods, and feel confused when the teacher gives them the authority to collaborate with their classmates for analysing and criticizing the taken-for-granted assumptions on gender. hooks (1994) has in fact admitted that "the urge to experiment with pedagogical practices may not be welcomed by students who often expect us to teach in the manner they are accustomed to" (pp. 142-143). A variety of techniques are therefore devised to overcome the initial difficulties in student-centered teaching methods. Another problem is with destabilising nature of feminist theories that encourages students to challenge sociocultural conventions and to adopt a critical

perspective upon the prevailing gender norms in their societies. For those students who are used to descriptive and explanatory approaches in their curriculum elsewhere, the idea of applying counter-cultural views may sound odd and even wrong. To prevent this, feminist instructors need to start with acknowledging the fear everyone may experience in questioning certainties, and he may proceed with informing students of the possibility of suspending one's own certainties to analyze the others' worldviews (Stopford 2020).

Antifeminism and Recommendations on How to Counter It.

One of the biggest problems in feminist pedagogy that has, however, remained unsolved is the growth of antifeminist tendencies among students. Usually, after getting involved in a few discussion activities on women's rights and the possibility of tackling sociocultural oppressions, disagreement and conflict arise in classes over deconstructing discriminations which usually alienate students from the feminist debate (Lombardo & Mergaert, 2013; Nordvall & Wieslander 2019). Antifeminist students mostly blame feminist developments for the difficulties of men, and they usually refuse to participate in any type of class activity that may contradict male supremacy. Although instructors confirm the theories developed on emancipatory potential of feminist pedagogy, as the common experience of teachers suggests, in practice, teaching feminism proves to be challenging, and long-term feminist sessions, especially with male-only or mixed sex grouping, typically fail to achieve the ultimate objective of feminism in decentring patriarchy (Goodman, 2004; Mackinlay, 2016).

For some instructors, like Buffington (1993), the antifeminist opposition among students is an essential part of a successful feminist pedagogy:

That conflict and struggle are vital parts of revolutionary feminist pedagogy. My students may not always feel comfortable with what they read, say or hear in my class. But they're thinking, learning, and changing. And that's what I want. After all, I'm not their mother. I'm their teacher. (Buffington,1993, p. 10)

Mullarkey (2009) similarly believes that feminism would have never survived without arousing the disagreement of its opponents, and insists that feminist pedagogy would not be able to communicate its "natural" meaning if the feminist teachers and students try to suppress the antifeminist assaults. At the same time with these few studies that normalize antifeminist conflicts, a considerable body of research indicates that the resistance to feminist pedagogy fosters and perpetuates misogynistic myths, reinforces male-female dichotomies and deviates feminist pedagogy from the intended mutuality and autonomy (Forbes, 2002; Mackinlay 2016).

The negative reaction of learners to feminist education is, in fact, an understudied but longstanding problem that has existed from the rise of the feminist pedagogy. The problem is not, however, restricted to a specific country and gets repeated with almost the same features in different parts of the world since long (Lombardo & Mergaert, 2013; Nordvall & Wieslander 2019). Orr (1993), the tutor or course director of "Concepts of Male and Female in the West" at York University, Canada, in 1984, describes the reaction of her male students to discussions on challenging gender stereotypes as follows:

Many male students drop out in the early weeks of the course, and among those who remain there is a contingent clearly hostile to the course for sexist reasons. This hostility is manifested in a variety of ways, ranging from a sulky silence in class and/or poor attendance; to a superficial "going along with it," "saying what the Prof wants to hear"; to overt anger exhibited

in sexist comments, put-downs of women students, and attempts, all too often successful, to silence them. (p. 242).

A similar experience of male student opposition can be found in Moore's (1997) description of teaching feminist theories at a university located in a small conservative city of the U.S. The author calls the resistance of her students as the "defining resistance" in which the male students are unwilling to listen to the theories and studies that contradict their perception of social order. To these students, feminism is nothing more than a "male-bashing" field of study that ignores men's problems. Like Orr (1993) and Hartung (1990), Moore (1997) relates the resistance of the male students to the biological sex of the instructor and claims that the problem rarely happens in the classes held by male instructors. In the opinion of the author, male students take female instructors to be "too self-interested" and "less credible" whenever they talk about women's rights. To alleviate the problem, Moore (1997) recommends female instructors to educate their learners about the possibility of resistance from the beginning days of the course. She says, by facing the problem and showing your openness to disagreements, the most resistant students get interested in feminist discussions.

Jaggar's *Feminist politics and human nature* (1983) blames the wrong and narrow assumptions of feminists about human nature as the source of trouble. Dualistic perception of gender that limits masculinity and femininity to individuals' biological sex, as Jaggar says, is one of the misperceptions that blunders the feminist discussions, and needs to be replaced by representations of gender as a historical and sociocultural construct. Jaggar also warns instructors that misunderstanding about the nature of gender and what the "genuine equality for women" means, can deviate feminist pedagogy from the true chances for women's liberation, and result in implicit female objectification. To prevent this, the author invites us to deepen our understanding of human

society to be able to properly identify the sources that reinforce patriarchy and to recognize the possible solutions for it.

The problem of resistance to feminist pedagogy, as Mackinlay (2016) says, has even aggravated in the 21ˢᵗ century because of the development of neoliberal imperatives that represent feminist pedagogies to be "troublesome" and trail feminist instructors and leaders into silence. Mackinlay (2016) states that Neoliberalism has turned feminist pedagogy into a mere set of ineffective demonstration or a "lecture theatre" that advances market values (p. 51). The mind and the tongue of the feminist teachers are locked even inside the classroom because what neo-liberalism represents of feminist pedagogy is nothing more than one-size-fit-all assumptions designed for the middle-class white. The author recommends to keep away from "whitestream" feminism, and to incorporate race and social class in our class discussions on identity politics to arrive at the mutuality and autonomy hooks expected to create through feminist pedagogy (p. 58).

For Rohrer (2018), antifeminism is a by-product of intimidation and seduction embedded with neoliberal feminism. Due to the structural oppression caused by neoliberalism, the author insists on the need for re-evaluating critical pedagogies, especially feminist pedagogy. The activism neoliberalism inspires is, in the opinion of Roher (2018), meaningless and superficial. It defends women's rights in that it addresses wage gap between men and women and magnifies the continuation of sexual harassment as the main obstacle over gender inequality, but refuses to uncover the underlying economic and political conditions that construct these problems. The author recommends feminist educators to analyze what institutionalized academia hides and to teach the students how to identify marketplace values by, for example, historicizing their own sexual positionalities, acknowledging non-normative gender identities in their classrooms,

questioning the taken-for-granted gendered pluralism that neoliberalism promotes, and turning students to co-creators of the course material.

Goodman (2004) explains how neoliberalism impoverishes women through insistence on privatization and outsourcing, and he gives examples of the ways in which neoliberal views are influencing the present systems of education in multicultural countries. He foresees the danger embedded within neoliberal claims about feminism, anti-racism, environmentalism, etc., and recommends that to support and empower teachers and students against neoliberal antifeminist charge, we should open the eyes of our learners to the true meaning of democracy, and revive the sense of social agency in students by examining ways in which individuals can harm or benefit global aspects of social democracy. Goodman (2004) calls classrooms as the best place for practicing the participation, autonomy and the reciprocity that are required for resistance against neoliberal loss of agency and achieving the true democratic society.

Brown & Ismail (2019) analyze the possibility of antifeminism in feminist pedagogy through masculinity studies, and make the point that, in feminist classrooms, once the instructor makes confusions over the definition of patriarchy, or every time s/he fails to make a clear distinction between the individual, the systemic and the institutional assumptions about male supremacy, the instructor subjects the male students to a subconscious humiliation, and this automatically arises their opposition to feminism as a male-bashing methodology. The study emphasizes the need for a balanced view over gender and power in feminist pedagogy, and claims that the best way to counter antifeminism is for the feminist instructor to elaborate on the ways male and female individuals embody hegemonic masculinity and empower sexism in their daily lives. Like Rohrer (2018), Brown & Ismail (2019) believe that the feminist instructor needs to refuse generalizations about men by deconstructing the image of the heteronormative white man to clarify the struggle

of power between men of different races and social classes, and by encouraging students to think about the possibility of nonconformity in the present models of masculinity.

Nordvall & Wieslander (2019) make the claim that the resistance to gender initiatives in education might be rooted in the conflict between pedagogical design and the actual outcome. They admit that in anti-oppressive educations, the mere idea of holding discussions on a topic can motivate resistance and opposition among any group of people including students: "when something is articulated and becomes a possible subject for discussion, it means that it is no longer taken for granted" (p. 219). The study gives the example of a "failed" feminist workshop in Sweden that brought about an opposite effect while it was trying to raise awareness about gender discriminations. Based on neo-Gramscian theoretical approaches, Nordvall & Wieslander (2019) hold the opinion that the probability of resistance to feminist education increases when the instructor: 1) forgets about gaining common consent in promoting gender-based emancipation processes, 2) displays feminism as women's war of position that aims to challenge the masculine gender discourses, or when she or he 3) intends to propagate the feminist "truths". To prevent the resistance, Nordvall & Wieslander (2019) advise that feminist pedagogy should go beyond ideological aspects of the hegemony and reach consensus over the advancement in women's situation, and to represent it as a part of the common sense that can coincide with other discourses. To gain and strengthen the consensus, instructors are recommended to promote open-ended discussions on the interests and the difficulties of the sexually and racially oppressed groups. Nordvall & Wieslander (2019) also remind teachers not to forget about the negative impact of the gender discourses practiced by the families and the societies outside the classrooms, and recommends to tackle the problem by turning the classroom into a space for sharing, discussing and resolving the dilemmas students confront in performing feminism outside the classroom.

Lombardo, E., & Mergaert, L. (2013) view the antifeminist opposition from the point of view of resistant students to clarify the reasons behind the resistance. In this perspective, the resistance to gender training in adult education, can be divided into three categories: refusal to accept the need for questioning and challenging gender hierarchies, denial of the significance of gender equality, and resistance to accept one's own responsibility in the process of change for equality. The study admits the difficulties feminist educators and trainers experience in encountering resistant students, and yet takes the opposition as an "opportunity" to learn about the gaps and ambiguities in feminist pedagogy, and invites instructors to accept this resistance "with openness and preparation," as a chance to observe women's rights from the point of view of those who advocate male supremacy. Lombardo, E., & Mergaert, L. (2013) believe that this will encourage the feminist instructors to try to create more convincing strategies in designing feminist pedagogy (p. 309).

Verge et al. (2018) make the point that one of the reasons for which students in adult education show opposition to feminist pedagogy in Catalan public university, in Spain, is the theoretical and abstract nature of the class discussions in feminist education, after which no real-world examples are usually given to students, to show them how the discussed topic might be acted out in the actual life or how the proposed viewpoint may positively impact their own individual or social lives. Students usually disagree with critical approaches to sexuality because they cannot form a clear mental image of the changes the critical view intends to make. Curricular reforms, in this view, need to include extra narratives (such as films, stories, news reports) with actors who make life-like decisions around the debated topics in the class, which make the feminist theories and the consequent need for change in gender norms more tangible for the students. Otherwise, as Verge

et al. (2018) say, the non-acted assumptions and ideas exchanged in feminist education would remain controversial and never to be practiced.

In her "Gender issues in action research: implications for adult education," Heiskanen (2006) analyzes antifeminist resistance to gender equality in Finland, the country that has one of the lowest levels in sexual discriminations in the world. Considering the problem to be inevitable in adult feminist education, the author relates the antifeminist opposition to the formation of male-or-female-dominated groups in classrooms and societies that reinforce gender binaries and end up in biased oppositions and incompetent changes. To prevent the issue, like Verge et al. (2018), Heiskanen (2006) advises educators to broaden the learners' perception of gender inequality through non-theoretical narratives, like works of fiction. Through literary texts, Heiskanen (2006) says, the instructors can draw the attention of the students to the possibility of contradictions, innovations and deviation in the definition of masculinity, femininity, and the relationship between men and women.

In the light of discussed research on the problem of antifeminism in feminist classes and the proposed solutions, below I review literature to evaluate the potentiality of literary texts for countering antifeminism in feminist pedagogy. I start with general perceptions toward literary studies, and move toward more specific ideas in this field.

General Perceptions toward Literary Studies

Although a few studies have found literature to be distracting, "seductive" and unhelpful (Goetz, 1995; Sadoski, Goetz & Fritz, 1993), literary studies have proved to be highly effective in accelerating learning process in different ways. At the same time with facilitating literacy development (Chomsky, 1972; Nagy, Herman, & Anderson, 1985), the inclusion of the works of

fiction in the curriculum strengthens students' relationship with literature and introduces them to the proper artistic values (Hagerty, Hiebert, & Owens, 1989; Tunnell & Jacobs, 1989). Literature positively impacts students' writing skills and helps them have a better understanding of the writing styles and the linguistic structures that are commonly used in different contexts (Purcell-Gates, McIntyre, & Freppon, 1995). Class discussions based on literature can accelerate communicative competence in students and increase their cultural awareness, especially when the discussions are focused on familiar topics from their own society (Byram, Nichols & Stevens, 2001)

Literary Studies and Critical Pedagogy

In thematic approaches to literary studies, works of fiction are used to activate critical thinking in students, and to optimize their potential for participation in socio-cultural changes (Armaignac, 2021). By reading and analyzing literature in class, teachers introduce students to the mindset and the experiences of the othered and marginalized individuals, contextualize the difficulties of the people of the periphery in relation to their surrounding society, and help the learners to get the urge to step beyond the prevailing norms and to think of the possible socio-cultural changes (Leavy, 2013; Bean, 2000; Saul, 2004; Yopp & Yopp, 2014). In this view, literature works as a pedagogical tool for student empowerment by enhancing the learners' chances for personal involvement in evaluating and solving real-life problems. During the critical reading and discussion sessions, each individual student mentally creates an intimate space to explore his own believes and experiences, privately challenge himself, form his own individuality and find his voice in collaboration or opposition with his own peers (Armaignac, 2021; Leavy, 2013). Here, literature adds to human experiences of the students and helps them find their own ways to realize their personal human aspirations and to decipher the meaning of life (Butler & Walter, 1991).

Compared to the great body of theoretical books that promote social change and combat discriminations, as studies indicate, except the few best-sellers, literary narratives are more widely read and they are more effective in encouraging readers to societal transformation (Vandrick, 1993). We should, however, note that the effect is not the same on all students. Although literary studies are presently being applied to different grades, the reaction and the perception of the students may vary based on their educational level. According to the comparative studies on students of different age groups, senior secondary or CEGEP students (16-21 year olds) have proved to display greater potential for active participation in social justice movements (Ramey, 2013).

What is especial about literature is the unique capabilities of the works of fiction in creating simultaneously fictional and lifelike portrayals of the people, the society and the social practices all of which pave the ground for a publicly-available research practice in classrooms (Barone & Eisner, 2012; Grosz, 2011). By including literary works within the curriculum, a teacher creates the sense of the real-life, and at the same time preserves a safe distance from the real world. It is within this half-real secure space that the power of imagination manages to solve the problems by constructing a new reality. According to Buikema & Thiele (2018), the collocation of reality and fiction allows learners to "become trained and practiced in view of greater sustainability, solidarity, and social justice" (p. 32).

This enormous capacity of literature for facilitating language acquisition and broadening critical and creative outlook in students has encouraged instructors to go beyond literary representations of social problems to use works of fiction in critical pedagogies for conducting more fundamental sociological examination of the power structures (Butler & Walter, 1991). In this approach to literary studies, literature is read to highlight the systematized cultural and political

power imbalance caused by hierarchies of class, race, gender, religion, etc., and the focus of attention is on radical and inclusive works of art, written about some specific minority groups, unprivileged classes, or the silenced and the marginalized individuals or communities, the typical examples of which include women, the people of color, or the aboriginals, so to draw the attention to the positionality of the marginalized, to scrutinize and challenge perpetuated social and cultural stereotypes, and to create a chance for improving the socially-approved institutional power.

