11 Demanding time: balancing school and out-of-school demands

Carolyn Jackson

Introduction

Displays of academic labour are regarded as 'uncool' within many secondary schools. Although government ministers and some researchers (Osler and Vincent 2003; Power et al. 2003; Francis and Skelton 2005) have suggested that the 'uncool to work' discourse applies only to boys, my research suggests that it is also dominant for girls (Jackson 2006). Yet there is a requirement in contemporary society for girls and boys to acquire 'good' academic credentials to enhance their chances in the competition for a 'good' career. This requirement is now well documented, and is a product of the broader 'neoliberal ethos of individualization, competition and marketization' (Ringrose 2007: 484). Given pressures on students to work for good academic credentials, the 'uncool to work' discourse can pose problems for them: how can they be 'cool' and popular, but also academically successful? Although some researchers have explored this and related questions in relation to boys (Frosh et al. 2002; Younger and Warrington 2005), girls have received very little attention in this regard, although there are signs that this is changing (Renold and Allan 2006: Francis this collection). This chapter explores how, given the contradictory 'uncool to work' and credentials discourses, secondary school girls in my research organized key aspects of their in- and out-of-school lives. Most girls attempted to balance academic and social (cool) demands, so I explore how they did this, and which girls were most able to achieve both academic and social 'success'.

I draw upon data from an ESRC funded project that explored 'laddishness' among Year 9 pupils (13-14 years old; see Jackson 2006). The study generated questionnaire data from approximately 800 pupils and interview data from 153 pupils (75 girls) and 30 teachers. Six secondary schools in the north of England were involved: four co-educational (Beechwood, Elmwood, Firtrees, Oakfield), one girls' (Hollydale) and one boys'
(Ashgrove). The schools were selected to ensure a mix of pupils in terms of social class, 'race' and ethnicity, and a mix of schools in terms of examination results, and gender of intake (single-sex and co-educational). This chapter draws mainly upon data from interviews with girls (from the five schools where there were girls), although occasional references are made to questionnaire, and teacher interview, data.

Pupils were interviewed individually in spring-summer 2004, during the school day, in school, for approximately 30 minutes. Interviews were semi-structured and covered several topics including attitudes and approaches to school work; tests; pressures in school; friends and popularity; out-of-school activities. They were audio-taped and transcribed in full. Transcripts were analysed using the computer program Nud*ist Vivo, in which responses were coded thematically (see Jackson 2006 for more details). Names in this chapter are pseudonyms.

**Constructing Popular, Cool Femininities: Negotiating the 'Credentials' and 'Uncool to Work' Discourses**

The importance of popularity and friendship in girls' school lives is well recognized and documented (e.g. Hey 1997; Osler and Vincent 2003; Girl-guiding UK and the Mental Health Foundation 2008). Not all girls aspire to be 'popular' because, as Paechter (2007) notes, being in the popular group often indicates more about how much social power a girl has rather than how much she is liked or respected. However, few, if any, girls want to be at the unpopular end of the 'popularity continuum' because of the negative consequences that ensue from being unpopular and not 'fitting in' (Hey 1997; Paechter 1998; Kehily 2001; Renold 2005).

Most of the girls I interviewed identified, without difficulty, features of popular femininity within their schools. They also recognized that popular girls had the most social power and were most able to influence and police 'acceptable' ways of 'doing girl' within their (heteronormative) school communities. Popular girls were usually regarded as (a) pretty, which involved being thin; (b) fashionable – they wore trendy clothes, make-up and had the latest mobile phones; and (c) sociable – they 'hung out' with friends inside and outside school, and were 'interested in', and attractive to, popular boys. In addition, and importantly, a recurring theme was that to be popular (or at least to avoid being unpopular) girls, like their male counterparts, generally had to avoid overt hard work and exhibit an air of indiffERENCE about academic endeavours. This finding challenges other work that suggests working hard is acceptable for girls, but uncool and unacceptable for boys (Osler and Vincent 2003; Power et al. 2003;...
pupils in terms of exam-factual). This is from the five interviews made.

In 2004, during a study of attitudes and popular discourses, the author, in full, discussed the role of popular girls in the school.

Olives is well appreciated among all students. Girls generally aspire to be popular. In the popular community, a girl can aspire to the status of a popular girl. Popular girls are often described as having a certain image, such as style, fashion, and popularity.

