

Does sexism start with the sandbox set?

By Jean Bond Kotulak

WHAT ARE little girls made of? Passivity, compliance, docility, neatness and politeness.

Claiming that sexual discrimination occurs daily in elementary schools, Myra and David Sadker, in a recent article in *Principal Magazine*, explore the different kinds of behaviors which have come to be expected from girls and boys in the classroom.

The Sadkers are assistant professors of education at the University of Wisconsin-Parkside in Kenosha and collaborated on a book called "Sexism in School and Society" to be published later this year.

"There is no subject in our elementary schools called 'Male Role Development' or 'How To Be a Girl,'" the Sadkers said. "Yet children learn their sex roles very well indeed.

"THIS learning occurs thru a 'hidden curriculum' that is replete with incidental learnings."

The hidden curriculum consists of learnings that children acquire not from textbooks but from experiencing the process of schooling.

Teachers reward and pun-

ish certain behavior and children interact with school rules, procedures and mores, thus contributing to the hidden curriculum, the couple explained.

The authors give an example of a visitor to the classroom observing a reading lesson.

"It would be just as accurate to say that he will be seeing children learning lessons in how to get around school rules or how to steal attention away from 30 fellow classmates," the Sadkers said.

The visitor also may see that each sex is entitled to a different set of rewards, privileges and punishments, they added.

Sex stereotyping for an elementary school boy begins when he first becomes aware that he and the school don't get along too well. He must function in an environment that is often against his life style — one usually designed and run by females, in which docility, good manners, and neatness are the keys to success.

"THIS CONFLICT is carried over to the language patterns in the classroom," the educators said. "Recent studies have focused on classroom interaction pat-



Grade school girls get better grades, but the boys get the most attention.

terns: who talks to whom, the proportion of teacher talk to student talk, who is criticized and praised, and how often."

In one study, children were asked to nominate those class mates who received the teacher's approval and those who received disapproval. Classroom observers and the children said that teachers expressed greater approval of girls and greater disapproval of boys.

Results of other studies showed: Boys receive 8 to 10 times as many prohibitory messages ["Stop talking, George."]; that when boys are scolded, teachers are more likely to use harsh tones than when criticizing girls for an identical act; and that boys were given less

opportunity to read.

"Not only do teachers appear to disapprove more of boys, but they also interact with them more in general," the authors said. "They talk more frequently about content matter and they listen more often to what boys have to say."

In other words, boys receive more of the teacher's attention than girls do. Boys learn something from more attention from the teacher and more than their share of prohibitory contacts, according to the Sadkers.

NEGATIVELY, they may learn that they are naughtier than girls and deserving of reprimands.

Some boys may become more hostile toward authority figures whom they view

as mainly punitive or become even more aggressive since it gains for them added attention, which they relish.

Girls are more likely to bring home good report cards, both from school subjects and conduct.

"And yet, they suffer from sex typing far more than do their male counterparts," the authors claim. "The legacy the young girl brings to school is one of partially formed compliance and passivity."

"Girls are rewarded for silence, neatness, and conformity, yet active curiosity and analytical problem solving are discouraged. For good grades and teacher praise, the grade school girl bargains away her willingness to deal with challenging

material and difficult problems."

Female inferiority is introduced to the elementary school girl in various ways.

WHEN AN issue arises, the girl sees her female teacher unable to handle the situation and the male [principal, board member or superintendent] take over.

Altho girls make better grades thruout school than boys, they are less likely to believe that they have the ability to do college work.

"It is a loss our society can ill afford," the Sadkers said. "It remains the challenge of elementary schools to eliminate sexist practices and to make equality of opportunity a daily reality, not an empty phrase."

Teachers Learn New Skills Through Micro-Teaching

Micro-teaching, in micro-definition, is a way of teaching teachers how to teach.

Developed about 10 years ago at Stanford University, micro-teaching techniques are already in use in more than 40 per cent of U.S. teacher-training institutions.

The original concept deals with 18 "cognitive" teaching skills, such as motivating students to learn, reinforcement of learning to increase student retention of information or summarizing a lesson to underscore central points.

Now, a pair of University of Wisconsin-Parkside education faculty members, David and Myra Sadker, are applying the micro-teaching concept to providing prospective teachers with human relations skills for classroom use.