Garland (2005) gives several reasons for why he thinks literary studies can revolutionize critical pedagogy. Comparing "open texture" of literature to "closed texture" of logic, Garland (2005) makes the point that there is no "one correct way" to understand works of fiction, and this "makes room for discussion and debate; it turns the study of literature into a social instead of an individual endeavour" (p. 97). Open-endedness of literary narratives would expose students to a "flow" of experiences and this multiplicity would change the student's view toward what the society and the culture display as the strict concrete logic. The new perspective would therefore make them feel more welcome to the possibility of innovation and deviation. Garland (2005) believes that in critical pedagogy, the instructor should first find about the true concerns and interests of his/ her students, and then find a set of literary texts that resonate with them. The resonance will work as the "magnets for learning" in critical pedagogy (p. 102), and inspire students to put more effort for active participation in the class activities.

Literary Studies and Post-Colonial Pedagogy.

There is a relatively large body of research on how positively literary studies impact the development of post-colonial pedagogies in different countries. Nicholls (2001), for example, explains about his own experience of teaching some of the poems of Robert Frost for promoting postcolonial perspectives in his classes at a South African University in 1996, the time in which

black students were under the pressure of the modernized educational system and instructors were forced to limit their syllabus to some predefined subjects. The author refers to the poetic features with which he managed to create an "equitable" context in his classes in those difficult days, such as the indecision of the poetic persona, plurality of subjectivity, namelessness of the landscape, instability of the perspective, etc. (p. 134). Nicholls (2001) says, the poems sounded "both familiar and distorted" and this helped his students go beyond the limits of the narrative, express their own frustration with the social policies of the time, and question the ruling ideologies.

Johnston & Mangat (2012) explain about the postcolonial literary curriculum they, together with a group of instructors, have designed for university level students in North America. Considering the highly multicultural context of the country and the increasing number of international or second generation students, these educators have found postcolonial works of fiction as the best way for creating a more inclusive educational environment. Some of the benefits Johnston & Mangat (2012) mention for literary studies in this case are: gaining respect for the students' differing worldviews, adopting alternative perspectives, criticizing the normative cultures, and moderating confrontational conversations among students on gender, race, class, etc. To have a more effective literary study in critical pedagogies, Johnston & Mangat (2012) advise teachers to start with disputing the boundaries of the literary canons by introducing students to unfamiliar literary narratives. This, the authors believe, would exemplify the way power relations work in the world outside the classrooms, and draw students' attention to other examples of marginalization in their surrounding world.

Literary Studies and Feminist Pedagogy.

In feminist pedagogy, literary studies are believed to be similarly effective. It facilitates both all-inclusiveness and individuality that hooks (1994) expected. Kozdras et al. (2006) describe

literary narratives as one of the powerful educational tools in feminist pedagogy in that they promote both "autonomy (the ability to act and change on its own) and interactivity (or the ability to think and react intelligently to the user)" (p. 519). Works of fiction are, in this view, assumed to create a dynamic context in which students equipped with feminist passion are equally welcome to question, in their own ways, the social, political and cultural constructs based on which the positionality of men and women are defined in literary texts, and to go beyond the limits of the narrative to gain a deeper understanding of their own individual and collective responsibilities for overcoming class, racial and sexual oppression (Manicom, 1992; Sawch, 2011).

The use of literature in feminist pedagogy creates a figurative participatory and liberatory space in which individuals discover their own suppressed potentialities to transform the conventional unequal relationships, and yet remain connected to others (Buikema, & Thiele 2018; Jarvis 2020). It improves the ability of students in evaluation, negotiation, prediction and decision-making, and boosts their self-confidence through increasing chances for joined intellectual thoughts and actions based on feminism (Jarvis, 2014). Mackinlay (2016) explains that by implementing literature in feminist curriculum, feminism turns into a "willful subject" based on which the teacher and students gain the courage to:

> say the word feminist fifty times, I cite my favourite feminist thinkers and scholars one hundred times, and I urge my students to stand alongside me and do the same one thousand times and more. In that moment of being and becoming feminist teachers and learners together, we are invincible and we willfully raise both arms in the air to dare once more. (p. 51)

Bruce & Brown (2008) similarly affirm that feminist literary readings help students "in discovering self-identity, increasing self-esteem, examining gender socialization, and providing an outlet for releasing inhibitions" (p. 86).

Despite the provided explanations about the positive influence of literature in different pedagogical frameworks, including feminist pedagogy, as the following available examples indicate, studying literature does not provide instructors with an absolute guarantee against antifeminism. At the same time with incorporating feminist literature, educators are still required to pay attention to the type of the feminist theory and literary work they select for their literature classrooms, and they need to be careful about how to present the whole idea. Due to the scarcity of sources on antifeminism in literary study classes, for the rest of my literature review, I mainly concentrate on the few best practices feminist instructors advise about including literary texts in curriculum.

Iverson (2015) affirms the significance of using works of fiction in curriculum, and admits that inspiring imagination and appreciating aesthetics play an important role in practicing social changes. Yet, he holds the idea that the reaction of the students in feminist pedagogy depends on the type of the theoretical perspective(s) an instructor adopts in his discussions on feminism. Iverson (2015) briefly reviews the advantages and the disadvantages of diverse feminist theories that might be taken in feminist classes, including liberal feminism, radical feminism, cultural feminism, and transnational feminisms, etc. and recommends educators to choose the perspective that meets the demands of their own students and their surrounding societies. In the opinion of Iverson (2015), teachers should display feminism as a historical construct, and make students understand that the concepts of power, gender and justice are political categories that may take new dimensions in different feminist perspectives.

In one of the early studies partially done on using literary narratives in feminist pedagogy, Devor (1988) describes his own experience of teaching feminist texts (including literary narratives) to an all-male group of student inmates. The author relates the increasing enthusiasm

of the men for participation in class discussions on women's concerns, at that time, to a variety of reasons such as his own ability as a teacher to refuse obscuring feminist theories and his power to "communicate with the students through the culture of men" which means by appreciating masculine toughness and by refusing emotionality or denying the need for empathy. According to the explanations of Devor, he had managed to talk to his male students about women's rights through accepting their stereotypical attitudes (p. 100). Although the method, Devor says, "would undermine my credibility as an instructor", it prevents conflicts between students and increases the chances for men's willingness to listen to women's problems for instance in marital relationships, prostitution, etc. (p. 100). Considering these, Devor selects his feminist texts from among the narratives that does not openly challenge the convention of manhood.

For Decure (2013) literature is a means for playing on gender stereotypes and questioning the normalization of sexual practices in classrooms. The author recommends instructors to be very careful in selecting literary texts for feminist pedagogy because as he says, representation of gender and sexuality in works of fiction play a significant role in students' reaction to feminist discussions. To have an effective and lively discussion session, the author recommends to put aside realistic texts and try contemporary works that include experimentations on gender. One of the examples Decure (2013) gives for inspiring students' interest in feminism, goes back to her experience of teaching stories with gender-neutral protagonists whose sex is not disclosed throughout the work. In her opinion, these stories raise gender awareness in students by giving false and confusing clues about the way such protagonists talk or behave. The confusion, Decure (2013) says, draws the attention of the students to the restrictions gender pronouns impose on individuals, and this paves the ground for discussions on other examples of gender categorizations in and outside the narratives.

Bell (2010) makes the point that the inclusion of feminist literature in curriculum increases students' chances for social consciousness and prepares them for participation in counter-neoliberal democratic movements. Bell mainly focuses on Bildungsroman works of literature, and calls the genre as the core contributor to feminist studies in classrooms. The author claims that by illustrating the life experiences of male and female characters and the processes they go through throughout their fictional lives, Bildungsroman stories create a space for a step-by-step discussions on the process of masculinization and feminization in classrooms. The fictional nature of literary studies, as Bell (2010) states, inspires imaginative engagement of students, trying to integrate their knowledge of feminist theories to their perception of the real world practices.

Considering herself as a "feminist pedagogue," Trites (1997) believes that antifeminism might be observed in literary study classes, among students of different ages. Within her discussions on different feminist types of fiction for children, Trites (1997) explains about how she herself has managed to overcome antifeminism in teaching feminist literature for children. As in adults' courses, at the beginning of the semester, her young students assumed feminism to "connote stridency, male bashing, radical rejections of traditions they like, and claiming victim status" (p. 138), and this resistance was negatively impacting the whole learning process within her classrooms. Unlike Decure (2013), Trites (1997) does not pay attention to the selected texts. Instead, she holds the opinion that the most effective methods in dealing with antifeminism, are: 1) identifying advocates of feminism among students, 2) dividing the classes into smaller groups with a few feminist student in each group, 3) and assigning the feminist students to facilitate discussions on feminist literary texts between their group members. The author believes that these methods empower the facilitators and at the same time convince other students to listen and think

about feminist ideas more carefully. Learners are more willing, Trites (1997) says, to accept the words of their own peers rather than that of the instructors.

Conclusion

The first half of the presented literature displays the prevalence of antifeminism in different educational contexts and offers a variety of strategies to counter this longstanding problem to help instructors to retain the autonomy and the mutuality favored in feminist pedagogy. For some critics like Moore (1997) and Jaggar (1983), the solution to antifeminism lies in facing the problem and going beyond dualistic perception of gender. For others, the problem can be solved by redefining patriarchy (Brown & Ismail 2019; Nordvall & Wieslander 2019), or by avoiding neoliberal imperatives through intersectional approaches to gender discriminations (Mackinlay 2016; Rohrer 2018). Following the insistence of Verge et al. (2018) and Heiskanen (2006) on the significance of fictional narratives, in the second half of the present chapter, I have reviewed the role of literary studies in feminist pedagogy, and I have found about the importance of theoretical perspectives (Iverson, 2015), the literary genre of the selected texts (Decure 2013), and the personal behavior of the instructors (Devor 1988) in teaching feminism through literature.

As the discussed literature indicates, the present increase in antifeminist tendencies among students in different countries has heightened the need for conducting a re-evaluation on feminist pedagogy. Due to the great potential of literary works for activating both autonomy and interactivity in sociological examinations of the power structures, and based on the reviewed sources, I put forward the idea of using literary studies for enriching feminist pedagogy. Yet, according to the teaching experiences of researchers like Trites (1997), Decurer (2013) and others, I understand that literary studies do not completely eliminate the possibility of antifeminism, and educators need to pay attention to the theoretical perspective and the literary texts they choose for

countering resistance in students and inspiring their interest in feminist discussions. In the coming chapters I focus on profeminist masculinity studies and postmodern literature, and I explain why I think this theoretical view and literary genre can address antifeminism better.

Chapter 3

Antifeminism from the Viewpoint of Profeminist Masculinity Studies

Introduction

Although antifeminism plays a significant role in defining men's and women's rights in a variety of legal, sociocultural, medical, occupational and educational fields, it has remained as one of the "poorly understood phenomenon" that justifies itself by safeguarding men's rights against women's, and it denies the underlying ideological scaffolding that forms and reinforces it (Blais & Dupuis-Deri, 2012, p. 21). Antifeminists usually disagree with establishing and enforcing equal rights for men and women, and sometimes, they display men to be victimized by the collective or legislative actions that protect or extend women's rights. Antifeminism is mainly supported in different countries by right-wing movements and politicians that foreground the market economy and reinforce racial and sexual hierarchies. In Islamic countries like Iran, antifeminist tendencies are more complicated and more normalized for being supported by the ruling heterosexist religious ideologies (Moghadam 2011).

According to profeminist masculinity studies, however, antifeminism is, in general, one of the adverse consequences of feminists' negligence to socio-cultural discourses of masculinity and their inattention to wider frameworks of power in studying women's problems and patriarchy (Whitehead 2007). In the opinion of Victor Seidler (1997), the profeminist activist of Achilles Heel Collective in 1970s, this inattention and negligence of feminists provokes resistance to feminism in the males as far as it disturbs their sense of self by disputing the conventions of masculinity and refusing to provide a new definition for manhood within the proposed counter-heterosexist paradigms. In his *Man Enough* (1997), Seidler says:

In the West heterosexual men have responded to the challenges of feminism and gay

liberation in different ways, but they have left many men feeling uncertain and confused

about what it means 'to be a man' as we approach the millennium. There seems to be a

crisis of masculinities initiated through the feminist questioning of traditional forms of

male power and superiority. . . . Often as white middle class heterosexual men we have

grown up to feel self-assured, at least on the surface, for the modern world has been very

much made in our image. Men often expected to be the centre of their social worlds. It can

be hard to accept a period of uncertainty and change. (p. 1)

Because of creating this sense of confusion in the males, and due to the consequent "problem" or

"crisis" of masculinity, feminist discussions are usually met with resistance and aversion. The

reaction is much stronger among male students in educational contexts specifically when feminist

discussions are opened up and explored to get institutionalized and systematized (Blais & Dupuis-

Deri, 2012; Faludi, 1992).

To counter antifeminism, profeminists try to solve the problem of masculinity by putting

aside the essentialist gender-war mentality, deconstructing dichotomies of race, gender, religion,

and sexuality, and by disclosing the mechanisms of power based on which the traditional

assumptions about masculinity and femininity have been formed. In its intersectional approach to

the problem of masculinity, profeminism subjects maleness to negotiation to develop post-

patriarchal models of manhood and to replace antifeminist type of masculinity with an affirmative

version that supports and advocates gender equality. In the innovative definition profeminists

provide for manhood, men gain the chance to unchain themselves from the problematic and

unrealistic demands of hegemonic masculinity, challenge overgeneralizations about manliness,

and arrive at a more individualized stage of self-identification. While antifeminists blame

feminism for putting men into trouble and for creating and deepening the crisis of masculinity, profeminists use feminism to disclose the true reasons behind the problem of masculinity, and propose strategies to overcome the problem in more egalitarian ways.

As it was discussed in the previous chapter, antifeminism has remained as one of the main sources of trouble in feminist classes in different parts of the world. Based on what the review of literature showed, the problem can be addressed through fictional practices and literary studies. Following Iverson's (2015) insistence on the significance of teachers' choice of theoretical feminist perspectives in countering antifeminism, in this chapter I intend to conduct a historical review on the development of the main profeminist and antifeminist movements to arrive at an all-inclusive theory for the feminist pedagogy that I am going to develop in the next chapter.

To explore antifeminism as an ongoing historical process, in this chapter, I start with elaborations on how emancipatory movements, especially feminism, have provoked and extended the problem/ crisis of masculinity at different historical points, and thereby I examine the ways the profeminist and antifeminist movements have tried to solve this problem in the context of the changing sociopolitical situations in the west. By analyzing the historical roots of the problem of masculinity and the proposed anti/pro feminist solutions, the present chapter tries to improve feminist pedagogy by adopting a broader perspective upon sexuality and gender equality among students. By revealing the true reasons behind the problem of masculinity, this chapter would introduce feminist teachers to new discourses on countering antifeminism in classrooms, and encourage them to incorporate new strategies in curriculum to address and alleviate the crisis of masculinity while teaching feminist ideologies in their classes. Considering the west as the starting point of the global feminist and antifeminist activities, I believe that the findings about how to counter antifeminism in the west would be applicable to different parts of the world.

The Problem of Masculinity in the Mid-19th Century

What is the crisis/ problem of masculinity? In the opinion of Jordan (2019), in discussions on gender and sexuality, "crisis is represented as a critical juncture where gender identities are fragmenting due to enormous social change. In this 'decisive moment', masculinity must be modified or terminated, must recover or die" (p. 72). Cultural studies on the significant social changes that have provoked the crisis of masculinity in the west, like Kimmel (1996), Mullaly (2002) and Tosh (2005) indicate the mid-19th century as the starting point of the man problem during which women's rights were legally extended and feminist activities and periodicals were for the first time established in different western countries to elevate women's social status. The consequent improvements in women's material situation gradually created what was later known as the first crisis of masculinity by revoking masculine privileges, and challenging the image of the strong and hardworking Bourgeois white man.

