Gender Mainstreaming

&

Related Issues

A short overview about Gender Mainstreaming, its history and its relationship to Non-Discrimination/Diversity Mainstreaming

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Introduction

This brochure developed out of a workshop given on the topic of gender mainstreaming and Related Issues given at the 2016 EurECA Conference. The idea for doing research into the area came from several requests related to Sexual Education curricula and information on gender mainstreaming. At the same time we as the Board of EurECA had renewed our vision to be a voice for Christians in Education across Europe. Some of the issues Christians in education face today are strongly related to Gender Mainstreaming, but there are other influences, laws and mainstreaming processes, which help us understand the positive and negative effects on the way we are asked to educate children today. The following introduction to GM and Related Issues only provides a short overview: much more could be written on each topic, but I hope it will provide all who read it with greater insight and understanding to enable them to read the signs of the time and to act accordingly.
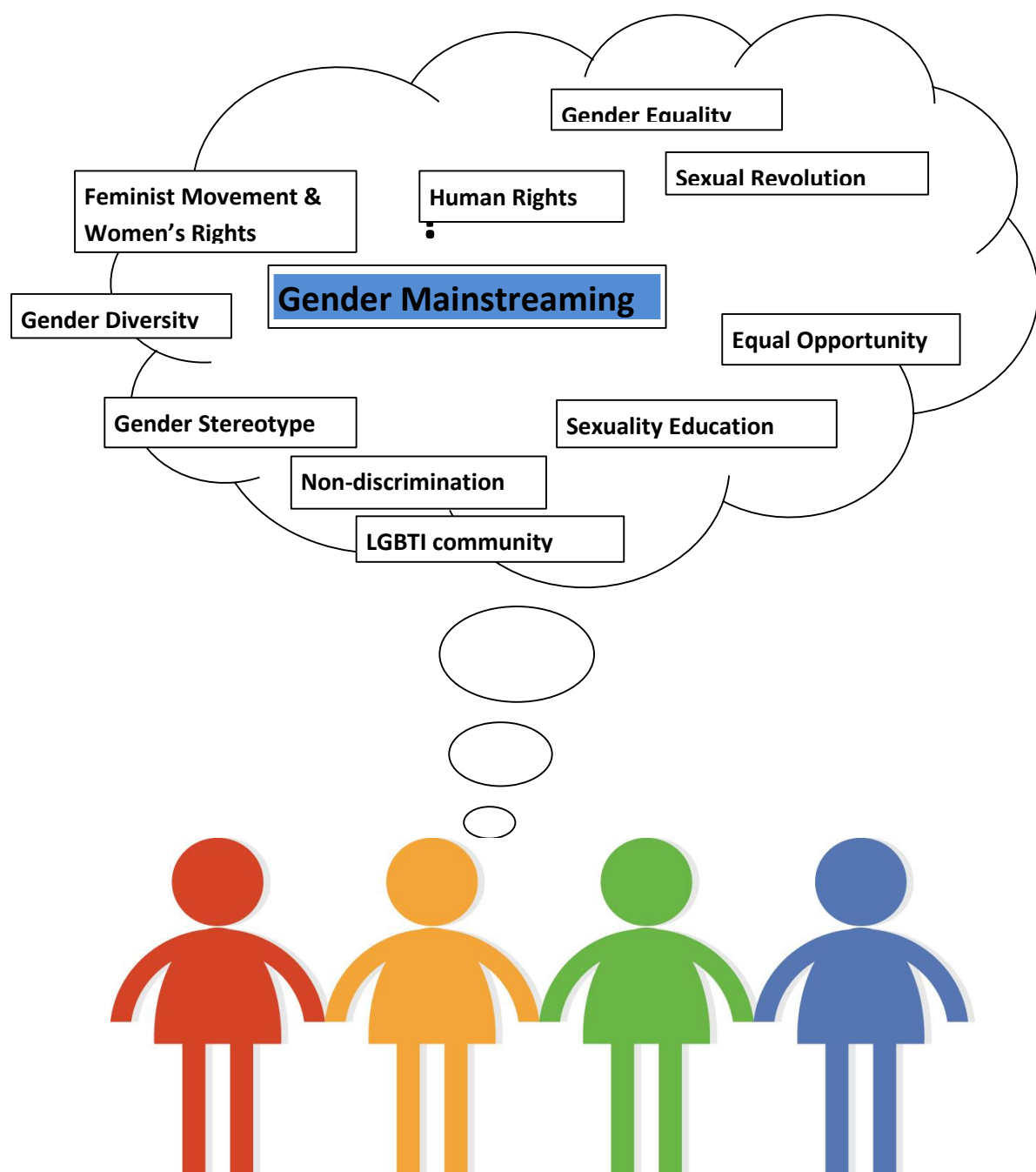
1. Terminology

1.1 Confusion about the term

The gender mainstreaming (GM) strategy was adopted by the EU in 1999. However, confusion exists among many people regarding the actual purpose and influence of GM. There are different responses from people when one mentions the word gender mainstreaming. Some have never heard the phrase. Some know it as a strategy promoting equal opportunities and rights for women. They know GM as a strategy to fight against women's poverty and to help to improve women's health; which it is and, as such, has brought about improvements for women in many areas.