Impetus for the research comes from a new provision of the state teacher certification code, approved by the Department of Public Instruction and effective next September, which requires that prospective teachers receive human relations training.

In late February and early March, the Sadkers will conduct a series of three micro-teaching workshops for principals in the Racine Unified School System, who can then carry the techniques back to teachers in their respective schools.

Between them, the Sadkers have conducted similar workshops for the Dade County (Florida) School System, the Peace Corps Ethiopia Project, the U.S. Teacher Corps and a number of school districts in New England. Myra Sadker also conducted a micro-teaching institute in Uganda. The Dade County Project was the largest ever conducted in the United States on micro-teaching.

How does micro-teaching work?

Basically it is a scaling

down of conventional teacher training methods in terms of number of students being taught (usually four to six), the time span devoted to presentation of the lesson (about five minutes) and the focus (each lesson concentrates on only one teaching skill).

For prospective teachers, the technique provides a bridge between course work and professional classroom work as an instructor, the Sadkers say. Students do not suffer while the teacher learns the implementation of course work on the job.

For teachers already in the

classroom, in-service instruction in micro-teaching skills can sharpen and update classroom performance, they add.

Moreover, research has shown micro-teaching to be as effective as traditional teacher-training methods while requiring only one-fifth the time.

A micro-lesson goes something like this:

Suppose the skill being taught is "silence." (Research shows that many teachers simply talk too much, Dave Sadker points out.)

To learn a teaching skill, such as "silence," the

teacher-to-be reads a written description of the components of "silence." The prospective teacher will then watch a five minute film in which an experienced teacher conducts a class illustrating effective use of silence. The teacher-model in the film allows the children to speak and to complete their responses. She will speak herself only when necessary — relying principally on non-verbal language such as hand gestures, facial expression and body cues to communicate.

The next step is for the student teacher to prepare a five minute lesson incorporating

the skill and teaching it to a class of four to six children while a university faculty member observes. The student teacher and the supervisor then discuss the lesson in terms of the specific skill. The practice lessons sometimes are also videotaped so that the student can review his performance.

Micro-teaching has been used at Parkside since fall, 1971.

The Sadkers' assessment of the program: We think it helps both teacher candidates and classroom teachers to identify and improve the skills

needed to be an effective teacher.

Parkside's education students are similarly positive about the technique. A consensus comment: Micro-teaching

lets you find out whether you really enjoy working with children; it lets you apply concepts learned in the classroom to real situations; it lets you concentrate on one skill at a

time and to achieve mastery of it; the lessons have a cumulative effect — finally you put all those skills together and you feel confident you're ready to be a teacher.



Micro-teaching lesson in progress: Student teacher John Bigley, kneeling at left, of 1708 Holmes Ave., Racine, gestures to illustrate a point as his performance is recorded on video-tape by UW-Parkside education professors Myra and

David Sadker, standing. The young students are, left to right, Penny Owen, Lori Davidovic, Teresa Deleon, all fourth graders at Mitchell School in Racine.

University of Wisconsin-Parkside. Photo

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STATE

Teaching Team Hits Downgrading Of Girls

TALLAHASSEE (UPI) — A husband-wife teaching team said yesterday that the "hidden curriculum" in schools makes girls feel they are less valuable than boys.

"The effect is to rob from girls their self-esteem and ability and desire to achieve," Dr. David Sadker told the Florida Conference on the Status of Women in education.

"They soon learn that being a boy is worth more than being a girl and that a girl who is too smart gets no where but home on a Saturday night," he said.

DR. MYRA SADKER, who with her husband is an assistant professor at the University of Wisconsin-Parkside, told the Florida

Education Association-sponsored conference that girls start out ahead of boys but that a different pattern emerges as they reach highschool.

"Girls' opinions of boys grow higher and of girls grow lower as they progress in school," she said.

Earlier, FEA Executive Secretary Richard D. Batchelder told the group, dominated by women teachers, that "migrant workers are the only group in America worse off than women."

FEA President Dorothy DaValt alerted the teachers to become more aware of "sex stereotyping" which dominates textbooks and, often, the attitudes of faculty, including women.

Dr. Myra Sadker cited examples by showing pictures taken from texts dealing with the role of boys and girls.