The women's emancipatory movement of the mid-19th century – later labeled as the first-wave feminist movement – and the subsequent crisis of masculinity, stimulated the first antifeminist reactions in the west. As the anxieties of men over women's activities increased, men tried to put more and more emphasis on the distinctions between themselves and the females, and highlighted markers of gender in their clothing style and their way of speaking and acting: "there was hardly any overlap between the active, rational, resolute male and the emotional, nurturing, malleable female. The two sexes were essentialized, and woman was constructed as 'other' in a more absolute sense than ever before" (Tosh, 2005, p. 336). To claim back the reduced masculine autonomy, antifeminists formed male-only communities, schools and colleges for promoting heroism, masculine vigor and interest in commitment to family and work, militarism, racism, insistence on objective certainty, and chivalric self-sacrificial service among the males (Mangan,

1995). Scholars resistant to feminism began, at the same time, to scrutinize different cultures to form and propagate the concept of the "Universal Male" that was supposed to include the common features of men from all over the world. This, they believed, would represent maleness as an authentic unchallengeable entity that naturally involved practicing paternal traditions.

In line with the idea of the Universal Male and discussions on the authenticity of maleness, antifeminists formulated "remasculinization" strategies in parenting. Before the crisis, "women were entirely in charge of the socialization of young boys. The three principal institutions that dominate early childhood socialization— family, religion, and education— were completely staffed and run by women" (Mangan, 1995, p.158). By the end of the 19th century, however, as Mangan (1995) explains, "many men felt that they needed to wrest control over socialization and get more actively involved themselves. To that end men decided to inculcate manhood into the next generation" (p.158). The fear of feminization of boys, heightened gender-based stratifications in raising children: "Boys and girls spheres of play were, for the first time, completely separated. Fathers sought father-son togetherness and feared a young boy's identification with his mother and sissification by playing with his sisters" (Mangan, 1995, p. 160). Opposition against femininity and feminism fostered the culture of sexism.

The Problem of English Masculinity in the First Half of the 20th Century

Despite all these attempts for opposing feminism through re-masculinization, in the first half of the 20th century, the crisis of masculinity deepened (rather than get solved) because of the changes in the overall sociocultural situation in the west (Tosh, 2005). The growth of urbanization, industrialization, and the success of campaigns for female suffrage on one hand, and the development of the modern secularization and degeneration of religious discourses, on the other, opened space for questioning the traditional assumptions about masculinity in different countries

(Rectenwald, 2016). What intensified the crisis of masculinity even more, was the start of the world wars. In spite of the strict insistence on men's innate tendencies toward militarism, heroism and self-sacrifice in the prewar era, during the WWI and WWII the ideals of masculine bravado were questioned by the high casualty figures, the humiliating situation of war veterans, and by the difficulties of the shell-shocked and sexually-assaulted warrior men (Petersen, 1998; Roper 2005).

While men were in the battlefields, in different countries women had to take over the supposedly-masculine responsibilities outside their houses to tackle the shortage of food, medical, military, etc. supplies (Robinson, 2012). Meanwhile, books and articles published about women's rights and female sexual desires increased. Discussions on birth control methods gave women an active role in reproduction and challenged the patriarchal assumptions regarding the macho sperm myth (Hoquet 2010). Women's activities at the time of the world wars progressively unsettled social structures, and gradually made a "significant change in the ways in which women experienced their sexuality" (Robinson, 2012, p. 3). In the light of the changes created in social and sexual expressions of women, the problem of masculinity continued with more pertinacity in the postwar era.

The Problem of English Masculinity in the Second Half of the 20ᵗʰ Century

The Second-Wave Feminism

Once the world wars were over, leftist parties extended their challenges to the established norms of heterosexuality and patriarchy which culminated in the second-wave feminist movement and gay liberation movement of the late 1960s. According to Segal (2007), however, these activates were not initially taken seriously by men:

When feminism first emerged in radical circles at the close of the 1960s, most men reacted with disbelief, often turning swiftly to ridicule and anger. Within a few short years, however, as women's liberation went from strength to strength, a very different reaction emerged. The experience of being left out, on the sidelines, was the new and threatening reality for many a young male radical, no longer feeling as certain as he had in the 1960s of his own participation in the making of history. (p. 235)

The second-wave feminist movement posed a considerable threat against male domination.

The crisis of masculinity of the 1960s was more extensive than that of the mid-19th century for questioning not only the prevailing norms of maleness, but also the supportive paradigms of knowledge production. Unlike the first-wave feminism that was restricted to legislative improvements in women's social rights, the second wave disrupted all notions of the society, history, reason, and the self (Petersen, 1998). The comprehensiveness of feminist activities in the second-wave feminism, diminished the chances for the restoration of the traditional norms of masculinity. Ash (2007) explains that:

Feminism's emphasis on securing women's gendered interests implied that men's power and masculine forms of dominance would have to be undermined. Second Wave feminists therefore attacked the central sites of men's power, including gendered practices and institutions, and also masculine ideologies, ethics and values more generally. (p. 11-12)

The problem of masculinity deepened in the late 1960s because the majority of activities the second-wave feminists performed at the time for raising awareness about the prevalence of sexism, were based on sarcastic male-bashing perspectives. For example, in Redstockings Manifesto that was developed by feminists in 1969, all women were described as the "oppressed

class"; also, it was claimed that all men "received economic, sexual, and psychological benefits from male supremacy. All men have oppressed women" (Paragraph III & II). Meanwhile, however, some feminists managed to go beyond the anti-male viewpoint of the time, and analyze the larger picture of domination. While a majority of liberal feminists, in the 1960s, displayed a monolithic image of all men as the oppressors, and categorized all women as the oppressed class, feminists like Betty Friedan (1963), put aside the idea of blaming individual men, and innovatively focused on the destructive influence of misogyny on both men and women. In her *The Feminine Mystique*, the bestselling book of 1963, Friedan represented masculinity as a social role that can be severed from the ruling patriarchal norms, and get modified independent from the sexist traditions of the society. Friedan's idea paved the way for social constructionist studies on masculinity and femininity that came later.

Gay Liberation Movement

By the start of the gay liberation movement, at almost at the same time with the second-wave feminism, fault-finding views on men and masculinity increased. Through adopting feminist paradigms, gay liberation movement questioned the normalcy of heterosexuality in the definition of masculinity, and put forward a more extensive demand for gender equality. The movement highlighted the possibility of same-sex relationships among men, and disturbed gender binaries by contradicting institutionalized definition of family, and negating the socially-accepted assumptions about maleness and masculine desires (Robinson, 2012). By the development of the gay liberation movements in different countries in the late 1960s and the early 1970s, the public attention was drawn to unconventional forms of masculinity, and this opened maleness to further negotiations.

The second-wave feminism, together with gay liberation movements, turned identity politics into inconsistent and arbitrary constructs, and removed both biological and dualistic

constraints in the studies on sexuality (Carrigan et.al, 1985; Whitehead, 2007). This arbitrariness, added to the passing of the Sex Discrimination Act in 1975, intensified the problem of masculinity, and inspired controversial ideas about the constructedness of gender identities. In *Woman Hating* (1974), for example, Andrea Dworkin rejected the illusions about innate heterosexual features in men and women, and proposed that "We are, clearly, a multisexed species which has its sexuality spread along a vast fluid continuum where the elements called male and female are not discrete" (p. 183). The author criticized the split between the supposedly male and female characteristics as the main cause of identity crises, and recommended men to restore harmony between their own feminine and masculine selves to be able to overcome the crisis of masculinity.

The First-Wave Profeminism

At the same time with the modifications in the definition of sexuality, sociological studies like Myron Brenton' *The American Male* (1966), proposed to solve the problem of masculinity in a more reconciliatory manner. The book admitted the "plight" of men in the face of emancipatory feminist movements of the time, and invited men to welcome feminism, and to comply with the conditions of "living in a twentieth-century matriarchy" (p. 70). Brenton's exaggeration in the use of the term "matriarchy" implied the depth of violations in patriarchal hierarchies of the time. By the late 1960s, Brenton joined a group of anti-sexist men who claimed solidarity with women's movement and set up the first-wave profeminist group for masculinity studies. In the experimental socio-cultural atmosphere of the early 1970s, these male advocates of feminism, who were few in number, tried to redefine masculinity through feminist strategies, and to unchain men and women from the problematic patriarchal ideologies, by putting emphasis on the interdependencies between the masculine and the feminine (Digby 1998; Hearn, 2005; Pease, 2000).

Despite their innovative ideas, however, these profeminist men gradually developed an essentialist yearning for restoring the traditional masculine traditions, and evoking a sense of nostalgia for male supremacy (Whitehead 2007). In the opinion of Brittan (1989), the opposition of this group of profeminist men,

> against their role as breadwinners [did] not entail the undermining of their dominance in the political and economic spheres. Nor, for that matter, [did] it imply that they ha[d] surrendered authority in the family or household. What ha[d] changed, [was] not male power as such, but its form, its presentation, its packaging. (p. 2)

The reconciliation the first-wave profeminist men made with feminism, was in fact a superficial and political one, and it could not create an affirmative feminist outlook in addressing the problem of masculinity. It seemed like they themselves were indecisive about the role of men in feminist struggles, and as a result, their idea could not settle the conflicts between feminism and discussions on masculinity (Goldrick-Jones; Kimmel). The first-wave profeminists, Whitehead (2007) says, "were noticeably 'power-blind', failing to offer any substantive critique of male dominance as men's exercise of (gendered) power" (p. 88). Their inattention for gender ideologies finally suspended the movement.

Antifeminist Psychoanalysis

In reaction to profeminist attempts that were blamed for feminization of manhood, a great majority of psychoanalysts, in about the early 1970s, tried to solve the crisis of masculinity by suppressing and disparaging feminism (Whitehead 2007). In her famous *The Feminized Male* (1969), Patricia Sexton, for example, analyzed the "boy culture" of her surrounding society, and came to the idea that the "sassiness" of the boys in the late 1960s was one of the unpleasant results

of the increase in their mother's attempt for educational and occupational success. Sexton idealized the old images of the masculine vigor and insisted on suppressing feminism to revive the traditional masculinity. Psychological studies of Dinnerstein in *The Mermaid and the Minotaur* (1976), on the other hand, called women's productivity as the source of fear for men – as it reminded men of their helplessness in infancy – and persisted on the need for suppressing women for alleviating the problem of masculinity.

Men's Liberation Movement

Opposition against feminism and profeminist movements became more organized and systematic by the development of Men's Liberation Movement and its antisexist activities. To counter essentialist anti-male claims of the second-wave feminists, Men's Liberation Movement blamed all women, feminism and the ruling patriarchal system for hindering the development of the proper masculine self in men. In *Men Freeing Men*, Messner (1986) explains that the movement perceived men to be

> emotionally and sexually manipulated by women, forced into provider roles where they work themselves to death for their gold-digger wives, kept from equal participation and power in family life, and finally dumped by wives only to have courts and lawyers give all the property, money, and child custody to the women. (32)

To help men overcome these difficulties, men's centers were developed rapidly in different western countries.

Men's centers raised awareness about the negative influence of sex role stereotypes on men, and invited the males to pay attention to their own distresses and needs by putting aside what the society and women assumed to be the "manly" (Sawyer 1970). Despite its antifeminist

dispositions, the movement somehow resulted in furthering interconnections between men's and women's worlds. According to Messner (1986),

> Men's liberation was especially focused on the ways in which socialization oriented boys and men toward competition and public success, while stunting their emotional and relational capacities. One of the major perspectives that men's liberation developed was the permission it gave to men to expand their definitions of manhood to include the emotional expression, 'It's okay to cry'. (37)

By opening space for expression of masculine emotionality, Men's Liberation Movement acted in some ways against its initial antifeminist aims, and inadvertently it blurred the gender role dichotomies in discussions on gender equality.

Radical Feminist Men

Some of the advocates of Men's Liberation Movement gradually accepted the necessity of redefining masculinity at the social and personal levels, and formed radical feminist men's movements in the mid-1970s, known as Achilles Heel Collective in Britain. Though it was unstable and had limited number of members, the movement tried to take new steps in examining "oppressive notions of masculinity and encouraged dialogue to improve relations between men and feminism" (Goldrick-Jones 2002, p. 192). The movement, was, however, inattentive to power relations in its redefinition of maleness, and thus it failed to weaken the opposition of men against feminism.

Socialist Feminist Men

Socialist Feminist Men's Movement in Australia and Britain of the early 1980s adopted social constructionist approaches to open discussions on sexuality to studies of power structures.

By analyzing the impact of race, religion, education and social class, socialist feminist men went beyond the seemingly-unified image of the white heterosexual man to disclose the possibility of variation in masculinization processes, and to draw the attention to the inequalities among the males. The movement replaced "masculinity" with the term "masculinities" to prevent generalizations and to explore new dimensions in masculinity studies. In this view, masculinity was displayed as "a continuing process of mobilization, marginalization, contestation, resistance, and subordination" (Carrigan et.al, 1985, p. 589), and sexism was accordingly taken as an outcome of the struggle of power between men.

For socialist feminists like West & Zimmerman (1987), gender was a kind of modifiable construct; it was nothing more than a "role enactment" that was performed individually and collectively, but wrongly believed to be natural and essential. Connell & Messerschmidt (re-written in 2005) coined the term "hegemonic masculinity" in 1982 to define the gender-based behavioral codes that were internalized as the "most honored way of being a man" that "required all other men to position themselves in relation to it" (p. 832). The idea provoked discussions on the "compulsory" aspects of white heterosexual models of manhood, and highlighted the difficulties the marginalized men were suffering from. Before the start of the Socialist Feminist Men, gay and black men were "emasculated," and were not considered as the "real" men to be included within gender hierarchies (Whitehead, 2007). By the inclusion of gay and colored men in masculinity studies and by the consideration of the problems of the marginalized men, the confusion over the crisis of masculinity extended significantly, and this inspired new waves of profeminist and antifeminist movements to address the problem.

The Second-Wave Profeminist Masculinity Studies

Following ideologies promoted by Socialist Feminist Men, in the late 1970s the second-wave profeminist masculinity studies applied constructionist feminist approaches to studies on socially and racially marginalized men in different countries (Kimmel, 1996; Whitehead, 2007). In the United States, as the articles published by Chicago Men's Gathering indicates, the second-wave profeminists focused more on racial hierarchies among men, and developed activities for the inclusion of the non-white males (Goldrick-Jones 2002). In the U.K., masculinization was analyzed mainly in relation to social class. For example, comparing men of different social classes, Andrew Tolson (1977) found that "working-class masculinity is characterized … by an immediate aggressive style of behavior" (p. 28). Tolson (1977) believed that the male aggression was much more intense among colored working-class men, especially in their relationship with the colored females. In this view, discussions on sexism was inseparable from power struggles.

The other profeminist researchers of the time conducted similar constructionist feminist studies on maleness. In his "Autobiography," published in 2005, Hearn concentrated on multicultural context of the U.K. in the late 1970s, and found that various forms of "patriarchies" were being performed within England of the time by immigrants from different countries. The author, thereby confirmed the need for interdisciplinary approaches to sexism in cosmopolitan societies, and used feminism to solve the problem of masculinity by disclosing the possibility of multiplicity in masculinization. Carrigan & Connell (1985), on the other hand, focused on the people of different cultures and scrutinized the ways men took in different cultures for distinguishing themselves from the females. Messerschmidt (1989) referred to the prevalence of gender asymmetry in western countries and related the rampancy of domestic violence to sociocultural conventions that accepted aggression against women as a masculine act. To resolve the growing problem of masculinity, these studies proposed to start with cultural modifications.

In their constructionist feminist approaches, the second-wave profeminists criticized the insistence of hegemonic masculinity on the binaries of masculinity/ femininity and reason/ emotion, to open a space for transgressing essentialist assumptions on gender equality. John Stoltenberg (1989), for example, pointed to different cultures in which maleness was defined based on "nonidentification with that which is perceived to be nonmale, or female" (p. 33), and tried to dispute the claims about the "threat" patriarchal cultures associated with feminism and femininity in masculinization. Seidler (1989), on the other hand, investigated on the dichotomy of reason/ emotion in patriarchal societies, and blamed the ways men take "to silence the voices of others in the name of reason" (p. 14) for the start and the development of the crisis of masculinity. In this view, conventions of rationality and emotionality needed to be revised to challenge gender hierarchies.

