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Executive Summary:
Educational Attainment, the Status of Women, and the Private School Movement in Poland
by Ireneusz Bialecki and Barbara Heyns
summarized by Michael Kennedy

Educational reforms in post-communist countries has also affected gender roles and status. The gender equity made unintentionally by communist policy is likely to be reversed by post-communist policy.

The communist emphasis on vocational training was most evident outside the university, but it is in the latter where women made the most obvious gains, for there gender equity was reached earlier than in the West or elsewhere. Part of this explanation for gender equity in the university can be traced to the policies of secondary education. Men were tracked into vocational schools designed to increase the skill levels of the favored working class; women were tracked more toward these college prep high schools called lyceum, and thus gender equity was an unintended consequence of class based educational policies. Post communist educational reforms are changing these patterns of education.

The decline of heavy industry has also undermined the old vocational schools. Many of these largely male bastions of upward mobility have been closed. The lyceum and its technical counterpart, the technikum, are now swamped with applicants. One reform to emerge from this crisis of
secondary education is the private school reform movement, in which new independent schools are formed under the control of parents' groups. These schools' ideology is similar to that of progressive education in the west. Another educational reform being developed is adult education, especially in retraining managers and administrators, teaching entrepreneurs and teaching English.

The impacts of these changes on gender roles might mean a reversal; increasing competition for lyceum positions will likely favor male enrollments, which is especially apparent in the new non-state schools and elite educations. This shift in educational patterns could lead to increasing tensions between men and women.
Educational Attainment, the Status of Women, and the Private School Movement in Poland

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EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, WOMEN'S STATUS, AND THE PRIVATE SCHOOL MOVEMENT IN POLAND

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The purpose of this paper is to provide a sociological and institutional framework for understanding the links between gender and schooling in the countries of the Eastern bloc. The initial section will provide a brief overview of various aspects of the development of socialist educational policy; the purpose is to sketch how the institutions developed by the communist state dispensed schooling and the legacies that these institutions bring to post-Communist societies. Then we will pursue the proposed reforms and institutional innovations that, thus far, can be said to characterize post-Communist educational systems. The central question involves how the educational system differentiated gender roles and status, both before and after the "velvet revolutions." The examples and the data are from Poland, but the model could be argued to apply equally well to the other Eastern European countries. Most analyses of the political and economic changes underway in the region deal with neither gender nor education, although both are crucial components of what might be termed civil society. Education can serve as a lens for viewing the impact of institutions and social policy on gender relations in both the past and the present. Educational policies in the past, we shall argue, contributed inadvertently to greater equality in the occupational structure; now, the economic transformation and the reform of education may contribute to a reversal of these trends.

Educational policy under socialism was organized to further the interests of the state; the needs of the economy, as they were defined by central planning were more important than responding to individual aspirations. Much like the trends in the west, access to education expanded over time; the types of schools that were organized and promoted, however, were those believed to enhance the productivity and skills of the labor force. The favored programs emphasized applied vocational training, consisting of narrow technical skills and courses of study oriented to the practical problems of production. Priority was given to the development of heavy industry, both to create a powerful and self-sufficient economic base and to develop a numerically dominant working class as the leading social force supporting the socialist system. Vocational and technical skills were viewed as essential to the development of the economy. Technical schools, vocational schools and training programs closely linked to socialist enterprises expanded dramatically in Poland throughout the 1960s and 1970s. At the university level, polytechnical schools and institutes grew more rapidly than the institutions oriented toward the liberal arts. The university, in contrast, remained profoundly intellectual, abjuring the practical or the applied for the theoretical and the humanistic. Insofar as one can link institutional patterns of education to the creation of class
cultures. The universities created or perpetuated the "intelligentsia" while vocational programs were designed to enhance the status of the working class.

A major accomplishment of the communist regimes was the expansion of women's roles in both the economy and the society. To be sure, the jobs and roles that women filled were generally not those with the highest prestige or power; the conditions of women's daily lives were, in general, much more difficult than in the west. But the tacit assumption was that all members of a society, both male and female, should be involved in productive labor. Since education was the preparation necessary for socially desirable work, access was not restricted by gender. One of the paradoxes of educational development under communism is that the educational attainment of women expanded more quickly than that of men. In most developed countries, women have become an integral part of university communities and professional work, particularly since the 1960s. However, equal access to a university education was attained by young women in the Soviet Union and in Eastern Europe at an earlier historical period than was the case in either Europe or the United States. Moreover, this occurred without organized efforts by or on behalf of women and with little direct intervention by the state. Women successfully invaded elite educational programs and institutions, seemingly with neither feminist ambitions nor economic incentives for prolonged study. Relative to either western women or the men in communist countries, the higher education of women increased dramatically under state socialism. If one takes the date at which university enrollments are equally divided between men and women as a crude measure of gender equity in higher education, the East Central European countries reached this benchmark point earlier than any country in the West, despite waning economic development. In the Soviet Union, over half of the post-secondary students were women well before 1950, while Bulgaria, Poland, and East Germany each reached this point by the mid-1970s. As Table 1 indicates, university training in Eastern Europe was close to fifty percent female by the early 1970s, while it took the more economically "developed" West at least a decade longer.

See Table 1. Page 25

HOW SOCIALIST EDUCATIONAL POLICIES FEMINIZED EDUCATION

In Central Eastern Europe, as in western countries, the post-war period witnessed an enormous expansion of education. In Poland, the initial increase was in secondary, or post-primary, enrollments. At the end of the second world war, among pupils who completed primary school before 1951, 31% of girls and 46% of the boys started some form of secondary education. Throughout the 1950s, secondary education expanded enormously. By the early 1960s, 60% of the girls were entering some type of secondary schooling and 68% of the boys were. Young males still had a relative advantage in admission to secondary education; however, a larger percentage of the girls completed their studies. Thirty-nine percent of the girls finished full secondary education, while barely 37%
of the boys received a secondary school diploma. The reason that the edge males held over females reversed between entering and leaving secondary school, has to do with the organization of secondary education.