Others connect GM with the idea of erasing all gender differences, promoted by an education in which girls and boys are treated exactly the same. Those who have dealt with Comprehensive Sex Education know that GM is in some ways connected and is promoting this curriculum. Others think of it as a strategy to promote LGBTI views and a negative view of hetero-normativity. A few people see it in connection with the push for child care centers, where children can receive care and education from a very young age.

Depending on the knowledge about GM and related Gender Issues, Christians view GM as something positive or negative, or as something in-between. Some are confused about certain issues: for example, is homosexuality a lifestyle the church should support and we as Christians in education should help to develop, or is it against our biblical values? Some Christians believe that women can be in leadership roles or even preach; others don't. Some think it is good for children to be cared for in childcare centers, so they will be helped to socialize with others; and again others believe a child is best cared for entirely by its mother and family. These are just a few of the dividing and confusing topics related to GM.

Some of the confusion, as we shall see, stems from the historical background, with different feminist groups and historic movements being involved in the development and implementation of GM. The top to bottom implementation of the strategy and different actors in the process did not help to make people aware of what was happening and how they were being influenced to think and act in a certain way. While the actual strategy was put into practice at the beginning in the late 1990s, the ideas behind it arose from the late 1960s, together with the second wave of Feminism, the Sexual- and Cultural Revolution of the 1968 generation, and the change from a modernist understanding of the world to a post-modernist understanding.

Let us start with the definitions of GM terminology, as it is often confusing.

1.2 Definitions of Gender Mainstreaming Terminology

Gender

While gender used to be defined as "*the behavioral, cultural, or psychological traits typically associated with one sex*" [1] many of the UN or EU definitions on their websites now define gender in the following way;

> ***Gende****r refers to the array of socially constructed roles and relationships, personality traits, attitudes, behaviors, values, relative power and influence that society ascribes to the two sexes on a differential basis.*
>
> *Whereas **biological sex** is determined by genetic and anatomical characteristics, gender is an acquired identity that is learned, that changes over time and that varies widely within and across cultures. Gender is relational and refers not simply to women or men but to the relationship*

The definitions one finds on EU or UN websites reflect a postmodernist view of what gender entails. It is seen as something that was entirely constructed by humans and thus it can be deconstructed and reconstructed by humans. The term gender as it is used today "*originates from the field of sexual psychology, and was the result of an endeavor to deal linguistically with transsexuality, which resulted in the conception of the dissociation from biological sex and emotional or metaphysical gender.* " [3] Through the use by the gay movement, the meaning of the term became more and more understood as gender being something that is socially constructed[4]. In combination with post modernism, which rejects the view of a unifying truth, it is now no longer up to society to construct gender roles and norms, but it is up to each individual to do it for him- or herself, or should we say for it-self? [5]

Equality

> *Equality is not about treating people the same, because different groups of people have different needs, different groups experience discrimination in different areas of life in different ways. Treating everyone the same can have the effect of being an indirect form of discrimination when it is clear that some groups have much greater needs than others.*
>
> *Equality is about securing equality of opportunity, equality of participation and equality of outcome.* [4]

This sounds reasonable, but becomes problematic when applied in contrast to a Christian worldview: Does it mean that e.g. homosexual couples must have "equal opportunity" to marry ? Or must a mother have the right to abortion in order that she has equal opportunities as a professional?

Gender Equality

> *Gender equality entails the concept that all human beings, both men and women, are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without the limitations set by stereotypes, rigid gender roles, or prejudices. Gender equality means that the different behaviors, aspirations and needs of women and men are considered, valued and favoured equally. It does not mean that women and men have to become the same, but that their rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female.* [5]

While, from a biblical perspective, the value of man and woman is the same, there are differences between the sexes, which are not just man-made stereotypes or constructed gender roles by society. Men and women are created to complement each other, so that they can work together on reaching a common goal, but not to fight each other for doing exactly the same kind of job as the other sex. When it comes to family, a woman is usually the natural person to take care of a child in the first few years of his/her life.

> *Gender mainstreaming has been embraced internationally as a <u>strategy</u> towards realizing gender equality.*
>
> *It involves the integration of a *gender perspective into the preparation, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, regulatory measures and spending programs, with a view to promoting equality between women and men, and combating discrimination[6].*

Gender Mainstreaming

Many people believe that gender mainstreaming is a compensatory measure for an unequal treatment of women. In the light of gender mainstreaming, quite a few measures have indeed been taken to do that; however, it goes far beyond a compensatory measure; it is a strategy to change the whole structure of society. A society in which diversity* is celebrated and seen as a move forward. All mainstreaming aspects have some positive and negative sides but, as Christians, we have to take a critical look at the aspects which are not in line with a Judeo-Christian view of the world[7].

*Diversity today, with the influence of Equality Mainstreaming includes besides sexual and family diversity, LGBT, Religion, Age, Ethnicity and Disability.