In his *Rediscovering Masculinity* (1989), Victor Seidler examined the significance of binaries of rationality and emotionality in the definition of masculinity, and criticized men's participation in these binaries as the cause of masculine emotional detachment and depression; the denial of emotionality, Seidler (1989) believed, prevented men from making enduring relationships with others, and harmed their personal health. It made men perceive their own bodies as machines programmed to do the expected masculine tasks without any need for self-expression or self-care. Seidler (1989) takes men's lack of self-care as the very root of their "unmet needs," their limited capacity for love and their experience of identity crisis in egalitarian contexts. Despite all attempt Tolson (1977), Messerschmidt (1989), Seidler (1989) and others made for reconciling the gender binaries, the second wave profeminist masculinity studies were still essentialist in defining masculinity and femininity, and failed to create a non-misogynistic reconciliation between feminism and masculinity studies.

Men's Rights Movement

At the same time with socialist feminist and profeminist men's movements, in the 1980s, a radical group of anti-feminist Men's Liberation began, under the name of Men's Rights Movement, to publicly express their disagreement with feminism as it was believed to deprive men from their absolute social and personal rights. In his *Men who Believe in Feminism*, Goldrick-Jones (2002) explains how Men's Liberation movement "hardened into the argument that men were being victimised and guilt-tripped by women, especially feminists" (p. 35). The movement highlighted topics such as fighting against legal injustice to men, women's violence against men, etc. to try to overcome the problem of masculinity through abolishing women's rights.

Mythopoetic Men's Movement

To promote their essentialist ideas, Men's Rights Movement organized an anti-feminist campaign, named Mythopoetic Men's Movement that used poetic images and mythological archetypes from Jung's psychology to encourage men to reinforce and promote their own "anima," the unconscious masculine side within and without themselves. Through these images and archetypes, the movement tried to justify male supremacy and attempted to normalize the masculine aggression against women (Seidler, 1997). One of the famous Mythopoetic works was Bly's *Iron John* of (1990) in which the readers were introduced to the ancient images from fairy tales to verify the need for the "wild" manly hostility. For the year 1990-1991, *Iron John* was in *New York Times* best-seller list because of the high expectation and the strong probability it created for solving the problem of masculinity and restoring the old gender hierarchies. Because of its essentialist approaches and universalized deductions, Mythopoetic Men's Movement quickly lost strength and got rejected. By drawing distinctions between the masculine and the feminine, the movement was in fact denying women's rights for improving men's welfare.

Capitalism

In spite of the antifeminist efforts of Mythopoetic Men and Men's Rights Movement, the problem of masculinity exacerbated toward the early 1990s. In the opinion of Ian Miles (1989) the man problem had its roots in the fundamental structural changes of the 1980s that jeopardized the privileges of the white heterosexual men. These structural transformations, as Miles (1989) said, were created not only by LGBT, women's or decolonization movements but also by "the rise of new movements oriented towards 'consumption politics' (lifestyle, ecology, welfarism, and so on)" (p. 52). The new consumption politics at the rise of capitalism ruined national and local industries, and disturbed the economic stability of men in the private and public spheres (Black, 2012). This economic turbulence turned the peaceful traditional marketplace into a place of desperate constant struggle that could no longer provide men with wealth and power (Griffin, 2012).

Postmodernism

The crisis of masculinity became deeper by the growth of postmodernism and the discussions on the "crisis of category" that abandoned dualistic assumptions on sexuality and advocated countercultural ideologies by rejecting sociocultural stereotypes. Within the context of postmodernism, masculinity and femininity were believed to be "always and only constructed politically, socially, and psychologically" (Gediman, 2004, p. 1064). Manhood, as a result, turned into "a political condition experienced as a journey requiring constant negotiation between individuals, none of whom have access to maps (or if they have each reads them differently), and all of whom have slightly different destinations in mind" (Whitehead, 2007, p. 148). Postmodern analysis of sexuality that had started since the mid-1970s, revealed susceptibility of maleness, and unchained the definition of masculinity from biological and dualistic restraints. The multiplicity

embedded within postmodernism opened further space for severing masculinity from patriarchal social structures and developing non-patriarchal modes of manliness.

Parallel with postmodern multiplicity, and in line with the emphasis of Men's Rights movement on the males' need for transgressing gender stereotypes, the 1980s witnessed the "sexualisation of the male body" and the display of masculine sexuality on visual media (Segal, 2007). Rather than perceiving it as a means for self-sexualisation of men, this visibility of men's body was mainly assumed to remove the traditional restrictions imposed on the males:

> Fashions, interests, pleasures, previously seen as quintessentially 'feminine', taboo for all but the most 'unmasculine' of men – the gay male – are today eagerly consumed by young men. The cold, drab, disembodied, insensitive masculinity the men's groups were fighting to destroy within themselves, their predominantly middle-class and Eurocentric fifties image of the man in the grey flannel suit, would already seem obsolete to many modern, sensuous, perfumed, mirror-hogging males, who in the 1980s were swaying to the words of LoveSexy Prince – coyly laid back, pouting and stark naked on his album cover. (Segal, 2007, p. 244)

Practicing the unmasculine was believed to relieve the fear and anxiety of men over conforming to hegemonic models of masculinity. It encouraged "androgynous" features in men, and displayed manliness as a mixture of "both 'feminine' (warm, sensitive, caring, gentle) and 'masculine' (strong, tough, competitive)" features (Segal, 2007, p. 244). In spite of the improvements this idea of androgyny motivated in personal-level male-female relationships, the problem of masculinity persisted as the changes could not penetrate into the ruling power structures to promote modifications at sociopolitical and economic levels. Meanwhile, as the

growing rate of male suicide also confirmed, toward the early 1990s, the uncertainty about the personal and social aspects of men's lives increased.

Third-Wave Profeminist Masculinity Studies

Toward the early 1990s, third-wave profeminist masculinity studies tried to solve the man problem by countering antifeminism and deconstructing power structures in discussions on sexuality. The movement was reinforced in the U.K. and the U.S. by the protection of Canadian White Ribbon Campaign (WRC) that invited the males to join together in preventing violence against women. Through their poststructuralist approaches to gender equality, the third-wave profeminist masculinity studies promoted "receptiveness" to feminism, and inspired men to examine "the manner in which their masculine desire had shaped them in anti-feminist fashion," and thereby it inspired men "to reshape their methods of dealing with people and situations in ways that are less domineering, more gentle" (Progner, 1998, p. 76). The reshaped new masculine self, had a more profound perception of his own desires and needs, and willingly withdrew the matrix of domination to extend and redraw the boundaries of maleness and to achieve the pleasure of wholeness in masculinity (Progner, 1998).

Scholars of the third-wave profeminist masculinity studies tried different techniques to disturb the dualities. Some of them favored ambiguity of language in writing, especially irony, because of the chance it gave for displaying the "fluidity" of masculinity and the opportunity it created for going beyond the conventional either/or mentalities (Wetherall & Edley, 1990). As the example of the journals like *loaded* indicates, some profeminists of the time used the multilayered language of caricatures to mock misogyny and to draw attention to its negative influences on men. Different reasons were provided by third-wave profeminist studies to create receptiveness to feminism. Seidler's *Men, Sex and Relationships* (1992), for example, explored mother-son

relationships to analyze the ways in which feminism could reconnect men to their own long-missing emotional selves. Patrick Hopkins (1996), on the other hand, displayed homophobia as the most influential element in men's denial of their own feminine sides, and brought up new ways to use feminism to dispel homophobia, and to reconnect men to their lost feminine sides.

Judith Butler's idea (1995) on the contradictory nature of heterosexual masculinity and its innate "fundamental ambivalence" put a significant influence on the third-wave profeminist studies. To become a "man," in this view, the heterosexual man was required to separate himself from the females and femininity, and at the same time, to display heterosexual desire for the repudiated female. In romantic relationships, for example, a man "wants the woman he would never be" which is "a wanting haunted by a dread of being what it wants" (Butler, 1995, p. 26). This simultaneous denial and desire of the feminine was believed to trouble men's social and interpersonal relationships in different studies. Following Butler's "fundamental ambivalence," Whitehead (2007), for instance, criticized the contradiction embedded within gender binaries in Western media and proposed to solve the crisis of masculinity by welcoming instabilities, avoiding emotional sterility, and by accepting the possibility of controversy in the definition of maleness.

For third-wave profeminists, like Michael Kaufman (1994) men were suffering from a contradictory sense of pain in power:

> There is, in the lives of men, a strange combination of power and powerlessness, privilege and pain. Men enjoy social power and many forms of privilege by virtue of being male. But the way we have set up that world of power causes immense pain, isolation, and alienation not only for women but also for men. This is not to equate men's pain with the systemic and systematic forms of women's oppression. Rather, it is to say that men's worldly power— as we sit in our homes or walk the street, apply ourselves at work or

march through history— comes with a price for us. This combination of power and pain is

the hidden story in the lives of men. This is men's contradictory experience of power.

(Kaufman, 1994, p. 142).

The idea did not simply refer to men's coinciding power and pain, but it decentered men's power

and disclosed it as the true cause of men's pain. It was, in this view, the privileges of the men of

different racial, social and sexual hierarchies that put them into predicament. So, the solution to

the problem of masculinity was believed to lie in men's withdrawing these hierarchical privileges.

The Peak of the Crisis of Masculinity

As the perception of sexuality was getting more and more complicated, in about the mid-

1990s, the crisis of masculinity hit its peak, and this shattered anti-feminists' hope for suppressing

feminism. Stories, news and films made about the socio-economic alienation of the white

heterosexual man of the working class increased to a considerable extent. The prevalence of

discussions on the crisis of masculinity, made men "feel truly exposed and vulnerable. They felt

anxious about their value to themselves, their families, their publics, and their nation. They sense

that they now have identities, when it used to be just other people who had them" (Berlant, 1997,

p. 2). Segal (2007) accounts the context of the mid-1990s as follows:

Just for a while, it came as a surprise when the Western world discovered that men overall,

men in general, might have gender troubles of their own, even the most confident and

authoritative of them. […]. Throughout the 1990s there was, internationally, an

unprecedented interest in men's lives, as economic and other social adjustments began to

impact on specific groups of men, just as they did on those of women. […] In scholarly

pursuits, men's new visibility was quickly an opening for detecting ambiguity, complexity,

mutability in notions of 'masculinity', while in popular culture, a more concrete language

of 'crisis' was widely used. In public culture, men emerged in the 1990s as society's new

victims, portrayed as suffering from falling levels of confidence, losing out as they

journeyed through life, in schools, jobs, personal relationships, overall health and well-

being. It was now men who were popularly addressed as disadvantaged all along the way.

(xvii-xviii)

Anti-Feminist Reactions of the Mid-1990s Onward

While the obscure images of masculinity was replacing the old trimmed picture of the white

heterosexual man, and while things were getting ready for establishing and practicing a new myth

of manhood (Culbertson, 1992), by the end of the 1990s institutionalized anti-feminist reactions

seized power in different ways: On one hand, under the excuse of bringing diversity and equity for

all, capitalism (Griffin 2012) and neoliberalism prioritized privatization and re-established the old

system of racial and sexual discriminations "from an altered, less obvious and more hidden place

than it once did" (Kapoor, 2013, p. 1034); exploitation of women became, as a result, more

"impersonal, corporate and bureaucratic" (Ehrenreich, 1995, p. 289). On the other, based on New

Labour programs, governments in different countries called for "urgent action" to support the

males in their education, healthcare and occupation (Hearn 2005; Segal 2007). Men in different

fields were provided with emergency governmental funding, "in response to evidence that women

in the workforce had begun to outnumber men from the close of the 1990s (by a minute fraction)"

(Segal, 2007, p. xix). Upholding the unchallenged male supremacy, in this view, was believed to

solve the problem of masculinity.

The public gaze, as a result, shifted onto the crisis of masculinity and how the males "lose

out" to the females (Segal, 2007). Opposition to feminism appeared in different studies. Scase

(1999), for instance, focused on the dramatic increase in men's suicide rate in the late 20th century, and compared it to the prosperity rate of the females (mainly single women) in the same period of time, claiming that there is an inverse relationship between the augmentation of the man problem and women's social achievements. To restore the lost social balance, Scase (1999) called for more attention to the problems of boys and men, and warned women about the duly masculine backlash. "Instead of tackling the problems of masculinity, as such, the media packaging of research encouraged only the deceptive contrasts between men and women" (Segal, 2007, p. xxi). This perspective displayed male supremacy to be natural and revived the old discussions on the distinctions between males and females. It reinforced antifeminism and promoted patriarchal masculinity.

Feminism and profeminism gradually lost their early glamour. Women's concerns turned into a topic of minor priority. Disagreements and inconsistencies increased among the advocates of women's rights, and all fervent hopes for achieving gender equity through non-discriminatory ways were shattered. Segal (2007) says, "Throughout the 1990s divisions deepened within feminist scholarship and the related academic milieu" (p. xxv). Like feminists, profeminist movements went through a similar decline in Australia, the U.S. and the U.K.:

> By mid-90s there were few real signs of a national 'anti-sexist men's movement', as in the public gatherings and conferences of the 70s and 80s. That development had diversified, been professionalised in organisational activities, focused on specific campaigns, or been diverted away from public profeminism to therapy, consultancy, family or career. (Hearn, 2005. P. 5)

There seemed to be no more need for incorporating feminism within the definition of masculinity because the ruling sociopolitical structures refused to approve the gender equality promised by

feminist and profeminist movements. Some scholars, like Goldrick-Jones (2002), related this failure of profeminism to its complicated and unrealistic assumptions that tried to navigate difficult political discussions on racism and sexuality, in relation with male privileges.

Masculinity Studies in the Early 21st Century

A New Dawn of Studies on Masculinity Studies

While male-dominated activism was suppressing women's rights, displaying male supremacy in workplaces and family structures as a "gender-neutral" norm (Hearn 2005), "a new dawn" of studies on maleness began, during which the feminist and profeminist assumptions were revised to become more palpable and plausible in the real world. According to Brod's "The Construction" (2011, p. 24), a variety of journals, articles, and books were published on masculinity in the first decade of the 21st century, including Bret E. Carroll's *American Masculinities: A Historical Encyclopedia* (2003), Kimmel et al.'s *Men and Masculinities: A Social, Cultural, Mtd Historical Encyclopedia,* (2004) and *Handbook of Studies on Men and Masculinities* (2005), Flood et al.'s *International Encyclopedia of Men and Masculinities* (2007), the *International Journal of Men's Health* (2002), *Culture, Society and Masculinities* (2009), online *Journal of Men, Masculinities and Spirituality* (2007), *Fathering: A Journal of Theory, Research, and Practice about Mm as Fathers* (2003), and *Thymos: Journal of Boyhood Studies* (2007).

Brod (2011) perceived this unprecedented increase in masculinity studies as a sign of "intellectual maturity" of the research in this field (p. 24), and Goldrick-Jones (2002) took it as a starting point for "Post-millennial Profeminist" movement (p. 201).

Profeminist Approaches in the Early 21ˢᵗ Century

In their post-millennial revaluations, profeminists tried different approaches to withstand the antifeminist assaults. Connell (2000), for example, objected to misogynistic perceptions promoted by male-dominated activists of the time, and explained how these activists' nostalgia for male supremacy would harm democratic perceptions in gender relations. Hearn (2005) proposed poststructuralist approaches to challenge the matrix of domination for both men and women. Bob Pease (2000), focused on the seemingly natural privileges of men, and later, in *Undoing Privilege* (2010) he elaborated that: "Many men deny that they have any privileges because they are subordinated by class, race or sexuality and so on. Even if they are marginalised by other social divisions, they still maintain gendered advantages over women within their marginalised communities" (p. 102). In the opinion of these researchers, abolishing women's rights was to negatively affect the whole society.

In the revisions post-millennial profeminists have made, the problem of masculinity was believed to be rooted in the sociocultural conventions that promoted the separation between the males and females. Balbus (2002), for example, categorized all men into two large groups of "men of idealizing narcissism," and "men of grandiose narcissism" (p. 212), and explained how both groups created and maintained the illusion of omnipotence through their own antagonism against the mother. Referring to the problems this antagonism created for both men and women, Balbus proposed to alleviate the crisis of masculinity through relational paradigms, by putting the antagonism aside and returning to one's maternal roots. Segal (2007) similarly criticized the masculine separative self for assuming detachment and sexism as the only means for self-realization in men. The author reviewed warrior-hero stories in Western literature (like *Odysseus*) as the source of patriarchal models of manhood in the west, and offered to solve the problem of

masculinity by introducing men and women to more intersubjective patterns in masculinization in which there would be no distinction between the manly and the unmanly. By removing the hierarchies of male-female behaviors, Segal (2007) believed, there would be no struggle for performing the manly features or denying the unmanly.