"BOYS BUILD HOUSES. Girls keep houses," was one example. Another was, "Boys fix things. Girls need things fixed."

Dr. David said sex discrimination in staffing adds to the problem.

Elementary school is a world of femininity, he said, with 88 per cent of the teachers women.

"But they take their orders from male bosses," he said.

The difference also is emphasized in school athletic budgets, and teams, he said.

"There has never been a female U.S. Commissioner of Education," he said.

HIS WIFE said although boys are generally scolded more and disapproved of more in school, "boys also are listened to and talked to more than girls."

A 1957 award-winning textbook, she said, sets a less demanding code of behavior for girls than boys.

"It's alright for girls to be scared or silly or ask a dumb question," she read from the book.

"Boys are portrayed as able to do active things. Do you know what girls are portrayed as doing? Watching the boys, waving goodbye. A totally passive image."

What are boys made of? — Same stuff as girls, 'biased' teachers told

By Mary Hladky

Staff Writer

At Nova schools in Davie, no one makes fun of a boy who says he doesn't like to play baseball or cries because he is unhappy.

And no one gives a condescending smile to a girl who wants to run the classroom projector or says she has decided to become a private detective.

The Broward County School District's project to become a national model for sexual equity in education, now in its second year, already has changed the ways students look at their opportunities and how teachers relate to their students. Nova teachers said yesterday at a conference aimed at helping teachers eliminate sex stereotyping in their classrooms.

"When I started teaching, you just didn't call on a girl to run the projector and the boys always put up the chairs," said Gwen Hankerson, a teacher at Nova's Blanche Forman Elementary School.

Not only are girls responsible for "boy-tasks" now, but a girl in her class won first place in Broward County's science fair this year, Hankerson said.

In fact, Hankerson and other teachers agreed, students are often more adept at catching sexual stereotyping or bias than are teachers.

"Nine years ago, I was unaware of bias in textbooks and materials, but now the kids pick it up," said another Nova teacher.

"They can find these things quicker than I can," Hankerson said.

And when teachers fall into the old biases, students immediately call them on the slip-up, teachers said.

So teachers, despite the best of intentions, still have a ways to go, they agreed.

That is why Myra and David Sadker, national experts on how to teach students without sex bias, traveled here yesterday to address a group of about 50 teachers from Nova and other Broward schools.

Although teachers are now more sensitive to the sex bias issue and textbook changes are being made, they still aren't treating all students equally, the Sadkers said.

Myra Sadker, dean of the school of education at American Univer-



Myra Sadker

sity in Washington, D.C., and David, an education professor there and director of the Mid-Atlantic Center for Sex Equity, have completed research that shows teachers still:

- Give boys more attention and praise and ask them more questions.

- Praise boys for the quality of their ideas or intellectual ability while commending girls for the neatness of their work and obedience.

- Tell boys they failed only because they didn't work hard enough while implying girls failed because they were not able to do the work.

- Give girls more attention in reading classes and boys more attention in math classes.

- Criticize and punish boys more frequently even when girls misbehave in the same way.

"Teachers are not conscious of these behaviors," Mrs. Sadker said. "They don't know they are doing it."

However, the result of such behavior is to reinforce the idea that girls are supposed to be quiet, passive and unable to excel in certain areas but boys should assume a leadership role and can excel in anything they want to master, the Sadkers said.

To help teachers spot inadvertent biased actions, the Sadkers have developed a "decoding method." One teacher sits in on another's class and monitors teacher responses to students, marking down the information on a special form.

Later, the teacher can review the form to see if boys and girls are getting different messages.

Sexism in School

Boys still get more attention than girls do

BY MYRA AND DAVID SADKER

If a boy calls out in class, he gets the teacher's attention. If a girl calls out in class, she is told to raise her hand before speaking.

Teachers praise boys more than girls, give boys more academic help and are more likely to accept boys' comments during classroom discussions. These are only a few examples of how teachers favor boys. Through this advantage boys increase their chances for better education and possibly higher pay and quicker promotions. Although many believe that classroom sexism disappeared in the early '70s, it hasn't.

