Read the essays and identify their **thesis statement** (中心论点句) and **claims** (分论点).

**Thesis statement** is the sentence in which the central idea of the writer is expressed;

A **claim** is a statement that supports the thesis.

**To Lie or Not to Lie —** The Doctor’s **Dilemma**

*By Sissela Bok*

Should doctors ever lie to benefit their patients -- to speed recovery or to conceal the approach of death? In medicine as in law, government, and other lines of work, the requirements of honesty often seem dwarfed by greater needs: the need to shelter from brutal news or to uphold a promise of secrecy; to expose corruption or to promote the public interest.

What should doctors say, for example, to a 46-year-old man coming in for a routine physical checkup just before going on vacation with his family who, though he feels in perfect health, is found to have a form of cancer that will cause him to die within six months? Is it best to tell him the truth? If he asks, should the doctors deny that he is ill, or minimize the gravity of the illness? Should they at least conceal the truth until after the family vacation?

Doctors confront such choices often and urgently. At times, they see important reasons to lie for the patient's own sake; in their eyes, such lies differ sharply from self-serving ones.

Studies show that most doctors sincerely believe that the seriously ill do not want to know the truth about their condition, and that informing them risks destroying their hope, so that they may recover more slowly, or deteriorate faster, perhaps even commit suicide. As one physician wrote: "Ours is a profession which traditionally has been guided by a precept that transcends the virtue of uttering the truth for truth's sake, and that is as far as possible do no harm.'"

Armed with such a precept, a number of doctors may slip into deceptive practices that they assume will "do no harm" and may well help their patients. They may prescribe innumerable placebos, sound more encouraging than the facts warrant, and distort grave news, especially to the incurably ill and the dying.

But the illusory nature of the benefits such deception is meant to produce is now coming to be documented. Studies show that, contrary to the belief of many physicians, an overwhelming majority of patients do want to be told the truth, even about grave illness, and feel betrayed when they learn that they have been misled. We are also learning that truthful information, humanely conveyed, helps patients cope with illness: helps them tolerate pain better, need less medicine, and even recover faster after surgery.

Not only do lies not provide the "help" hoped for by advocates of benevolent deception; they invade the autonomy of patients and render them unable to make informed choices concerning their own health, including the choice of whether to be patient in the first place. We are becoming increasingly aware of all that can befall patients in the course of their illness when information is denied or distorted.

Dying patients especially -- who are easiest to mislead and most often kept in the dark -- can then not make decisions about the end of life: about whether or not they should enter a hospital, or to have surgery; about where and with whom they should spend their remaining time; about how they should bring their affairs to a close and take leave.

Lies also do harm to those who tell them: harm to their integrity and, in the long run, to their credibility. Lies hurt their colleagues as well. The suspicion of deceit undercuts the work of the many doctors who are scrupulously honest with their patients; it contributes to the spiral of lawsuits and of "defensive medicine," and thus it injures, in turn, the entire medical profession.

Sharp conflicts are now arising. Patients are learning to press for answers. Patients' bills of rights require that they be informed about their condition and about alternatives for treatment. Many doctors go to great lengths to provide such information. Yet even in hospitals with the most eloquent bill of rights, believers in benevolent deception continue their age-old practices. Colleagues may disapprove it but refrain from objecting. Nurses may bitterly resent having to take part, day after day, in deceiving patients, but feel powerless to take a stand.

There is urgent need to debate this issue openly. Not only in medicine, but in other professions as well, practitioners may find themselves repeatedly in difficulty where serious consequences seem avoidable only through deception. Yet the public has every reason to be wary of professional deception, for such practices are peculiarly likely to become deeply rooted, to spread, and to erode trust. Neither in medicine, nor in law, government, or the social sciences can there be comfort in the old saying, "What you don't know can't hurt you."

**Single-Sex Schools: An Old Idea Whose Time Has Come**

*by Diane Urbina*

In 1972, single-sex public schools were made illegal by Title IX, the federal law that prohibits sex discrimination in education. Since that time, boys’ and girls' schools (and men's and women's colleges) have been limited to private schools whose high tuition fees are paid by students and their parents. The result is that single-sex education has become available to only a small percentage of students, and primarily those from well-off families. For most people, single-sex schools are thought of as something antique: a quaint remnant of the distant past. And that’s a shame, for there is increasingly persuasive evidence that single-sex education offers students—particularly girls—advantages that they cannot get in coeducation settings.

It has been demonstrated time and time again that students who attend single-sex schools perform better academically. In the biggest study of its kind, researchers in Australia measured the academic performance of 270,000 students over a period of twenty years. The boys and girls who attended single sex schools performed between I5 and 22 percentage points higher on standardized tests than students attending coed schools. A separate study in Britain looked at 979 elementary schools and 2954 high schools. Its results showed that the highest-achieving students were girls in single-sex schools, followed by girls in coed schools. Next came boys in single-sex schools. The lowest-achieving group was made up of boys in coed schools. Another study showed that girls who attend all-girl high schools are six times more likely to major in math or science in college.

Why would students perform better when in school with only those of their own gender? Researchers, teachers, and the students themselves have offered a variety of explanations. Some of the most convincing arguments have come from David Sadker and the late Myra Sadker, social scientists who spent twenty years looking at gender bias in education. They are the authors of *Falling at Fairness: How Our Schools Cheat Girls.* Although as the title suggests, the Sadkers' findings focus on how girls are short-changed by coeducational schools, they suggest that boys as well are better served by single-sex school.

