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Women's Studies - Feminizing the Academy?

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- . *european women's studies databank*
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WOMEN'S STUDIES - Feminizing the academy?

Geraldine H Wooley

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This is the second of a series of seminars in which we are looking at the development of women's studies throughout the EC. The topics which we hope to cover today follow directly from our first seminar. Some of you were present, and I expect that most of you have read our report, so I won't go over that ground again; however, just to remind you, we discussed the position of women's studies as a taught subject - where courses were established, the teaching posts and the financial and political support for the development of the subject.

In this seminar we wish to go into the details of the teaching of women's studies, with the emphasis on the student and teacher, and how feminism informs their experience in women's studies. For the future of women's studies is limited unless we can ensure continuing generations of teachers and researchers, and it seems to me that our students are the key to this issue, and how we enable them to experience women's studies will in many ways determine its future development.

For, as most of you are no doubt acutely aware, there is an inevitable conflict, often acted out on a very personal stage, between the demands of academia - status, "scientific" principles, "unbiased" information etc. - and the feminist principles underpinning women's studies. We cannot hide the contradictions involved, and I believe that it is precisely our experience in handling this conflict and trying to resolve these issues both on a personal basis and in our relationship with our students, that makes women's studies a particularly important area to examine in the context of "feminizing the academy", bringing more women, and different approaches, into the established academic systems of Europe. We can use our experience as well as the content of our research and teaching, to inform not only the development of women's studies, but the promotion of women and women's interests both within the academic structure and in society as a whole.

After the research we have done to create our student guide, we have a good (but not complete) knowledge of the range of courses on offer. However, what we cannot discern is who actually enrolls on these courses, and how they are taught - to what extent a feminist methodology is used, how feminism informs the course content and whether there is a different relationship between student and teacher on a women's studies course to courses in the established curriculum.

So, in the first place we are looking for information - who are your students, and what is the relationship between us as WS teachers and those students. Does the course content reflect the sexual orientation, class and race of the students involved (and is this by design or accident). Does the course content introduce the challenge of "difference" and how do you and your students cope with this at both personal and academic levels.

Following from this, another area for discussion is the "invisibility" of minority groups within WS. From our research it is clear that neither Black Women's Studies nor Lesbian Studies seem to be a necessary element in WS courses. Do you feel that these areas are integrated into your courses, or is their invisibility a sign that they are too radical or deviant to be accepted? Would their overt inclusion jeopardise the status or acceptance of women's studies by academia?

Needless to say, your responses to these issues will often depend on the type of course you teach - its "level" in academic terms, the academic traditions of your country or education system, and the degree to which you, as WS teachers, are able to innovate in both course content and teaching style within the systems in which you work.

So I think we will also need to touch on the debate between integration and autonomy in WS. Some of you have experience of teaching WS as an autonomous subject, others teach within an integrated curriculum. In general, this leads to a different student mix - for instance, integrated courses, especially if they are part of the core curriculum, have a different gender mix than optional or autonomous courses. How does your feminist methodology apply in these circumstances? Is the teaching of WS in either its content or method necessarily different from the established curriculum? Do we as teachers use different approaches according to our student group - what effects do our methods have on students and on the academy? Can women's studies effectively "feminize the academy"? Would this require a major reform of academic institutions? If so, does women's studies wish to be a movement for such major reform?

I believe that the answer to this will vary; at present the majority of WS teachers have studied initially in the traditional curriculum, and even many students, entering the discipline at postgraduate level, have a totally traditional academic background. So we cannot assume that there is a necessary link between the methodology of feminism and that of the teaching of women's studies. However, as some of you are well aware, there is also a large number of WS students who with no "academic" background, coming to the discipline through activism or motivated by personal experience. Consequently, their views of the relationship between WS and established academia may be very different to that of students and teachers trained within the established curriculum, and in many cases struggling to break from its traditions both in terms of research and/or teaching content and the relationships between student and teacher.

So much of the discussion today will be factual - who are your students, what is your relationship with them, how does "feminism" influence the course content. The prime aim of this seminar is to debate these issues, and to understand their implications for women's studies at the European level. But there is a wider dimension to this - the political and strategic role of women's students in promoting the aims of the Third Action Programme for Equal Opportunities. As Dearbhal Ni Charteigh will explain later this afternoon, the strategy we have decided to follow is to promote WS through a resolution to go to the European Council of Ministers. This resolution should highlight the role of women's studies in promoting the aims of the Third Action Programme, thus giving political support for the development of the subject. You will find in your seminar papers a copy of a resolution which has already been accepted, which effectively puts WS on the agenda. We need to build on this.

Consequently, we must turn our minds to how we want women's studies to be developed in order to undertake the practical aspects of drafting and processing this resolution. At this stage in the project we are still gathering basic information about the teaching of women's studies - but it is on the basis of that information, and the discussions that we will have around it today and in future seminars, that we will draft this resolution. So, in listening to the papers today, and in making your contribution to the discussion which will follow, please do not forget this dimension. We will have the opportunity to discuss it in more detail later.

In practical terms, we have divided the sessions within this seminar into two periods of presentations followed by discussion. this morning we will hear presentations from two teachers in university level education, and this afternoon from a teacher in a centre outside the university, and a teacher of "non-traditional" learners. These presentations are by no means intended to offer definitive views on the role or content of women's studies teaching. I hope they will serve to focus our discussions on the issues involved in WS teaching, and allow us to make some comparisons between our experiences throughout the EC.

In inviting you to this seminar, I asked each of you who is not making a presentation to prepare a short paper on your experience of WS. This has enable us to know more of your background and experience, and I hope this has helped you to focus on the issues. However, we do not expect you to use these papers directly in making contributions to the discussion. However, in contributing to the discussion, please make it clear where relevant at what level you teach and whether yor comments are specific to your faculty etc or if you are making generalisations about the teaching of WS in your country or at EC level.

Les études féministes à l'Université de Toulouse Le Mirail

Marie-France Brive / Février 1992

Comme vous le savez, à condition de respecter les normes qui confèrent aux diplômes délivrés un caractère national, l'Université Française fonctionne en autonomie. Chaque Unité de Formation et de Recherche (UFR) décide de ses thèmes d'enseignement et de ses axes de recherche. Cependant, la création de postes et leur spécification dépend en dernière instance de la volonté ministérielle et gouvernementale. Ainsi, l'Etat peut soutenir, si le Conseil Scientifique de l'Université et l'UFR concernée en sont d'accord, le développement de tel domaine disciplinaire.

Jusqu'en 1984, il n'existait nulle part en France de poste "études féministes". Cependant, à partir des années 1970, sous des appellations diverses, certaines universités offraient des Unités de Valeur (UV) "femmes" : cela dépendait de l'initiative personnelle de telle ou telle professeure. Ce fut le cas à l'Université de Toulouse-le Mirail, grâce par exemple, à Monique Haicault (sociologue) ou à Jacqueline Martin (économiste). En 1976, sur la demande de Rolande Trespé, l'UFR d'Histoire confiait à une chargée de cours, c'est-à-dire à une personne extérieure à l'Université, en l'occurrence, moi-même - une U.V. de licence (3e année) intitulée : "La condition féminine hier et aujourd'hui". Sous un titre, on ne peut plus conventionnel, était traitée la question de l'histoire du féminisme, des rapports entre lutte-conscience de sexe et lutte-conscience de classe, etc., selon un point de vue qui s'inspirait directement du mouvement social des femmes...

Vingt ans plus tard, où en est-on ?

Certes, avec la gauche au pouvoir, il y a eu une "officialisation", une "institutionnalisation" des "études féministes". Mais cette politique est restée limitée et l'évolution du libellé qui l'accompagne n'est guère rassurante. Jugez vous-même : en 1985, il y a eu création de quatre postes "études féministes" mais un, celui de Nantes affecté au droit, ne fut pas pourvu ; il disparut donc ! A la rentrée de 1991, deux postes se sont ajoutés -deux!- l'un accompagné de la mention "études féminines", l'autre "histoire de la condition féminine" : c'était cela ou rien ! Résistance "à la base" et "au sommet" donc !

Dans ce contexte fragile et préoccupant, que rappelle avec autant d'humour que de désespoir Christine Delphy dans l'éditorial du dernier numéro de *Nouvelles questions féministes* (1), Toulouse fait figure de lieu privilégié :

un mouvement de femmes indépendant, multiple, divers, qui, au prix de sévères remises en cause, continue à vivre...(deux cafètes, un établissement pour femmes en difficulté : l'APIAF, un ciné-club et des rencontres culturelles, politiques...

une Université qui, en matière d'études et de recherches féministes, a déjà à son actif un bilan non négligeable : Colloque National de 1982 sur "**femmes, féminisme et recherches**", Colloque international d'avril 1989 sur le thème "**femmes et Révolution Française**", deux groupes de recherche reconnus par le Conseil Scientifique de l'Université - il s'agit du **G.R.I.E.F.** et de **Simone** qui réunissent une vingtaine de personnes - des publications, par exemple, *la revue du Grief* dont le dernier numéro vient de sortir (2) où les 3 tomes des *Actes* de la manifestation consacrée au bicentenaire... (3) une Université enfin qui, à l'heure actuelle, est la seule en France à bénéficier de deux postes et qui peut être un bon observatoire pour voir fonctionner les "études féministes" et répondre aux questions que vous vous posez. Quelques précisions d'ordre général sont encore utiles. A l'UTM, les "Etudes féministes" n'apparaissent pas en tant qu'unité d'enseignement autonome ou département distinct qui délivrerait un diplôme spécifique; le principe reste celui défini en 1982 lors du Colloque "**femmes, féminisme, recherches**" : plutôt que de créer des women's studies, s'attacher à introduire leurs problématiques et leurs apports dans chaque savoir existant en espérant que celui-ci n'en sortira pas indemne, et cela sans pour autant renoncer à l'interdisciplinarité et à la visibilité d'un enseignement spécifique. C'est ainsi qu'il faut lire le catalogue des cours : une série d'U.V. et de séminaires "femmes" figurent dans le programme de certaines UFR ; A côté, le séminaire, organisé par **Simone**, se donne une vocation transdisciplinaire, par sa pratique et ses projets : l'un d'eux, le DESS "politiques sociales et rapports sociaux de sexe" a été inclus dans le plan quadriennal de la convention signée entre l'UTM et le Ministère de l'Education Nationale... Nous avons ainsi répondu à une demande qui nous arrivait "de l'extérieur", "du terrain", très exactement des femmes qui à Toulouse assurent le fonctionnement de l'APIAF, citée plus haut : ses responsables souhaitent un diplôme qui permette à celles qui les aideront ou leur succéderont d'acquérir un minimum de bagages conceptuels puisés au savoir et à la démarche féministe... (voir document annexe qui s'inspire de la présentation proposée dans le catalogue GRACE).