Roughly speaking, secondary education can be divided into three types of schools. First, lower vocational schools that are meant to prepare qualified workers for skilled and semi-skilled jobs, largely in industry. Second, two distinctive forms of full secondary education exist, both of which gave students a diploma or certificate of graduation and the right to sit for the entrance examinations for higher education: the lyceum and the technikum. These two secondary programs have quite different curriculum and educational goals. The lyceum consists of four years of traditional academic course work preparing the student for the university. The technikum, in contrast, requires five years to complete, and the major emphasis is on scientific and technical subjects. Both courses of study give the graduate the right to apply to higher education. Completing a degree in the technikum, however, gives in addition the graduate the diploma of technician in one of the sectors of the economy; the lyceum grants only the secondary school diploma without any specialization or focussed vocational training.

The expansion of secondary education in the 1950s had a quite different impact on male and female students. For the young women, the expansion meant a large increase in the enrollments in the lyceum. From less than ten percent (8.4%) of all female primary school graduates before 1951, by the end of the decade, the lyceum was admitting over one-fifth (21.4%). No other form of secondary schooling experienced as large an increase in female enrollments. The technikum, for example, grew from 10.7% to 18.0%, while lower vocational programs increased by only 5%, from 7.8% to 12.8% of each cohort.

As for the males, the expansion of secondary schools meant, first of all, a substantial increase in vocational training. In the 1950s, the technikum appeared to gain the most; the increases in enrollments here were the highest, over 11%, and five times as great as the tiny increase in enrollment in the lyceum (2.2%). Later, by the 1960s, lower vocational schooling expanded even more sharply, becoming the modal educational career for young males. Since then, the proportion of boys choosing this type of schooling has increased steadily. For most of the 1980s, over fifty percent of boys graduating from primary school entered and completed lower vocational education.

Since decisions regarding the choice of post-secondary education are determined to a very large extent by the social background of the pupils, it is worthwhile to trace what social origins coincide with what kinds of school choices. Both young men and women of intelligensia origin, defined loosely by whether or not the student's father has a higher education diploma, tend to attend one of the schools offering a full secondary education,
such as the lyceum or the technikum. Three-fourths of the sons and about 85% of the daughters from these families do so. The girls, however, choose the lyceum more often than the boys do. Girls of working class origin are also more likely to choose full secondary school (lyceum or technikum), rather than lower vocational. The proportion of girls enrolled in lower vocational has increased since the late 1960s and in the 1970s, but the vast majority of students are still male. One can tell the same story about girls of farm origin. They choose some kind of full secondary education over lower vocational schools, although in the 1980s, the proportion choosing lower vocational has increased.

Males of working class or farm origins, unlike their sisters, prefer lower vocational education over full secondary. What is more -- the proportion of those choosing lower vocational secondary education grew steadily throughout the 1960s and 1970s, while the proportion opting for the lyceum was more or less constant over time, at around 5%. As a result of these trends, in the late 1960s and 1970s, 26-28% of the girls of all backgrounds were attending the lyceum as their first choice of secondary school, while only 8-9% of the boys were doing so. These trends, operating individually and in concert, brought about the feminization of the lyceum in Poland. Without compromising standards or mission, and without losing relative status, the lyceum became more than 70% female. The lyceum remained the single form of secondary education that offered the most favorable odds for successfully passing the rigorous entrance exams to higher education. Eighty percent of all university entrants are graduates of the lyceum in Poland, and this proportion has not changed very much over time.

The riddle of why female attendance at university is so high in socialist societies is directly linked to the tracking of young women into the lyceum. The creation of vocationally relevant alternatives for males, alternatives that did not require or at times even disallowed higher education, left the domain of humanistic and non-technical schooling open to female penetration. Among the graduates of the lyceum, a higher proportion of males are admitted to university; however, the increasing numerical dominance of women in these secondary schools meant an increasing share of female applicants. In Poland, as in the west, female students tend to avoid technical fields, subjects that require preparation math or science, and specializations that appear narrow and vocational. However, in the west, achievement in these fields predict university attendance, while in Poland they serve as a handicap. The majority of the graduates of the technikum choose to pursue jobs rather than higher education. Numerous post-secondary programs for women developed, such as teaching or nursing, that required less than the full five years of university needed to earn the magister degree; however, most of these feminized vocational programs remained affiliated with the university.

The political intention of the leaders of centrally planned economy was the growth
of heavy industry and an expanding working class. The policies to bring about these goals focused on the expansion of lower vocational education. Industrial workers were quite well-paid in relative terms; the training provided in lower vocational schools signified good prospects for the sons of the working class. Girls from similar backgrounds were deprived of offers for vocational training that were equally good. Moreover, it seems likely that the geographical network of vocational schools in traditionally female fields was not as good as that for boys. In contrast, the network of provincial lycées were readily available. The appeal of operating complex industrial tools or large pieces of machinery may well have been less as well. But for all of these reasons, girls from disadvantaged social backgrounds chose the lycée much more often than boys did. And consequently, the lycée provided substantial educational mobility for young women.

In Poland, the crucial decision regarding which type of secondary school to be pursued after primary education is made quite early in the life course. These decisions tended to reproduce the vocational choices and the occupational histories among young men much like those of their fathers. The decision to attend lycée among girls offered less in the way of vocation, but it also closed off significantly fewer options. The curious fact is that women may have drifted into the university simply because the array of post-primary vocational alternatives was unsatisfactory. The well-paved path from the lycée to the university resulted in a growing number of young women seeking post-secondary training for occupations such as teachers and nurses, and subsequently, to larger cohorts completing higher education as well. This expansion of female enrollments in the university apparently occurred without any hint of affirmative action and with no indication that feminist aspirations or sympathies were in the air.³

As we have argued elsewhere, equality in access to higher education between men and women was an unintended consequence of socialist educational policies (Heyns and Białas, 1990). The timing of school expansion, and the type and composition of the schools allowed to grow, fashioned distinctive educational careers for men and women. The dominant thrust of socialist policy was clearly oriented toward training the working class for jobs in heavy industry. Ironically, the feminization of higher education was a direct consequence of educational policies that were designed to enlarge and further the interests of the proletariat. Instead of expanding possibilities for male workers, however, the vocational and technical tracks tended to limit their options.