2. EU Roadmap for Gender Equality

2.1. Equal economic independence for women and men

In many European countries, up until the 1960s women depended strongly on their husbands in financial matters and they were not allowed to work without their husband's permission. A woman often did not have the chance of getting job training, and even the same jobs were not paid the same. Some measures were indeed required in order to enable women to support themselves and to receive the same payment for the same work. In order to survive financially, especially in case of divorce from or the death of a husband, to fight for women's better education and ability to work in a well-paid job are major factors in preventing women's poverty.

Today the main focus in European politics lies in making sure that the same percentage of women participate in the labor market as men which, when one looks at numbers, has not been achieved. According to the European Commission the main reasons for this prevailing inequality between men and women are that men still don't take enough responsibility in the household and that there is a lack of daycare facilities for children[1].

2.2. Reconciliation of private and professional life

According to the Barcelona European Council objectives of 2002; "Member States should remove disincentives to female labor force participation, taking into account the demand for childcare facilities and in line with national patterns of provision, to provide childcare by 2010 to at least 90 % of children

between 3 years old and the mandatory school age and at least 33 % of children under 3 years of age" [2] in order to achieve this goal[3]. Equality of women is believed to be best achieved when they can send their children to a daycare center, so that they can work for the same amount of time as men. If employers can count on women full time and not stopping when they have children, then it is supposed that they will have better job opportunity and equal pay, thus reducing the danger of poverty among women.

2.3. Equal representation in decision-making

Another goal of gender equality is to have the same number of women in leadership as men, but it has not been achieved.

The European Commission believes that "The causes for the underrepresentation of women in decision-making processes and positions are multiple, complex, and call for a comprehensive approach to tackle the problem. They stem from traditional gender roles and stereotypes, the lack of support for women and men to balance care responsibilities with work and the prevalent political and corporate cultures, to name just a few." [4]. Again, the same analysis for a slightly different problem.

Thus, the answers for the first three points of the Roadmap for GM lies in:

• combating traditional gender roles and elimination of stereotyping;

• provision of more child care facilities and

• men taking more responsibility in the home.

Thus all of the resulting policies will focus on these three strategies.

While many women will benefit from achieving these goals, there are those who want to stay at home, or at least only work part- time, so they can be with their children. Women should be free to make that decision for their sake and for their children's sake. Many people who support childcare, believe it is also in the best interest of the children, as it would provide all children with the same educational base. But does it really do that? Is it really always best, especially for children under the age of three, to be full time in a childcare centre? The bond between mother and child is special and should be supported by society."

2.4. Eradication of all forms of gender-based violence

To eradicate violence towards women is a goal which everyone should aspire to reach. There also should be no violence or bad language used towards people of diverse gender identities. No matter if a person's view or decision regarding his/her gender identity is viewed by another person as right or wrong, each person should be treated with love and respect. However, today also any questioning of the view that all kinds of gender identities are equal can be regarded as hate speech, or interpreted as a discrimination. As long as a person feels he/she has been discriminated against, there is, according to the *Handbook on European non-discrimination law (point 2.4.1); „no need for a comparator to prove harassment "*[5]. Already LGBTI activists have actively been using their rights in lawsuits such as Asher's Bakery* in Northern Ireland. And we have to be aware of the consequences it could have for us in the future.

*See The Christian Institute http://www.christian.org.uk/case/ashers-baking-company/

2.5. Elimination of gender stereotypes

In the course of history, it is true that women have been wrongly stereotyped. Churches have overemphasized the ruling role of man over woman, as women were seen to be more easily led astray,

or just because of the verses that emphasized the headship of men over women. Greek Myth placed women into a lower role as men and, in the scientific age, there was supposedly proof of women's lower intelligence. Much has been done to eliminate wrong and negative stereotyping, but for those who are seeking gender equality, this is not enough. To them, the heterosexual norm (meaning that men and women are complementary and the core of the family cell) is an obstacle to gender freedom and must be deconstructed.

2.6. Promotion of gender equality in external and development policies

The sixth priority area of the roadmap is to implement the first five areas in external and development policies[6].

3. EU Top to Bottom Implementation; a Non-Democratic Process

Gender mainstreaming has been implemented on the basis of the Beijing Platform of Action[1]. This Platform of Action was brought forward by the Fourth World Conference on Women and then recommended to the General Assembly of the United Nations. In some ways nothing is unusual about strategies being brought forward through a non-democratic process.

So why does it seem to some as if there was something not right about the whole process, and why is it so unclear what the whole strategy is all about[3]? One reason is that the gender concept is not very clear; the other is that the main work of putting forward resolutions is done before the main conference in the pre-conference, the so called Prep-Com. For the Fourth World Conference on Women this happened in March of 1995, where UN-Delegates met for four weeks to discuss the draft of the resolution. Journalist, Dale O'Leary reported afterwards in her book *The Gender Agenda* that it seemed that some women's groups did not receive the accreditation to take part in the discussions, whereas others were granted more power to influence the process[4]. By just looking at the groups that were allowed to take part and those that were not, it is easy to see that this was not a neutral process.

And this non- neutral process was the basis for a strategy which has had a tremendous influence on society.