Ultime remarque : devant les U.V. "femmes" qui sont toutes optionnelles, les étudiantes et les étudiants savent se fabriquer leur propre cursus, soit sur le mode interdisciplinaire, soit/et sur le mode disciplinaire. Par exemple, les U.V. "Femmes, Histoire, Société, Culture" peuvent être prises par des sociologues ou des économistes qui suivent dans leur spécialité respective les U.V. consacrées à la problématique des rapports sociaux de sexe. D'autre part, à l'intérieur de la filière "Histoire" - et ce sera également le cas en Sociologie dès l'an prochain - une même personne reçoit un enseignement "femmes" tout au long de sa progression : elle s'inscrit à l'U.V. de Deug puis à l'U.V. de Licence et elle prend enfin un sujet de Maîtrise qui implique sa présence et sa participation au séminaire animé par **Simone**. Elle acquiert ainsi une sorte de spécialisation, un "plus" tout en préservant les droits que confèrent en France l'obtention du Deug, de la Licence ou de la Maîtrise d'histoire ; cependant, un diplôme donnant une visibilité à sa formation en "études féministes" serait souhaitable. Nous le préparons sur le plan de l'U.T.M. ; par ailleurs, nous cherchons une formule européenne avec les universités auxquelles Erasmus nous relie.

J'en viens maintenant aux questions que vous vous posez précisément. J'y réponds à partir des 2 U.V. que je pratique de l'intérieur. Je parle là en tant que "maître(?) de conférences en études féministes histoire contemporaine".

Qui enseigne ?

Dès leur création, j'ai tenu à ce que ces U.V. fonctionnent sur la base de l'interdisciplinarité et d'un cours à plusieurs voix. N'est-ce pas favoriser la remise en cause des rapports hiérarchiques en montrant *de visu* que le savoir se fonde d'abord sur l'ouverture et la discussion ? N'est-ce pas inscrire plus solidement les études féministes dans les esprits en montrant tout le parti que des "non spécialistes" de ce domaine peuvent tirer de son option : mettre les femmes en tant que sujets au centre de la problématique ?

L'UFR d'Histoire et l'Université de Toulouse Le Mirail m'ont toujours permis de mettre ces principes en pratique.

Depuis maintenant plusieurs années, je bénéficie de la collaboration de Claudine Leduc, historienne du monde grec ancien, et de celle de Laure Ortiz, juriste, qui donne par ailleurs l'essentiel de ses cours en Géographie. Pendant longtemps, nous assistions ensemble aux séances des deux U.V. et notre écoute respective donnait lieu à des échanges, à des interrogations, à un savoir mis en débat par les enseignantes elles-mêmes. Aujourd'hui, nous continuons à travailler dans le même esprit, seule lorsque le contenu exposé est devenu "classique", ensemble pour des textes "difficiles" ou des questions "sensibles". Cette pédagogie des U.V. "femmes" est pointée par notre public étudiant comme quelque chose d'original et même d'exceptionnel, cela ressort unanimement de l'enquête que j'ai réalisée pour tenter d'arriver devant vous avec quelques éléments concrets et précis. Un mot revient très souvent pour caractériser les rapports qui constituent le cours : "dialogue" ou "se prêtant au dialogue". Mais cette forme est vécue comme plus ou moins perturbante. Riche pour la réflexion me dit-on, mais d'autres - ou les mêmes - perçoivent très bien que le rapport, du fait des notes et de l'examen, reste inégal et que l'argument d'autorité n'a pas disparu pour autant.

Il devient alors très difficile de trouver un équilibre et c'est ce qui contribue à rendre passionnantes ces U.V. : s'y joue la transmission de tout un savoir fondé sur des luttes que je me refuse à occulter ; du coup les "sciences humaines", leur fonctionnement, et l'ensemble du système éducatif qui les accompagne se trouvent interrogés. Les étudiants et les étudiantes perçoivent nettement cette articulation qui fonde les études féministes et, selon leur âge et leur expérience de vie, cette remise en cause produit des effets différentiels, voire contradictoires. Je vais y revenir en réfléchissant quelques instants sur la mixité de l'enseignement.

Au niveau des "cours", il y a eu et il y aura des intervenants... Certes, la collaboration des professeurs hommes est ponctuelle, mais lorsque l'occasion se présente, je n'hésite pas à faire appel à eux sur la base d'une confiance réciproque. De même, au niveau du public - et voici un début de réponse à la deuxième question : qui suit les cours d'études féministes ? - la mixité a toujours été préservée sans aucune intervention volontariste de ma part : chaque année, depuis 1976, quelques garçons s'inscrivent, s'accrochent et...réussissent. Cette

mixité me paraît importante. Elle distingue deux lieux qui à mes yeux, ne doivent pas se confondre ou être confondus : l'Université et le mouvement des femmes. En même temps, je constate que ce sont surtout les garçons qui ramassent la mise : je les retrouve plus que les filles - en DEA et Thèse, ayant parfaitement compris tout ce que les études féministes apportent de stimulant, de neuf dans la recherche. Le paradoxe n'est qu'apparent : les rapports socio-économiques n'ayant pas changé, le mouvement des femmes ayant reflué, la mise à jour des mécanismes de l'oppression et de l'exploitation tend à plus fragiliser celles-ci que ceux-là. L'an dernier un étudiant -très engagé à gauche, m'a bien dit que dans mon U.V. il s'était retrouvé pour la première fois, dans le camp des "dominants" mais son trouble lui avait donné envie d'aller plus loin dans la réflexion. Par contre, l'une de ses camarades, très motivée et très impliquée, m'a expliqué qu'elle ne continuerait pas en maîtrise car, moralement, c'était trop dur...! (elle vient de me dire, à mon retour de Bruxelles, qu'elle le regrettait...).

Ce que je dis là ne se vérifie pas au niveau du nombre. Le public qui assiste à mes U.V. est très majoritairement féminin.

Quelles sont ses motivations ?

Premier point qui fait question : le niveau universitaire semble plus déterminant que l'identité sexuée. Filles et garçons formulent des attentes relativement homogènes ; la distinction s'opère selon qu'elles et ils se trouvent en Deug ou en Licence.

Alors que dans les effets des études féministes, je notais que la différence des sexes jouait à plein, dans le domaine des motivations, elle paraît largement supplantée par le phénomène de génération.

En première ou deuxième année, la plupart avancent la curiosité, l'attrait de la nouveauté, le désir d'acquérir des connaissances. Cela montre bien que les études féministes à l'Université manquent de relais et ne bénéficient d'aucun miroir, ni dans la société, ni dans l'enseignement qui se déroule de la maternelle au baccalauréat. Les réponses expriment le plaisir de suivre une U.V. non traditionnelle mais jamais, même de la part de ceux et celles qui se déclarent féministes, ne se dégage la volonté de se situer dans une dynamique et le sentiment qu'un grand nombre de certitudes risque d'être bousculées est absent. Je dénote un mélange de naïveté et de sérieux, des intuitions dont les tenants et aboutissants restent du domaine de l'implicite. Une étudiante n'a-t-elle pas écrit dans une même phrase qu'elle s'était inscrite "en tant que femme et au hasard" ?

Ce décalage -inévitabile- entre elles-eux et moi, s'accompagne d'un blanc dans leur mémoire qui précisément justifie dès le Deug une U.V. "femmes". Or, cette année, elle a d'abord fonctionné comme un lieu de confrontation où le lien a tardé à se faire. Pour la première fois, à la mise en garde que j'exprime dans le cours introductif -à la manière dont Jalna Haner en a rendu compte dans un des *Cahiers du Griff* (attention, cette U.V. n'est pas une U.V. "tranquille" (4), j'ai eu des réactions négatives : quelques garçons -pas tous- sont partis et l'on fait savoir; l'ensemble de l'assistance a été choquée. Dans la suite du travail, j'ai perçu une écoute hétérogène où la résistance à ce qui était dit et proposé l'emportait. Alors que cette U.V. sert à apprendre l'alphabet de la problématique "femmes" et à acquérir une culture générale, nous étions maintenu-e-s en deçà de ces objectifs : ma bibliographie et mes remarques générales -notamment sur le langage

et les règles grammaticales, ma lecture guidée du *Deuxième sexe*, mes chronologies commentées de la Révolution Française et mes cours sur les textes fondateurs du MLF soulevaient beaucoup plus de réticences que de compréhension. Ne m'a-t-on pas objecté, alors que faits et textes venaient d'être expliqués : "ça c'est de la philosophie, ce n'est pas de l'histoire...". La situation évolue cependant : le visionnement de l'émission : "Le Torchon brûle" (5) les a conquis : "ah ! que ne l'avez-vous projeté plus tôt, dès le début etc." Et les réponses aux questions que je leur ai posées à l'occasion de ma venue ici confirment que le combat pour ce qui ne fait pas encore signe -les études féministes- contre l'idéologie des rapports sociaux de sexe et les représentations qu'elle induit n'est pas totalement vain...

En Licence, les données du problème ne sont plus les mêmes : à l'UFR j'assure des cours d'enseignement général, cela fait partie de mes tâches officielles, et l'U.V. "femmes" de Deug aidant, plus de la moitié des troisièmes années me connaissent. Beaucoup ont véritablement choisi. Dans le sondage que j'ai réalisé, plus d'un tiers se situent dans la perspective d'un cursus "études féministes" : il s'agit de continuer l'U.V. de Deug ou de se mettre à niveau pour la maîtrise. Un nombre non négligeable -15 %- articule l'option prise avec un engagement du côté des droits des femmes ou avec son vécu personnel. Et si un autre bon tiers exprime les mêmes motivations que celles déjà rencontrées en Deug : la "nouveau", "l'exceptionnalité", la "curiosité", "l'attrait du titre", "la conscience de manquer dans ce domaine des outils et de la culture nécessaire", elles supposent ici une écoute favorable. C'est bien ce qui s'est produit mais j'ai observé une "réserve", un "quant à soi" que je peux facilement expliquer.

Peut d'abord être invoqué l'effectif presque aussi élevé qu'en Deug -une quarantaine d'assidu-e-s- qui rend le dialogue matériellement difficile et la prise de parole réfléchie plus "dangereuse" : on a peur de se ridiculiser parce qu'on mesure son "ignorance"...Par ailleurs, j'ai moi-même contribué à ce "blocage". J'ai demandé à Claudine Leduc d'explicitier, et ce sur plusieurs séances, l'article qu'elle a rédigé pour le tome 1 de l'*Histoire des femmes* (6) consacré à l'Antiquité, sous le titre : "Comment la donner en mariage?"(6). Plusieurs raisons m'animaient : l'importance que revêt à mes yeux le travail de Claudine Leduc : sur un champ d'étude -le pays grec du IX au Ve siècle avant J.-C, elle parvient à articuler la circulation des biens et leur statut avec le statut de la femme. Elle saisit ainsi le passage d'une société de la parenté à une société politique. Sa démonstration est d'un abord difficile. Cette difficulté même du texte servait mes intentions : montrer qu'à l'encontre d'une certaine image que certains, certaines(?) voudraient donner des "études féministes", celles-ci sont productives de savoir et de découvertes scientifiques, ce qui peut par exemple servir lors d'un concours de haut niveau... Je crois que j'ai réussi, mais le choc fut rude pour l'auditoire. J'ai donc poursuivi par un enseignement beaucoup plus descriptif : montrer la réalité et l'ampleur des luttes que les françaises ont dû mener pour obtenir le droit de vote et d'éligibilité ; prendre la mesure tant de leurs combats que des obstacles institutionnels et idéologiques auxquels elles se sont heurtées ; affirmer ainsi la dimension politique du féminisme puisqu'il interroge la République et la démocratie au coeur même de ce qui les fonde : la citoyenneté.

Avec Laure Ortiz, à partir des textes d'Elizabeth Badinter et de Luce Irigaray, la notion d'égalité sera à nouveau discutée sur le mode contradictoire: *L'un est l'autre* (7) et *Le temps de la différence* (8) offrent des perspectives opposées et, en tant que professeures, nous n'avons aucune certitude sur les réponses à donner...