We would like to extend this line of reasoning and consider a second hypothesis that links educational change to the socialist labor market. The growing proportion of women who were employed in the service sector, in administrative positions and in white collar jobs generally was a consequence of the feminization of the lycée. The lycée supplied universities with a very large share of entrants; indeed, college preparation was its sole
function. The graduates of the lyceum, whether male or female, were encouraged or almost obliged to continue their education. The expansion of women into professional and white collar work that took place in the mid-1960s and the 1970s, was the direct result of the feminization of higher education and the increasingly influential role played by women in secondary and post-secondary education.

Some of these occupations would no doubt have been feminized in any event, irrespective of educational policy. The expansion of office jobs and administrative work. It is common practice to upgrade the occupational qualifications for particular jobs when applicants are especially well-trained. The fact is, however, that women moved into a wide variety of professional and service occupations in Poland. Feminization occurred in medical and legal specialties with well-established requirements for special credentials and training. In the case of health services, the growing numbers of medical students in second half of 1970s and increased professionalization led to a consistent advantage for women in the fields of pharmacology, stomatology and even in medicine itself. Virtually all of the health and social service occupations were feminized before the 1980s. In certain semi-professions, such as nursing, a portion of the new recruits are being trained in schools of medicine. Teacher training colleges produced large numbers of women teachers for both primary and secondary schools. Stomatologists and pharmacologists might never have reached as large a proportion of women if the lyceum had not recruited such a high percentage (over 70%) of young women. The most dramatic expansion of women in medical schools occurred in the 1970s, largely as a consequence of increasing enrollment places in medical schools. Women were, it seems, the chief beneficiaries of the governmental decision to increase the number of doctors and other medical staff.

The same process could be said to operate in the humanities and the social sciences. These fields manned, or perhaps wo-manned, the administrative apparatus of the socialist state. To be sure, the positions of power were reserved for men, drawn from the ranks of nomenklatura, but in a host of professional and semi-professional fields, women dominated the official bureaucracies numerically. The university diploma in economics, or business vocational training at secondary level, were means to train accountants. Under socialism, business and economics became female occupations because of the low status of the accountant at the state enterprise. The more prestigious posts in international trade, for example, remained male sinecures. The feminization of diverse occupations, such as sociologists, psychologists, editors, journalists and so forth was, at least in part, an unintended side effect of educational policies put in place in the 1960s and 1970s. As Table 2 indicates, female domination of the liberal arts and professional programs in the universities dates from the decade of the 1960s.

See Table 2. Page 26
One of the features of all centrally planned socialist economies was the extensive way of development and the permanent shortage of labor. That is why the percentage of women in the labor force in all socialist countries was typically higher than in western economies. Feminized secondary general education, the lycée, enrolled more than one-fourth of all female primary school graduates since the mid-1960s. We would argue that the feminization of many of the highly educated but not very well-paid positions within the professions was, at least in part, the result of the expansion of lower vocational education for males. The lycée and the feminized specialties within post-secondary created a reservoir of cheap but well-educated labor. Although some of the professional and service roles that became feminized consist of narrow, highly-specialized job titles and occupational niches, they are in fields that in the west remained largely male-dominated.

The evidence regarding the impact of educational attainment on the status of women is rather mixed. Women surely did not reap the same monetary rewards for their educational degrees and credentials as men did in either the east or the west; moreover, the differential benefits tended to increase with schooling rather than decline. In terms of occupational status, however, there is ample evidence that women increasingly played an important role in most professions and in the service sector. Between 1972 and 1982, the average levels of occupational attainment of women increased much more quickly than did those of men (Pohoski and Mach, 1988). The patterns are similar when one compares 1982 and 1987, as shown below, although the Polish occupational structure changed very little during the latter period.

See Table 3, Page 27

In sum, the feminization of the service sector and of many of the educated occupations of the socialist state was, we would argue, at least in part the result of the heavy reliance on lower vocational education and technical schools designed to enhance the skills of males. Although communist regimes espoused egalitarian ideals, class rather than gender was the highest priority; expanding educational opportunity was viewed as a means to advance educational opportunities for the proletariat or the peasantry. The educational attainment of women was an incidental by-product of these policies. The aims of education were essentially utilitarian --- to increase skills and human capital of males in order to advance the economic and industrial goals of centralized state planning. The emphasis on narrow, technically-oriented education, prevailed for most of the forty years of communist rule. Ironically, these policies helped women as a group far more than they helped the proletariat.

EDUCATIONAL TRANSITIONS
Given the roots of gender equality in education, one is forced to ask how what patterns will prevail in the future. How will the transition from a command economy to a market economy affect schooling, women's status, and the patterns of employment by gender? It is, of course, too early to observe large changes in the institutional structures of education and employment. Hard data on post-transition changes are fragmentary. In July, 1991, the Sejm passed an omnibus package of legislation about education, which will undoubtedly shape the functioning of the school system in the future. We can, however, observe the emergence of new educational programs and explore some of the social and economic pressures experienced by socialist educational institutions. We may even assay predictions about changes in educational opportunity based on the new economic, social and legal context that is in the making. We can inspect the host of new programs that aim to train or retrain managers and administrators in the use and interpretation of economic data. Finally, we can examine the educational hopes and aspirations of parents who are creating new schools to socialize their children for the new era. In each of these areas, it is possible to identify tensions between gender roles and post-communist institutions.