To further develop the interrelationship between masculinity and femininity, some profeminists concentrated on the success stories of real-life men, and highlighted the role of women in these narratives. Accordingly, Connell and Messerschmidt (2005), for example, made a revision on the definition of "hegemonic masculinity" to explore the role girls and women played in the development of different masculine traits (for example stolidity or supportiveness) in boys and men. Considering the term "hegemonic" as a source of "certain notions of consent and participation by the subaltern groups," Connell and Messerschmidt came to the idea that "women are central in many of the processes constructing masculinities— as mothers; as schoolmates; as girlfriends, sexual partners, and wives; as workers in the gender division of labor; and so forth" (p. 848). From this viewpoint, women's role was not simply restricted to granting consent for male supremacy. Women could in fact actively mold or challenge masculine traits, and help men acquire any "behavior that might serve the interests or desires of women … actions as bringing home a wage, sustaining a sexual relationship, and being a father" (p. 840-1). In this "relational approach" to sexuality, individuals were given the liberty to go beyond the ruling gender ideologies, and to act against the hegemonic models of behavior.

Some post-millennial theorists analyzed the previous profeminist works, and found fault with their superficial approach to the problem of masculinity that had failed to develop a comprehensive systematic plan beyond the limit of the plausible individual changes. In the opinion of Hearn (2005), for example, "Interconnections of practice and theory, activism and research,

materiality and discourse are fundamentally important in changing, researching and theorising men" (p. 85). Clatterbaugh (1997) similarly emphasized on opening profeminist masculinity studies to practical and pragmatic activism. In his *Contemporary Perspectives on Masculinity* Clatterbaugh (1997) criticized the earlier profeminists for restricting the movement to academic discipline, and forgetting about its sociopolitical functions. These theorists held the opinion that the problem of masculinity could be solved by the involvement of activists and politicians.

Before any all-encompassing systematic transformations for gender equity, in "Men and Feminism," Goldrick-Jones (2002) proposed to increase men's sensibility and responsiveness to the network of problems associated with antifeminism and heterosexism. To boost responsiveness in men, in *Undoing Privilege* (2010), Pease encouraged men to listen to and to sympathize with their mothers, wives, sexual partners and or daughters, to be able to replace their own "egotistic interests" with "relational interests" (p. 107). Pease (2010) examined antifeminism from the viewpoint of men, and came to the idea that what profeminism has ever offered men as men's emotional gains and psychological profits have never been actually attractive to the males. In the opinion of Pease, what has made men resistant to feminist activism was men's self-identification with the existing dynamics of power in gender relationships:

> While men will often refer to critiques of patriarchy as 'male bashing', it is in part because they are unable to separate out patriarchal arrangements from their own experience. Many men have difficulty untangling a critique of patriarchy as a particular form of gender order from a general critique of men. Many men think that a critique of patriarchy implies that all men are oppressive in their behaviours towards women. Some men will act defensively, however, because they identify with the values of patriarchy and they do not want to relinquish the male privileges associated with it. […] Many men are reluctant to

acknowledge that male privilege exists because they fear they will have to face guilt and

shame for their part in maintaining their privileges. (105)

In this view, profeminism needs to raise awareness about men's mistaken self-identification with

patriarchal masculinity, and to define innovative nonpatriarchal power dynamics for dispelling

men's fear or shame in distancing from heterosexist manliness.

Based on the literature, antifeminism is a part of the wide range of sexual and racial

discriminations that assumes masculinity to be dependent on othering the non-white and the non-

male. Antifeminism is a part of the unjust systematic oppressions that promotes hierarchical

relationships and supremacist perceptions. To address antifeminism, profeminist masculinity

studies inspires men to reconstruct maleness, and

…to recognize the finitude and vulnerability of others, not as a threat to our own survival

and flourishing, but as an invitation and responsibility to become a part of their lives as we

invite them to be a part of ours. With a commitment to being close to others, we begin to

see and feel what has hurt and is hurting them. We begin to see them not as competitors,

but as cherished partners in the cocreation of our common life. We consequently begin to

act differently as we step over those barriers that obstruct our connections with others and

begin to resist, individually and collectively, those institutional realities and structures of

consciousness— internal and external— that harm and distort others and ourselves. (Boyd,

1995, p. 129)

Profeminist masculinity studies have attempted to counter antifeminism through redefining

masculinity based on mutuality and the policies of reconciliation. In their new myth of manhood,

contrary to separative antifeminists, profeminism developed the idea that "human beings' first

natures, or 'inmost selves,' are inherently relational; we and other human beings, earth creatures, and nonanimate beings are interdependent" (Boyd, 1995, p. 105). Considering these, I put forward the idea that incorporating profeminist masculinity studies within feminist pedagogy, would provide students with a more comprehensive understanding of gender equality which would alleviate antifeminism in classrooms and motivate learners to actively question and challenge patriarchal gender norms from within. Since antifeminism is being observed in different parts of the world with almost the same features (but at different degrees), I believe that the findings can be applied by teachers throughout the world.

Conclusion

Briefly, antifeminism started in the mid-19th century in reaction to the First-Wave Feminist movement, and it developed by propagating the concept of the "Universal Male" and "remasculinization" strategies that were formulated at the time for parenting. In the first half of the 20th century, by the growth of urbanization, industrialization, the female suffrage, and by the progress of WWI and WWII, the chances for the reversal of gender hierarchies increased and this intensified the opposition of patriarchal powers structures against feminist viewpoints. By the start of the Second-Wave Feminist movement and Gay Liberation in the late 1960s, antifeminist tendencies turned into massive organized campaigns that developed under the name of Men's Liberation, and later as Men's Rights movement.

At the same time with the growth of feminist and antifeminist movements, profeminist theories started and developed through Socialist Feminism and Radical Feminist Men's movements, trying to challenge hierarchies of gender, race, class and religion, to open a space for transgressing essentialist assumptions on gender equality. While profeminist studies were struggling to incorporate deconstructionist postmodern believes in discussions on sexuality, in the

mid-1990s institutionalized anti-feminist reactions began to foreground capitalist and neoliberal values and to restore the male supremacy. In the 21st century, in the revisions post-millennial profeminists have made, further connections have been created between antifeminism and sociocultural conventions of the time. Contemporary profeminists describe antifeminism as a part of the wide range of sexual and racial discriminations that needs to be addressed through propagating mutuality, and by opening feminist discussions to wider socio-cultural frameworks of power. These theorists provide a new definition for manhood that supports and advocates gender equality. Since profeminism raises awareness about innovative nonpatriarchal power dynamics for distancing males from heterosexist manliness, I have decided to incorporate profeminist masculinity studies in my feminist pedagogy which is going to be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 4

Profeminist Masculinity Studies in Feminist Pedagogy & the Example of *Arthur & George*

Introduction

Going through the present research was like facing the truth about my old experience of adopting literary study techniques for teaching Women's & Gender Studies (a three credit course) in the department of English Language and Literature at an Iranian university. Like all other courses in the faculty of humanities at that university, it was a mixed sex class of about fifty to sixty undergrad students from different social classes, ethnicities, and educational backgrounds. At that time, in most of undergrad classes, teaching was mainly done through professors' lectures, and class discussions were limited mainly to some seminar courses. This educational system had turned students into passive learners, and accustomed them to teacher-centered educational methods. As a result, my first few classes for Women's & Gender Studies sounded almost innovative and somehow interesting to my students because of incorporating reading and writing activities on English feminist literature and holding small/large-group discussions in the class.

By introducing my students to a set of realistic feminist works of literature, at that time, I expected the learners to demonstrate empathy for the oppressed female characters and to get interested in non-patriarchal models of behavior. Contrary to my expectation, however, by applying literary studies most of my male students became alienated from feminism and displayed antifeminist tendencies which was, I believe now, because of my unfamiliarity with established approach to the theory and the feminist teaching strategies in that context. For me, at that time, people could be simply divided into two large groups of the oppressing males and the oppressed females, and in this context, feminism looked like a set of fixed theories that could defend the

rights of the victimized women against men. What sounds more superficial to me now, is the fact that in those years my knowledge of feminism was limited to second-wave theorists; I did not know about the diversity of feminist studies, the possibility of including different feminist theories in curriculum, and the distinction between the impacts of each trend on different group of students. Because of the prevalence of female subordination in Iran, I assumed that all my students were already familiar with the problems caused by sexism, and I had no doubt that all would accept feminism as a just and reliable problem solver. As far as I remember, based on these assumptions, I didn't even take time to introduce my students to the basics of feminist theories or to contextualize the fictional narratives we were reading about western misogynistic power structures.

To avoid repeating the same mistakes in my future feminist classes, in this chapter, I use my understanding of profeminist masculinity studies and postmodern fiction to develop an alternative approach to feminist literary studies in an Iranian educational context, with an increased understanding of and resilience to antifeminism. I believe the multiplicity favored by profeminism and postmodern literature would enable feminist teachers to achieve further mutuality and reciprocity among students as these two are what feminist pedagogy intends in the first place (hooks 1989). Since the majority of feminist pedagogies are male-exclusive (insisting on the distinctions between men and women), and because there is no well-trodden path to pursue in describing a male-inclusive strategy for teaching feminist literature, I start my explanations with the suggestions and the concerns discussed in existing literature, mainly focusing on works that take a critical look at "separatist" feminist pedagogies.

According to Martin et al. (2017), separatism is a strong and growing trend in feminist studies that concentrates on problems created by men and the patriarchal ideologies. Separatist

feminism envisions women-only utopias in classrooms as it assumes the exclusion of males to bring enough comfort and space to let female students who "were deemed 'troubled,' 'rebellious,' and 'at-risk'" to find their own voice and to express their own inarticulate rage at the prevailing patriarchal conventions (p. 7). Since separatist feminism reinforces antifeminism in classrooms, in this chapter, I take a critical look at women-only feminist pedagogies to extend the boundaries of separatist teaching strategies, and then I continue with giving examples about how to use profeminist masculinity studies to teach a sample postmodern work of fiction titled *Arthur & George* (2005) by Julian Barnes*,* to demonstrate how applying profeminism on postmodern literature can break resistance to feminism in a variety of educational contexts. I will thereby develop a pedagogy for how to look at literary texts with young male (and female) readers that helps to address the key issues raised in my earlier chapters.

Feminist pedagogy, as Shakelford (1999) states, has no unique form to rely on; it develops through negotiation and dialogue, and its nature changes based on the selected feminist theories and the responses of students in each class. Instead of embodying a definite essence, in feminist pedagogy "there are, however, characteristics or enduring themes and principles which relate to the ideology and practice of feminism that help describe, rather than define, what employing a feminist pedagogy might entail" (Shakelford, 1999, p. 20). The most common characteristics and themes, in feminist pedagogy, that take the place of the conventional definite teaching strategies include: giving importance to students' feelings (Gourarier, 2019), putting aside the hierarchical models of behavior, favoring subjectivity and multiplicity of perspectives (Martin et al., 2017), thinking critically about power relations existing in and outside the classroom, and voicing the marginalized individuals in supremacist structures (Magaraggia et al., 2019). Incorporating these characteristics and themes in feminist pedagogy, helps students construct (rather than gain or

memorize) a multilayered understanding of gender dynamics and arrive at a deeper understanding of their own share in countering patriarchal norms.

Profeminist Masculinity Studies in Feminist Pedagogy

To promote negotiation and dialogue in my proposed feminist pedagogy, and to practice the above-mentioned common characteristics and themes, I have decided to keep away from essentialist feminist theories that focus on biological feminine/ masculine essence in individuals, or the theories that try to justify the significance of gender distinctions in different sociocultural fields. Since essentialist approaches reinforce gender war mentality in learners, I have selected profeminist masculinity studies, as it was discussed in chapter three, to highlight the existing intersubjective patterns in the construction and performance of masculinity and femininity. The theory challenges the prevailing hierarchies of sex, race, class and gender, and it analyzes gender identities at the intersection of diverse sociocultural studies on sexual and racial discriminations (Goldrick-Jones 2002). By obscuring the borderline between the binaries of male-female, white-colored, and manly-unmanly, the theory creates adequate space for deconstructing core-periphery models of relationships, and this capacity for diversity helps teachers to retain individuality, autonomy, mutuality and interactivity among students of different sexes, classes and races.

In its deconstructionist approaches, profeminism reveals the arbitrariness of supremacist sociocultural hierarchies, and it opens room for accepting contradictions and welcoming the loss of coherence in the definition of masculinity and femininity. The consequent multiplicity embedded within the theory takes the class beyond the either/or mentality favored in separatist feminism, and it activates students' creative views towards possible transformations in reformulating gender dynamics (Whitehead 2007). Based on its non-dichotomous principles, profeminism uses feminist theories to highlight the plight of both males and females within

patriarchal power structures, and it proposes post-patriarchal models of masculinity to unchain men from the troublesome demands of hegemonic masculinity. By considering equal weight for men's and women's problems, the theory seems to offer a reasonable prospect for the construction of egalitarian gender attitudes in and outside the classrooms.

Another reason for the incorporation of profeminist masculinity studies in my pedagogy is the distinctions the theory draws between the plight or privileges of men of different sociocultural, racial and sexual classes. It refuses displaying all men as the privileged class and acknowledges the differences between men's positionality; this realistic concern for the individuality of men can reduce male students' resistance to feminism and encourage them to get involved in discussions on sexuality. In fact, as Whitehead (2007) explains, the main reason behind men's antifeminist tendencies is the reductionist insistence of the majority of feminist theories on the overgeneralized privileges of the white middleclass males in opposition to women's difficulties, and also their negligence to the complex socio-cultural discourses that produce multiplicity of masculinities. Because of disregarding the individuality of males, and for denying men's rights or silencing their concerns, feminism is for most of men nothing more than a miscarriage of social justice. The interdisciplinary nature of profeminist studies, highlights the possibility of diversity in masculinities, and this protects the class from the essentialist viewpoints that are presented and confirmed in some feminist classes.

Profeminist masculinity studies seems to have the special qualifications that Macdonald & Sánchez-Casal (2002) define for a "safe" and "transformative feminist pedagogy" in that its intersectional approach to gender prevents the "staged openness" and the meaningless gestures practiced in some classes (p. 46). By questioning ideologies and the multilayered power structures, profeminism helps teachers create a site for "intellectual struggle" between students, and prevents

"behavioral struggle" which involves their personal emotions and feelings, and arouses anger, fear, trepidation, resistance and the desire for domination over others (p. 46). Once their critical consciousness is intellectually activated, as hooks (1989) said, students become interested in devising solutions, getting involved in the world and transforming it.

What, however, differentiates profeminism from gender studies and from other anti-discriminatory pedagogies, is the potential profeminists show for challenging (rather than reinforcing) the longstanding oppressor/oppressed paradigm. James (1999) blames the paradigm for increasing male students' resistance to discussions on social equality, and he pinpoints that in analyzing gender identities, "the oppressor/oppressed paradigm limits what can be learned about masculinity because it sets up a binary relation between the empowered and the disempowered that reproduces the same narrative regardless of historical or cultural context" (p. 142). To avoid getting involved in this binary, some instructors and students devise new terms such as "bad," "toxic," or "traditional" masculinity and use them in contrast to "good," "positive," or "alternative" manliness (Magaraggia et al., 2019). However innovative the idea may sound, it fails to create a non-dichotomous understanding of manhood, and it results in new dualities which similarly stiffen resistance against feminism. In the light of such binaries, some boys, for example, may "feel that they are being coerced either into a kind of a self-hatred for embodying the traditional or into taking up an alternative position that borders on a 'feminization'" (James 1999, p. 150). Categorizations does, in fact, strengthen "essentialized identity constructions and stereotypes in education. It may once more obscure the perception of men as diverse and gendered subjects" (Magaraggia et al., 2019, p. 5).