Je n'insisterai pas sur le Séminaire qui est pris en charge collectivement. Je noterai simplement que, jusqu'à ce jour, nous tenons le pari que nous nous étions fixées: faire que l'enseignement et la recherche "études féministes" s'articulent au terrain et qu'entre les différents niveaux de pratiques une circulation existe. C'est le sens du sous titre pris par notre groupe: *Conceptualisation et communication de la recherche/femmes.*

Je ne peux pas terminer mon intervention sans évoquer l'une de vos propositions de travail. Dans la circulaire que j'ai reçue, vous écriviez à peu près ceci:

Nous chercherons à établir la manière dont le "genre", l'orientation sexuelle, la classe sociale, la "race" des étudiant-e-s et enseignant-e-s en études féministes sont pris en considération dans les cours eux-mêmes (9).

J'ai reconnu, dans cette formulation, le "politiquement correct" des pays anglo-saxons, une conception de voir les choses très éloignée de la mienne, et qui, à la limite, recouvre une stratégie menaçante pour l'avenir des études féministes. En effet, le "p.c." m'apparaît comme une entreprise de division et de culpabilisation des femmes par des femmes qui ne parlent pas en tant que telles.

J'ai voulu connaître le sentiment de mes étudiant-e-s. Sans leur faire part de mes réserves, je leur ai lu la phrase en question. Leur réaction fut d'abord de surprise: qu'est-ce que cela veut dire? J'ai donc tenté de l'explicitier. J'ai pu alors constater que cette approche ne les laissait pas indifférent-e-s. Certes, beaucoup disent: "Bien entendu!" (que les éléments énumérés ci-dessus sont pris en considération); d'autres écrivent: "C'est saugrenu!", "c'est superflu!" mais toutes ces exclamations ne s'assimilent pas à un rejet, plutôt à la conscience que, comme l'a souligné quelqu'un-e: "C'est délicat".

Leurs remarques se résument ainsi: il serait difficile d'inscrire ces éléments dans le cours, mais on en parle, on en parle sans le dire et peut-être faudrait-il trouver les moyens d'en parler davantage et explicitement. Certaines réponses manifestent clairement cette attente, notamment en ce qui concerne l'orientation sexuelle et l'origine ethnique (le mot "race" a violemment choqué, même cerné de guillemets).

Vous avez donc là soulevé des problèmes réels que mon public préfère ne pas poser lui-même: il attend que "l'occasion se présente". Pour ma part, je les traite de façon pragmatique, par exemple à travers les exposés choisis par les étudiant-e-s. L'empirique me paraît dans ce domaine une bonne politique. Avoir toujours ces éléments en tête: oui; les institutionnaliser selon une grille normative et pré-établie: non. Dans mes U.V. -et ce sera ma conclusion- j'adopte une attitude qui montre, à mes yeux, la force et la pertinence du point de vue féministe: permettre à toutes les paroles de s'exprimer sans jamais céder sur le principe qui le fonde: l'égalité des droits. Libre ensuite à chaque individu-e- de se forger ses outils et son propre jugement. Les études

féministes participent de la construction du savoir -d'un savoir nouveau- inséparable d'une démarche citoyenne où liberté-égalité doivent enfin s'accorder.

Notes

- (1) ***Nouvelles questions féministes***, 16-17-18, 1991, 262 p., pp. 1-12.
- (2) **G.R.I.E.F.**, "Se reproduire, est-ce bien naturel?"
Groupe de Recherches Interdisciplinaire d'Étude des Femmes,
Presses universitaires du Mirail, 1991, 179 p.
- (3) ***Les femmes et la Révolution Française, Actes du Colloque international tenu à Toulouse les 13, 14 et 15 avril 1989***,
éd. Marie-France Brive, Presses Universitaires du Mirail,
tome 1, Modes d'action et d'expression, Nouveaux droits -
nouveaux devoirs, 525 p., nov. 1989.
tome 2, L'individuel et le social. Apparitions et
représentations, 410 p., déc. 1990.
tome 3, L'effet 89, 480 p., nov. 1991.
- (4) ***Les Cahiers du Griff***, "Savoir et différence des sexes",
n° 45, automne 90, pp. 7-15, p. 15.
- (5) Dans la série télévisée "Génération" de Patrick Rotman,
Hervé Hamon et Daniel Edinger, réalisation Irène Richard,
KUIV productions, La Cinq, Ina, 1988.
- (6) Sous la direction de Georges Duby et Michelle Perrot,
tome 1, L'Antiquité, sous la direction de Pauline Schmitt-
Pantel, Plon, 1991, 585 p., pp. 259-316.
- (7) ***L'un est l'autre***, éd. Odile Jacob, 1986, 365 p.
- (8) ***Le Temps de la différence***, Le livre de poche, biblio-
essais, 1989.
- (9) Lettre du 9 décembre 1991.

Repoussi Maria.
DIOTIMA / GRECE

Etudes féministes - féminisation du savoir?
Bruxelles, 4 et 5 février 1992.

Les études féministes et sur les femmes étant d'une part auparavant étroitement liées au mouvement de libération des femmes et à présent à la théorie de ce mouvement, tenant de l'autre compte des intérêts des femmes en tant que catégorie sociale distincte et opprimée se trouvent de nos jours, à mon avis, dans une situation bien différente à celle des années 70 et 80 et difficile en même temps.

Différente parce qu'elles semblent avoir dépassé la négation pure et complète de la part de l'academisme et du savoir officiel et arriver à un niveau de reconnaissance, ce qui pose des problèmes différentes; difficile parce que, bien qu'elles soient reconnues dans la plupart des pays de la communauté et évoluées dans une grande partie des disciplines, elles se voient avoir ouvertes des questions importantes vis à vis leur développement.

Etre ou ne pas être une discipline et pourquoi; s'orienter vers un développement interdisciplinaire; constituer une approche dans les disciplines existantes; qui doit enseigner en études féministes et qui est le groupe cible du corps enseigné s'il en existe un; si l'approche en études féministes conduit obligatoirement à l'établissement d'un nouveau type des rapports entre d'une part le corps enseignant et enseigné de l'autre; quel est ce nouveau type des rapports ou qui doit être et quelle sorte de changements doit entraîner pour les études féministes et les institutions universitaires; quel est le rapport de l'Etat membre et des Communautés Européennes au sujet de la promotion des études féministes; doit-il et doivent-elles intervenir -et comment- en faveur de l'institutionnalisation des études féministes tout en respectant l'autonomie des institutions universitaires d'une part, rendant nulle de l'autre la résistance opposée à la reconnaissance et au développement des études féministes;

Telles sont les questions à mon avis importantes qui ont surgi au cours d'une réunion organisée, à Athènes, le 14 juin 1991, par Le Secrétariat Général pour l'Egalité des Sexes, coordonnée par le Groupe des Etudes Féminines de l'Université de Salonique et regroupant la plupart des enseignantes en études féministes aussi bien que quelques enseignantes intéressées par le sujet mais sans avoir aucune expérience en la matière.

Telles sont grosso modo, à mon avis, également les questions qui préoccupent les enseignantes en études féministes au niveau des Communautés Européennes en ce qui concerne l'élaboration d'une stratégie commune au niveau européen.

Dans le but d'en élaborer une, il me semble nécessaire de signaler deux choses: -Accepter les différences parfois grandes qui existent dans les différents pays de la communauté -différences du système éducatif, des traditions universitaires et du développement des études féministes entre autres- et essayer de définir un projet commun tenant compte de ces différences mais de façon à évoluer et pas de reculer.

-Contribuer à la création des réseaux de communication au niveau national et transnational de façon à avoir une vue globale, à pouvoir échanger les expériences et profiter des acquis de certains pays où les études féministes ont été bien développées.

Suivant l'objectif général de cette rencontre et dans le but de contribuer à l'échange des expériences, je voudrais vous exposer à la suite quelques aspects concernant l'enseignement en études féministes en Grèce.

Tout d'abord, cet enseignement se passe à présent :

A/ Dans les institutions académiques.

B/ Dans des 'Universités Ouvertes'.

C/ Dans des programmes de formation professionnelle adressés uniquement à des femmes.

A/ Il s'agit des cours d'études féministes intégrés dans le programme d'études de la section universitaire ou du département, qui n'aboutissent à aucun diplôme et qui ne forment pas, dans la plupart des cas, un ensemble conçu en tant que tel et ayant de la suite. Dans le rapport préparé à l'occasion du séminaire de mars dernier à Bruxelles, j'ai présenté une liste détaillée des cours en question. Elle reste la même dans ses grandes lignes. La seule exception concerne probablement le groupe de Thessaloniki dont mon collègue de Thessaloniki va vous parler.

Dans ces cours, les enseignant-tes sont uniquement des femmes, qui se désignent, la plupart, en tant que féministes. Les étudiantes sont beaucoup plus nombreuses que les étudiants et c'est le point de vue féministe qui définit le contenu des cours. L'orientation sexuelle est mise en question comme une contrainte sociale qui opprime les femmes en tant que catégorie sociale. Dans l'enseignement de l'histoire p.ex le point de vue féministe consiste à poser la question du rapport des sexes dans toute analyse historique, ce qui semble avoir des effets positifs tant pour l'analyse historique que pour les études féministes qui sont de cette façon bien intégrées et ne constituent pas forcément un domaine à part.

B/ C'est une pratique tout à fait récente en Grèce. Quelques universités ouvertes instituées par des municipalités ont inauguré des cycles des études féministes. DIOTIMA, le centre de recherches et d'études sur des questions des femmes auquel je participe, vient de finir un tel cycle et est en train d'ouvrir un nouveau.

L'expérience y est différente, bien qu'il y ait des points communs. Le public est presque exclusivement des femmes, plus de 30 ans, qui étant sensibilisées au féminisme pendant les années 70 et 80, cherchent à établir un nouveau lien entre elles et le féminisme par le biais des études. Leur participation est active et révèle des questions dans leur vie quotidienne. Soit consolidant les choix personnels, soit les mettant en question, une relation étroite s'établit entre les cours et elles-mêmes.

C/ Dans le but d'assurer aux femmes les meilleures conditions possibles en faveur leur insertion professionnelle, DIOTIMA conduit des programmes de formation professionnelle y faisant intervenir les études féministes. Considérant que les femmes prennent confiance en elles, revalorisent leurs compétences et réalisent leur chemin à l'emploi de façon plus sûre si elles ont la conscience de l'appartenance à une catégorie sociale, à un genre social, on pose le problème de la différence des sexes, on prend en considération à part égale le masculin et le féminin dans l'ensemble de la formation.

Le public y est exclusivement des femmes -le corps enseignant aussi bien entendu- des jeunes femmes issues des universités mais dans une situation professionnelle bien précaire et ne pouvant dans la plupart dessiner leur avenir et aborder des questions de carrière. D'après notre expérience, les études féministes y fonctionnent dans un processus aussi bien de conscience que de confiance et d'autonomie des femmes. Elles assurent également de meilleures conditions d'insertion professionnelle.