4. Actors in the Process

4.1.Politicians

Politicians are the main actors in the process. They are responsible for taking care of the needs of all of society, which they do through creating laws and making policies. However, those who desire a career as a politician do so because of a certain political view, thus they are not fully open to listen to what all people in the country feel or believe. They try to find people who will vote for them by convincing them that their view is right and good for all people. Thus politicians are not without bias and many politicians today, are of the 68 Generation.

No politician can be an expert in all areas, thus politicians will often base their decisions on analysis provided by others. Governments will provide funds for certain research institutions so that they can do the research upon which they will base their decision making[1].

4.2.Researchers and Experts

Researchers have been given a lot of power to influence policy making. Researchers who have been involved in supporting policies for gender mainstreaming have been those from the fields of Women's studies, gender studies and most recently also from studies of Same-sex Relations. Thus policies have been based mainly on a one-sided view of the issue.

4.3.NGO's, interest and pressure groups

The closeness of NGOs (Non-government organizations) and interest groups to the grassroots and their expertise are seen as helpful for policy making[2]. Because GM has been implemented very quietly behind closed doors, only those NGOs and interest groups who were involved in the Feminist movement were right there active from the beginning, making sure their voices were heard. Later LGBTI activist groups jumped on the bandwagon, while those who had a different view, either did not know about what was going on behind the scenes, or just did not know what the consequences would be. Only a few raised their voices, early on (e.g Christa Meves[3] and Dale O'Leary).

4.4.Media, Education org.

Media is obliged through GM-policies to show a diverse spectrum of family life and of gender. Education policy and curriculum development have been influenced and asked to portray diverse family life and gender roles and identities[2].

Without knowing the actors in the process, GM documents can easily be seen as just promoting equal treatment of women, giving them the rights which they truly did not have before. While it does that, GM goes far beyond equal treatment and rights. Concerning the media, they have gone beyond just promoting new gender roles; they also have been giving Christians a very negative press. Likewise, some of the studies on GM have been negative towards people with more conservative believes and Christians[4].

5. History of GM

The history of GM begins with the first wave of Feminism, continues with the second wave[1], which happened at the same time as the Sexual Revolution and the beginning of the era of Post Modernism. The analysis of the injustices done to women in those times were mostly correct. However, as often happens, when one group is or feels discriminated against, there is an overreaction, and hatred involved towards the violators. Thus some of the answers to the problems go beyond a corrective measure. And the waves of Feminism stand in strong connection with other historical influences of those times.

The seeds of the negative view of the Church, of men and of motherhood, were sown early in the first movement and grew to full bloom in the second movement.

The blame for women's disadvantage was laid upon the church and its hierarchical teaching based on the second creation account and Paul's writings[2]. Another aspect was that women were seen as lower than men, based on the deficit theory, which had its beginnings during the time of the Industrial Revolution. As women were viewed as a defective copy of men, different roles were assigned to men and women[3].

It was also believed that men were behind this negative view of women as declared in the 1848 Resolution of the first women's rights convention in Seneca Falls: "*We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men **and women** are created equal ... . The history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of man towards woman, having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her….*" [4]

The negative view of motherhood came into parts of the women's movement, as children were seen as a hindrance for women to work fulltime and to participate in the wider society[5]. In order to avoid the discrimination of women through motherhood there were, and still are, two answers given; one has been to provide daycare and the other through contraception and abortion[6].

Two Waves of Feminism

First Wave of Feminsim in the 1800s with the main points being
• Partriarchy (male domination)
• Exclusion from public politics
• Different roles of men and women (esp. motherhood seen as having a negative effect on women)
• Church view of women and Deficit Theory
• Lacking education for women
• The horrible situation of working women during the Industrial Revolution
• Protection from sexual exploitation

Second Wave of Feminism beginning in the early 1960s with the main points being
•   Women being unsatisfied with their role as housewife and mother
•   Rethinking women's roles and cultural picture of what family is
•   Reproductive freedom and better healthcare
•   Better provision for daycare
•   Discrimination in the workplace and right to work outside the family
•   Equal opportunity, pay and access to jobs
•   Scientific studies to research women's discomfort with the gender differences and goal to change society (leading to the establishment of women's studies)
•   De-sexing language, as it was felt language reflected male domination
•   Freedom from traditional and religious morality

After WWII there was a period, in much of the West, in which people were looking for the "idyllic world" and men, where finances allowed, were proud to be the sole financial provider for their family. Women had plenty to do in the home, but slowly modern household machines made the work easier and faster. Women started to be dissatisfied with their role. They felt that "*Even though the women are better educated and have more free time, women stay in a psychological dependence on house and stove, or if they work they feel subliminal discrimination.*" [8]. While the situation women found themselves in, in the 1960s was much better than in the time of the first wave of feminism, there still were many issues which truly needed to be addressed.

Today most women in Europe enjoy greater independence, better education, liberation from wrong stereotypes and diversity of jobs and higher positions that are now open for them.

Influenced by the ideas of Post-Modernist thinkers, the Sexual Revolution and the spirit of the 1968s Movement, the Feminist Movement's call for equality became a call for total freedom from all stereotyping, traditional and religious moral laws.