The advantages to single-gender schools are entangled and difficult to separate. A clearly defined one, however, is that girls and boys literally learn differently. This is not the same as the erroneous idea that boys and girls are "by nature" better suited to different fields of study (and, later, careers). That belief is a loaded one that has been used as a weapon against granting equal opportunities in education and employment. And the fact is not that boys are "just better" at math and sciences, while girls are "just better" at English and foreign languages.

Why, then, do standardized tests seem to show that boys have the edge in some fields and girls in others? There are several factors at play here. First, boys mature more slowly. According to Dr. Leonard Sax, author of *Why Gender Matters*, the part of the brain that governs language in a typical five-year-old boy is two or three years" less developed than of a typical five-year-old girl. An average fourteen-year-old boy is even further behind—four or five years.

Eventually the boy's language ability catches up with the girl's, but it's easy to see that in those ensuing years a lot of problems can occur in the classroom, Girls, typically, learn to read earlier and more easily. Boys are pushed to learn to read at an age when many of them are unprepared to do so, and later, to keep up with their female classmates. The results are ones almost everyone has observed: lots of boys who dislike reading and think they’re not good at it, and lots of people who take it for granted that girls are "just better" at reading, writing, and other language skills.

And what about the girls? Again, according to Sax and other researchers, while girls’ brains are on the fast track developing their language centers, they are on a less hurried schedule developing the areas that govern spatial relationships and geometry. These areas in boys’ brains mature more quickly. The result? Girls who are thrown together with boys in school quickly conclude that they’re “dumb at math and science.”

In single-sex schools, the classroom curriculum could be designed with girls’ and boys’ learning differences in mind. In reading class, boys would be expected to keep pace with other boys, not with girls who seem impossibly more advanced, They could concentrate on reading material of particular interest to boys of their ages, rather than the stories and literature that are often selected by (mostly female) teachers for their (mostly female) enthusiastic readers. Girls could be introduced to math and science concepts in ways that particularly appeal to them. Girls are typically less interested in pure math at an early age, but they often enjoy learning the practical, problem-solving aspects of math. Teachers who understood and could appeal to the boys or girls learning style would have a far better chance of reaching more students than those who are trying to do “one size fits all" teaching.

Another great advantage of single-sex schools is that they take into account a very basic fact of life: boys and girls act differently in each other's presence. Anyone who has observed a group of quietly talking boys turn into posturing, shoving, guffawing loudmouths when girls come into view, or a group of sensible girls start giggling, shrieking, and preening when boys approach recognizes the truth of this statement.

There's nothing wrong with this flirting, attention-getting behavior. It's as old as the Neanderthals, and nothing is going to keep people from flirting with those who they find attractive. The problem is that this perfectly normal social behavior creates at least two serious obstacles to learning. The first is simple: flirting takes up a lot of time and energy that could be better used in the classroom. It's terribly difficult to concentrate on the difference between “ser” and “estar” in Spanish class when you're trying to figure out how to accidentally bump into the hunk in the second row after class. And boys and girls being boys and girls, such social plotting often becomes the focus of the school day. Both genders burn up the phone lines at night, not comparing notes on classes, but on who said what to whom and if anyone has a date for Saturday night.

The second related problem is that the presence of the opposite sex often influences students to act. Think again about the first point raised in this paper—the misconception that girls are naturally "good" at reading but "bad" at math, with the opposite being true for boys. If students believe that, then that "badness" becomes a sexual characteristic, just as a girl's curvy figure or a boy's deep voice is. A girl may think she seems “girlier,” more feminine, more attractive, if she makes a point of being clueless in math class. A boy may think he's more macho, more alluring to girls if he loudly proclaims that he hates to read. As a result, students may deliberately flaunt their weaknesses in order to impress the opposite sex. In general, mixed classes tend to encourage such potentially harmful gender differences. In the presence of guys, many girls give in to the stereotype that says girls are “nice,” quiet, passive, and nonathletic. Around girls, guys feel compelled to be "jocks,” noisy, disruptive, and overbearing. In a single-sex school, none of this behavior would be necessary. Students could concentrate on learning, rather than competing with each other for the attention of a cute guy or girl, or demeaning him or her self in order to catch someone's eye. They could develop their individual talents, without the constant concern of how they were coming off to the cute girl or guy in the next seat.

A final reason that single-sex schools are advantageous concerns the behavior of teachers. As the Sadkers were compiling their twenty years of research, they took many hours of videotape of classrooms in action. When they played those tapes back, many of the teachers were surprised—and horrified—by what they saw. A few examples:

• Boys were eight times more likely to call out in class without raising their hands. In general, teachers accepted their behavior.

• Teachers were twice as likely to pick out boys in the class as role models.

• When boys raised their hands, they were five times more likely to be called on than girls.

* Teachers memorized boys' names more quickly than the names of girls.
* When a boy gave a wrong answer, teachers would spend time praising him, encouraging him, and trying to lead him to the right answer. When a girl gave a wrong answer, teachers generally just moved on to another student.

No one assumes that the teachers involved “liked” boys better than girls. Rather, it is apparent that teachers as well as students are very much influenced by gender stereotypes. Because girls are (in general) less disruptive and demanding in a mixed-class setting, they receive less attention and affirmation. In general, the Sadkers concluded, girls in coed settings become the "audience," rather than the players.

But in single-sex schools, girls and guys can play all the roles—scientist, writer, musician, basketball player, artist, math whiz, track star. Without the presence of voices (spoken and unspoken) saying "Boys don't do that" or “Girls aren't good at that,” they can develop their own gifts and talents, irrespective of gender. Without the constant pressure to impress the opposite sex, boys and girl can channel their energies into becoming the best rather than forcing themselves into stereotypical molds. Single-sex schools could be the very best thing to ever happen to many students. It's time to bring them back.