D'après mon propre expérience dans l'enseignement et celle du centre auquel je participe, je dirais en bref que les études féministes en tant que élargissement et profond changement du savoir par le point de vue 'femmes' se trouvent ou peuvent se trouver en pleine expansion même aux pays où il n'y avait pas auparavant une recherche capable à appuyer leur enseignement. Le développement des études féministes dans certains pays européens et dans les Etats-Unis diminue les effets de cette absence car finalement le savoir n'a pas de frontières. L'accumulation du savoir en recherches et études féministes nous permet à présent un enseignement incontestable au niveau scientifique même dans

les pays où on y avait un grand retard. Reste à définir une stratégie capable à assurer une évolution permanente et à dépasser les problèmes dus à leur manque de moyens, à un certain isolement et à la marginalité que les institutions patriarcales veulent leur imposer. Car le développement de ces études est au bout de compte notre cause.

Schaumburg Inger. Feminizing the medical academy? Current status in Denmark.

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Women's studies in Denmark are established in six centres for women's studies and feminist research - one of which is in medical science. Medicine is an area where women's studies are not very well developed and changes are coming very slowly. I am a medical doctor myself so I shall concentrate on medicine, on the reasons why women's studies are so poorly developed and what can be done about it.

The first and so far only lectureship in medical Feminist Research was established in Copenhagen in 1987. Feminist research groups have existed in Copenhagen since 1979, and in Aarhus and Odense since the beginning of the eighties. In Aarhus and Odense feminist research has never formalized within the medical schools.

Odense University, from where I graduated, is the smallest and youngest of the three medical faculties in Denmark. It was founded in 1966 and the number of medical students is today between 700 and 800. The proportion of women among medical students changed from 36% in 1980 to 56% in 1990. For students leaving the University with a medical degree the percentage of women was 26 in 1980 and 47 in 1990. The intake of students into medical school in 1990 consisted of 37% males and 63% females. This means that within a few years the Medical Faculty will be dominated by female students.

In Copenhagen, at the oldest and largest of the medical faculties, the situation is similar. The first woman doctor graduated in 1885. Since then still more women have entered the medical faculty. The percentage of women among medical students changed from 41% in 1979 to 53% in 1989. Since 1980 the intake of medical students has been dominated by women and in 1987 female medical students for the first time formed the majority.

However, still the teachers at medical school are mainly men. Among the researchers at the Medical Faculty in Odense 17% were women in 1990. No woman has been appointed professor. Among researchers with a permanent position (senior lecturers) 9% were women. Among research fellows with temporary positions women held 37%. Assisting personnel, of course, are mostly women (80%).

Writers of medical textbook used in medical schools are mostly men as well as referees in medical journals and members of scientific boards. Among the newly appointed scientific editor group in the national Danish medical journal (Ugeskr Læger) 66 out of 67 members were men.

If we look at the leadership of the University in Odense it has not changed according to the changes among students. The Academy Council of Odense University has 11 male and no female scientific members. Among students three are male and three female. The assisting personnel has elected two males and four females. The Medical Faculty Council consists of one female and seven male scientific members and in the Teaching Council of six male and no female teachers.

To me, the number of women in the scientific staff is very important for the possibility of developing women's studies within medicine.

Women's studies are not a special subject during medical school in Odense. Female teachers have taken feminist themes and subjects into their courses but only on an individual basis and to a small extent. Odense University has a Department of Feminist Studies in the Faculty of Arts. They have never been involved in teaching at the Medical Faculty. Neither has the lecturer in Medical Feminist Research in Copenhagen.

In Copenhagen Medical Feminist Research is involved in teaching medical students in psychiatry and gynaecology. Besides, there has been held mini symposiums for four years with topics on women - abortion, fertility, suicide, psychiatry etc. A lot of female students have done elective projects in medical feminist research. Topics have varied - mental problems in relation to induced abortions, gender differences in the medical profession, patients' expectations to male and female doctors etc. The research group has also been involved in postgraduate courses for future specialists in psychiatry and a method course in medical feminist research. Finally, an international congress on women's health issues is held in Denmark this year (1992). But women's studies were never an compulsory part of the medical curriculum. Looking at the Danish Medical Association, it has to day about 18,000 members - 40% of which are women. However, women are few in all types of powerful positions (head of medical departments, professors, members of scientific boards). Women have primarily specialized in psychiatry, paediatrics, gynaecology and geriatrics whereas women are few in the surgical specialties, especially orthopaedics and heartsurgery. Among doctors working at the hospitals research is very important to their future career. In a new survey by The National Medical Association - 67%

of male doctors answer that they are doing current research compared to only 50% among the female doctors. Women state that "they lack a research group", that "they want to use their spare time on something else" and that "they have no interest in research".

Finally, I shall conclude that in a few years women are going to dominate the medical faculties in Denmark and the medical profession. Today women's studies are not integrated into the medical curriculum and it seems as if many female doctors loose interest in research.

From my point of view we have to do the following:

- Change "women's studies" into "gender studies".
- Make gender studies a compulsory part of the medical curriculum. Gender studies should become an integrated part of all subdisciplines.
- At least one chair in gender studies should be available in each medical faculty.
- Research groups on gender studies should be founded or strengthened in all medical faculties. They should take special care about encouraging female students and doctors to do research.
- Research groups of gender studies should try to do research of high international standard.
- Women should be encouraged to take part of the leadership of the medical faculties.
- Gender quotation in scientific staff appointment.
- Gender quotation in all groups appointed to evaluate scientific production (thesis, dissertations).
- Gender quotation in the editorial boards of scientific

journals and in scientific boards deciding on research funds.

WOMEN'S STUDIES AS EMPOWERMENT OF

NON-TRADITIONAL LEARNERS

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Women's Studies as empowerment of 'non-traditional' learners.

Synopsis

This paper considers the role that women's studies plays in initial professional training for community and youth work. I will examine how the exploration of difference and diversity in students and in subject matter can be facilitated to enable women to work collectively and collaboratively. This involves paying attention to how feminist theory can inform pedagogical practice and group process.

Structure and aims of the course

The women's studies course on which I teach is a component of a university-based community and youth work course. It provides an opportunity for women to theorise power, to develop an analysis of the social construction of gender and to explore their experiences and professional practice in a group work setting. As post-experience vocational training, the course attracts a large number of students who fall into the category of 'non-traditional' learners. They come from a wide variety of backgrounds. Difference, diversity and anti-oppression work are key concepts in both training and professional practice.

The concept of empowerment has become institutionalised in the profession and the Statement of Purpose (Report of Second Ministerial Conference 1990) states that youth work should offer young people opportunities which are 'educative'; 'designed to promote equality of opportunity'; 'participative' and 'empowering'. The inclusion of the word 'empowerment' in Conservative documentation is viewed with suspicion by many workers in the field. But in reclaiming the concept there is a possibility of enabling 'a potential opposition to articulate its opinions' (Jeffs and Smith 1990 p. 21).

Initial training courses also need to recognise that students are necessarily influenced by the learning processes and relationships in which they participate. As a tutor I am particularly interested in the role that both the content and pedagogical processes in women's studies can play in the empowerment of a professional group which is officially charged with the empowerment of others.

Collective action and collaborative working relationships form part of the value base and learning outcomes for initial training. Empowerment work cannot simply focus on the self but must include the ability to understand the structures of inequality, power and powerlessness (National Youth Agency 1990: Nemiroff 1989).

Gender is perceived as one axis of inequality among others and courses and workshops on black studies, race, class, disability, sexuality and social class are an integral part of the two year course. Given the context of the work, women's studies needs to resist additive approaches to oppression (Collins 1990 p. 222) and operate from a paradigm which places distinctive systems of oppression in one overarching structure.

The two year course leads to the award of the Diploma in Community and youth work. This qualifies students to become workers in youth centres, detached youth projects, community centres, advice and counselling projects and a variety of related settings. The course comprises university-based taught courses and supervised fieldwork in relevant agencies. The taught component includes courses on sociology, black studies, management, interpersonal and group work skills, social policy, psychology and principles and practice of youth work.

In providing formal training for community and youth work, the course aims to develop reflective practitioners, and as such, is located in a theory of personal, organisational and societal change.

The context

The community and youth work course is placed within the Department of Community Studies which incorporates a range of post-experience, professional training courses: social work, community nursing, guidance and counselling. The department was formed as a result of the merger between Bulmershe College of Higher Education and the University of Reading in 1989. The relocation of the community and youth work course from a professional training college to a university exposed many of the issues which arise as a consequence of improved access opportunities and new models of provision in Higher Education.

The 'legitimacy gap' (Coyner 1987 p.47) which often exists between women's studies and other disciplines has also arisen between Community Studies and other more traditional departments and between courses and components within the department itself. The community and youth course has entry criteria which prioritise experience over educational achievements. In terms of the curriculum, anti-oppression work underpins the acquisition of professional skills and vice versa.

The existence of a progressive, post-experience, professionally-based course in a university produces tensions and contradictions that arise when academia and activism are combined (Fraser 1989 p.1). This activism, in the case of community and youth workers, takes the form of change agency. This involves evolving innovative responses to disadvantage and discrimination, experienced on both a personal and professional level. As professional workers, they work with individuals, groups and organisations to bring about the development of personal potential and organisational structures and policies.. Hence, women's studies is taught as an intervention as well as an academic discipline.

Awareness influences positive action (Butler and Wintram 1991 p. 15). Change is effected by a clear feminist or woman-centred approach to the range of professional roles undertaken by community and youth workers, eg. counselling, advice, advocacy, group facilitation, befriending. As a consequence of such situated theory, students are motivated and emotionally engaged in their learning. There is commitment to change and consciousness-raising as they attempt to integrate theory, practice and life experience. The critical and analytical skills which students develop in relation to practice are also applied to the organisational context of their training.

The under-representation of women in academic posts in conjunction with the increased casualisation of teaching (Aziz 1990: Hansard 1990), and lack of policies and strategies for equality in British universities mean that the organisational context of women's studies is often in itself disempowering. In addition, many of the students on the community and youth work course are trainees employed by local education authorities. As such they are witnessing changes in social policy such as Section 28 of the Local Government Act 1988 (Stacey 1991 pp. 284-304), and widespread cuts in public expenditure which have direct impact on service provision for women in the community.

With the abolition of the Greater London Council in 1986 and of the Inner London Education Authority in 1990 many innovatory practices and units on equal opportunities, women and race disappeared. Many local authorities have organised public sector cuts. In May 1990, following the election of a Conservative council, the London Borough of Ealing immediately closed both its Women's and Race Units (Brimstone 1991 p.121).

The challenge therefore exists for women's studies to continue to provide a source of inspiration for personal, social and organisational change in the face of major disinvestment and deradicalization in the public sector in Britain. This also involves the struggle to resist

incorporation, internalisation and acceptance of powerlessness to bring about change in the face of major civil inequalities.

Who are the students?

The course attracts black and white women and men of all ages from a wide geographical area. The majority of white students on the course define themselves as working class, whereas many black students question the appropriateness of class stratification to race. In any case, the racial and class composition on the course differs from the traditional student profile within the university.

The term 'non-traditional' learner is culturally specific with normative connotations and contains the risk of marginalising women returners as a remedial group and as a single category of analysis. The concept itself defines students through the gaze of the powerful group and emphasizes 'lack' ie. 'non', rather than positive attributes.

It would be erroneous to suggest that students enter the course as powerless victims but for many women students, identity based on membership of oppressed groups frequently interacts with the role universities have traditionally played in maintaining strands of domination and perpetuating social inequalities. Paradox and contradiction can

therefore arise as women enter the academy to be trained and empowered on a course which is viewed with suspicion by the institution. The organisational context can readily access women's feelings of powerlessness. Hence, democratic pedagogical processes take place within a restrictive institutional context. (Ramazanoglu 1987 : Lowe and Lowe Benston 1991: Bricker-Jenkins and Hooyman 1987).