Instead of the opposition embedded within binaries, profeminism, according to Kozdras et al. (2006) creates a participatory space for boosting self-esteem in learners, encouraging them

to investigate on the role of discriminatory sociocultural systems in acquisition of gender identities. Gleeson (1994) takes antifeminism among boys as a sign of their "individualist" view toward gender, in which the person assumes to inherently possess and to permanently own a certain type of gender identity since birth, and based on this logic, the individual tries to preserve that inborn stable essence at any possible cost. Once gender binaries are suspended, male students learn to put aside the individualist understanding of manliness, and to separate "masculinity" from "men," and thus they become willing to test and to examine the assumption of the essence, without taking defensive measures to protect themselves against what they assumed to be the feminists' "attack" on "the central sites of men's power" (Ash 2007).

Talking about the male students' sense of being "attacked" by feminists, Gourarier (2019) advises teachers not to display "masculinist" tendencies to increase male participation in feminist classes. The author defines "masculinism" as follows:

> Masculinism is an ideology that consists of considering the group of men as a category oppressed by the group of women. As such, masculinism is primarily concerned with the defense of male interests which are deemed to be under threat. This mainly involves defending the rights of fathers and of men suffering from domestic violence or promoting seduction. (p.188)

In disturbing gender binaries, instructors need to refuse masculinist representations of men as the "suppressed" and the "defensible" at it resumes the oppressor/ oppressed paradigm in the class.

Postmodernism in Feminist Pedagogy

To address the anxiety of male students over their being violated by feminist discussions, Gourarier (2019) and Martin et al. (2017) recommend questioning the authenticity of masculinity/

femininity in a "safe" space like the domain of literature. To make this happen, in contrast to my previous teaching experience for which I chose simple texts from realistic English literature, for my current feminist pedagogy I choose a postmodern novel because of the sceptical look postmodernism has over gender and sexuality. As James (1999) says, biases and prejudices easily creep into "easy texts" and they push the class to immediately arrive at the essentialist either/or mentality in which there are certain "natural" ways to be a man or a woman. James (1999) recommends providing class with "complex representations not of normative masculinity but of beleaguered, put-upon, wounded masculinity" to create the chance for fostering ambiguity, voicing multiplicity of viewpoints, and for obstructing the progress of the class discussions toward a definite final solution (p. 143). This multiplicity and ambiguity would enhance the impact of non-dichotomous approaches in profeminist masculinity studies.

Macdonald & Sánchez-Casal (2002) appreciate inconsistencies foregrounded in postmodern fiction because "it is precisely at the site of these contradictions where the most productive and potentially transformative connections can be made between the multiple subjects that constitute the community" (p.32). Postmodern literature "deuniversalizes" sexual identities, and it refuses to "bind" individuals "across whatever social, political, and cultural differences distinguish their experiences" (Harper, 1994, p. 92). In postmodernism, gender "depends upon factors from social categories conventionally conceived of as distinct from sex and gender—race, for example, or class, or physical ability or bodily configuration" (p. 90). Discourses of postmodernity disturb the illusion of having "a fixed identity" (Kellner, 1995, p. 233), and they dispel anxiety in classrooms for unsettling the ideas of "the depth, substantiality, and coherency that was the ideal and sometimes achievement of the modern self" (233). The emphasis of

postmodernism on fragmentation and discontinuities, makes the struggle between students more intellectual.

In the opinion of West (1994), antifeminism in classes happens when male learners come to the idea that feminism represents manliness as an acute disease that needs to be combated to create the so-called social justice (Mackinlay 2016). The "crisis of category" fostered in postmodern literature, however, protects feminist discussions from pathologizing masculinity. Instead of displaying manhood as a "problem" that "ails men," postmodernism questions gender stereotyping and displays maleness and femaleness as a set of coreless and endless chain of signifiers that always go through a multiplicity of "sequential transformations" (Gediman 2004, p. 1060). As in profeminist studies, studying a postmodern work of fiction can encourage students to learn about the acceptability of inconsistencies and conflicts in the models of masculinity and femininity. By refusing categorizations, postmodernism promotes innovative approaches to gender, and it facilitates a dialogue between the opposing poles of the binaries, without underlining the need for disempowering one and re-empowering the other model of behavior.

Practicing the Pedagogy in Class

Considering all these points about the great potential of postmodernism and profeminist masculinity studies for extending the boundaries of feminist pedagogies, I'm going to develop a hypothetical pedagogy by applying the ideas to a postmodern novel titled *Arthur & George* (2005) authored by Julian Barnes, a contemporary English novelist born in 1946. What encourages me to choose this postmodern British novel for my study is the familiarity of the most of Iranians with Arthur Conan Doyle and his Sherlock Holmes stories, different versions of which are being broadcasted on National Iranian Radio and Television (NIRT) since 1975. Because of this public interest in Sherlock Holmes, Barnes' *Arthur & George* is translated and published in Farsi in 2010,

so the students who may have any trouble in understanding the original English story may refer to the translated version, as the main goal is to promote gender equality, not to evaluate/ increase their language capabilities. Because of the conflicting models of behavior in Iran, I believe that *Arthur & George* would help better than any Iranian or Islamic writer in accomplishing the aims of feminist pedagogy in an Iranian classroom.

Another significant point about this novel, is the real-life basis of the plot and characterization which may inspire students to explore the historical aspects of the incidents discussed in the novel, and help the class preserve its connection with the non-fictional ideologies of race and gender in England of the late 19th and the early 20th. What happens to George Edalji in *Arthur & George* (2005) is based on the actual life story of George Ernest Thompson Edalji, the half English solicitor who was imprisoned in the 1910s and convicted of mutilating livestock in Staffordshire village, England. After a few years of imprisonment, when he is released, like the actual historical figure, George is banned from his most favored job as a solicitor, and this harms his lifelong assumption of Englishmanness and brings about discussions on his racially inferior masculinity. In this limbo situation, George asks for help from Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the great author of his time and finally, as in the historical accounts, George gets pardoned by Arthur's intervention and returns to his job and normal life as an Englishman.

Arthur & George creates a new understanding of racial and gender hierarchies in England of the late Victorian and the early Edwardian eras, which are conventionally assumed to be "some kind of Indian summer of English supremacy and unchallenged greatness" (Berberich 2011, p. 123). At the same time that the novel confounds expectations about the prewar purely-white and male-dominated English masculinity, it creates interrelationship between manhood and womanhood by highlighting the role of women and femininity in masculinization of Arthur and

George, and by displaying the ways the men's contradictory need for/denial of emotionality puts them into trouble. Racial binaries are also disturbed as it brings Arthur, the distinctive model of Englishmanness to collaborate with and to learn from George, the racially abused half-English character. The multilayered construction of gender identities, in this novel, can motivate the students to question the idea of white Englishmanness in the late 19th and the early 20th centuries.

What might be more interesting to students of the contemporary world is that, in *Arthur & George*, the fictive nature of the past calls the present into the novel. It repeatedly reminds that the story is not very historical. The past is to illustrate the present; despite being inspired by a historical incident, Barnes points out that his book is not a completely "historical fiction," and explains that:

> This may sound like sophistry, but there were constantly things happening in the novel that I thought could have happened nowadays in my country, from police attitudes to crimes with racial elements to bureaucratic and government attitudes, and so forth. […] A historical novel is one in which you're placing the reader in a chair that was made at the time in which the novel is set […] Whereas with *Arthur & George* I want the reader to be in an uncomfortable modern chair, worrying about all the things in modern life and a Walkman blaring in their ear . . . preferably not, but that sort of thing, reading it very much from now. (Schiff & Barnes 71)

The novel is juxtaposing the past with the present. At the same time with displaying the struggle of men of a hundred years ago over the distinctions between femininity and masculinity, it draws attention to the continuation of a similar sexist mentality in the early 21st century. Under its historical cover, the novel reminds us of the institutionalized anti-feminist reactions British authorities have shown since the late 1990s to the problem of masculinity (Griffin 2012). The publication of *Arthur & George* (2005) happens at the period the authorities blame women,

especially lone-mothers, for sissiness and the asocial behavior of boys; it is the time English government tries to re-masculinize the British family structure through putting emphasis on the role of the father in raising sons (Berberich 2011).

The inferiority of George's half-English masculinity exemplifies the repetition of the old xenophobic attitudes in the contemporary England, and it reminds of the rise in racial hate-crime in England of the early 21st century (Griffin 2012). Barnes creates analogy between the past and the present, to criticize the latter through the former. By obscuring the line between past and present, and by creating interrelationships between the difficulties of men and women from different social and racial classes, *Arthur & George* (2005) may raise critical thinking in students toward the incorporation of the old racist and sexist prejudices in the present model of masculinity. This critical perspective may encourage students to think about the possibility of non-white and non-male masculinity in the present world.

The following phases will be considered in designing this class project which could spread over 9-10 weeks.

Phase 1: Historical review. I will start my feminist class with a historical review, and I will facilitate class discussions on the postmodern understanding of gender, the definition of the term "crisis" and the "crisis of masculinity," and then we will discuss how the problem has been addressed in different profeminist and antifeminist movements throughout the history, focusing mainly on the topics discussed in the previous chapter. Because there is no comprehensive book on these topics, I will present PowerPoint slides, encouraging students to make predictions about the impact of the significant sociocultural movements and events on people's perception of gender in different historical periods. Since the selected novel is set in Victorian and Edwardian England, and since it makes references to the contemporary world, I will start from discussions on the

problem of masculinity in the mid-19[th]century, and advance chronologically to the analysis of the same problem in the 21st century. Depending on the background knowledge of students these discussions may take two to three sessions to be covered.

Gourarier (2019) states that by conducting the historical review on the crisis of masculinity, students will see "how difficult it is to find a historical period in which masculinity has not felt threatened" (186). The author recommends to start from:

> Antiquity, when the Greeks and Romans complained of how manliness was under threat of being "softened" by "luxury." Moral philosopher Lucius Annaeus Seneca offers one such example. Whichever period you look at, it seems that the model of masculinity has always been a thing of the past, something now spoiled, regretted, and which might hopefully be regained. (p. 187)

In this view, the anxiety over deterioration of masculinity would no longer be considered as a "disruption of an initial state," but a "constant" and "normal" operating mode with which the patriarchal social systems try to maintain the existing power dynamics (Gourarier, 2019, p. 187).

Conducting a historical review over the crisis of masculinity will also familiarize learners with hegemonic and non-hegemonic models of masculinity in different periods of time, and the possibility of fluctuation will complicate dichotomous understanding of gender identities, and prepare students for encountering contradictions or discontinuities in the definition of masculinity. The outcome of the discussions would be summarized and listed in a kind of chart to be used and referred to in our investigation on *Arthur & George.*

Phase 2: Sizing Up the Situation, the Group Work and the Roles. According to Jacobs et al. (2016), it is better to divide classes of 50-60 students to groups of 2-3 people to prevent

students from feeling "crammed" (p. 12). Based on Trites (1997), within the first few sessions that phase one and two are to be held, I need to identify students interested in feminism, so that when I divide the class into small groups, I can place feminist students in distinct (not the same) groups to have a more balanced student-centered feminist discussions. Mixed sex groups are ideal, but it might not be possible to have equal number of males and females in each group, as female students outnumber boys in human sciences in most of countries, including Iran (Boon et al. 2014, p. 9). Each group will be initially given time to decide on a unique name for itself so that their answers and comments in the class discussions can be placed under the selected group names. Gender-neutral names and titles will be highly recommended. According to Carillo (2007) and Mezirow (1991), in mixed sex classes we need to avoid categorizing students or their responses into male/ female groups as it may perpetuate gender binaries in students' views. To break gender binaries, I, as a teacher, will also make use of non-gendered terms, like "folks" or "you all" (rather than "Girls and boys" or "Ladies and gentlemen") in addressing students.

In line with the emphasis of feminist pedagogy on creating student-centered contexts (hooks 1989), I, as a teacher, need to give up the role of the master problem solver, and instead awaken curiosity of learners, encourage them to ask questions, and to guide them toward discovering the possible answer(s) by reminding them of the interconnections between their anti/feminist understanding of the novel and the already-discussed historical accounts on masculinization. To facilitate such a process, I will need to concentrate on open-ended discussion topics, and show value and respect for students' questions and findings (Jacobs et al. 2016). To make it more interactive, and to increase student participation, I will promote peer feedback. This way, it may take longer to arrive at an idea, or we may even fail to come to a conclusion on some

topics, but the process of discovery itself will teach autonomy and promote multiple intelligence within students which is more effective than the teacher-centered techniques (Jacobs et al. 2016).

The multiplicity favored in postmodern fiction and profeminism would increase students' chances for making various inferences, and getting engaged with the novel in different ways. Yet, this diversity might be confusing for some students who have got used to teacher-centered courses, or those who have the habit of finding the final objective truth. To overcome this confusion, and to increase students' sense of belonging and control over the learning process (Jacobs et al. 2016, p. 30), before studying the novel, I will explain about the objectives, techniques and the advantages of student-centered techniques, describing it as a chance to go beyond the objective impressions to arrive at the manifold dimensions of the so-called truth. I will turn their uncertainties into discussion topics, and motivate the learners to speak their minds; if needed they may consult online search engines, to reduce the need for teacher's lecturing to the least.

To have effective and constructive disagreements in class discussions, Jacobs et al. (2016) offers to introduce students to the following phrases for engaging them in "non-hostile" disagreement:

a. "Thanks for your idea. I don't completely agree."

b. "I see things differently."

c. "What if we look at it from another angle?"

d. "I'm going to try to paraphrase what you said. Please tell me if my paraphrase is correct. After I correctly paraphrase you, maybe you would like to paraphrase me." (p. 60).

Phase 3: Delving into Barnes' *Arthur & George*. Before starting to focus on *Arthur & George* itself, we will have an introductory session on Julian Barnes and his general view on gender binaries in his other novels. In this introductory session, I may ask students to browse on the internet (http://julianbarnes.com/ is recommended) and read about the plot summary and the representations of gender binaries within different novels of Julia Barnes. I may provide all groups with a chart similar to the following one, asking them to fill in the blanks based on the findings of themselves and their group members.

Name of the novel	The plot summary, focusing on gender binaries
	A bourgeois womanizer uses his job and his wife's money to go up the social ladder.
	A retired man is puzzled by remembering the frustration he experienced in his youth, over his love for an unfaithful girlfriend.
The Noise of Time (2016)	
	A retired widowed man is wondering about the authenticity of his wife's love.
	A female character fails to manipulate men in her personal and occupational relationships.
Talking It Over (1991)	

The possible answers would be as follows:

Name of the novel	The plot summary, focusing on gender binaries
The Man in the Red Coat (2019)	A bourgeois womanizer uses his wife's money to go up the social ladder.
The Sense of an Ending (2011)	A retired man is puzzled by remembering the frustration he experienced in his youth, over his love for an unfaithful girlfriend.
The Noise of Time (2016)	The male protagonist is manipulated politically, and he tries to control his own masculine self by controlling art.
Flaubert's Parrot (1984)	A retired widowed man is wondering about the authenticity of his wife's love.

England, England (1998)	A female character fails to manipulate men in her personal and occupational relationships.
Talking It Over (1991)	The male protagonist tries to compensate for his wife's disloyalty through economic prosperity.

Once the answers are ready, groups will walk around the class and share their findings with the other groups, and then take turns to discuss the result with the whole class, mentioning the sources they have referred to in finding their answers. The following answers might be elicited: In *England, England* (1998) male supremacy dominates the story; in spite of the struggle Martha makes to perfect her job, Paul and Sir Jack win the game, and expel her from the island. In *Flaubert's Parrot* (1984) Geoffrey tries to solve the confusion over the authenticity of Flaubert's parrot to convince himself of the honesty and faithfulness of his own deceased wife. Like Tony in *The Sense of an Ending* (2011), Geoffrey's masculinity seems to be harmed every time he thinks about the disloyalty of his female partner. This may lead to discussions on sense of ownership in romantic relationships. The same idea might be discussed in *Talking It Over* (1991) as well. We may end the session with some guesses about Barnes' attempt for unsettling or conforming to gender binaries in *Arthur & George* (2005). Students might be invited to watch the TV mini-series that was produced in 2015 based on two chapters in Barnes' *Arthur & George* (starring Martin Clunes and Arsher Ali) to be able to compare the content of the novel with the content of the aired episodes.