The data to be reported is based largely on interviews and on articles written by experts who are based in Warsaw. Warsaw is, of course, a place where the winds of political and economic transformation are fiercely blowing, but it is not altogether clear that it is the most reliable weather vane for social change in the country or the region as a whole. With these caveats, however, we will hazard some speculations regarding how changes in educational institutions will alter the status of women in post-communist Poland. These data suggest, although they cannot prove, that post-communist patterns will be less favorable to the educational and occupational choices of women. The three areas in which educational changes are suggestive of new trends are the area of vocational education, independent secondary schools, and business education for adults.

In education, as in other fields, the process of transition has meant a fundamental questioning of all aspects of state policy. Both the intentions and the outcomes, both the ideologies and the strategies for implementation that were adopted by the communist regime have come under attack. Much of the discourse is cast in the terminology that was embraced by the opposition movements in the 1980s, most particularly by the various branches of the Solidarity trade union. Education, for example, must be "de-colonized," or established independently of state control. The themes are largely political; virtually all proposed changes are argued to increase participation, democratic processes, and parent's control for example. In addition, new movements and ideas that resonate with the economic changes are also common. The logic of privatization has attracted a substantial following in educational, as well as economic, circles. From the perspective of the new government, decentralization, combined with fiscal austerity, are the order of the day. The
economic crisis has led to a Balcerowicz plan for education that implies few "frills" and funds that are barely adequate to pay teacher's salaries. Local school systems cannot hire new teachers; many have been forced to lay off part-time instructors.\(^8\)

The administrative changes and the new policies for financing schools are the most salient, but it is still too early to see how much these changes will influence the system directly. Key actors in the Ministry have been replaced by opposition leaders, and it seems clear that the role of the state in education will be diminished. The rationale for decentralization, for local control under the auspices of School Councils, is in part economic and in part ideological. But to date, few if any of the local educational authorities have the means at their disposal to finance revising curricula, purchasing books, employing new teachers, or improving the quality of education markedly.

At the same time, parental -- and popular -- expectations favor a complete restructuring of schools, at least in principle. How to bring this off in the midst of an economic crisis is difficult to imagine. For the majority of parents, the transition to post-communist, maybe capitalist, society, seems to have produced a chaotic and mercurial context for considering the education and future of their children. For a sizeable contingent of urban, relatively advantaged parents, school reform is essential. The school reform movement, however, seeks democratization through privatization. The next three sections provide, by way of background, a discussion of three significant developments in education in post-communist Poland. Understanding the evolution and the fate of vocational education, of private schooling, and of the numerous post-graduate courses in administration, management and business education can provide a context for discussions of how women's roles are likely to be transformed.

Vocational Education\(^9\)

Vocational education was a one of the most conspicuous innovations developed by the communist educational system. In Poland and elsewhere, the socialist state devoted substantial resources to expanding post-primary schooling, particularly the terminal, three-year program of studies known as lower vocational education. Between the early 1960s, when these schools were introduced, and the mid-1980s, these programs expanded threefold. Upon completion, the student earned a skill or craft designation (or, in slang, a *fach*) that entitled him or her to work in one of the appropriate industries or factories. These programs were extremely specialized, and over time, became quite narrow and inflexible; in Poland, lower vocational offered some training for over two hundred and forty different blue collar trades.

Lower vocational programs in Poland are quite diverse. Perhaps half of all
vocational students were enrolled in programs that were sponsored or affiliated, equipped and co-financed by large state enterprises. These programs most resembled institutionalized apprenticeships, and included very little general education. The affiliation was, however, a good deal for both the pupils and the companies. The former were getting equipment, on-the-job training, and sometimes board as well as modest pay; the companies got cheap, underpaid labor for the duration of the training program and then an opportunity to hire young workers who had been trained on the spot. At best, the skills students learned translated directly into a job, or a promotion with a raise, when they finished their studies. In one large automobile factory outside of Warsaw (FSO), ninety percent of the newly-hired workers each year were students from the vocational school connected to the plant.

Recession combined with unemployment is a new feature of the Polish economy. In the present situation, companies are not looking for a new labor force but are forced to fire their own people. Moreover, many companies will not survive in the new economic climate. The Warsaw Steel Mill and the Ursus factory are on the brink of collapse; both have closed their vocational schools. Even the firms that manage to weather the transition are unlikely to continue subsidizing vocational education. The school connected to FSO, for example, closed early last year. In a recession, state enterprises do not have money to support affiliated vocational schools. One of the first autonomous actions taken by many state enterprises when forced to cut costs, was to cancel their vocational program. Three years ago, there were two places in Polish industry for each graduate of the vocational schools. Now exactly the opposite ratio holds. Two graduates are available for every place. Vocational schools in the television industry (WZT), in food and dairy processing, textiles, and especially in heavy industry have closed. Spółcem, one of the largest state-run firms that distributes and retails grocery and agricultural products, has terminated the vocational education program as well. Some of these vocational programs have been taken over by the Ministry, and absorbed into the system of schools sponsored by the curatoreum; others, however, will simply be discontinued. Although systematic studies are sparse, there is evidence that the vocational programs in other Eastern European countries are experiencing similar dislocation.

Vocational programs in general, were largely male; but even those that trained a substantial number of women, in the textile industry, for example, have been adversely affected. A large plant manufacturing semi-conductors just outside Warsaw, TEWA, has dropped its vocational education program. As a result of the collapse of the Soviet market, many of the textile factories in Łódź are near bankruptcy or have suspended operations. The labor force in both these industries is heavily female.