Empowerment is not necessarily institutional practice, but based on individual tutors' interpretation of contract with students. But this feature can be transformed into a strength. The course components I currently teach on interpersonal skills and women's studies provide opportunities to do empowerment work with students.

The women's studies course I teach takes place in a women-only group. The substantial number of re-entry women students means that there are varying levels of participation in the women's movement and of identification with woman-centredness. For some, women's studies represents the first experience of working in a women-only setting. For others, many of whom have worked in women's community and youth projects, girls' projects, women's aid or rape crisis counselling, the subject is an extension of their wider commitment to feminist intervention.

Within the group, women self-define in terms of interests and identity based on social class, disability, sexuality, race and ethnicity, age or role, such as 'mother' or 'single provider'. Some identities are static whilst some are

negotiable and liable to change during the course.

Commonalities among women are invariably rooted in social class and commitment to professional activism. Divisions and conflict in groups in the six years I have been teaching the course occur most frequently around race and sexuality. Some women come from local authorities and communities where there is an absence of dialogue or critical perspectives on race and sexuality. For these women, exposure to new ideas can activate strong feelings.

Within women's studies there is the opportunity to divide into black and white groups for part of the time. The division is not always unproblematic as it poses questions of definition. This is particularly relevant to women with ambiguous racial and ethnic identity. Ambiguous in the sense that their self-definition might not always correspond to how other women see them.

Membership of the black group is open to women of African, Asian and Caribbean descent. But in the past, there have been women on the course who have identified as politically black, eg. Turkish. Attempts to join the black group were met with rejection and many black women resented that their 'empowerment' time was being taken up with discussion of terms of membership. Irish, Jewish and Yugoslav women have also raised objections to their inclusion in the white group. Whilst they made no attempt to join the black group, they felt that they had not benefitted from Britain's colonial past. Instead, they had been victims of racism,

anti-semitism, imperialist feminism and xenophobia.

Whereas debates about identity and difference can be perceived as distractions, they can also provide rich material for discourse in women's studies.

Evaluating effectiveness of women's studies

Judging from participant evaluation and personal feedback, the majority of women on the course express considerable enthusiasm about the empowering effect women's studies has had on their lives and on their relationships with other women. For example, women frequently observe how their ability to construct and sustain feminist arguments and perspectives are enhanced, both as a result of increased knowledge and sense of value as women. The development of process skills to facilitate conflict and confrontation is also noted.

Disappointment is most frequently posed in terms of perceived areas of omission ie. avoidance of certain issues, or conflict arising from differences in the group. Absences and silences are often related to issues of diversity. They appear to refer more to the level of group engagement with the subject, rather than to the frequency of discussions. These qualitative / quantitative observations raise

questions about performance indicators for the evaluation of effectiveness in women's studies.

Bell Hooks (1989 p.53) discusses the complexity of evaluation in women's studies.

I began to see that courses that work to shift paradigms, to change consciousness, cannot necessarily be experienced immediately as fun or positive or safe and that this was not a worthwhile criteria to use in evaluation.

In this sense, part of the empowerment process is visible in the way in which women evaluate women's studies. By the end of year two, I have noticed that disappointment is less frequently expressed. Women appear to move away from blaming and holding others responsible for meeting their needs. The empowerment process is noticeable in the ability to appreciate themselves and other women. Criticism is offered in a more co-operative spirit and less rooted in hurt and distress.

Donna Haraway (1990 p.197) discusses Chela Sandoval's (1984) concept of 'oppositional consciousness'. Haraway defines this as the skills for reading webs of power by those refused stable membership in the social categories of race, sex or class. This 'oppositional consciousness' is keenly applied by students to their evaluation of pedagogical practices and tutor styles and attitudes. Feelings find

expression in a variety of ways, but there is a low tolerance for people Patricia Hill Collins (1990 p.208) describes as 'educated fools'. Discrepancies between theory and behaviour are rapidly perceived and tutors' failure to model good practice results in loss of confidence, confrontation and student cynacism.

Their 'oppositional consciousness' informs many 'non-traditional' students when they are being patronised, manipulated or undermined. The empowerment work allows them to express this in ways which do not reinforce victimhood and are less harmful to themselves. For example, the ability to separate self from others represents a major piece of personal development. As women become more empowered they are more likely to identify when their own distress material is being activated by someone else's treatment of them. They are then more able to give feedback without storming, attacking or blaming others. For example, in response to an unsatisfactory session with a visiting lecturer, certain women felt that she had 'oppressed' and 'patronised' them. Other students described the experience in different terms and felt that she lacked a class analysis in relation to gender, and was obviously more experienced in traditional methods of teaching.

The empowerment process

As women's studies incorporates a matrix of commonalities and differences there is the potential for this 'oppositional consciousness' to find expression in group interactions. Roles of oppressed and oppressor shift as women discover points of contact and discontinuity with other women in the group. Brimstone (1991 p. 125) writes

'...there is no straightforward, easily identifiable opposition between centre and margins, oppressor and oppressed, for within the terms of this binary classification system the splittings are so infinite and so unstable that we invariably end up arguing about is the degree of participation each of us has in one or other position at any given time.'

This perspective raises interesting challenges for the organisation of separate space for different oppressions within feminism. The delegitimisation of some women's experiences and the privileging of others have been an important part of black feminist debate. (Lorde 1981, 1984: Amos and Parmar 1984: Brooks-Higginbotham 1989: Collins 1990: Mohanty 1988). Exclusionary practices in women's studies (Baca Zinn et al. 1986) have reinforced racism and placed the burden on black women to draw attention to power differentials based on race.

As white women have been the custodians of women's studies for too long, an essential part of the empowerment process is the composition of the staff team. In this case, women's studies is taught by black and white women with the possibility of work in separate groups. The notion of separate groups is usually put forward by the tutors or black students. For many white women, having their oppressor role pointed out to them whilst they are in the early stages of analysing their role as oppressed provides considerable discomfort and confusion. (Green 1987: Morley 1992).

Separation is experienced in terms of rejection and loss. Some white women question how they are going to learn about race in the absence of black women. My intervention is to point out the racism in the idea that black women exist as resources for white women and are not entitled to space free from the inhibiting presence of white women to explore issues of interest to them as black women. Bell Hooks (1990 p.71) makes a similar observation:

As long as white women within feminism still ask black women to teach them about race, we are still being put in the servant/served relationship.

The pedagogical task is to enable this perspective to be 'unlearned' and to confront some of the rigidities of information and attitude which allow racism to flourish. For an anti-racist perspective to be the norm in women's studies (Watt and Cook 1991) resistance has to be minimised. Collins (1990 p. 229) points out that

'Although most individuals have little difficulty identifying their own victimisation... they typically fail to see how their thoughts and actions uphold someone else's subordination.'

Without wishing to reinforce the preciousness of white women, I have had to find pedagogical interventions which enable white women to develop an anti-racist consciousness and strategies without activating the negative feelings many of them already have about themselves. This frequently involves locating the hurt part of the self that receives misinformation about self and others. But cathartic personal work needs to be accompanied by action for change. Acknowledgement of racism is only effective if it leads to transformation (Hooks 1991 p.35).

Unlike many other disciplines, women's studies does not aim to educate and inform 'on top' of the individual's sense of self, but seeks to locate the self at the centre of the learning process.

Maggie Humm (1991 p.60) has reached a similar conclusion in her work.

'Clearly, feminist knowledge has to be seen as neither an exterior product to be ingested...nor as a set of personal opinions as in liberalism, but as an evolving construct, created by the self through the analysis of the complex and changing reality of others.'

Women's studies cannot always be safe and comfortable as one woman's comfort represents the discomfort of another. But the challenge exists as to how difference and diversity can be explored without reinforcing and re-enacting the hurt women have experienced via their forms of oppression. For example, how the issue of lesbian oppression can be addressed without tokenising and exposing lesbians in the group to unaware attitudes, language and fears?

Whilst consciousness and awareness are qualitative, rather than quantitative, the question arises as to how women can receive the attention needed to enable them to develop ideas when their present views can be so unacceptable to others. In addition, many of the women have had negative experiences of the education system in the past and are very conscious of the potential for hurt and humiliation in educational settings. This often translates itself into fear of saying the wrong thing and showing ignorance of issues or using inappropriate language in group discussions. As misinformation via language plays such a prominent role in

the establishment and maintenance of power, it is difficult to avoid the restimulation of profound feelings of victimisation when members of oppressed groups hear themselves referred to in terms associated with their prolonged subordination.

The valorising of experience has always been a key feature of empowerment work with women. As Hanmer (1991 p. 105) points out, 'Personal experience is both embryonic theory and the site for the validation of theory'. The challenge also exists as to how women's studies can extend women's experiences and contradict some of the harmful effects of negative experiences based on oppression and discrimination.

It is not uncommon for women on the course I teach to express confusion about the apparently mixed messages they believe are being transmitted in women's studies. For example, a white working class woman recently produced an essay on women's oppression written entirely in the first person from her own perspective. Her justification was that her experiences had always been excluded from academic study in the past and that it was an intensely political act to make herself the subject of her inquiry. This is a view that many feminist teachers would support, but it raised questions about the interpretation of the label 'woman' as 'white woman', and by making herself the subject of work on women's oppression, she had purported to speak on behalf of black women too. The challenge was how to validate and celebrate her experience, but also to acknowledge that it

was only a partial view and had also been constituted by exclusionary practices.

Women's studies can open up opportunities to theorise power differentials and exchange good information about our lives without reinforcing divisions and destructive interactions between women. To ignore difference in the interests of a false sense of sisterhood would be inappropriate. But to explore difference without attention to intra- and inter-personal dynamics can merely widen the gaps and reinforce hurt. (Wheeler and Chinn 1984 and Ferguson 1988). Approaches to the study of difference in women's studies have been well documented by feminist theorists. Renate Klein (1991 p.83) believes that

'..difference...not only splits women into non-entities...it also splits women from each other.'

Kathleen Barry (1989 p.572) also observes,

'Whenever differences are emphasized without first recognising collectivity, commonality and unity among women, gender power is depoliticised.'

This dynamic was most visible some years ago, when some women in the group insisted that lesbian oppression should be the first topic for study at the beginning of the course. When the session took place, tension levels soon rose as

some women related to the subject as a 'special need', and were unable to see how heterosexuality as an institution and ideology upholds female oppression (Bunch 1991 p. 319). Frustration and hurt were angrily expressed in the group, and women accused each other of oppressive behaviour. Some of these feelings were transferred on to me and some women were angry with me for 'allowing' this to happen. The psychoanalytical terms of transference and counter transference have established connections with feminist pedagogy (Culley and Portugues 1985 p.15).

Counter transference had to take place without depoliticizing the subject matter (Perkins 1991). But it appeared that women were engaging with the subject from their hurt (Itzin 1985). Internalised oppression was operating to ensure that anger and rage were being vented on each other (Morley 1992). My intervention was to reinforce the importance of the subject, by providing information, analysis and experiential exercises. I needed to provide a challenge to the heterosexism in the group without it being seen as the authority-led gaze and thereby activating more unhelpful feelings. But more importantly, I needed to expose the destructive blaming games which were being enacted. Certain women felt that the 'I'm O.K, you're not O.K. game was being played, and this was reactivating strong feelings of powerlessness in the face of disapproval. Nobody could see the fear and hurt, but only the anger and disappointment. We interrupted the exploration of the issue and focused on group dynamics. I attempted to enable the

group to relate theoretical perspectives from their interpersonal and group work skills sessions to the understanding of process in their women's group.