Education is not a spectator sport. Numerous researchers, most recently John Goodlad, former dean of education at the University of California at Los Angeles and author of "A Place Called School," have shown that when students participate in classroom discussion they hold more positive attitudes toward school, and that positive attitudes enhance learning. It is no coincidence that girls are more passive in the classroom and score lower than boys on SATs.

Most teachers claim that girls participate and are called on in class as often as boys. But a three-year study we recently completed found that this is not true; vocally, boys clearly dominate the classroom. When we showed teachers and administrators a film of a classroom discussion and asked who was talking more, the teachers overwhelmingly said the girls were. But in reality, the boys in the film were out-talking the girls at a ratio of three to one.

Even educators who are active in feminist issues were unable to spot the sex bias until they counted and coded who was talking and who was just watching. Stereotypes of garrulous and gossipy women are so strong that teachers fail to see this communications gender gap even when it is right before their eyes.

Field researchers in our study observed students in more than 100 fourth-, sixth- and eighth-grade classes in four states and the District of Columbia. The teachers and students were male and female, black and white, from urban, suburban and rural communities. Half of the classrooms covered language arts and English — subjects in which girls traditionally have excelled; the other half covered math and science — traditionally male domains.

We found that at all grade levels, in all communities and in all subject areas, boys dominated classroom communication. They participated in more interactions than girls

did, and their participation became greater as the year went on.

Our research contradicted the traditional assumption that girls dominate classroom discussion in reading, while boys are dominant in math. We found that whether the subject was language arts and English or math and science, boys got more than their fair share of teacher attention.

Some critics claim that if teachers talk more to male students, it is simply because boys are more assertive in grabbing their attention — a classic case of the squeaky wheel getting the educational oil. In fact, our research shows that boys are more assertive in the classroom. While girls sit patiently with their hands raised, boys literally grab teacher attention. They are eight times more likely than girls to call out answers. However, male assertiveness is not the whole answer.

Teachers behave differently depending on whether boys or girls call out answers during discussions. When boys call out comments without raising their hands, teachers accept their answers. However, when girls call out, teachers reprimand this "inappropriate" behavior with messages such as, "In this class we don't shout out answers, we raise our hands." The message is subtle but powerful: Boys should be academically assertive and grab teacher attention; girls should act like ladies and keep quiet.

Teachers in our study revealed an interaction pattern that we called a "mind sex." After calling on a student, they tended to keep calling on students of the same sex. While this pattern applied to both sexes, it was far more pronounced among boys and allowed them more than their fair share of air time.

It may be that when teachers call on someone, they continue thinking of that sex. Another explanation may be found in the seating patterns of elementary, secondary and even post-secondary classrooms. In approximately half of the classrooms in our study, male and female students sat in separate parts of the room. Sometimes the teacher created this segregation, but more often, the students segregated themselves. A teacher's tendency to interact with same-sex students may be a simple matter of where each sex sits.

For example, a teacher calls on a female student, looks around the same area and then continues questioning the students around this girl, all of whom are female. When the teacher refocuses to a section of the classroom where boys are seated, boys receive the series of questions. And because boys are more assertive, the teacher may interact with their section longer.

Girls are often shortchanged in quality as well as in quantity of teacher attention. In 1975 psychologists Lisa Serbin and K. Daniel O'Leary, then at the State University of New York at Stony Brook, studied classroom interaction at the preschool level and found that teachers gave boys more attention, praised them more often and were at least twice as likely to have extended conversations with them.

Serbin and O'Leary also found that teachers were twice as likely to give male students detailed instructions on how to do things for themselves. With female students, teachers were more likely to do it for



them instead. The result was that boys learned to become independent, girls learned to become dependent.

Instructors at the other end of the educational spectrum also exhibit this same "let me do it for you" behavior toward female students. Constantina Safilios-Rothschild, a sociologist with the Population Council in New York, studied sex desegregation at the

Coast Guard Academy and found that the instructors were giving detailed instructions on how to accomplish tasks to male students, but were doing the jobs and operating the equipment for the female students.

Years of experience have shown that

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Myra and David Sadker are professors of education at American University in Washington, D.C. This article is reprinted from *Psychology Today*. © 1985 Ziff-Davis Publishing Company.