A good many of the lower vocational schools in Poland probably should be closed, for both educational and economic reasons. However, for most of the past decade,
these schools absorbed more than half of all primary school leavers, and around two-thirds of the young males. Haunted by the specter of growing unemployment, parents are anxious and confused about what sort of education will provide a secure future for their children. The closing of the traditional avenues of vocational training puts tremendous pressure on the schools that survive. In particular, the secondary schools that served as the primary alternative to lower vocational schooling, the lyceum and the technikum, are likely to be swamped with applicants. In Warsaw, twenty percent of the primary school graduates traditionally enrolled in a lyceum; this fall, these schools are preparing to accept one-third of the young graduates. In a period in which the state budget has little flexibility, it is difficult to know where the funds to support such an expansion will come from.

The Private School Movement

One of the most fascinating developments in post-communist education has been the formation of a very active school reform movement. The themes and the rhetoric of proposed reforms echo those heard in the debates about economic and political transition generally. Institutions must be democratized and decentralized; the monopoly of the state over the provision of goods and services must be broken. The schools must become more responsive to the needs of individual parents and children. The curriculum needs a complete overhaul; all traces of ideological indoctrination must be expunged. The organization and financing of schools should be lodged in democratically organized community groups; schools should be controlled by the families who can best monitor the education their children receive. And, finally, the most workable strategy for eradicating state control is to establish new, independent private schools, under the control of parents' groups.

Społeczne Towarzystwo Oświatowe, which literally means the Social Education Association, or STO, is the paramount example of the school reform movement in Poland. It has had phenomenal success in challenging the monopoly of state schools and in creating alternatives. In the first year, 1989, 35 non-state or semi-state schools were in operation; in September 1991, 190 or more "social" schools will open their doors. These schools are organized by some 36 different local educational associations and 160 educational foundations. STO currently claims over 10,000 members, as well as many sympathizers. The primary schools organized by STO are quite small and represent a tiny portion of the student population; the new secondary schools, however, are of primary interest here. Without exception, these new schools elite lyceum, offering university preparation and a modified version of the standard lyceum curriculum. In Poland, there are only 900 lyceum; numerically, then, the 100 new private lyceum constitute a significant proportion of the total number of schools, although they do not yet enroll ten percent of the students. At least part of their popularity and their dramatic growth is due to an increasing demand for this
The term "social" as applied to private education in Poland is curious. The term is used in contrast to "state," and it includes virtually all independent or non-state education, whether religious or non-denominational. Social is sometimes translated as "civic" or even "public" education. Only a handful of the new private schools are wholly supported by private funds, but all proclaim the right to establish autonomous educational institutions, subject to democratically elected self-governments. Politically, these schools must meet standards of educational quality that apply to state schools. Economically, the financing arrangements require the state to pay approximately half of the costs of the civic schools, while parents pay the rest. The new schools can, by law, be run by "non-state self-governments, legal or natural persons," but virtually all of the new schools are still fiscally dependent on the state. In practice, social schools are run by foundations, private companies, the Church or one of the various convents, and individuals.

The style and the rhetoric of STO clearly owes much to the political opposition in Poland. The success of the movement is surely attributable in part to the collapse of the communist state, although the organization itself antedated the round table talks and the change of government. STO as an organization was the result of the decision made in 1987, to try to register an association of parents explicitly claiming the right to control the education of their children and the right to establish private schools. In theory, these rights were guaranteed by Polish law, under a statute passed in 1961; but official permission was needed in order to exercise such rights, and such permission had never before been granted. In December, 1987, neither the Ministry of National Education nor the 23 signers of the petition asking for official sanction believed that an organization like STO would be allowed to exist.

When the Ministry turned down the petition for registration, the fledgling organization appealed the decision through the courts. After a brief legal battle, STO and two affiliated groups in Wroclaw and the Malopolska region won their suit; in December 1988, they were formally registered with the intent of establishing private schools. The stage was set for private alternative schools under the auspices of democratic, non-State control and authority. STO was registered as an official organization, but opening such schools still had to be formally approved.

The first petition requesting official permission to open a private school was submitted to the Ministry of National Education in June 1988. The minister responded quickly and as predicted, rejecting the petition and arguing that it would be against the Polish Constitution to collect fees for education. The Krakow parent, Anna Jeziorna, who had submitted the petition, then appealed this decision to the High Administrative Court.
This case understandably attracted considerable attention; it was the first time in which a group of concerned parents had challenged the right of the Ministry to determine where and how their children would be educated. The timing was, of course, fortuitous. Plans for the round table talks were underway, and Solidarity was about to be reinstated as a key actor in the negotiations between state and civil society. The political changes were not lost on the legal system. On February 23, 1989, at almost the same moment that the round table talks were beginning, the High Court handed down its decision: the state administration was wrong to deny parents the right to organize schools. Parents did have the legal right to open private schools in the People's Republic of Poland. The right to found private schools, as it turned out, would outlive the "People's Republic."

The "social" or civic schools take democratization as their most fundamental purpose and their principal grievance with state education. The chief impetus behind STO and a central motif in the schools that have been formed, is democratic education. Although STO does not endorse any particular educational philosophy, expect democratic pluralism, the STO schools share basic assumptions. The ideology of the "social" schools is quite similar to that of progressive education in the west; teachers should attend to individual differences and the needs of particular children. Parents should be actively involved in the education of their children at every stage. Schools should be open institutions, fostering community participation and parental involvement. The only sure way to rid schools of socialist dogma, to change the passive and conformist attitudes and behavior associated with the past, is to establish new and different institutions. The curriculum should be modernized, although for STO members, this does not mean that standards should be lowered or the curriculum should be intellectually diluted. These secondary schools maintain the traditional prerequisites for admission to the university. The parents who have so ardently supported these new schools do not want their children to be at a competitive disadvantage with the graduates of state schools.