In my experience, when conflict arises out of difference, women in the 'oppressor' role often resent the intrusion and disruption caused by women drawing attention to power differentials. Women in the 'oppressed' role resent the fact that some women can make a choice whether or not to concern themselves with issues that other women are not in a position to forget. (Childers and hooks 1990 p.75).

To conclude, empowerment is not about behaviour modification or cognitive restructuring (Perkins 1991) or finding 'a cure' (Kitzinger 1991), but is more concerned with ways of analysing and challenging our oppression which are less harmful to ourselves. Equally, by problematising the concept of empowerment itself, women's studies can play an effective role in challenging disadvantages based on race, class and gender.

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Margaretdaughters.

WERRC

Women's Education Research and Resource Centre University College Dublin

Women's Studies - In search of the Feminist component

Outline Communication to the GRIP GRACE Seminar
Feminising the Academy Brussels 1992

The WERRC centre was established by the Faculty of Arts of University College Dublin in 1990 to encourage and support the development of Women's Studies research and education. It has, as one of its primary objectives, the aim of "increasing knowledge of the historical and contemporary roles and experiences of women in all cultures and especially in Ireland" (1). The WERCC centre is one of several experimental models of Women's Studies in Ireland, long with those of University College Galway, University of Limerick, Trinity College, Dublin and University of Ulster.

Born from a campus of 12,000 students, WERCC has seven different types of courses, subject options and programmes intended for quite distinct groups of women students, women graduates and women in learning from different social and educational backgrounds.

1. Post-graduate Master's Degree and Diploma in Women's studies which explores the theoretical and applied foundations of women's studies with a core component of feminist theory.
2. A series of research seminars where post-graduate students and researchers from inside and outside the University engage in critical discussion of formal papers on themes such as 'Women and Philosophy' or 'Research on Domestic Violence.'
3. A series of public lectures advertised in the mass media. This included writer Germaine Greer in 1991 attended by an audience of about 900 and writer Beatrix Campbell (UK) in February 1992.
4. In October 1991, WERCC opened its first adult education Certificate course for women who had left the education system some time previously. This part-time night-time course awards a Certificate in Women's Studies and opened with 60 women mature students.
5. Some under graduate students are offered a 'women's studies option' as part of their Degree. Students of Social Science and of Social Work can attend an option on Women and Social Policy jointly offered by their Department and WERCC. About 40 men and women students take this course and examinations each year.

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Director: Allbhe Smyth WERRC, Library Building, University College, Belfield, Dublin 4
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6. WERCC has begun a Community Outreach programme on a small scale to exchange ideas on women's studies with women organised in community groups on housing estates at the edges of the city. Many women in these groups left school at the age of 14 or 15. The groups are invited to visit the campus as part of the exchange.
7. In October 1991, the first of a series of five television programmes in Women's Studies were broadcast on national television (RTE). These had been made during the year by WERCC with the University Audio-Visual Centre which has its own TV studios. The target audience were women with families who do not engage in paid employment outside the home.

The WERCC approach which is highly differentiated in its courses and students is based on the assumption that differences in social class, educational and cultural experience and attainment generates a variety of heterogeneous needs among women.

In this context the course range from those which present descriptive accounts of gender difference to those which elaborate on the various schools of thought which advance causes and explanations of difference, to research seminars on the re-construction of gender-neutral knowledge.

Pauline Conroy Jackson.

1. Women's Education, Research and Resource Centre Annual Report 1990-1991. Dublin.

Paper for the GRACE-seminar on women's studies in Europe on 4-5th February 1992 in Bruxelles by Freda Dröes (lecturer Catholic Theological University Utrecht), Bickersgracht 2, 1013 LE Amsterdam.

Who teaches women's studies in theology?

In most Departments of Theology in the Netherlands there is one women-theologian who has the task to teach women's studies in theology. They are all working also for a Ph.D. The one's who have already a Ph.D are foreigners (Germans, British, Belgians). Theology is a university in itself. All disciplines are connected with disciplines outside theology: exegesis with languages and literature, church-history with history, practical theology with social sciences. The integration-framework on the church-faculties is systematic theology, as a reflection on christian faith in relation to culture and society. Most of the lecturers who teach women's studies in theology are systematic theologians. In the state-departments of Theology there are women-lecturers who have the task to teach in women's studies exegesis, church-history, practical theology. The integration-framework for these lecturers in women's studies in theology is theology in the sense of a search for meaning, naming the transcendent and constructing identity for women. In spite of the differences, all the lecturers in women's studies in theology in the Netherlands are networked in relation to discussions concerning teaching, theory-forming and research in women's studies. In the different disciplines of theology there are only a very few women-lecturers (0 or 1 at each faculty) and they also pay attention to subjects of women's studies. So there is a double track policy on the Departments of Theology: promoting women's studies theology as a discipline in itself and more women in the different disciplines who are (or will be) connected with women's studies. In our experience feminism is a fundamental condition for emancipation policy at faculty-level.

The lecturers who have these jobs are all women and white (13x). Most of them are middleclass. 25% of them are lesbian, some of them are bi, most are hetero-sexual. 10% is married, some live together, some alone or in a living group. 25% has one or more children.

Who is taught in women's studies theology?

In most Departments of Theology there is a obligatory course for all students (women and men) in the second year, in one Department also in the third year. After the third year students can choose for women's studies in theology. One can do one or two seminars on a subject of women's studies theology or a part of the specialisation in second fase of the study. Most of the students who choose women's studies in theology are white women, some white men. A black women (or men) is rare. The class-background and the sexual orientation of the students is different.

Most Departments have also students in part-time (in the evening and on Saturday). Most of these students are (older and working) women. There is for them also an obligatory course in women's studies theology. They can not choose much in their programme.

Most Departments have courses in women's studies in theology

for theologians who are working in the field. Most of these post-graduates are women.

Relationship between student and teacher in women's studies theology?

The relationship in the courses is based on the transmitting knowledge and experience. Some students are more involved as student-assistants. In most Departments there are structures for women's studies (more or less official commissions) in which the most active women-students and the teacher(s) in women's studies participate. Those structures give the teacher a basis among the students in the Department and the students the opportunity for more political involvement in the aims of women's studies. Because there are only one or two women-teachers on a faculty and about 50% of the students are women, you can imagine that the women-lecturers have a extra unpaid and unrecognised work-load in terms of pastoral and psychological support for these students.

Introductory course content

-introduction in women's studies in general (characterisation, definition, aims, development in the Netherlands, actual position in history, literature, psychology, philosophy)

-criteria and categories in women's studies in theology (women/men/human; female/male; gender/sex; discrimination/misogyny/ women's oppression; hierarchy/complementarity/androgyny; sexual difference/equality/difference; matriarchy/patriarchy.

-theological women-traditions (History of women in theology: renaissance, nineteenth century, twentieth century; the beginning of feminist theology, from feminist theology to women's studies in theology)

-developments in systematic theological womenstudies (steps to do feminist theology, focus for example on the thinking of feminist theologians about sin and evil)

-womenstudies exegesis (sex-specific literary and historical approach. Reading the bible 'as a women'; experiences of women: a source of authority; tracks of womentradition)

-womenstudies ethics (moral development of women, analyses of ethical theories for women: specific ethical problems for women: feminist ethical theories).

-womenstudies philosophy: the difference in gender-relations as difference in power.

The feminist element in women's studies teaching is consequent. It starts from a women's perspective with the aim of exposing the inequality in power between men en women. The texts and activities of women in bible, tradition and actual theology are central in the teaching. With the possibility for identification for women gives this also new knowledge and insights. In the teaching it is of course important to teach the students the scientific methods and tools for women's studies. To work with gender as a scientific relevant categorie, to make gender-specific analyses and to problematize consequent constructions of the gender-differences as such. Differences between women (sex, race, class) and the nature of female subjectivity are central to the methods and tools of women's studies (theology) as a critical and selfcritical principle.

VITA FORTUNATI

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ITALY

The fact that Women's Studies Department and Courses do not officially exist in the Italian University does not necessarily mean that there is not an active interest and research carried out on the subject. In order to understand why Women's Studies Programs do not exist in our system it is necessary to keep in mind two factors.

The first one is historical: although women have consistently been present in Italian academia in different fields such as literature and science (as recent research on the subject has shown), power within the University has traditionally been held by male scholars and academicians.

The second factor has to do with the existing divergence among women who teach and research women's studies as regards the institutionalization of women's studies. Many women fear that once women's studies are institutionalized, they will lose their radicalness and their characteristic of joining what is "inside" and "outside" of academia. In other words, by being institutionalized, women fear that women's studies programs won't maintain the link between feminist theory and feminist practice. Such a position has inevitably led to a slow-down in research on women's issues as well as on the possibilities of having women's studies programs.

Such lack has been filled by the presence of Research Centers, Libraries and Women's Bookstores, Associations and the Erasmus Program. Research Centers are publicly financed by City Governments; one of the most important is in the city of Bologna (Centro di Ricerca e Documentazione delle Donne). The Center

promotes talks, debates and research on women's issues which are often connected with research and initiatives carried out in different departments of the University. It has a well-stocked library, which is to become the first national library and archive on women's studies.

Besides libraries, there are all through Italy, women's Bookstores also promoting cultural and political programs. Research Centers, Bookstores and Women's Groups often collaborate with the University, where we also have an Interdepartmental and Interdisciplinary Research Center on Women's Studies (University of Turin) and various Associations (Women Historians, Literary Women, Donne Bolognesi Universitarie).

But the initiative that comes closer to Women's Studies is the Erasmus Project that links the University of Bologna to Utrecht University (other partner Universities: York, Paris, Bielefeld, Madrid, Antwerp, and from next year Dublin). It is the first Erasmus Project on Women's Studies to have been established in Italy (there is now another one in Florence on German Literature and Women's Studies). The subject taught and researched are the usual ones: literature, history, art history, film theory, philosophy, art history, sociology. The project is in its third year of existence and partners are currently at work on the formulation of a "joint curriculum," that is, a core course on Women's Studies which will be taught in each partner university. At first it will be taught by professors of different universities and later by staff members of the same university.

Eliane GUBIN (Université libre de Bruxelles)
Séminaire GRACE 4-5 février 1992

1. L'enseignement est dispensé dans le cadre des études d'histoire et de journalisme et communication à l'Université de Bruxelles. Les deux cours dont je suis titulaire (*Critique historique appliquée à la période contemporaine* et *Etude approfondie d'histoire politique de la Belgique contemporaine*) sont des cours obligatoires : ils ne font donc pas l'objet d'un choix.

Cependant, ces cours peuvent être choisis par des étudiants d'autres sections, parmi leurs cours à option (c'est le cas chaque année pour quelques étudiants de licence en sciences politiques et de licence spéciale en droit international).

2. Pour les séminaires de "Critique historique..." (30 h., groupe de 30 étudiants de candidature), l'optique "women's studies" résulte des thèmes mis à l'étude. Ils changent chaque année. A titre d'exemple, en 1989-90, le séminaire a porté sur "le Travail des femmes en Belgique au 19e s.;" en 1990-91, sur "La Tribune libre féminine du *Soir*" (le plus important quotidien bruxellois) de 1920 à 1940, en 1991-92 sur "L'insertion professionnelle des femmes dans la région bruxelloise (1846-1970)". Ces séminaires obligent les étudiants à des lectures et à des recherches originales débouchant sur un travail écrit d'une vingtaine de pages, dont la note constitue la note d'examen pour ce cours.