BARNEY PETERSON

THIS WORLD, JUNE 16, 1985

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David Sadker, right, professor of education at the American University in Washington, D.C., role plays a teacher with students, from left, Merlyn Bartlett, Bartholomew Consolidated School Corp. employee relations director; Brenda Kennedy, Indiana Vocational Technica College; and Lois Durnil, Gender Equity Advisory Board member.

Gender inequities common occurrence, educators told

By Dana Corbit
The Republic

The United States has come a long way since Myra Sadker first published a book on sexism in 1973. However, hundreds of thousands of "micro inequities" between the sexes are present in today's society although many go unnoticed.

David Sadker, professor of education at American University in Washington, D.C., described some of these inequities to local educators Monday in a Gender Equity seminar.

"How did a guy ever get involved in sex equity?" asked Sadker with a laugh. He admitted he married into the subject along with his wife, Myra.

The couple did a lot of research as doctoral students at University of Massachusetts, but the educational community inevitably referred to their joint articles as "David's."

MYRA WROTE a newspaper editorial about being female and invisible in a doctoral program that later gave her an opportunity to write a book on sexism in education.

During her initial research, Myra found a book, "I'm Glad I'm A Boy; I'm Glad I'm A Girl," published in 1970, that exemplified the biases.

David Sadker showed transparencies of that book's pages to the 23 educators: boys were doctors; girls, nurses; boys, presidents; girls, first ladies.

"Boys invent things," the book said. "Girls use what boys invent." "The most common portrayal of a girl in a textbook is with her hands behind her back watching a boy doing something," he said.

Sadker asked the group who invented the cotton gin, and they responded the textbook response: Eli Whitney.

ACTUALLY, THE cotton gin was invented and re-invented in other countries before being updated in the United States, a joint project of Katherine Green and Eli Whitney, he said.

"Why do we not hear about women inventors?" Sadker asked. "Is it a plot?"

Merlyn Bartlett, Bartholomew Consolidated School Corp. employee

relations director, suggested an answer.

"Maybe at that time women were not able to take out patents," he said.

At the Monday program, educators completed questionnaires that determined their Gender Communications Quotient. Some of the true/false questions were:

• "Men talk more than women."

TRUE. IN FACT, in one study where men and women were asked to describe a piece of landscape art on tape, men spoke an average of 13½ minutes to the women's two to three minutes.

"When people hear generic words such as 'mankind' and 'he,' they respond inclusively, indicating that the terms apply to both sexes."

False. In one study, a kindergarten teacher asked one class to draw cavemen and another to draw cave people. The products from the first class were all men, with the second group producing men, women and children.

Another study with graduate students, showed similar results. Students were asked to help their professor produce a book cover for a new book. One class was told the title was "Urban Man," with the other class, "Urban Life."

"We don't understand how much language shapes our minds," Sadker said.

• "Women are more likely to touch others than men are."

FALSE. THE most predominant touch in society is the handshake, performed most often by men. touch represents acceptance, control and power.

Men also often practice a touch called "shepherding" or guiding people by touching them on the arm or shoulder. Women, however, touch more with children.

Women are often careful about how they touch men because the touch can be interpreted as sexual, something the research confirms.

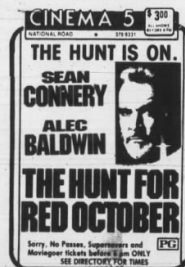
During a small group discussion regarding the questionnaire, Ph. Houston, Columbus East High School principal, described changing educational attitudes.

"I came into this business hearing you should never ever touch a student," he said, noting no educators are told to do so at certain times.

• "Men not only control the content of conversations, they also work harder at keeping conversations going."

FALSE-BECAUSE the second part is false. In one study, families conversations were recorded over period of time and analyzed.

About 96 percent of the topic introduced by men were built on by women. However, two of three topics introduced by women were ignored.



Sexism in schools subtle, expert says

By Ed Berthlaume

Post-Crescent staff writer

NEENAH — Girls on average enter first grade ahead of their male classmates in every subject but are measurably behind by the time they leave the school system 12 years later.

That flip-flop, American University Professor David Sadker says, is in large part a result of subtle sexism in schools, a tendency for otherwise talented teachers to treat boys and girls differently.

"Females are the only group that comes into schools with a distinct academic advantage and leaves with a distinct academic disadvantage," Sadker said during a visit to Neenah High School Wednesday.