Ironically, thus far it seems easier to privatize state education than state industry; and it has been easier to found new schools than to alter the organization and structure of those already in existence. Educational policy under communism was both highly centralized and quite hierarchic. It is not yet clear what organizational framework will define the governance of education in the future. It is possible that the new private schools will become models for education generally; it is possible that they will not survive the present economic crisis. The current government clearly favors local control and local funding. New public educational boards, School Councils, are in place. These boards are democratically elected, from three slates that are equally divided between parents, teachers, and students. The Councils also often include a few eminent leaders from the community, either religious or lay. These boards are mandated to provide local oversight, they can propose educational policies, and they now control that part of the school budget that is
locally collected. At present, however, only the new "social" schools receive a significant portion of their funds from non-state sources. In the state schools, the local boards are not particularly responsive to parent or community groups yet; at the same time, parent and community groups often have no idea of how to use them to improve the quality of education or to influence programs.

The civic schools incorporate forms of education that were unavailable under state socialism, even in the best lyceum. The schools organized by and for parents with elite aspirations, if not backgrounds. As a result, both the formal and the informal curricula are conscious of status of education. In the area of sports, for example, several new schools offer tennis and swimming. In contrast, the best socialist schools gave students soccer and gymnastics. Soccer, like most team sports, requires minimal individual coaching and much less expensive equipment for each student. Gymnastics can be taught in a vacant room furnished with a few mats; when the weather is inclement, these courses provided good indoor exercise, but at relatively low cost. The supplemental athletic activities in civic schools provide access to training that, under socialism, were reserved for private classes paid for by parents.

There are no blueprints available for shaping post-communist society or post-Communist educational policy; more to the point, social schools have elicited an uncommon amount of energy and activity from parents. The STO "Kola" or "circles" organizations pursue democratic decision-making in their schools and communities. The thrust of their efforts, however, seems to be oriented toward discrediting the state in all aspects of educational planning and control. Privatization in education does represent a democratic alternative to traditional state schools; the question remains, however, whether such schools will support equality and the public interest.

Post-Communist Educational Programs: Adult Education

The most visible changes that have occurred in the field of education, and the most directly linked to the growth of private enterprise, are the proliferation of new training programs in management and business administration, and in foreign languages. Virtually all of these programs are privately funded, and most charge a hefty tuition fee. There are now forty-seven new programs with diverse sponsorship and the title "International Business School" in operation. These programs offer not so much continuing education as a retooling for the market economy. In part, such programs are designed to retrain managers and administrators from the state sector; in part, they aim to provide skills in marketing, accounting, business English and capital accumulation for budding entrepreneurs. The most respectable programs are affiliated with either a university, a foundation, or a large foreign enterprise that hopes to develop business contacts in Poland. Sometimes the fees for such
programs are paid by a foreign consulting firm, hoping to recruit a local labor force; sometimes the purposes are strictly altruistic. Ads in newspapers and on television promise to provide the training and contacts for starting a successful private business. A typical program offers a short but intensive training period, followed by trip or exchange with a foreign university or firm. While one should be wary of the claims and the credibility of many of these new schools and programs, western universities and foundations have undoubtedly contributed to the burst of new programs and schools.

EDUCATION IN TRANSITION: GENDER AND EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

What will be the consequence of these new post-communist institutions and policies on educational attainment? Will the new institutional forms outlined above endure? What impact do the new educational trends augur for women's status in post-communist Poland? What will become of the large number of women with considerable human capital who have never reaped the full economic benefits of their education?

Although definitive answers to such questions cannot yet be given, some speculation seems in order. With respect to secondary schooling, it is clear that more students will abandon, or be abandoned by, lower vocational programs in industry that offered an easy vocational transition to adult roles. A shift in enrollments from lower vocational education to lycéeum and technikum schools can already be observed, at least in Warsaw. The growth in the lycéeum will most probably mean an especially large increase in male enrollments. Although the majority of students in these schools are still female, the new non-state schools, and those offering the most elite education, are becoming masculinized, or at least de-feminized, more quickly than traditional state programs. The secondary schools are likely to diversify their educational missions and clientele as well. Partly as a result of decentralization and local control, communities will increasingly have to define what type of educational programs meet the needs of the community and which can be supported. The new private schools are one response to these trends. One can imagine an educational system in which these institutions become models for high quality educational programs in the state sector; or one can imagine a system in which innovation and reform remain "privatized." At present, these schools are most concerned with retaining political independence and some measure of fiscal control. Will males reclaim the lycéeum, displacing young women in the educational tracks that lead most directly to the university? Although it is too early to conclude that this is inevitable, such an outcome cannot be ruled out. If one judges by the preferences and educational ideologies expressed by STO members, many post-communist parents believe that the returns to higher education are likely to increase substantially in the future.

With respect to the overall status of women, the issues raised by educational and
economic transitions are interesting but very complex. It seems likely that the demand for lyceum and for post-secondary education of all sorts will increase. Moreover, it seems likely that young men and women will increasingly be competing for scarce positions in both the lyceum and the university. The reasons for this are several. First, the declining utility of lower vocational programs will increase the demand for alternative programs of schooling. A significant portion of these new recruits will be males, drawn from the ranks of those who would have become technicians or qualified workers under socialism. A larger pool of lyceum graduates will put pressure on the universities to either expand or admit a larger proportion of male students. The same could be said of the professions and the service sector generally. The elite professions will likely become both better paid and more desirable positions for men. The incumbents of the occupations and jobs in administration and the service sector will also face increasing competition from new entrants, some with university degrees and some without.

