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Invited response to James J. Kilpatrick's "And Some Are More Equal than Others"

Mary Jo Deegan

University of Nebraska-Lincoln, maryjodeegan@yahoo.com

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Deegan, Mary Jo. 1976. Invited response to James J. Kilpatrick's "And Some Are More Equal than Others" (a controversial assessment of the Macmillan Publishing Company's new guidelines on standards for textbooks). *American Sociologist* 11 (May): 87.

[Note: Professor Deegan's response was one of seven; the other invited respondents were: Jeane Baldigo, Susan Fernandez, Joan Huber, Marion Kilson, Norma Shepelak, and Charles Willie.]

It is difficult to take Mr. Kilpatrick's column seriously. Not only is it written in a light-hearted vein, like many remarks written on minority groups and women, but also it takes an illogical and indefensible position.

Somehow, I gather, the reader is supposed to feel that women should not be in half of the illustrations relating to society. In "reality" they are 51% of the population, so perhaps Mr. Kilpatrick is referring to a different reality than the one where women live. It would be interesting to know where this "reality" exists.

In an additionally inexplicable manner there is supposed to be something unbelievable about "mother working at her desk while dad reads or clears the dining room table" or "both sexes playing ball; sometimes boys watching a girls' team play." The only thing that is unbelievable is that such normal activities are worthy of exclamation points, indignant claims, and sly remarks about how unusual these activities are.

It is impossible to say that there is equality of opportunity in our society. If Mr. Kilpatrick wishes to have more reality represented in textbooks, then I suggest that pictures be inserted showing how minorities and women are discriminated against in our society. That is very realistic and should be included in textbooks as part of the educational process.

MARY JO DEEGAN
*University of Nebraska,
Lincoln*

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