However, the study also highlighted the struggles of girls in terms of achieving the status of a popular girl. The study found that popular girls often face challenges in maintaining their popularity, as they need to constantly prove their popularity through various activities and events.

Francis and Skelton (2005) explain that popular girls are often portrayed as loud, and sometimes as smokers and drinkers. The following examples illustrate how girls depicted popular femininity:

Sarah (Firtrees)
*So what makes them [group of girls] popular?*

...it's like the clothes they wear and the way they never do any work...smoking and drinking on Friday nights and everything, and like shouting at teachers and not doing as they [teachers] say.

Nassima (Oakfield)
*What sorts of things make girls popular in school, do you think?*

...Well now, it's who's got the best shoes I think, the best pointy shoes. And the best hairdos, best coats, bags, shoes, everything, make-up, best looks, who's with the best guy or who can pull the most.

Clara (Hollydale)
They [popular girls] go out with the popular boys and get drunk and stuff...They just dress like in all the latest stuff and they like all the latest phones and stuff. So everyone wants to be seen with them.

Jenny (Firtrees)
Most of the popular girls you see walking in groups together and they've all got the same hairstyle and their hair is perfectly straight. Like [they've got] the same coats and they're all dead skinny and there's all these little chubby girls walking behind them going 'oh I want to be like that'.

Gail (Elmwood)
I wouldn't say they're popular because they're hard workers, I'd say it's maybe more of the opposite: some people might say it's because they're not [hard workers].

As flagged earlier, the centrality of the 'uncool to work' discourse in the construction of popular femininity created problems for girls because of the dominance of the counter, 'credentials' discourse. Pressures to succeed – to gain credentials – were reported regularly by schoolgirls in the interviews, and these were frequently transmuted into pressures not to fail. For example, girls spoke of teachers and parents emphasizing the need to work hard and succeed in school in order to avoid 'dead-end' jobs and a bleak future (see also Reay and William 1999). Almost all students had taken this message on board. For example, on a questionnaire 72 per cent of pupils (girls and boys) chose 'very true' and 18 per cent chose 'mostly true' in response to the statement 'doing well in school is important in order to get a good job in later life' (points 5 and 4 on a 5-point scale).
The credentials discourse is dominant in schools. However, the ‘uncool to work’ pupil discourse is an equally dominant, yet contradictory, discourse. Given this, how do students navigate these discourses?

All interviewees spoke of the value of academic credentials, and none rejected academic work completely. However, some suggested that they prioritized social rather than academic goals because it was uncool to work. Sandy (Hollydale), for example, suggested she did not work hard because it was not cool to do so:

*If it was really cool to work hard in school and you got status from working hard, would you work hard?*

Yes I would, I would if it was [cool]. But because at the moment it’s not, I just don’t [work hard]. I don’t try and I don’t intend to.

By contrast, a minority rejected the ‘uncool to work’ discourse and instead subscribed to the credentials one. Within their groups these girls attempted to redefine school work as cool. This attempted redefinition was not, though, accepted by the majority. Generally, the girls paid for overtly prioritizing school work over ‘cool work’ was being labelled as unpopular and mocked by their ‘popular’ peers.

While the ‘uncool to work’ pupil discourse was accepted by a small minority, and challenged by a small minority, the majority attempted to balance school work and ‘cool work’. Frosh et al. (2002) reported similar findings from their study of 11-14-year-old boys. They argued that most boys attempted to negotiate what Frosh et al. call a ‘middle way’. In other words, they tried to undertake school work in ways that avoided attracting the label ‘swot’. For most girls in my research the tension between wanting to appear relatively ‘cool’ and popular in school, and also wanting to do well academically and attain good exam results, was difficult to manage. Not surprisingly, some were more adept at managing this than others. The next sections explore how some girls managed both academic and social ‘success’, and which girls were most likely to accomplish these.

### Strategies for Balancing Social and Academic Demands

Whether or not a girl was successful at balancing academic and social demands depended, to a large extent, on the strategies she adopted and the resources at her disposal. Strategies for ‘getting away with’ undertaking academic work without being cast as uncool operated on two levels, which I term ‘direct’ and ‘indirect’. Time was central to both.

Direct strategies were those that girls employed deliberately to hide their work and effort. Girls hid or downplayed their effort because although
academic achievement *per se* is not uncool, working hard to achieve is. Such strategies included, for example, girls pretending they were not listening in class when they were, and working at home but hiding it. The latter frequently involved girls claiming to their peers that they had spent much less effort and time on their work than they actually had (see Jackson 2006 for more detail).