6. Different forms of Feminism

While most feminists agree on many of the issues which they are fighting for or against, "*there is no common block of feminist fighters, but a muddle of views and opinions regarding the essence of human beings, which can't be combined without tension*" [1]. Two basic groups exist, each with different kinds of subgroups. The two big groups are Equality Feminism and Difference Feminism. The first group often belonged to the upper class and fought for equal participation in society. The second group mainly belonged to the working class, with the focus on social rights, the fight against bad working conditions and women's poverty.

6.1. Equality Feminism

One important trailblazer was Simone de Beauvoir, whose book *The Second Sex* became an inspiration for unsatisfied women in the 1950s and 1960s [2]. The most famous quote from her book is *"one is not*

born as a woman, but becomes one". According to Raedel the goal of equality feminism "*is that no one will be "forced" into a gender role, based on "real" biological sexual appearance. In short, human genitals are meaningless in regards to who I want to be or whom I want others to see in me: facts and fantasy are melting together to an un-dissolvable sameness"*[3]. Despite several in depth studies of scientific validity that prove that the sex determines various neurological and psychological differences, those who *believe* in equality feminism, will argue against those findings[4]. As Equality Feminism is based on a view that all differences are culturally constructed, equality feminists are not only fighting for people's personal freedom to be what they want to be, but they fight for a deconstruction and reconstruction of society, without traditional cultural norms and stereotyping.

6.2 Difference Feminism

Difference feminism acknowledges that there are differences between men and women. In order to provide for equal rights and treatment, women and men need to be treated and supported differently, but the results should be the same.

The positive aspects of the DF can be seen in the medical aspects, where medicine is produced specifically for men and women. At work, the differences are taken into account and each person's gifts and abilities utilized for the good of the whole organization. The differences between boys and girls are to be addressed in the school curricula, so that both have equal chance to succeed in school. Politically, where women have a voice and can bring their side of the issues to the table, common ground can be found. Some of the literature and seminars on understanding the differences can help men and women to relate better to each other.

According to Raedel; "*Gender equality means for the purposes of GM not the resolution of the differences between the sexes, but a harmonization of gender roles considering the obviously not completely identical needs and interests of men and women*"[5]. While that is true, both feminist groups are influential in the policy making process, as both groups are represented in the different groups of actors in the process.

Main Forms of Feminism

Equality Feminism	Difference Feminism
- Started by middle class women who faught for cultural rights	- Started by women of the working class, fighting for social rights
- Gender differences seen as man-made	- Acknowledging that there are natural/biological differences, but problems for women are man made
- Creating a society without Gender differences, thus opening the way for diversity of Gender idendities	- Creating a society in which natural/biological differences do not hinder a person from receiving equal rights, opportunities and outcomes
One is not born a woman, but becomes one. Simone de Beauvoir	*Society is there to help the mother. Children grow up in in kindergardens, nurseries, ... and schools under the care of experienced nurses.* Alexandra Kollontai

* Kollontai was a socialist feminist who dreamt of a world where it was no longer the family who took care of their weakest members. She wanted women to be free to work alongside men and have the same opportunities. Children would be taken care of in child care centers. Men and women could work together in the same jobs, and old people would be taken care of in old people's homes. No longer would a family be responsible for the young or the old, but those who were trained and did this as a job.

7. Other Influences leading the way to today's views on gender and sexuality

7.1. Renaissance Humanism (14th -16th century)

During the time of Renaissance Humanism women of noble families were allowed to study. Women who had a desire for learning and who did well in it, were often viewed as becoming like men, since learning was up to that time mainly the field of man. Many women were proud to leave behind the symbols of the world of women. One known feminist of the time, Christine de Pisan wrote; "…I changed from being a woman to being a man … I was a woman, now I am a man, this is proven by my diligence"[3]. Thus the seed for Equality Feminism was sown.

7.2. Universal Declaration of Human Rights

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, written in the era of Modernism and adopted in December 1948, states that all men have inalienable and inherent dignity. This means the writers recognized that equal dignity is not something that can be ascribed by human beings themselves, but is given to them; in other words, human dignity has a transcendent origin. This understanding of human dignity is in the

declaration, because at the time it was written many of the authors, if they were not Christians, they at least had been influenced by a common value system, which was based on the Judeo-Christian view of the world[6]. However, human rights are being read and understood today with a postmodern view of the world. Rights are no longer seen as something given, but something each person grasps for him/herself. In a world without belief in a universal truth, where all views are equal, we end up in a world where everyone believes they have a right to live the way he/she wants, as long as one does not seem to hurt others. In such a world everything and everyone is accepted, except those who adhere to a belief system, which is based on universal truth and viewed as restrictive to the freedom and rights of others.

In order to support the structural changes to society which GM and the postmodern view on Human Rights desired, non-discrimination laws were developed. As Human Rights are much broader than the fight for equality between the two sexes, the non-discrimination laws include discrimination based on religion and worldview, gender and sexual orientation, disability, racial and ethnic background and age[7]. Around 2005 the European Commission found that gender mainstreaming needed to be broadened to include all the aspects of non-discrimination legislation. **Thus what we are actually dealing with now is non-discrimination and equality mainstreaming**, which includes all the above issues[8]. Just as in gender mainstreaming, where education has a big part to play in furthering the agenda, so education plays an important part in equality mainstreaming. The programme for that is diversity education, (Comprehensive Sex Education) in which a society with diverse family structures and gender identities is portrayed as the norm.