During those 12 years of school, students are taught a history curriculum that inaccurately suggests most every major accomplishment was the work of a white male. Teachers without knowing it give greater reinforcement and greater praise to and hold higher expectations of male students.

"It's not that teachers want to be biased," Sadker said. "They're among the fairest people around. But they need to be taught to avoid biases."

That's where Sadker comes in. Considered a national expert on fighting sexism, Sadker was brought to Neenah for a three-hour in-service seminar with the 350 teachers in the Neenah Joint School District. He also addressed about 40 lo-



Post-Crescent photo by Bob Baeten

PROFESSOR David Sadker spoke in Neenah Wednesday about sexism in schools.

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EDUCATION

Schools still put boys first

Webster looks at gender bias

By Janet H. Cho
Staff writer

When Myra and David Sadker were working on their doctorates, they noticed people would praise their joint efforts as the "great article David wrote" or the "great proposal idea David had."

David Sadker says his wife fumed: "Sexism is the only socially acceptable form of discrimination."

David Sadker yesterday talked to more than 200 Webster teachers and administrators about gender bias in the classroom. He also taught about 30 teachers and staff ways to give girls equal opportunity.

"We need to extend the concept of human rights to include not only racial and religious groups, but both genders as well," he said at Webster Junior High School.

Females start school with better speaking, writing and math skills, but by high school have fallen behind their male peers.

Boys score up to 50 points higher on their Scholastic Aptitude Tests and outperform girls on 11 of 14 achievement tests.

"If the cure for cancer were buried in the mind of a female, we're less likely to get it," he said.

His visit to the school was organized by the school's Gender Equity Committee and funded from a two-year, \$20,000 state grant.

The Sadkers, both professors of education at American University in Washington, D.C., conducted years of research on sexism and sexual inequity in classrooms and board rooms. They have written six books and more than 75 articles on their findings.

After studying hundreds of fourth-, sixth- and eighth-grade classrooms, they have found:

- Half of American classes are segregated by gender. Teachers tend to spend more time teaching the boys. Sadker says teachers who would never consider separating Jews and Christians, think nothing of segregating boys and girls.

- Males are more likely to receive praise, criticism and specific clues on how to improve their an-



Burr Lewis Staff photographer

David Sadker demonstrates gender bias in the way men touch women during a visit to Webster Junior High School sponsored by the Gender Equity Committee. Teacher Anne Guerrein Wahl assists.

swers. Girls are more likely to get simple acceptance answers like "OK" or "un-huh." The only time girls get more attention than boys is regarding their appearance or the appearance of their work.

- White males tend to get the most attention, followed by minority males, then white females, and finally minority females.

By not taking higher-level science and math classes, females limit their career options.

"This hits the nail right on the head," agreed Stephanie Polowe, president of the Monroe County School Boards Association and an English instructor at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf.

"Teachers are usually surprised when it's pointed out to them ... but with the right training, the results are dramatic and encouraging," said Anne Bryant, executive director of the American Association of University Women.

"Teachers tell us girls start raising their hands, they talk in class, they defend their opinions, they're

How to promote equality in class

To promote equality in the classroom, experts suggest:

- Wait longer for students to answer questions, to let more female and minority students raise their hands and to get better, more complete answers.
- Separate teaching from classroom control. Don't reward misbehaving students by giving them your time and attention.
- Desegregate classes. Don't let students divide themselves by race or gender. Avoid pitting the girls against the boys.
- Alert students to gender bias; urge them to offer suggestions.
- Learn to recognize bias and evaluate peers for subtle ways in which they may favor males over females.

- Create strategies to encourage all students to participate. Write each student's name on at least two index cards, shuffle them, and ask questions randomly.

- Meet with students in groups outside of class. Tell the noisy students you appreciate their comments, but won't be calling on them as often; stress to quiet students you want them to talk in class and will be calling more.

- Walk around the classroom, changing who's sitting in front of you and calling on students in the back corner seats.

- Promote female role models in textbooks, lessons and classroom displays.
- Discourage students' self put-downs and tentative answers.

less willing to be in the background."

Bill Kent, a ninth-grade earth science teacher, said: "If we get good

enough, it's possible the kids themselves could challenge the teacher."

"I think that would be a wonderful measure of success." □