Indirect strategies were those that enabled students to offset the negative implications of school work, to negotiate more time and/or space for academic work without becoming unpopular. After-school socializing was one such indirect strategy; by ensuring they were sufficiently sociable outside of lessons and school, girls could ‘get away with’ some work. For example, Jane (Firtrees) explained how girls can work hard and still be popular if they balance their time:

*Could a girl who worked hard and did really well be popular?*

Yes

*How would she manage that?*

‘Cause you do your work and you try hard but you still have time for your friends. You don’t just ignore your friends and [you] hang about with them as well as revising. Like you do your revising three days a week and go out with your friends the other three, or leave your work all the week and then do it at weekends.*

Jane stressed the importance of making time for friends. Time was a big issue for most girls, and it arose in almost all of the interviews. Time is central to our lives, yet it is often an invisible and taken-for-granted aspect. But lessons about time are an important part of the school’s ‘hidden curriculum’. Hughes (2002: 135) argues that

Schooling is a key site where time discipline is instilled. … The organization of schooling is fixed according to age and calendar. The days are divided into periods and lesson activities are also planned to linear time. The length of examinations is set to specific hours and minutes. Teaching time of lessons is set aside from play time and home time. Children learn that if they have not finished their work they are taking too long or if they finish early they have not done enough. Accurately gauging the appropriate level of input in relation to the time available is a key skill.

The school system is premised on the assumption that pupils invest a lot of time and effort outside of school on their school work in order to be academically successful (see also Frosh et al. 2002). Yet, as we have seen, this is not straightforward for girls. Furthermore, in addition to the time demands of homework and socializing with friends, some girls reported
having to perform domestic duties such as looking after family members or undertaking household chores (which no boys reported having to do) (see also O’Brien 2003). Overall, the ways in which time is used, presented and negotiated by students is central to their academic lives and the activities that enable them to acquire ‘popular’ status, or at least avoid being ‘unpopular’.

Strategies for hiding work and effort and balancing social and academic demands depended on pupils having the wherewithal to be able to pull them off. The remainder of this chapter explores how access to resources shaped the ways in which girls were able to balance the social and academic demands of schooling.

**Resources for Balancing Social and Academic Demands**

In his study of 10–11-year-old boys, Swain (2004: 171) argues that the boys’ ‘position in the peer group is determined by the array of social, cultural, physical, intellectual and economic resources that each boy is able to draw on and accumulate’. This applies to secondary school girls too. Furthermore, not only does access to these resources shape the pupils’ position in their peer group, but crucially, it shapes how well they are able to balance the different demands of their lives.

Resources are inextricably linked to time. As O’Brien (2003: 265) argues, ‘as the demand for more time on school work done at home increases through second level [schooling], working-class girls may not have the resources to meet this demand’. When the demands on time are viewed not only in terms of academic ones, but also in terms of social ones, access to resources becomes even more salient. In my research, access to resources that facilitated quick and effective home study practices left girls with more time to socialize with friends and undertake activities that could earn them peer approval. For example, some girls said that having a computer at home helped them to organize their school work and to work efficiently (see also Valentine et al. 2005). Computer technology also enabled some girls to undertake social activities without them leaving their homes, and to socialize while also (privately) doing their homework. For example, Steph (Hollydale) who attained scores of 6, 7, 6 in her SATs spoke about how, using the internet, she did her homework and socialized with friends simultaneously:

I always make sure that I’ve done my work because that’s one of the most important things. But I like, when I’ve done it, I always try and do it quickly so then I have time to ‘talk’ [on the internet]. Or you can ‘talk’ to your friends when you’re doing it or something. And then it’s like, if I’m on the internet at home doing my research I both thing.

It was clear from the interviews that girls had access to the internet. It occurred online, and online work did not have to be done on weekends, it required relatively little physical activity to take advantage of it. While socializing with friends online at home was possible:

While accessing was necessary advantage the example, who go at home than a...

When you an art box, sequins and your work to do it on more my I careless. So got at scho...

Girls’ access to more facilities for some students was important (Beechwood, v me, I have like we don’t have a...

