Proposal for the 2013 UW Bothell Teaching and Learning Symposium

**Women on Film: Using The Bechdel Test to Explore Male Privilege Across Disciplines**

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The concept that would eventually become The Bechdel Test (or Wallace/Bechdel Test) was introduced in the comic *Dykes to Watch Out For* in 1985 by cartoonist Alison Bechdel. The test is meant to gauge female presence in a film and has a very simplistic design. While evaluating a movie you ask a three part question about its content:

1. Does the film have two women in it with names;
2. Who speak to each other;
3. About something other than a man?

The test does not necessarily gauge whether or not the film is feminist, but just if there is a basic female presence. When you start to think about it, it is truly staggering the number of films that fail this very basic test.

The Bechdel Test is an easy way to spark conversations about a topic that has been, in my experience, difficult for students to grasp – Male Privilege. I use it as a stepping stone to deeper inquiries of gender inequity in film and media, but it can also be used in other disciplines in a variety of ways. My poster will provide examples of past student assignments, both creative and scholarly, that used The Bechdel Test to explore Male Privilege and provide examples of ways it could and is being used in other disciplinary settings.