7.3.Civil Rights Movement

The Civil Rights Movement was a movement, which rightly fought for the rights of African Americans to be viewed as humans with the same rights and abilities as white people. Likewise, the women who fought to receive the same rights as men, were fighting for the right to be seen as humans with the same value as men, given to them by their creator. Today LGBTI groups are claiming that their fight is in line with the Civil Rights Movement[4]. However, the Civil Rights Movement was about fighting for the rights of a suppressed ethnicity, who were legally not even allowed to sit in the same places as white people in the bus, whereas the Gay Rights Movement is fighting for acceptance of social behavior.

7.4.Sexual Revolution & 68 Movement

At the same time as the second wave of feminism, the Sexual Revolution and the 68 Movement took place. The sexual liberation movement was aided by feminist ideologies in their struggle to challenge traditional ideas about sex and gender. The cause of repressive governments was seen in their moral laws. Living according to the pleasure principle was seen as the way to end wars and bring about a good, non-repressive government. As religion in the eyes of feminists and the 68 Movement was seen as the cause of wars and the suppression of women, this might be the reason for the negative view promoted by the media.

7.5. Feminist Socialism

Feminist socialists dreamt of a world in which motherhood and the care for older family members, no longer hindered a woman from taking part as equal member of society. In order to achieve this, nurseries and kindergartens or homes for children should be established and old people should have their own places to live in and be taken care of. The hope was that the responsibility of families for their children or old people would be taken over by the collective[5]. When one looks at European countries

which have been influenced by socialism, part of that dream has been realized. The EU Roadmaps call for more daycare, to free women for the market place renewing the vision of a world in which no woman is held back from the work place through motherhood.

7.6. Malthusian Political Economy

Onto the bandwagon of the women who fought for reproductive freedom jumped another movement. This movement had its origin in the teaching of Thomas. R. Malthus, an Anglican pastor (1766-1834), whose thesis it was that increasing population growth would lead to hunger crisis[4]. Thus the right of women for abortion and reproductive freedom is pushed forward, not only to help women, but to stop population growth[5].

7.7 Postmodern View of the World

One very important aspect was, that Postmodernism came into the whole mixture in the 1970s as well[2]. It influenced the thinking of feminists, like Judith Butler, who is one of the strong voices, calling for the deconstruction of the old view of gender roles, and proposing that each person can construct his gender and way of life, without binding him/herself to his or her biological sex. This is fully in line with postmodern thinkers, who have abandoned "the realist view in favor of a non-realist or constructivist view"[2]

Other influences and their results

Renaissance Humanism	Opened the way for some of the women to study, they were seen a becoming like men (beginning of deconstructivist view)
Civil Rights	„All men and women created equal" became „Gender identdities created equal"
Socialism	Women should no longer be bound to their role of motherhood, but the whole society should be restructured. (Nursery, Kindergarden, School, Work, Old People's Home)
Human Rights	Non-discrimination legislations, Diversity-education, right for sexual self-determination
NGO´s, Interest and pressure groups	used their Influence to promote their views

Sexual Revolution
- **Challenged the traditional view of sexuality and family structure.**
- **was against religious morals and hierarchical and authoritative structures**
- **sexualization was seen as a tool to destroy the authority of God, the Church and Traditions**
- **Pushed for sex-education in schools.**

68 Movement
- **saw the cause of repressive governments in their moral laws**
- **Living according to the pleasure principle was seen as the way to end wars and bring about a good, non-repressive government**

„….natural sexuality is the deadly enemy of mystical religion. The church, by making the fight over sexuality the center of its dogmas and of its influence over the masses, confirms this concept." Wilhelm Reich

8. Timeline from the Beijing Platform of Action to Non- Discrimination/ Equality Mainstreaming

Following now is an overview of important dates and documents leading from fighting for women's rights, to the Beijing Platform of Action, to gender mainstreaming, from non-discrimination legislations to non-discrimination/ equality mainstreaming.

1995 Bejing Platform of Action. Written at the Fourth World Conference for Women, is the beginning of gender mainstreaming.

1997 UN Resolution 52/100. UN Supports the full Implementation of the Beijing Platform of Action for all its Member states[1].

1999 Treaty of Amsterdam. In this treaty the ideas of gender mainstreaming were adopted into the EU. It also includes for the first time "Gender Orientation "as a point to fight against discrimination[2].

2006 Yokyakarta Principles. The application of International Human Rights Law in relation to Sexual Orientation and gender Identity (did not receive the recognition wanted, but still influential).

2007 TFEU - Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. Article 19 of the TFEU provides the legal base for EU legislation combating discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation[3].

2008 Communication "Non-discrimination and equal opportunities: A renewed commitment". A renewed commitment to use the legal systems of Europe to "fight <u>discrimination</u> on the grounds of <u>race or ethnicity</u>, religion or belief, disability, age, <u>gender</u> or sexual orientation and to promote equal opportunities, so that everyone is given a fair chance to realize their potential"[4].