Overall, while socializing with friends online at home was possible:

‘They’ve Got It’

So far I have disabilities pupils to thus providing...
ing after family members by reported having to do chores time is used, presented domestic lives and the activities, or at least avoid being

social and academic withdrawal to be able to pull in access to resources launch the social and academic

04: 171) argues that the d by the array of social resources that each boy is to secondary school girls resources shape the pupils’ ses how well they are able

Brien (2003: 265) argues, done at home increases s girls may not have the hands on time are viewed arms of social ones, access search, access to resources / practices left girls with activities that could earn that having a computer work and to work efficiently technology also enabled some leaving their homes, and homework. For example, in her SAT’s spoke about nd socialized with friends because that’s one of I’ve done it, I always talk’ on the internet. ‘I’m doing it or some- et at home doing my

research I can ‘talk’ to my friends at the same time, so I can get both things done at the same time.

It was clear from Steph’s comments that she had long periods of uninterrupted internet access at home. It was also clear that girls who did not have internet access would be excluded from the regular socializing that occurred online between Steph and her friends. While online social networks did not replace face-to-face ones (Steph went out with friends at weekends), it meant that she could balance social and academic demands with relatively little effort (see also Gannon 2008). Contrast that with girls who do not have access to online social lives, and who have to meet up physically to socialize, the time demands are markedly different. So are the opportunities for combining work and social time. Steph could work while socializing and hide her work and effort; it is much harder to do homework in the park without being noticed.

While access to computers seemed to offer those who had them numerous advantages over those who did not, it was not only in terms of technology that resource differences were apparent. Zoe (Elmwood) for example, who got 7.7.6 in her SAT’s spoke proudly of having more resources at home than at school:

When you’re doing projects and things, at home you’ve got like an art box, and you’ve got all erm, like lollypop sticks and erm, sequins and cards and buttons and things. So when you’re doing your work you can tend to do like little fancy borders. And I tend to do it on the computer because I think the more I write, the more my handwriting gets scruffier and my spelling gets a bit careless. So I think that’s the facilities I’ve got there and I’ve not got at school.

Girls’ access to resources differed markedly; while Zoe boasted of having more facilities at home than at school, finding space to study was an issue for some students (see O’Brien 2003; Ridge 2005). For example, Helen (Beechwood), who got 3.3 and a score below test level in her SAT’s told me, ‘I have like a cabin bed upstairs with ‘t table and that underneath, and we don’t have a table or owt downstairs, we just have a like, a breakfast bar’.

Overall, while many students talked about pressures of time and the difficulties of fitting in the demands of school and of being cool and popular, some had the resources to make this balancing act easier.

‘They’ve Got It All’: Image and Class in the Balance

So far I have discussed the ways in which access to certain resources enables pupils to undertake school work relatively quickly (and privately) thus providing them with more time for the requisite ‘cool work’ (direct
strategies). Resources also help in a second way: certain resources help to offset the negative implications of school work. In other words, pupils were more likely to 'get away with' working if they were cool in other ways (indirect strategies) and, to an extent, cool could be purchased. It was easier for girls to be cool and popular if they wore the 'right sorts' of clothes and had the 'right sorts' of fashion accessories. Although there were some differences between the schools regarding fashion, the 'right sorts' of clothes and accessories were almost always very expensive (see also Swain 2002):

Aisha (Oakfield)
So what are the cool things to wear?
... right now for girls it's pointy shoes, and cropped jeans... I mean, the more expensive you look, the more cool you look.

Ruth (Elmwood)
So who defines what's cool? I mean how do you decide what's cool and what's not cool?
It's probably clothes or something. Or the way you look... I think it's more makes than anything... They have to wear make-branded clothes or you look like a scruff or summat.
So the scruffy ones aren't cool?
No. I think they're sectioned into three, you know, there's swots, cool and scrubbers, as they call them.

Alice (Hollydale)
We like to wear nice clothes and everything. Some people just look like tramps and everything but most of my friends and everything have nice clothes because we don't really want to be seen walking around with somebody who looks a tramp. But most people, it's not because of the clothes that they wear that we're not friends with them, it's just we don't really get on with them if you know what I mean.

Ruth and Alice's comments both convey downward social comparisons in terms of class. They talk about 'scruffs', 'scrubbers' or 'tramps' and both reveal the negative values attached to such labels. Alice's comment that 'it's not because of the clothes that they wear that we're not friends with them, it's just we don't really get on with them', conveys that it's not only clothes that make them 'Other' but also their ways of being. 'Swots' too were placed as 'Other': while they were not 'scrubbers', neither were they cool. This was partly because 'swots' didn't wear 'fashionable' versions of school uniform and, crucially, they wore their uniform in an uncool way, which usually meant they wore it in accordance with school rules. For example, at Beechwood students who wore their ties in line with school rules were caught up the 'cool I work in juniors', nifier of the social acceptability for each girl. In addition to trying to convey an air of Here again, spent during the int of by the girls. And if a tremendous of, you know, can't start counting.