The evidence for these claims rests on the patterns of attendance in the new elite private schools and the attitudes expressed by the rector and directors of the new programs in the university. Although the private schools do not explicitly endorse any change in the gender composition of schools, the new private secondary schools offer, uniformly, lyceum-type university preparation. They aim to satisfy parents' demands for elite education combined with special attention to children with difficulties or problems in adjusting to school. Despite grass-roots organizations and "bottom up" support, STO is basically a movement of "middle-budget intelligentsia" families, who value education and place a high priority on it for their children.16

Enrollment data is not yet available for the period since 1989, although special tabulations provided by the curator of schools in Warsaw is instructive. Table 4 provides data on the gender composition of all state secondary general schools in Warsaw, and of the new private schools, both for all students and for those in their first year. The differences are consistent and significant. The traditional lyceum enrollment has increased. Although the majority of students are still young women, a larger share are male. The private non-state schools, which are without exception oriented toward university preparation, are significantly more likely to be male than state schools, although even in these elite schools, the majority of students are female. Moreover, the first year class has a larger proportion male enrollment than later classes.

See Table 4. Page 28

The role of the numerous new adult education programs in post-communist society are still ambiguous. At present, these programs appear to attract a higher proportion male compared to their counterparts in the university, but they are also admitting students from
a fairly broad age range. Reliable enrollment figures by gender that could be compared to applications are difficult to come by. Moreover, many, perhaps the majority of the new business schools will probably not survive. As the number of schools and programs have proliferated, applications to individual schools have fallen off, perhaps as a result of competition between the programs. Although virtually all of the new schools are promising to provide special skills for the post-communist era, it is not clear how many will make good on these promises. Few of the private business schools have either the time or the inclination to track their graduates or to evaluate the outcomes of their programs, much less to assess their impact on gender inequality.

With respect to the management and language-training programs, the results are similar. Both applicants and enrollments appear to be increasingly likely to be male. To be sure, women still constitute the majority of students in the language training and business programs, as one would expect given their superior educational qualifications. Although the image of these programs has post-communist appeal — based on their entrepreneurial, international focus — it is not yet clear whether they will be significant factors in the economic mobility, or even economic stability, of their graduates. But they surely aspire to recruit and assist soon-to-be-successful new business leaders and managers. The directors of these programs reported, with some satisfaction, that they are receiving a larger number of applications from males than previously. Indeed, we were told that this was a very important phenomena because it proves that business and economics are once again "serious" fields of work and study. The Warsaw programs that we studied range in composition from over sixty percent female to seventy percent male. The programs with the largest proportion male are those that restrict admission to those currently managing state enterprises; but even in foreign languages, a traditionally female area, have a higher proportion male than did foreign languages in the past.

**SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

In summary, we have argued that the educational policies in socialist countries favored the substantial growth of vocational and technical education. The vocational and technical schools attracted and enrolled a disproportionate share of males and a growing share of all male primary school graduates. As a consequence, the non-technical and non-vocational programs became feminized. In particular, the *lyceum* enrolled and absorbed a steadily increasing number of young women pursuing post-primary schooling. The *lyceum* was not, however, a vocational track; the primary option for the graduates was to continue to higher education. In the west, elite preparatory academies lost their monopoly on access to colleges and universities; in Poland, the educational transformations allowed the *lyceum* to retain status while becoming numerically dominated by females.
Second, we argued that the feminization of the lyceum led to greater female enrollments in the post-secondary training colleges and universities at an earlier period than occurred in the west. Although the economic returns to education under socialism are quite low and generally do not favor women workers, there have clearly been noticeable improvements in the occupational status of women. In particular, higher education appears to have contributed significantly to the high proportions of women in the professions and to the feminization of the service sector.

These trends provide a fascinating contrast to the patterns of education and attainment by gender in western countries. Moreover, the process of economic and social transition provides a ready-made laboratory for studying whether the underpaid and feminized occupations will gain income and status or lose a portion of their heavily female labor force. Education, we have argued, is a lens for studying these processes, and a strategy for examining gender and status relations. Insofar as one can form an early impression of these processes, it seems clear that the lyceum will become a more gender-balanced institution, in both the state and private sector. It also seems likely that there will be greater competition between males and females for university places. The prestigious secondary schools that are growing the most quickly and that seem to have the greatest appeal to post-communist parents are lyceum; moreover, the new, private lyceum attract an increasing number and an ever-larger proportion of male students. One may expect that as the returns to education and to occupational position change, and presumably increase, there will be increasing tension as to how such rewards are distributed. Considering the gendered nature of the occupational structure, this tension is likely to involve conflicts between males and females.

Will the transformations occurring in education and vocational training be matched by changes in the labor market?
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Słomczynski, Kazimierz M. Pozycja zawodowa i jej związki z wykształceniem [Occupational Status and Its Relation to Education]. Warsaw: The Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the Polish Academy of Sciences, 1983.


NOTES

1. The literature on women's roles in Communist countries, generally supports this point. For recent surveys, see Drakulić (1990), Moghadam (1990), Heitlinger (1985), and Wolchik (1989). For recent discussions of the status of women in Poland, see Bishop (1990), Bystydzienski (1989), Czarnecka (1989) and Siemienińska (1990). For the Soviet Union and more general theoretical perspectives, see Lapidus (1977) Scott (1974) and Stites (1981).

2. These data, as well as others cited in this paper unless otherwise stated, are from the 1987-88 survey conducted by research team at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Polish Academy of Sciences studying Social Stratification and Mobility Research in Poland. The team includes: Ireneusz Białecki, Henryk Domanski (Head of the team), Krystyna Janicka, Bogdan Mach, Zbigniew Sawinski, Joanna Sikorska, Kazimierz M. Słomczynski (Principal Investigator) and Wojciech Zaborowski. The sample consists of 5894 men (aged 20-65) and women (aged 20-60) in the civilian labor force.

3. As a result of these changes, the educational opportunities available to young women expanded much more than those available to young men. This had the effect of decreasing the variance of outcomes, or the distance between the poor and the privileged, more for females than for males.

4. The over-representation of women in Polish medical schools was prevented by the decision of the rectors regarding *numerus clausus*: that is, the proportion of women admitted should not exceed 50% in any department. See Sokolowska (1981) and Kennedy (1991).