En ce qui concerne le cours d'histoire de Belgique (30 h., environ 160 étudiants de licence), j'y fais une place importante au mouvement d'émancipation féminine. Cet aspect est généralement ignoré des étudiants, qui ont pourtant suivi précédemment d'autres cours d'histoire de Belgique. J'insiste aussi sur l'ampleur des recherches menées en histoire des femmes, autre aspect totalement ignoré des étudiants. L'année passée, dans une liste d'ouvrages à préparer pour l'examen (en plus de la matière enseignée), j'ai été agréablement surprise de constater qu'un nombre significatif d'étudiant(e)s avaient choisi de présenter un livre traitant d'histoire des femmes. Il est toutefois à noter que cette "réception" se fait sans peine parce que la matière est inscrite dans le cursus normal et n'apparaît pas explicitement sous le terme "histoire féministe". Je pense qu'elle serait beaucoup plus sélective et laborieuse si elle était détachée de cours obligatoires.

Des leçons spécifiques consacrées à la condition des femmes sont organisées tous les deux ans, grâce aux fonds de la Chaire Suzanne Charlier-Tassier qui permet d'inviter un professeur étranger. Thèmes : en 1990, le Travail des femmes en Europe occidentale (Michelle Perrot), en 1992 : Construction des différences et rapports sociaux de sexe en Europe contemporaine (Eleni Varikas).

Le Groupe interdisciplinaire d'Etudes sur les femmes a pour ambition de construire un enseignement autour de cette chaire en s'inspirant de l'expérience décrite précédemment. Il s'agit d'un enseignement de second cycle, sous forme "d'unité de valeur" (titre pressenti : "Femmes et sociétés"). L'on constituerait un module de cours, parmi les cours réguliers de l'Université, dont les titulaires s'accordent pour y insérer une dimension "women's studies" (cours de sociologie, droit., psychologie..etc). Ce module pourrait être choisi par les étudiants des facultés de sciences humaines, dans le cadre de leurs cours à option. Il serait mentionné sur le diplôme, au titre de qualification reconnue (la proposition étant de l'intituler Certificat "Femmes et sociétés").

1. L'enseignement est dispensé dans le cadre des études d'histoire et de journalisme et communication à l'Université de Bruxelles. Les deux cours dont je suis titulaire (*Critique historique appliquée à la période contemporaine* et *Etude approfondie d'histoire politique de la Belgique contemporaine*) sont des cours obligatoires : ils ne font donc pas l'objet d'un choix.

Cependant, ces cours peuvent être choisis par des étudiants d'autres sections, parmi leurs cours à option (c'est le cas chaque année pour quelques étudiants de licence en sciences politiques et de licence spéciale en droit international).

2. Pour les séminaires de "Critique historique..." (30 h., groupe de 30 étudiants de candidature), l'optique "women's studies" résulte des thèmes mis à l'étude. Ils changent chaque année. A titre d'exemple, en 1989-90, le séminaire a porté sur "le Travail des femmes en Belgique au 19e s;" en 1990-91, sur "La Tribune libre féminine du Soir" (le plus important quotidien bruxellois) de 1920 à 1940, en 1991-92 sur "L'insertion professionnelle des femmes dans la région bruxelloise (1846-1970)". Ces séminaires obligent les étudiants à des lectures et à des recherches originales débouchant sur un travail écrit d'une vingtaine de pages, dont la note constitue la note d'examen pour ce cours.

En ce qui concerne le cours d'histoire de Belgique (30 h., environ 160 étudiants de licence), j'y fais une place importante au mouvement d'émancipation féminine. Cet aspect est généralement ignoré des étudiants, qui ont pourtant suivi précédemment d'autres cours d'histoire de Belgique. J'insiste aussi sur l'ampleur des recherches menées en histoire des femmes, autre aspect totalement ignoré des étudiants. L'année passée, dans une liste d'ouvrages à préparer pour l'examen (en plus de la matière enseignée), j'ai été agréablement surprise de constater qu'un nombre significatif d'étudiant(e)s avaient choisi de présenter un livre traitant d'histoire des femmes. Il est toutefois à noter que cette "réception" se fait sans peine parce que la matière est inscrite dans le cursus normal et n'apparaît pas explicitement sous le terme "histoire féministe". Je pense qu'elle serait beaucoup plus sélective et laborieuse si elle était détachée de cours obligatoires.

Des leçons spécifiques consacrées à la condition des femmes sont organisées tous les deux ans, grâce aux fonds de la Chaire Suzanne Charlier-Tassier qui permet d'inviter un professeur étranger. Thèmes : en 1990, le Travail des femmes en Europe occidentale (Michelle Perrot), en 1992 : Construction des différences et rapports sociaux de sexe en Europe contemporaine (Eleni Varikas).

Le Groupe Interdisciplinaire d'Etudes sur les femmes a pour ambition de construire un enseignement autour de cette chaire en s'inspirant de l'expérience décrite précédemment. Il s'agit d'un enseignement de second cycle, sous forme "d'unité de valeur" (titre pressenti : "Femmes et sociétés"). L'on constituerait un module de cours, parmi les cours réguliers de l'Université, dont les titulaires s'accordent pour y insérer une dimension "women's studies" (cours de sociologie, droit., psychologie..etc). Ce module pourrait être choisi par les étudiants des facultés de sciences humaines, dans le cadre de leurs cours à option. Il serait mentionné sur le diplôme, au titre de qualification reconnue (la proposition étant de l'intituler Certificat "Femmes et sociétés").

Universität Osnabrück

FACHBEREICH
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Ihr Zeichen

Ihre Nachricht vom

Mein Zeichen

Datum

28th January 1992

Paper for "Women's Studies - feminizing the academy?"

Two central characteristics of the higher educational system in Germany have shaped the emergence of women's studies:

1. Teaching programs in the humanities and social sciences are highly flexible, or even in a state of anarchy; teaching staff select their own topics and texts within a broad, abstract framework.

This made it relatively easy for teaching assistants to make individual choices about including feminist topics and books in their courses early on; no prior departments decisions were necessary. I have taught women's studies courses in departments of sociology, political science and education (depending on the position I held) since 1974. Not until 1985 was there a professorship in Germany (Berlin) explicitly for women's studies, and this was part-time (my own). Since 1988 I hold a chair of women's studies and educational philosophy at the University of Osnabrück.

2. Formal certification controls access to vocations and professions in Germany almost totally. An academic degree confers some right to positions and level of pay; a specified degree is prerequisite to most positions. Against this background it makes no sense to offer degrees in womens's studies as such.

This has created a broad consensus among feminist who teach women's studies that we integrate our themes and issues into the recognized disciplines and subdisciplines. The relative liberty of choice of course content has reduced the level of conflict that this can involve. However, the interdisciplinary and unconventional character of women's issues means that there is always some tension around this, and it is sometimes a political issue. Locating our field in the most general areas of "theory" and "methodology" is helpful. The remaining problems have been approached in two ways: by including a "women's issues" element in programs (as a partial specialization) towards a regular degree in the field; and by offering some courses as "general education" or in cooperation with other departments.

In the department of education, I have both future teachers, who generally take only courses which explicitly fulfill their requirements in the education department, as well as students who are studying education as a first or second major field, either for a diploma in social work or for a M.A. (for example, in combination with literature, art, social sciences or other fields).

I pursue all three above strategies in teaching.

1. I "redefine" established examination topics in gender-specified ways: for example, my course in pedagogical anthropology (a required field) discusses the ways gender difference may be biologically determined and the ways in which it is socialized, as well as its role in education. With this course, future teachers and students with an education major fulfill part of their requirements in general education theory.

2. I offer courses in a field of specialization defined by our new M.A. program as "Education and counselling of women" (one of three alternatives alongside social pedagogy and European education). Such courses may deal with the phenomenology and causes of violence against women, with the history of girl's education or of

the women's movement, or with sociocultural differences in gender relations.

3. Some courses are needed which transcend all program categories, for example a survey lecture covering feminist theories of patriarchy. Others overlap with other fields. I am now planning a course in cooperation with the law department on state intervention relating to violence against women; this will count for credit towards a law degree as well as being counted in the education department. Both types of courses are part of the attempt to bring the ideas generated in women's studies to a broader audience.

Absolutely central to my own teaching and research in women's studies is on-going communication via lectures and discussions with women outside academic programs. They may be political women, students, mothers and housewives, highly educated women, or women in a variety of jobs; but their input into my thinking - which I receive by offering them my ideas (lectures) or by interviews (research) constitute the creative force shaping what I think and teach. This, too, is a form of "teaching" women's studies. I have commitments of this type on an average of three per month.

The vast majority of my students are female; this is true in lectures open to the public as well. Some topics draw women only, and it is clear that young men tend to be fearful of entering the feminist lion's den. In those courses and lectures which do draw a mixed public, there tend to be about 10 % men. Lesbian issues have been very influential in feminist women's studies in Germany, less so in the mainstreaming of the field.

A substantial proportion of my students have been women whose educational path did not originally lead to academic study, but social class is infrequently an issue raised by students. Cultural and ethnic difference is becoming an important issue in cities such as Berlin; in Osnabrück it is rather a topic for consciousness-raising by teaching and research staff and guest lectures.

Olwen Hufton

Professor of History and Gender History

European University Institute,

Florence

I was one of the early teachers of women's history in the U.K. From 1973 I taught undergraduate courses in the history of women 1500-c1930, a class in the history of feminism from Wollstonecraft to c 1975 ,and I sought to integrate some of the issues regarding women into general history courses in the political and social history of Europe . The University where I taught , Reading, was an older red brick [as we say] but one which had some tradition of interest in women's history since Lady Doris Stenton, who had written the history of the medieval English woman was for a long time head of the department though long retired when I arrived. When I began, women's history had yet to develop into gender history .though by the eighties this approach was dominant. The students were middle class or largely so and mainly white. The subject was of particular interest to mature students and many of these were very able indeed. I find it difficult to say to what degree the students were motivated by a feminist consciousness. Most of them certainly were.

Three points stand out

1. The courses taught belonged in the "optional" category and were directed towards third year students deemed sufficiently

advanced. These were in groups of about twenty and of the seminar type. Issues about women could only infiltrate the broader foundation courses in history in a very general and perfunctory way. In a thirteen week course for first years on twentieth century European history I managed only to get one week for women. I ~~consider the infiltration of studies early in a student's career to be an essential.~~

2. It would have been possible for us to introduce a women's studies M A with a strong history component. This could have been interdisciplinary - history, literature, sociology. The university would have lauded such an initiative because it would have made money from it. [£2000 sterling per student] However, the teachers would not have had this teaching taken into account in their teaching quotas. The small number of teaching women involved would have given them a heavy additional load and if one left crisis could have ensued. Since the women's history courses were oversubscribed and since U.S. junior year abroad undergraduates were also making demands [another group making money for the university] I believed one had to be realistic. Other British universities like York and Sussex have had success at the M A level but this reaches only a tiny minority of women.

3. The traditional discipline structures with clearly defined epistemological lines continue to prevail in most English Universities and in most cases are likely to remain undisturbed. The area of women's history is frequently seen as something nice to have but not essential.