2010-2015 EC current Strategy for Equality between men and women includes LGBTI 221616 people[5].

2010 WHO Standards for Sexuality Education. Written in cooperation with the Federal Centre for Health Education in Germany, where it is understood as normal and encouraged for teenagers to have sex and to live a life based on gender equality, self-determination and acceptance of diversity*.

2011 Compendium of practice on Non- Discrimination / Equality Mainstreaming by the European Commission of Justice[7]. Gender mainstreaming is stated as the gateway to non- discrimination; equality mainstreaming to be brought forward into the mainstream with the same strategies as those of gender mainstreaming.

*See WHO Standards; "Principles of Sexuality Education", p.27. The explosive potential of these terms only becomes apparent at second and third thought. When self-determination is brought together with gender-equality and acceptance of diversity, this means that children are supposed to be enabled to choose their gender identity. From a moral viewpoint, sexuality education should lead students to tolerance towards those who live out a different lifestyle, but not to acceptance, which actually means approval. Thus the WHO standards operate with terms which can and will be interpreted to any kind of extreme.

9. Summary - What are we dealing with when we talk about Gender Mainstreaming and Related Issues?

As stated above, confusion exists when one mentions gender mainstreaming, this is due to several reasons:

1. there are different groups of feminists influencing the actors in the process, and LGBTI groups jumped onto the bandwagon of GM

2. the process of putting the GM Strategy into practice was a non-democratic process, and many of the actors in the process were those who stood behind the whole idea of GM and non-discrimination/equality mainstreaming

3. many of the actors and ideas behind GM and non-discrimination/equality mainstreaming arose out of a mix of Feminism, the Sexual and the Cultural Revolution of the 1968th Movement and Post Modernism

While many of the changes were for the better, especially the fight against women's poverty, equal participation in society, better healthcare and part of the fight against stereotyping of women; those changes would not need a strategy to change all of societies gender and family norms. The Church and society in general have truly discriminated and hurt women and LGBTI people before. A change was needed, which would provide equal value to men and women, but within a biblical framework and understanding. LGBTI people need to be welcomed into our churches, in a way which would lead them in a loving way and without fear to get to know the Lord and His truth.

We are dealing with a <u>strategy</u> towards realizing Gender/Diversity-Equality. A strategy to change the structure of society.

Main Aspects to be considered

Opposition to all stereotyping

It is good to get rid of some of the traditional views of women, like the view that women are less intelligent or that they cannot take leadership roles, and of some of the stereotypes, which lead women to hurt their health in order to fit the beauty ideal of a given culture. However, trying to get rid of all the differences between men and women is taking the issue too far. Besides, the ban on stereotyping does not stop at traditional views of man and woman, but also of the family. To say a family exists of a father, a mother and children is brandished as discriminatory. The non-stereotyping way is to say, that a family exists of people of different generations, who love each other.

Development of Gender-Sensitive Language

 In Postmodern understanding language is used as a tool to structure society [2]. Since language is seen as promoting a patriarchal view of society, it needs to be changed, to reflect gender equality. The European Institute for gender equality (EIGE) defines gender-sensitive language as "*the realization of gender equality in written and spoken language. Gender equality in language is attained when women and men and those who do not conform to the binary gender system are made visible and addressed in language as persons of equal value, dignity, integrity and respect.*

… the systematic use of gender-biased terminology influences attitudes and expectations and could, in the mind of the reader or listener, relegate women to the background or help perpetuate a stereotyped

view of women's and men's roles. There are number of different strategies that can be used to express gender relationships with accuracy, such as avoiding, to the greatest possible extent, the use of language that refers explicitly or implicitly to only one gender, and ensuring, through inclusionary alternatives and according to each language's characteristics, the use of gender-sensitive and inclusive language[3]."

Freedom of choice regarding one's own gender and sexuality

Interpreting Human Rights in light of postmodern thinking, takes away any boundary, which a belief in transcendental truth provides, thus everybody claims the right to choose his or her identity. This absolute freedom applies also to relationships. Thus to have any kind of sexual relationships is okay, as long as the involved parties agree to it.

Reproductive Freedom - at the cost of unborn life

To free women from the burden of motherhood and the inequality which motherhood supposedly bestows on women, the call for contraceptives and abortion has been in the feminist movement from its very beginning. In the name of women's health and rights, girls and women have fought for the right to abortion. Youths are taught that one can have sex free from the danger of pregnancy and, if one does get pregnant, abortion is the way out.

Equality for women in the workplace – Daycare for Children

Daycare for children provides mothers with the chance to go and work fulltime and receive equal pay: thus it is promoted as tool for the liberation of women. However, this liberation for mothers means many hours of daycare for children. Studies about early childhood education find some negative effects for children in daycare; e.g. heightened aggressive behavior, agitation in combination with attention deficit, fear and depression. These effects are stronger, the younger children are when they enter childcare and the more hours they spend per day in childcare[6], but also of course, depending on the quality of the care.