Barnes' *Arthur & George* (2005) is composed of four quite long chapters, each of which can be covered most probably in one session. Students will be required to read one chapter every session prior to the class time, and to come to class prepared for getting involved in discussions. To motivate them to do the reading, and to awaken their sense of curiosity about the story, I will

involve learners in some pre-class activities that may differ each session based on the content of each chapter.

     Phase 3, Chapter 1. The first chapter of *Arthur & George* is a Bildungsroman account of the construction of masculinity for both protagonists, Arthur and George, starting from their early childhood to the end of their adolescence. To draw students' attention to both historical and gender-related aspects of the story in reading, they can be provided, for instance, with the below chart to be completed individually while reading the chapter. To help students in completing the chart, I will advise them to review the notes they've taken in the earlier sessions on the problem of masculinity in the mid-19th and the early 20th centuries. Ideally, for this chart, the answers would be in the form of textual examples with quotation marks and the page numbers (one to three examples are enough for each row). In this activity, students need to check how the characters in the novel try to (or fail to) conform to (or challenge) the hegemonic model of masculinity of the time, main features of which are listed on the left column of the chart. Since Arthur and George have almost contrasting personality types, and since their ways for masculinization are quite distinct, there might be no answer for some of the items in the chart. In such cases students may put "*Not included*" as an answer.

Victorian & Edwardian masculinity	In Arthur's life story	In George's life story
Subordination of women		
Commitment to family		
Racism		
Hard work		
Militarism		

Chivalric self-sacrifice		
Insistence on gender binaries		
Interest in objective certainty		
Fear of feminization in boys		
Degeneration of religious discourses		

The possible answers would be any example related to the following points:

Victorian & Edwardian masculinity	In Arthur's life story	In George's life story
Subordination of women	Arthur tries to dominate his matriarchal mother in his childhood, and other women in his youth.	George's father humiliates his wife. George accordingly shows egoistic behavior towards the servant girl.
Commitment to family	After his marriage to Touie, Arthur stops acting as a womanizer.	George gradually becomes interested in marriage
Racism	Arthur denigrates Ernest, his sister's half Mongol partner, for his non-white origins.	George's classmates and the police officer humiliate George.
Hard work	Arthur's father fails to support his family financially. He is an example of the failed men.	George dreams of working as a solicitor since childhood.
Militarism	Arthur's voluntary participation in Boer war	*Not included*
Chivalric self-sacrifice	Arthur's self-identification with chivalric heroes, and his dreams about saving his mother and sisters from poverty	*Not included*
Insistence on gender binaries	Arthur manipulates girls, he is an adventurous voyager and a sportsman, thinking that only men can do these.	In their house, only Maud (George's sister) can cry. She sleeps with the mother, & George sleeps with the father.

Interest in objective certainty	Arthur's interest in spiritualism rejects objectivity, but his interest in writing detective fiction seems to confirm it.	George's interest in law & his roleplaying as detectives comply with his interest in objectivity
Fear of feminization in boys	Arthur's mother teaches him chivalric stories and reminds Arthur of his great ancestors to prevent his sissification in the absence of the father	George's father encourages him to put aside the features he has got after his mother, to be able to succeed.
Degeneration of religious discourses	Arthur refuses to go to church since when his mother has told him about the fictionality of the Holy Book and the church rituals.	*"Not included" because in chapter one, George is still living with his religious family and he is somehow under the authority of his father*

Once the class starts, students may start with reviewing the same chart with their group members, to compare and contrast their own answers to the items in the chart, and come up with more comprehensive answers. They are free to move around the class and ask for other groups' answers. This will help them have a deeper understanding of the representations of Victorian and Edwardian masculinity in the first chapter. For the rest of the class time, I may ask groups to imagine themselves interviewing three of the characters represented in the first chapter (Arthur, George, their parents, etc., preferably at least one female character), trying to discover together the untold feelings and sensations the characters might have had in going through the events mentioned in the chapter. In case students are confused about what I mean, I may put the following sample question on the board that starts, for example, with "George, how did you feel when…?". Each group will ask only three questions (ideally one from each of the selected three characters), and hand in their questions on a piece of paper. Once their three questions are handed in, I will randomly pass the questions to other groups in the class, asking them to answer them together, this time personifying themselves as the interviewees (Arthur, George, their parents, etc.). The answers

would be written in first person, starting with, for example, "Well, I felt …". Since the novel is a third-person narrative, the first-person reviews of the story will make the students get more familiar with the fears, the anxieties and the interior monologues of the characters. This would take us closer to profeminists' concern about the plight of both men and women. At the end, each group may read aloud one question and answer to the whole class.

Phase 3, Chapter 2. The second chapter of the novel highlights the prevalence of racism and sexism in the society. While it displays George's being framed for writing threat letters and killing animals, the chapter shows Arthur's increasing interest in Jean (a girl 17 years younger than himself) and the shame he later feels for continuing this out-of-wedlock relationship during the time Touie, his wife, was in bed. To make their reading effective, before the class, I may ask students to individually answer questions, such as the following ones, supporting their ideas by textual examples:

1. How is George's masculinity problematized? Who problematizes it, and how? How does George react to this problem?

2. How is Arthur's masculinity problematized? Who causes this problem, and how? How does Arthur react to this problem?

The answers to question one will revolve around stigmatization of George as the Eastern murderer by his colleagues, the interrogators, the media and the ordinary people of the time because of which he finally loses his chances for continuing his dream job (as a solicitor), and it is this loss of job that harms his sense of masculine self and weakens his control over life. He tries to keep a stiff upper lip, and during the imprisonment years, he distances himself from his father's model of masculinity in different ways, as it proves to be baseless. But the problem remains unsolved. In the second question, students may say it is Arthur's sense of shame over his

illegitimate relationship with Jean that harms his assumption of Victorian masculinity that insists on men's strict commitment to family. What adds to Arthur's problem is Jean's strong personality. She proves to be completely different from submissive women of her time, and this confuses Arthur's simplistic assumptions about women's inferiority to men. Arthur tries to overcome the problem by mourning for the obedient Touie's death, refusing (for a while) to marry Jean after Touie's death, and stopping social interactions with others. But the problem persists.

Once the class starts, students would double check their answers to the two questions with their group members (and if needed with the groups around them), and then groups may share their final answers with the whole class. Since understanding of Arthur's and George's problems of masculinity plays a significant role in our overall class discussions, I would allocate as much time as needed to this activity to make sure that all students have understood the issue properly. Then, for the rest of the class time, I may assign students to some writing activity. For example, I will ask groups to take a look at the humiliating magazine report about George, on page 116 of the novel, quoting Birmingham *Daily Gazette* of the time. I would ask my students to identify themselves with Arthur and George, and write two defence letters (one for each protagonist) in response to all accusations the public, the media and the authorities might have made against Arthur and George, for being published in the same *Daily Gazette*. I will remind the students that based on the fictional *Gazette*'s rules for publication, the defence letters should be in first-person narrative, of maximum 250 words each. I will prepare a board as the *Gazette*'s page, with a heading "Birmingham *Daily Gazette"* on top, asking groups to pin their answers (either printed or handwritten) on the board so that their classmates can read and comment. This, I believe would help students to get more involved in the personal feelings of Arthur and George in the face of the problem of masculinity.

Phase 3, Chapter 3. The third chapter is the point for the first encounter between Arthur and George, and it highlights the collaboration and, at the same time, the differences between the two men. For the third chapter, before the class, students could be asked to answer the following during-reading question individually (again ideally supporting their personal opinions by giving textual examples):

How did George and Arthur help each other in overcoming their distinct problems of masculinity?

The answers would most probably pinpoint that, in contrast to the Victorian model of masculinity that insists on men's finding a straight objective answer for questions, here, it is Arthur's subjective perception of George's problematized masculinity that solves the problem. Arthur helps George to get his job back by what George and authorities assumed to be a set of illusory and illogical presumptions, discussed in his fictional work titled "Sherlock Holmes Investigations" (*Arthur & George* 2005, p. 284). Students may give examples of Arthur's confusing irrational analyses to support this idea. George, however, helps Arthur by unchaining Arthur from Victorian assumptions of guilt and innocence. During the time Arthur works on George's case, Arthur manages to go beyond the duality of honor and dishonor in his society, and this discloses his secret black hole of emotions (Schiff & Barnes, 2007). So, the student's answers will revolve around Arthur's emotional relief in the third chapter.

The class on the third chapter would start with students' small/large-group discussions on the abovementioned question, giving them time to compare their individual answers with that of their peers. Since the postmodern elements included within the third chapter may sound confusing to some students, I may complement the above-mentioned during-reading question with post-reading class discussions, for example, on how the break with conventions of storytelling, and gender or race binaries takes place in postmodern fiction, specifically in *Arthur & George*. In these

discussions, students may give examples for how the third chapter of the novel violates the traditional assumptions about the conservative detective tales, or how it disturbs the conventions of sexism and racism. They may give answers first within their own groups, and then share their findings with the whole class. The probable answers would be:

Postmodernist break with the conventions of:	In chapter 3 of *Arthur & George*
Detective tales	Arthur defends George from the first day, without knowing anything about George and his problem. There is no objective truth in Arthur's analysis on George's case. It is Arthur's interest in "noisy reason" that wins (*Arthur & George,* 2005, p. 219). Arthur and Woody imitate Sherlock Holmes and Watson.
Sexism	Although gaze is normally associated with female subjectivity (Mulvey 1975), in this chapter, it is the gaze of women that restores the masculine sense of self in protagonists: Maud's gaze charges George, and the Mam's gaze charges Arthur with energy.
Racism	In spite of Arthur's initial denigration of the non-white, he becomes interested in George's Indian origin, and he talks openly about his own non-English great ancestors. Also, it is by the help of George that Arthur manages to overcome his own problem of masculinity. George distracts Arthur from the promises Arthur has made for supporting the three women of his life, Touie, Jean and the Mam.

Phase 3, Chapter 4. The fourth chapter is mainly about Arthur's funeral and George's emotions and feelings toward Arthur, 23 years after his first encounter with him over solving his legal case. For during-reading, I may ask students to fill out the below chart individually. The chart compares George of the first chapter with George of the fourth chapter to clarify the changes he has gone through throughout all these 23 years. For the first two columns, I will use the questions and answers discussed in the first chapter:

Victorian & Edwardian masculinity	George in chapter 1	George in chapter 4
Subordination of women	George's father humiliates his wife. George shows egoistic behavior towards the servant girl.	
Commitment to family	George gradually becomes interested in marriage	
Hard work	George dreams of working as a solicitor since childhood.	
Insistence on gender binaries	In their house, only Maud (George's sister) can cry. She sleeps with the mother, & George sleeps with the father.	
Interest in objective certainty	George's interest in law & his roleplaying as detectives comply with his interest in objectivity.	
Fear of feminization of boys	George's father encourages him to put aside the features he has got after his mother, to turn into a successful man.	
Degeneration of religious discourses	*"Not included" because in chapter one, George is still living with his religious family and he is somehow under the authority of his father*	

The probable answers will be as follows:

Victorian & Edwardian masculinity	George in chapter 1	George in chapter 4
Subordination of women	George's father humiliates his wife. George shows egoistic behavior towards the servant girl.	Unlike his father, George respects women, and he supports "female suffrage" (*Arthur & George* 2005, p. 330)
Commitment to family	George gradually becomes interested in marriage	He has never married, and feels a great lack for it.

Hard work	George dreams of working as a solicitor since childhood.	George keep working as a solicitor but not much proud of it.
Insistence on gender binaries	In their house, only Maud (George's sister) can cry. She sleeps with the mother, & George sleeps with the father.	George finds his sister to be stronger, wiser and more supportive and efficient in (office and house) work than himself.
Interest in objective certainty	George's interest in law & his roleplaying as detectives comply with his his interest in objectivity.	George has come to the idea that what he thinks to be the final truth today, may prove to be a fallacy tomorrow.
Fear of feminization of boys	George's father encourages him to put aside the features he has got after his mother, to be able to succeed.	George has become interested in literary books of his mother, and he has put aside his father's Bible.
Degeneration of religious discourses	*"Not included" because in chapter one, George is still living with his religious family and he is somehow under the authority of his father*	George is no longer a strict believer. He compares "rituals of the Church" to performances and "theater" (*Arthur & George* 2005, p. 342).

In class, students may, once more, start with double checking their own answers with their peers, helping each other to arrive at a deeper understandings of George's transformations. Then I may assign students to an in-class post-reading activity, asking them, for instance, to re-write the last chapter and develop a new ending for the protagonists. Or, I may ask them to identify themselves as George, discuss his reasons for each of the transformations he has gone through, and explain the untold impact of those transformation in his personal and social life. Their answers may start with: "I decided to put aside the idea of…. because it … The change made …(sb)… to…". Students may go beyond the text to talk about the positive or negative feelings George, his sister and the people around them have had due to the changes made in George's behavior. This

may draw students' attention to the negative impact of men's supremacist behaviors on men themselves and the others.

Phase 4: Final Reflection. I will ask students to think about examples of racial, sexual and religious discriminations in the present models of masculinity, and to bring to class at least one printed pictures on each topic. To provide students with some examples, I may print out a few pictures of white middleclass men and boys practicing toxic models of masculinity. The pictures would display white men humiliating the colored, making fun of the lower class men, or objectifying women (for example by watching porn); they may show boys blindly imitating their fathers, etc. The pictures may include any of the following:
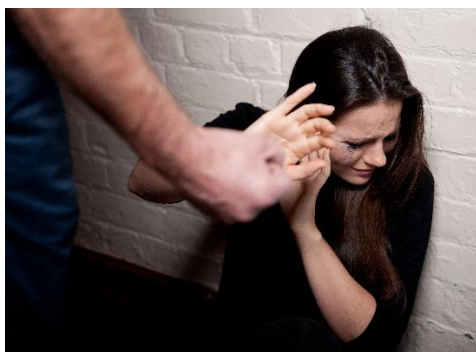
Once students bring the photos, I will number the pictures and stick them on the walls, all around the class, asking students to walk and take notes to discuss in groups about the social and the emotional advantages and the disadvantages each man in the pictures gains by causing such an

offence. This way, I will draw students' attention to the prevalence of discriminations, biases and stereotypes (Magaraggia et al. 2019), and I will highlight the need for having a non-essentialist understanding of the people in our surrounding society.

Based on students' reactions, I may decide on the supplementary course material that can appeal to students' sense of justice, such as showing them some news videos on gender inequality, or any documentary account of female subordination in advanced western societies which are believed to be free from gender biases. For example, I may choose a video made by research centers like EWA on gender discriminations in the film industry, conducted by Francine Raveney and Melissa Silverstein, available on YouTube at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rvk3fbzWupg. Or, I may invite motivational guest speakers who may activate critical thinking in students about the present gender roles and fe/male privileges. It would be more effective to invite both male and female guest speakers such as Susan Aglukark, John Legend or any important figure in pro/feminist movements like HeForShe campaigns. To do so, I may invite the whole class to a one-hour virtual coffee chat with the selected speaker(s). The activities would highlight the need for collaboration between men and women in creating social justice which aligns with our previous discussions on profeminist masculinity studies.

For their exit ticket, students might be invited to write about what they did/did not enjoy, and what they have/ have not learnt throughout the semester.

Conclusion

Based on my past experience of teaching feminism in a class with some antifeminist students, in my present feminist pedagogy I have proposed to conduct a literary study or a fictional practice, applying the theories of profeminist masculinity studies on a postmodern work of fiction,

namely Barnes' *Arthur & George*. Because of the novel's and the theories' inclusive and deconstructionist nature, I believe that the pedagogy would prevent separatist feminist envisions, and it would enable feminist teachers to achieve further mutuality and reciprocity among students. The multiplicity embedded within the open-ended class discussions, I think, would promote subjectivity and help with putting aside the hierarchical models of behavior. To help the class with going beyond the gender war mentality, I have also incorporated preparatory steps on sizing up the situation, the group work and the roles. Through reading Barnes' *Arthur & George* I think a feminist instructor would draw students' attention to the past and present racial and gender discriminations, and help their learners with developing new models of manhood based on the interrelationship between the white & the non-white, and the male & the female.