5. Medical schools in Poland consist of a six-year program taught in special university departments. Although scientific, the *lyceum* generally gave a better education in biology and languages than the *technikum*.

6. A statistical abstract on education has not been published in Poland since 1988, although one is scheduled to appear in the fall of 1991.

7. The private schools in Poland prefer the term independent or civic schools. In Polish, privatization, or *prywatyzacja* is generally applied only to strictly economic, profit-making organizations; however, these schools require parents to pay some tuition and to contribute a good deal to the organization and to the planning of education.

8. Many of the part-time instructors were retired teachers with special skills and inadequate pensions.
9. The data on vocational education programs is indebted to discussions and information provided by Jan Szczucki, a member of the team studying the construction of expertise in post-communist Poland.

10. In Hungary, the research of Eva Balazs (1991) suggests that the collapse of apprentice schools has increased the competition for places in the best secondary schools.

11. For a particularly insightful evaluation of vocational education programs in Poland, see Peter Grootings (1991).

12. The information regarding the independent schools movement is from interviews with members of the Ministry, from a number of Warsaw activists, and from selected issues of the STO journal, Edukacja i Dialog.

13. In January, 1990, the Minister of National Education agreed that the state should subsidize social schools, to the amount of half the current costs per child in the state schools in the region; schools sponsored by foundations or business concerns do not qualify for state subsidy, although denominational schools do. The tuition paid by parents is quite modest by western standards, amounting to between $10-$12 per month; however, even fees of this order represent ten percent of the average monthly salary.


15. These results are based on several dozen open-ended interviews with the directors and managers of new business programs in Warsaw, conducted in the summer of 1991 by Dina Smeltz and Pauline Gianopulos. This work is part of the ongoing Project on "The Construction of New Expertise: Education, Professions and Elites in Post-Communist Poland," by Michael D. Kennedy, Ireneusz Bialtecki, and Barbara Heyns, and funded by the National Council for Soviet and Eastern European Research, 1991-92.

16. This conclusion is reached by virtually all of the Polish observers of the civic schools; the quotation, however, is from Andrzej Witwicki, the former Secretary General of the Civic Educational Association, in an article "The Avalanche has started." Education and Dialogue, December 1990, pp. 14.

17. We should point out that many of the STO organizers that we have interviewed are convinced that the new schools have the same gender composition as the state schools, although they have not actually collected any data. The best state lyceum are most evenly balanced between males and females; perhaps the impressions of the parents in the private school movement are based on a contrast between STO schools and the most exclusive
state schools, or perhaps the data for all of Poland will be less compelling.
Table 1. Percentage Female of the Population Enrolled in Post-Secondary Education in Western Europe and the Socialist Countries, 1950-1985.

<table>
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<tr>
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<td>17</td>
<td>22</td>
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<td>50</td>
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<td>43</td>
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<td>44</td>
<td>49</td>
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<table>
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<td>Finland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Israel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
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<td>USA</td>
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SOURCE: UNESCO, Selected Dates. School enrollment figures are based on the data files assembled by John Meyer and the school expansion project at Stanford University.
Table 2. Percent Female Enrolled in Selected Professional Schools, Day Courses.


<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Arts</th>
<th>Economics</th>
<th>Pedagogy</th>
<th>Law</th>
<th>Medicine</th>
<th>Humanities</th>
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<td>1960</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td>60.1</td>
<td>36.3</td>
<td>62.2</td>
<td>69.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>48.0</td>
<td>62.3</td>
<td>70.6</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>66.0</td>
<td>75.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>47.0</td>
<td>64.1</td>
<td>75.4</td>
<td>48.6</td>
<td>63.1</td>
<td>78.6</td>
</tr>
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<td>1985</td>
<td>48.7</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>72.5</td>
<td>46.3</td>
<td>61.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>50.5</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>72.6</td>
<td>46.0</td>
<td>61.2</td>
<td>74.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>50.8</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>71.6</td>
<td>46.5</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>74.0</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Source: Główny Urząd Statystyczny, Rocznik Statystyczny Szkolnictwa, Selected Years.
Table 3. Changes in the Occupational Structure, Employed Persons 30-39 Years Old, by Sex.


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<td>Professionals</td>
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<td>23.1</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>26.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other White Collar</td>
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<td>3.1</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>17.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skilled Manual</td>
<td>50.8</td>
<td>54.7</td>
<td>58.1</td>
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<td>14.4</td>
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<td>8,998</td>
<td>541</td>
<td>811</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>466</td>
<td>872</td>
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Source: Data for 1972 and 1982 is from Pohoski and Mach (1988); 1987 tabulations are based on data collected by Slomczynski, et al., IFiS, PAN.
Table 4. Students in State and Non-State General Secondary Schools
(Lyceum) by Sex and Year of Study, Warsaw 1990-91

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Independent Schools</th>
<th>State Schools</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>45.1 %</td>
<td>36.4 %</td>
<td>37.2 %</td>
<td>[7,706]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>54.9</td>
<td>63.6</td>
<td>62.8</td>
<td>[4,558]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>100.0 %</td>
<td>100.0 %</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>[12,264]</td>
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<tr>
<td>[N]</td>
<td>[1,039]</td>
<td>[11,225]</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All Other Years</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>38.5 %</td>
<td>36.5 %</td>
<td>36.6 %</td>
<td>[9,652]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>61.5</td>
<td>63.5</td>
<td>63.4</td>
<td>[16,732]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>100.0 %</td>
<td>100.0 %</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>[26,384]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Lyceum Students</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>41.9 %</td>
<td>36.5 %</td>
<td>36.8 %</td>
<td>[24,438]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>58.1</td>
<td>63.5</td>
<td>63.2</td>
<td>[14,210]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>100.0 %</td>
<td>100.0 %</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>[38,648]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[N]</td>
<td>[2,019]</td>
<td>[36,629]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>