And in placing children in day care, not only should these possible negative social emotional effects be considered, but also the content of education. In regards to GM the teaching starts already in kindergarten, be it through sexuality education or through the new EU Citizenship Policy[7], which is supposed to promote common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination.

Diversity of family structures

Family is no longer viewed as mother, father and children, but it is seen as people of different ages living together and loving each other[6].

Childrens's right to Sexuality Education, which includes the following:
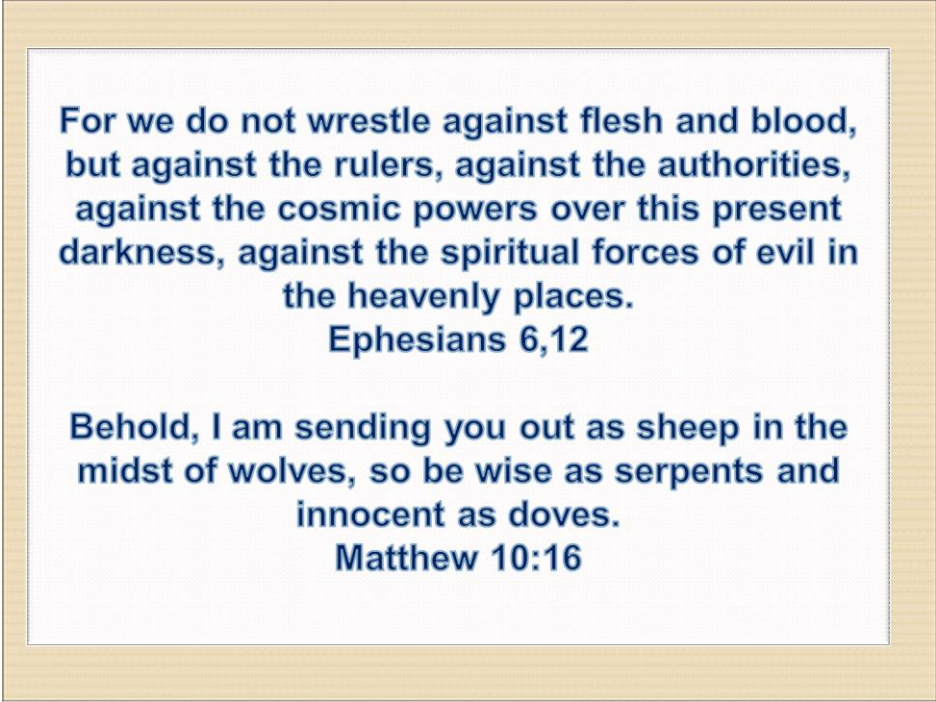
- Curricula content is supposed to reflect all of the above
- Questionable sex education curricula and practices (caused by the influence of the sexual revolution and LGBTI lobbyists
- Top down decision-making regarding the content of curricula

Opponents might often face discrimination and even criminalization. On the other hand, in some countries, LGBTI groups can teach their views to the children[6]. Some proponents would prefer sexuality education with the above content being taught without the parent's influence[7].

Conclusion

While there are good things like: better women's health, reduced women's poverty, more rights and equality regarding working environment, that have come out of the feminist movement, gender mainstreaming and now Non-discrimination/Equality Mainstreaming, one has to be on guard at the same time about some of the underlying philosophies and goals. For Christian Educators this means that work has to be done in the following areas;

Materials need to be developed, which reflect a biblical view of Man and human sexuality. Guidelines need to be written, to meet all of the above challenges. Christians themselves should write curricula for Sexuality Pedagogy, or look for good curricula. There is also a need for advocacy in the area of Non-Discrimination legislation, for Christians who are forced to compromise their faith.

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.
Ephesians 6,12

Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.
Matthew 10:16

For those involved in the struggle for the future generation, it is important to always understand that we are not fighting the people who promote false teaching. They themselves have been led astray. It is also important to separate the fight on the theological and philosophical level and the help we want to offer to those who struggle personally with sexual issues. As Christians we should be clear what the Bible teaches in those matters and not be afraid to state it in public, but we should be as loving as we can to those who oppose us or those who come for help.

In our way of speaking about the issues we should avoid any negative or degrading language towards those who believe differently. We treat them with respect, yet with the greatest understanding and clarity derived by thoughtful study and prayerful preparation.

NOTES

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[6] http://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/what-is-gender-mainstreaming derived 25.04.2017

> [7] Flyer from the German trade union for education and science (GEW): Vielfältig Leben gegen einfältige Vorurteile (Diverse living against simpleminded prejudices)

2. EU Roadmap for Gender Equality

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[3] Raedel (p. 24f)

[4] Ch.R. Vonholdt, *Summary of the Gender Agenda*, derived http://www.dijg.de/gender-mainstreaming/dale-o-leary-agenda-konzept-hintergrund/

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[2] Ibid. (p.42)

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8 Timeline from the Beijing Platform of action to Non- Discrimination/ Equality Mainstreaming

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9 Summary - What are we dealing with when we talk about Gender Mainstreaming and Related Issues?

¹ Grenz, S. J., 1996*, A Primer on Postmodernism*, 1996, WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1996, (p 114)

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