Although there is almost no precedence in incorporating profeminist studies on postmodern fiction in feminist pedagogy, I feel somehow confident in my proposed method as it addresses the majority of the needs and the gaps discussed in my literature review: It covers discussions on class, gender, race and sex discriminations to conflate one-size-fit-all neoliberal assumptions on masculinity and femininity (Mackinlay 2016). By requiring students to review the construction of masculinity/ femininity throughout the history, and by elaborating on the reasons behind the development of profeminist masculinity studies, it draws the attention of students to the ever-changing nature of sexual identities and the fluidity of feminist theories as Iverson (2015), Jaggar (1983) and Rohrer (2018) recommend. By deconstructing the image of the heteronormative white man (Arthur) in *Arthur & George*, as Brown & Ismail (2019) expects, my pedagogy creates the possibility of nonconformity in the present models of masculinity. Also, by foregrounding the protagonists' pain in power, the study attempts to break any of the three types of male resistance discussed by Lombardo & Mergaert (2013), i.e. it would encourage male students to accept the

significance of gender equity, to acknowledge the need for disturbing gender hierarchies, or to admit their own role and responsibility in making such a change. The postmodern aspects of the selected novel would help the students go beyond gender binaries to practice the possibility of contradictions in masculinity through non-theoretical and non-realistic narrative accounts which were suggested by Heiskanen (2006).

Chapter 5

Conclusion

Conclusions

In the present world, while classism, and sexual and racial discriminations are obstinately persevering, discussions on social justice fail to properly take place or to achieve the intended goals. Although it is half a century after the start of radical movements for women's rights, the debates on gender equality and feminism continue to be met with resistance, not only in societies with conflicting models of behavior, such as Iran, but also in countries like Sweden and Finland that hold a superior rank in the global gender equity index (Heiskanen 2006; Nordvall & Wieslander 2019). Since the late 1990s that neoliberal feminism and its superficial market values have developed its one-size-fit-all solutions for the problem of women's rights, the resistance to feminism has become even stronger and more complicated. Antifeminists usually call feminism to be male bashing, and they disagree with or underestimate the significance of gender equality because of its being unfair to men. They deem feminism responsible for provoking the crisis of masculinity and violating what they assume to be the "natural" rights of men.

In educational contexts, antifeminism remains as one of the longstanding and understudied problems that turns teaching feminist courses into a big challenge, especially in mixed sex or male-only classes. Although some instructors normalize antifeminism and perceive the antifeminist conflict and discomfort to be inevitable in feminist pedagogy, a large body of research indicates that the conflict perpetuates misogyny and distracts the class from the autonomy and reciprocity intended in feminist pedagogy. In classes, antifeminism appears mostly in male students, in the form of poor attendance, silence, anxiety, anger, humiliation of female peers or instructors, and

the attempt to suppress them. Most of antifeminist students disagree with challenging gender hierarchies, and/ or they refuse to accept their own role and responsibility in the creation and the development of gender equality.

Considering the persistence of antifeminist tendencies in and outside classrooms, and due to the continuation of structural oppression imposed by neoliberal discriminations, I believe there is an urgent need for re-evaluating and improving feminist pedagogies. Alternative strategies need to be designed and practiced by teachers to emphasize and justify the need for social justice. Methods should be developed to turn educational contexts into safe spaces for establishing and asserting the rights of men and women of different classes, races and sexualities. Rather than putting aside feminism or silencing the discussions on men's rights, in the present research I propose educators to use literary study techniques to activate critical thinking in students on hierarchical gender-based cultural behaviors, and to open their eyes to non-normative gender identities as it would activate the feeling of social agency in learners. Here, I have chosen to focus on senior secondary or CEGEP students (16-18 year olds) because of the greater potential students of this age group show for active involvement in social justice issues.

Based on the discussions presented in the second chapter, works of fiction have proved to be more effective than theoretical books in promoting social change. Studies on literature have shown that literature has a great potential for countering resistance in feminist pedagogy in that it multiplies communicative competence in learners and raises their cultural awareness about the need for change. In thematic approaches, literature accelerates critical thinking in classes, and optimizes students' interest in how socio-cultural ideologies work and how they can be transformed. In works of fiction devoted to the people of periphery, by voicing the marginalized, literature functions as a pedagogical tool for challenging students' personal believes and

experiences, and the challenge shapes their individualities, and helps them find about their own role and share in solving real-life social problems. In educational contexts, literature acts as a medium that helps students in deciphering their personal understating of life, and in actualizing their own human aspirations.

The "open" texture of literature takes students beyond the strict and "concrete" texture of logic, and at the same time with inspiring the sense of the real-life, it helps learners to keep a safe distance from the actual to carefully explore the discussed topics and themes without getting personally involved in it. Within the half-real secure space of literature, student can think critically about the ruling stereotypes and the systematized cultural and political power imbalances. In the multilayered world literature creates for representing the flowing experiences of its characters, students' differing worldviews are respected, alternative perspectives are adopted, and confrontational communications among students on racial and sexual discriminations are moderated. The participatory and liberatory space developed by literature broadens students' skills of evaluation, negotiation, prediction and decision-making. It increases self-esteem and helps learners in discovering self-identity. I believe that, in feminist classes, literary studies can motivate students to question patriarchy from within, and it turns learners into active interpreters (rather than passive consumers) of the ruling sexist culture.

The incorporation of literature itself in feminist pedagogy, however, is not an absolute guarantee against antifeminism, as it is mainly the reaction of the students, the choice of the literary genre and the selection of feminist theory that decide the effectiveness of feminist literary studies. Based on my personal experience of teaching feminism, implementation of essentialist theories in curriculum ends up in female-only separatism that alienates the majority of male learners from advocacy of women's rights. The choice of an essentialist approach to feminism can reinforce the

oppressor/oppressed paradigms that blunder feminist discussions by making generalizations about the empowered and the disempowered groups, and thus it disregards the individual, historical and sociocultural dimensions in the construction of masculinity and femininity. These generalizations harm students' self-esteem and obscure the perception of men or women as diverse and gendered subjects.

To inspire students' engagement in feminism, and to lower antifeminism, as it was discussed in chapter three, in my present pedagogical project I propose to incorporate profeminist masculinity studies in curriculum because of the reconciliatory approach the theory has for overcoming resistance to feminism. According to profeminism, antifeminism has its roots in the confusion emancipatory movements (especially feminism) create by their negligence to sociocultural discourses in the construction of manliness. The incorporation of profeminism in feminist pedagogy fills this gap by going beyond the gender-war mentality and opening discussions on women's rights to deconstructive negotiations on manhood within the discourses of class, race and gender. Because of the consideration profeminist masculinity studies shows for men's and women's difficulties, I believe that the theory can retain the individuality and the interactivity that feminist pedagogy aims to create among students since its creation in the 1970s.

Compared to the reductionist feminist theories that complain about overgeneralized privileges of the white middleclass males, I think profeminist masculinity studies can address antifeminism better, because by disturbing the binaries of male-female, white-colored, and manly-unmanly, the theory gives space for deviation from the dominant conventions of masculinity. Profeminism unchains men from unrealistic demands of hegemonic masculinity, and it develops post-patriarchal models of manhood, trying to replace supremacist patterns of masculinity with affirmative versions of manliness that support gender equality. In line with its intersubjective

patterns of masculinization, the theory encourages men to become "receptive" to feminism to develop less domineering and gentler ways of behavior to be able to experience the pleasure of wholeness. The theory discloses men's pain in power, focusing on how male supremacy puts both men and women into trouble, to activate "intellectual" rather than "behavioral" struggle between students, and to invite them to devise solutions for gender inequality.

Since profeminist studies favor multiplicity, subjectivity, and the ambiguity of language, as it is discussed in chapter four, I have chosen postmodern fiction for my proposed pedagogical project. Postmodern literature insists on fluidity in the definition of gender identity, and its emphasis on the "crisis of category" increases its potential for taking the class beyond the essentialist discussions on gender, race, class and sexuality. To prevent students from taking feminism as an "attack" against men, postmodernism deactivates students' "individualist" views and helps them avoid the idea of possessing or preserving a fixed type of gender identity within the individual self. By creating an opportunity for the appearance of contradictions, postmodern fiction deuniversalizes sexual identities and dispels the anxiety students may have over unsettling the idea of depth and coherence in femininity and masculinity. Postmodern literature stimulates fragmentation and discontinuities to pave the ground for innovative models of manhood fostered in profeminist masculinity studies.

To exemplify how the inclusion of profeminism and postmodern fiction in pedagogy can break students' resistance to feminism, in the second half of chapter four, I've given examples from reading Julian Barnes' *Arthur & George* (2005) in a feminist class. In the activities I have developed for each phase, the before-class and in-class exercises match to the content of each chapter in the novel. Also, in these activities, I have tried to highlight the internal anxieties of male protagonists, to emphasize on the interrelationship between men and women, and to explore how

the struggle for conformity to patriarchal models of behavior motivates men to get involved in separatist and supremacist interactions. At the end, I have encouraged students to go beyond the novel and to talk about the gender-based problems outside the classroom. This way, I have tried to take feminism beyond the idea of females' war of position, and to turn it into a solution for the problems of both men and women, to gain the students' consent for peaceful discussions on gender-based emancipation as a vital part of the common sense. Through incorporating postmodern fiction and profeminist masculinities studies in the proposed pedagogy, I have tried to draw the attention of students to the plausibility of contradictions, deviation and innovations in the formation of maleness, femaleness and the interrelationship between manhood and womanhood.

Rather than lecturing or limiting students to a certain theoretical book on the novel or the diversity of anti/profeminist ideologies, I propose to facilitate open-ended discussions on each of the topics, and show value and respect for students' questions and findings. Through guided self-discoveries, students would find about the hegemonic and non-hegemonic models of masculinity in different periods of time, and develop more innovative ideas about the possibility of contradictions or discontinuities in the definition of masculinity or femininity. By extending students' consciousness of their own learning processes, this student-centered approach would break the learners' resistance to feminism, and increase their interest in gaining knowledge on gender, race, and class discriminations. It would develop their potential for critical scrutiny, and extend their receptiveness to new ideas.

Beside the considerations made for selecting the theories, the literary genres and their way of presentation, some preparatory steps need to be taken, in feminist pedagogies, to make literary studies more persuasive. Based on my experience of teaching Women's & Gender Studies in Iran, I can say, one of the key points in practicing feminist pedagogies is to focus more on warmup

activities and on students' reactions to those exercises. For example, before getting the class involved in literary studies or discussions on gender equality, a feminist teacher, I believe, needs to help students to work toward a kind of agreement on the prevalence of power imbalance in the present world. In societies with stronger sexist ideologies, such preparations should be made more carefully and more intensely (through supplementary course materials) because students in those societies, especially the males, are more likely to be personally involved in or influenced by patriarchal power dynamics, and they may take non-discriminatory views as a violation of their own socially-accepted rights. One of the causes of trouble, in my feminist literary class in Iran, was my carelessness about this preparatory step. Without providing my students with warmups or the necessary supplementary materials, my discussion on gender equity, in that class, failed to appeal to most of my male students' sense of justice and couldn't activate their critical thinking in a proper way.

Another basic and key point that I failed to consider in my feminist classes at that time, was the communicational skills and the educational habits of my students in Iran. At the university that I was teaching at the time, undergrad classes were mainly based on professors' lectures, and students had a very limited or no experience of attending in student-centered classes, and they were not well familiar with the conventions of participating in class discussions. Also, some of them were brought up in father-on-top conventional family structures in which feelings and issues were not easily expressed or discussed, and as a result, the group discussions were usually accompanied with angry outbursts and emotional rather than intellectual reactions. To prevent these, in my proposed pedagogy, I have included a brief section on teaching how to have more effective and more constructive disagreements in class discussions. The section can be extended or limited based on the needs of students.

Grouping, I think, also helps in improving students' social skills; it can positively impact the development of their critical thinking and boost their engagement with course material. To promote mutuality and to encourage active and increased participation among group members, based on my personal experience, I have proposed to pay attention to sizing and the roles in group work. I believe, the number of students in each group, their gender and their level of interest in discussions on feminism can impact the performance of the whole class. In my class in Iran, group members were chosen randomly, students were allowed to change their own groups in each session, and there was no specific limitation on the number of group members. After the first few sessions, once the tension increased among my students, I found the class to be divided into two large groups of the males and the females, and this increased the hostility of male students towards feminism. With this division, it was impossible to go beyond the prevailing gender binaries. To prevent such a gendered duality, I also propose to pay attention to the way the groups are being addressed, for example by deciding on a gender-neutral name or title for each of them.

Limitations of the Study

The strategies proposed here, for improving feminist pedagogy and countering antifeminism, are limited in multiple ways: Most of the available sources on feminist pedagogies were male-exclusive and separatist, trying to highlight the distinctions between men and women, rather than the plausibility of commonality and interaction between them. The other significant limitation pertains to the scarcity of feminist literary studies in addressing antifeminism; most of the available literary studies on gender discriminations are aimed to underline the victimization of women, and fail to go beyond the gender-war mentality. Also, profeminist approaches are rarely applied or discussed in educational contexts, and because of these restrictions, I couldn't find a reliable profeminist source for modeling my pedagogy.

Furthermore, I am not sure how my proposed feminist pedagogy would play out in different contexts, as it is the reaction of students that forms feminist pedagogies. The hypothetical pedagogy included within this thesis can be implemented in a real class context, either in Iran or somewhere else, to analyze the effectivity of each section in the proposed learning plan, and to gain further information about how to improve feminist pedagogy in each context. For instance, I have chosen to start my feminist class with a historical review over profeminist and antifeminist tendencies in the west, but I understand that the idea may prove to be inadequate or even problematic in some Iranian educational contexts. Based on my personal experience of studying and teaching feminism in Iran, I believe that it is the crude imitations of the western feminist and antifeminist movements that confuses Iranian students over what each movement establishes/ propagates, and this confusion prevents them from participation in feminist causes. My attempt to clear up the confusion through a historical review, may, however, result in further resistance to feminism. I do also admit that, reading and analyzing a postmodern novel about Sherlock Holmes, the widely-known fictional detective in Iranian programs, may fail to facilitate counter-culture discussions in the class, and the instructor may have to replace the novel with an Islamist novel to make it easier to delve into the final reflection at the end of the novel.

Implications for Further Study

This research paves the ground for further intersectional approaches on gender equality and literary studies on antifeminism. The integration it creates between the findings on literary studies, feminist pedagogy, and antifeminism may help policy makers or educational administrators in higher education to incorporate further intersubjective perspectives in their discussions of social discriminations; it may encourage them to implement profeminist studies in their curriculum to promote active participation in social justice movements. The framework proposed for studying

Barnes' *Arthur & George* may encourage educators to develop similar activities on other works of fiction in English, and to extend the boundaries of feminist studies by conducting a comparative study on the findings. Because of the incorporation of intersectional discussions on gender, race, class and religion, I believe that my suggested strategies and the framework of my research can be applied to other critical pedagogies such as postcolonial studies. Because of its student-centered nature, my pedagogy may help learners to gain consciousness about the potential sociocultural stereotypes perpetuated in their daily communications, and to develop innovative coping strategies for challenging them. By broadening students' intercultural communicative competence, my pedagogy would ultimately increase students' participation in social equity movements.

In terms of extending the present thesis, I propose the following research directions as the possible new research areas:

The present study, can be replicated by using another work of fiction or a different feminist perspective. For example, a similar research can be conducted on a non-English literary work through the point of view of Eco-feminism or Marxist feminism. The research may, for instance, concentrate on a French novel, and analyze gender stereotypes prevailing in France. Alternatively, comparative research can be done on how literary studies can address antifeminism in different cultures. For this purpose, similar fictional practices will be conducted in different cultural and educational contexts, preferably on the same work of fiction to find about the similarities and the differences between the reactions of students from each culture. Another option would be comparing and contrasting this study with mythopoetic studies on *Arthur & George,* analyzing the possibility of making profeminist and antifeminist interpretations on a single work of fiction. This would illustrate the significance of viewpoints in conducting literary analyses, and highlight the subjectivity of our findings.

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