According to Ms W: They're talented... I look at one of you're a hard working Hollydale then 'they're quite clever' (I an image that rity. Like Ms W: 'They always talk, they're quite like other schools. Local kids like local boys' school. Without a doubt, they're balancing...
certain resources help to reduce the pressure. In other words, pupils were cool in order to be in fashion. It was known that the ‘right sorts’ wore the ‘right sorts’ of clothes. Although there were awards for ‘best dressed’, the ‘right ways’ were very expensive (see cropped jeans...). I would say cool you look.

decide what’s cool and decide what’s not cool. I suppose it depends on how you look... I think I have to wear make up, know, there’s quite a lot of people just look good all the time and everything is automatically assumed to be seen walking by most people, it’s not that we’re not friends with them if you know what I mean.

rd social comparisons in terms of ‘tramps’ and both. Alice’s comment that it was not only girls, ‘Swots’ too. Swots’, neither were they ‘fashionable’ versions of the cool look, in an uncool way. I suppose we used to wear the school rules. For instance, we were expected to wear school ties in line with school rules which were called ‘swotknots’. Undoubtedly, wearing the ‘right sorts’ of clothes in the ‘right sorts of ways’ and having appropriate accessories (for example, the latest mobile phones) enabled students to jump several rungs up the ‘cool ladder’ as it contributed to a cool image. Swain’s (2002: 66) work in junior schools demonstrated how clothes act as ‘a powerful signifier of the pupils’ worth as people, and were an essential ingredient of social acceptability (or rejection) within their specific peer group culture’. In addition, students dressed and adorned themselves to portray an air of coolness, the body itself was central to the performance. Here again, some were given a head start. It was reported time and again during the interviews with pupils and teachers that girls ‘get away with’ spending time working academically if they were heterosexually attractive. Many girls invested a lot of time in their appearance; this was conveyed by Ms Walters (Hollydale):

I quietly laugh at my Year 9 because they have a little contingent that we refer to as ‘the Barbies’, which is a lovely expression. It’s one that the girls used as well.

Did they? Well we [teachers] refer to them as that and it’s no reflection of their ability because some of them are the most able girls. And they’re very nice natured girls and also very pretty girls and they’ve got everything going for them. But they do spend a tremendous amount of time grooming themselves and it’s that sort of, you know, everything has to be just so and it’s as though you can’t start the day until everything is in order and in place.

According to Ms Walters this group of popular Year 9 girls have ‘got it all. They’re talented, they’ve got the looks, they’ve got the personality and I look at one or two of these charming young women and I think well, you’re a hard act to follow’. According to teachers and students at Hollydale these girls balanced academic and social demands very well; ‘they’re quite clever even though they’re still always going out. They’re really clever’ (Iram). Appearance was central to the image of this group, an image that reflected traditional models of white, heterosexual femininity. Like Ms Walters, some pupils described them as having ‘everything’: ‘They always look, they’ve always got the lip gloss and the pink shoes and they’re quite rich. They always get designer clothes and [are] the ones with everything. Like, most of them have got long blonde hair and blue eyes and [are] tall and they’re all slim and they all get all the lads from [the local boys’ school] and everything’ (Faya).

Without a doubt the social class position of these girls underpins and is central to their image of ‘got it all’. It is their class position that facilitates their balancing of social and academic realms. The admiration of their
teacher about their ability to balance academic and social demands in an apparently effortless way, and their lifestyles in general, was clear:

They're quite cool because they've got it all. They can do it but they're not the ones that are constantly, you know, the teacher's pet... They can be told off for inappropriate comments in the same way as somebody sitting on the front row deliberately chatting or somebody who isn't interested. That's what makes them cool, is that they're not really the swotty type. They can do it, they've got the ability, they're interested, they're well motivated, they're clever girls but they don't appear to be overly zealous when it comes to their work. Everything is done, they just quietly get on with it. They're the ones that finish their science in the double lesson, they're the ones whose books are always on the shelf on a Monday morning because they've done their homework. But they can balance it.

(Ms Walters, Hollydale)

But strip away their expensive clothes and their charm, mould their tall, slim bodies, long blonde hair and blue eyes, and they would have a much harder time maintaining their popularity without being regarded as swotty. Their bodies and their expensive feminine accoutrements are key to enabling them to create the time and space to undertake academic endeavours without rebuke.

**Conclusion**

Girls who were apparently effortlessly successful in academic and social realms were generally regarded as 'having it all'. These girls were able to acquire the necessary academic credentials while also being cool and popular. The apparent effortlessness of their academic success was very important: the dominance of the 'uncool to work' discourse in these schools meant that while academic success was accepted (and admired), overtly working hard to attain academic success was uncool.

Of course, very few girls are 'effortless achievers', but some are more adept than others at creating the impression that they are. Effort and time are inextricably linked. To be effortlessly successful academically means getting good results without (apparently) spending much time on school work. To be successful socially depends on spending time with friends. Therein lays the problem for many girls: how can they spend enough time (without showing it) on school work to succeed academically, and also spend enough time with friends to be popular?

---

**Notes**

1. RES-000-27
2. I adopt Sw 168): 'resou 'strategies'
3. Pretending does it earn as failure within the ideal in this.
4. SATs are more than these polls of 
   14, but in the [year-olds] displayPN.cpected or 't

---

**References**

Francis, B. and I. 
Frosh, S., Phoe standing Bo,
nd social demands in an
general, was clear:

They can do it but
know the teacher’s
comments in the
deliberately chat-
t to what makes them
be. They can do it,
well motivated,
very zealous when
they just quietly get
ence in the double
ons the shelf on
air homework. But

Walters, Hollydale)

charm, remould their
and they would have a
without being regarded
the accoutrements are
to undertake academic

academic and social
girls were able to
being cool and pop-
success was very im-
course in these schools
and admired), overly
,
', but some are more
y are. Effort and time
academically means
much time on school
ng time with friends.
 they spend enough
ed academically, and

In this chapter I have outlined some of the ways in which girls attempt
to balance academic and social demands in order to be successful in both
spheres. I have argued that resources play an important role in facilitating
this success. Furthermore, by virtue of their range of resources, middle-
class girls are more likely than their working-class counterparts to be able
to balance the demands of being popular and academically successful.
That is not to say that the balancing act does not take its toll on middle-
class girls; other research has revealed the high emotional costs for some
middle-class girls of striving to meet neo-liberal demands to be ‘successful’
in all domains (for example, Walker, 2001; Allan & Seal, 2006). We need to keep the demands faced by girls firmly on the research
agenda, and question and challenge the popular rhetoric that girls are fine.

Notes
1. RES-000-27-0041.
2. I adopt Swain’s distinction between ‘strategy’ and ‘resource’ (2004: 168): ‘resources’ are the capital or stock that people draw upon and
’strategies’ are the processes they use to apply them.
3. Pretending not to work hard has numerous potential benefits. Not only
does it earn girls ‘cool points’, but it also protects them if they ‘fail’, as failure without effort does not automatically imply low ability. Fur-
thermore, success without effort (effortless achievement) is regarded as
the ideal in schools (see Jackson, 2006 for an extensive discussion about
this).
4. SATs are national tests taken by pupils in England. They were intro-
duced for 7-year-old pupils in 1991 and those aged 11 in 1995; these are ongoing. SATs were introduced in 1993 for pupils aged
14, but in October 2008 School Secretary Ed Balls announced that
he was ending the requirement for schools to run national tests for
14-year-olds with immediate effect. See: http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/
DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2008.0229. At the time of the research the ‘ex-
pected’ or ‘target’ level for SATs taken at age 14 was 5, and the maxi-
um levels were 7 for English and science and 8 for maths.

References
Francis, B. and Skelton, C. (2005) Reassessing Gender and Achievement: Quest-


nputers': girls, ICTs and
lation (2008) A Gener-
w.mentalhealth.org.uk/
phy of Girls' Friendships.
and Research. London:
nder and a Fear of Failure.
ns schools, in B. Francis
ary Perspectives in
-level schooling in Ire-
d Education, 15(3): 249-
: Rethinking the Agenda.
w and Schooling. Lon-
: Masculinities and Fem-
2003) Education and the
structure, agency and ent, British Educational
n: Exploring Children's ul. London: Routledge-
: high achieving girls,
of success in the pri-
l Politics of Education,
m girls negotiating erstanding and Support-
rt-feminist, neoliberal
nder equality, Gender