From 1987-91, I was director of Women's Studies at

Harvard.harvard was the last of the ivy league to have a concentration in women's studies. The modular structure of the American degree makes women's studies a greater reality provided that one can get some really good and structured foundation courses. There are many universities and colleges where women's studies is a name given to a rather random selection of courses and there is a replication of the unhappy spectacle of women again teaching above their loads to sustain a program.I taught a semester course [half a foundation course] two lectures and one seminar class per week per student- on the development of feminist thought from Wollstonecraft to Mary Daly via J.S.Mill, Engels, social Darwinism and fascism, the French feminists of the turn of the century,Woolf, de Beauvoir, Friedan , Millet,Bell Hooks and Black feminism adn a lot more before handing over to Alice Jardine on feminist literary criticism. My experience makes me a proponent of a strong first year course for all arts and humanities undergraduate students which treats of women's issues or a feminist perspective. Most students never get beyond the undergraduate stage.

The European University Institute is a graduate establishment. of forty professors only two are women and both are feminists working in their own fields, history and law.There is a healthy number of students interested in doing specialised work in gender .There is also a multi disciplinary group which meets on a regular basis and which attracts about forty participants.The status of this group at the Institute is not clear and what its funding will be in the years to come under the new plans for the establishment

of a Schumann policy centre is at present problematic. We will certainly not go away but we would be much encouraged by a firm commitment. Those who are working in law and economics and sociology in particular need an assured presence of a regular seminar. They are doing excellent and important work for the Europe of tomorrow.

ÉTUDES SUR LES FEMMES AU PORTUGAL

Je ne suis pas enseignante et mon expérience se situe à deux niveaux: en tant que chercheuse dans ce domaine d'études et en tant que fonctionnaire du Centre de Documentation de la Commission pour l'Égalité et les Droits de la Femme (ex-Commission de la Condition Féminine). C'est à dire que ma façon d'envisager la question que se propose discuter ce Séminaire est traversée par ces expériences, proches et lointaines simultanément. Je voudrais d'ailleurs profiter de l'occasion pour faire quelques remarques sur la situation des études sur les femmes au Portugal et sur la difficulté que l'on ressent souvent à donner à voir des réalités, des approches et des démarches différentes.

Mon travail à la Commission est un bon poste d'observation de la réalité portugaise à ce niveau: il y a pas mal de chercheurs/euses, d'étudiant(e)s et de journalistes qui le fréquentent. Je peux suivre les questions / les problèmes qui se soulèvent comme des vagues (p. ex. violence contre les femmes et contre les enfants, harcèlement sexuel); les nouveaux objets de recherche et d'intérêt, les études qui se font et qui se publient. Tout cela constitue une somme considérable d'études dans ce domaine. Des études très diversifiées. Au niveau théorique nous sommes penchés / branchés sur les problématiques internationales, ce qui fait que, même qu'il n'y ait pas de cours officiellement constitués, cela ne veut pas dire que ces questions ne soient pas abordées dans des cours, des séminaires, des travaux réalisés. Une autre conséquence c'est que, même si ce sont des femmes la grande majorité des professeurs qui s'intéressent à ces sujets, il y a aussi des enseignants et des chercheurs qui savent qu'il n'est plus possible de passer à côté de certaines questions dans leur

travail de recherche et d'enseignement, comme, par exemple, les rapports sociaux de sexe. Il apparaît alors, d'une façon informelle, l'intégration d'une problématique sans changement institutionnel corrélatif (tel la constitution d'un département, etc.). D'ailleurs, déjà lors du rapport présenté en 1988 sur les Women's studies au Portugal, la plupart des chercheuses et des enseignantes ont répondu qu'elles ne faisaient pas de recherches féministes mais "sur les femmes". Plus tard, dans la préparation de l'Association Portugaise - Études sur les femmes (APEM), la plupart des chercheuses présentes ont opté pour l'intégration dans les domaines scientifiques déjà constitués.

Il faut donc faire attention parce que dans chaque pays - dans le mien dans ce cas - il y a des contextes et des constellations, de rencontres parfois avec les mêmes domaines mais en des contours qui changent, ce qui fait un paysage différent, ce qui ne veut pas dire paysage vide.

Chaque fois que j'essaie de retracer le contexte national portugais au niveau des Études sur les Femmes, j'ai l'impression qu'il y a un problème de traduction, qui peut devenir affirmatif dans le sens énoncé par R. Braiddotti: "Il s'agit de mettre l'accent sur les différences culturelles de façon à les rendre manifestes dans nos propres pratiques théoriques" (41). C'est comme si à chaque fois il fallait insister sur tout le travail déjà réalisé, sur les séminaires et les livres publiés en rapport avec eux, soit organisés par la Commission, soit par deux autres Instituts de recherche (à Coimbra et à Porto), cités lors de notre 1^{er} rapport sur la recherche et l'enseignement féministe et/ou sur les femmes au Portugal, sur le bulle-

tin de la Commission qui essaie d'informer sur tous les séminaires, colloques, réseaux internationaux dans ce domaine. On fait de plus en plus de thèses de licence et de maîtrises, et même des doctorats. C'est à dire qu'il faut envisager la réalité 'nationale' dans ses "différences multiples" et ne pas essayer d'établir un modèle / une filière unique pour l'affermissement des "Études sur les Femmes", tant à niveau national qu'euro-péen. D'ailleurs j'ai l'impression que la façon d'entendre d'autres cultures, d'autres formes de dire et de faire est souvent brisée par un modèle euro-centriste qui sort très peu de sa culture, qui est assez peu traversé par d'autres cultures, qu'elles soient lointaines ou proches; par exemple, le Sud de l'Europe dans sa pluralité. Et la réalité est beaucoup plus vibrante et difficile qu'on essaie de le croire. La folklorisation d'un peuple ou des femmes d'un certain pays passe par des images figées en des stéréotypes.

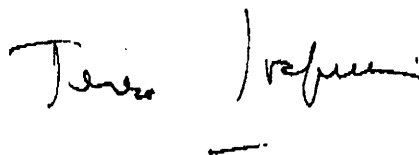
Par exemple, une facette différente du Portugal est le taux très élevé et assez rare de féminisation de l'enseignement scientifique et technique. La Commission est d'ailleurs en train de mener une étude sur les facteurs qui déterminent la présence des femmes dans l'enseignement supérieur, étude fait avec financement de l'UNESCO. Il semble y être vu comme ayant utilité internationale, permettant par exemple l'esquisse de stratégies pour l'augmentation des femmes dans l'enseignement supérieur dans d'autres pays, notamment dans le domaine de la technologie. Il doit être conclu en Juin 1992.

Dans un autre cadre, j'aimerais aussi mentionner la création par les Organisations Non-Gouvernementales du Conseil Consultatif de la Commission - constitué d'une vingtaine d'organisations de femmes - d'un prix decerné à des recherches sur les femmes au Portugal.

C'est dans ce contexte qu'il me semble très important aussi le travail qui développe l'APEM en des différents aspects: recherche, enseignement, information, formation, divulgation. "L'intervention des institutions de la CE tout comme la diversification de l'enseignement au Portugal sont favorables à l'ouverture de nouveaux domaines d'études" Il faut aussi tenir compte du cadre financier de la recherche scientifique portugaise qui est très fragile et où il y a lieu surtout pour des recherches empiriques. L'APEM essaiera de poursuivre des recherches empiriques mais souhaite aussi susciter le débat et la réflexion théoriques, le questionnement épistémologique, lequel est très nécessaire et peut être stimulant dans un contexte scientifique où le débat et le conflit sont fort absents.

Et pour finir, je sens que les questions posées ne peuvent pas recevoir l'écho d'un contexte très différent. Par exemple, la question du "genre", je la vois très peu travaillée dans le cadre de la recherche portugaise sur les femmes, même si curieusement le premier texte "féministe" du Portugal, au XVIème siècle, s'intitulait "Du genre et des prérogatives du sexe féminin"...

Teresa Joaquim



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From Sasa Lada
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My experience of the teaching of women's studies comes from my participation into two different groups. The first, as a member of the Women's Studies Group of A.U.T. (Aristotle university of Thessaloniki), and the second as a member of the teaching staff of the School of Architecture of A.U.T.

My participation in the Women's Studies Group dates since 1983, when the group got its multi-scientific profile. Lecturing on gender-space issues started in 1985, as one of the issues included in the program of the free lectures organised by the group every year since 1985.

The existence of the group, the discussions within it and the step by step formation of a collective conscience regarding subjects on gender and science were the necessary background for me, before I got the initiative to organise and teach a course on gender - space issues in the School of Architecture. Here comes, I think, the first comment, as regards the conditions under which a "feminist" course should be included in an undergraduate or post-graduate academic program; that is, in my opinion, the existence of a women's studies group, as far as, the "feminist approach" becomes an obvious parameter in the construction of science and of the scientific methods.

In 1987, together with another colleague, a member also of the WSG and of the staff of Architecture, we decided to propose for teaching a course on gender-space issues in the school of Architecture. The proposition had been accepted and we run the course for two years, 1987-88, 1988-89. The title of the course was "The gender as a parameter for the organisation of space".

The course, two hours per week, for one semester, selected both by male and female students, was given in the form of lectures followed by discussion. The main objective of the course was to familiarize the students with the hypothesis that the genderisation of society has been reflected also on the construction of space and vice versa.

The main subjects discussed in the course were:

- the genderisation of society: the social institutions where the genderisation is realized, such as the family, education, etc.
- the real and symbolic use of space: the relationship between human (without gender?) behaviour and space; territoriality, privacy etc.
- Family structure and the spatial organisation of the house. The analysis compares the historical evolution of society with the forms of family and housing that occurred, in pre-industrial, industrial and meta-industrial era.

During the course the students had to prepare a paper, on the use of the spaces of their own homes, by their own families, its scope being to approach the issues discussed during the course through a personal experience.

Summarising the experience of this course, I would like to comment on:

- The reactions of the students towards the basic hypothesis of the course.
- The necessity or not, to exist a "feminist" course in an academic program.

As regards the first, we observed a differentiated attitude between male and female students; mainly the male students had a greater difficulty to accept it and further more to understand its consequences in the built environment.

As regards the second, I think that the existence of "feminist" courses in academic programmes is a necessary prerequisite for the transformation of science and scientists, in order to overcome the socially constructed dichotomy between male and female, dichotomy which is also reflected in the construction of science.

FEMINIZING THE ACADEMY - PAPER FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER

BACKGROUND TO WOMEN'S STUDIES

Women's Studies commenced at the University in 1988 with foundation courses and a post-graduate Diploma/MSc. The courses are interdisciplinary, involving staff from five faculties of the University. They are still part-time courses since we have insufficient resources to operate these courses on a full-time basis. Our next stage is to develop specialist courses at the undergraduate level and to obtain further resources to expand this programme on an outreach basis.

We have major links with women's organisations and women's groups and through outreach work we intend to bring the courses to the women, rather than the women to the University. This is mainly because the costs of childcare and travel remain a hurdle for women wishing to return to higher education. We hope to appoint a liaison/development officer to secure the outreach work between the community and the University.

Resources for Women's Studies

In 1991, we had the appointment of Celia Davies to a Chair in Women's Studies. In 1988, this was a University-wide Chair in Women's Opportunities but the post is now based in the Department of Social Administration and Policy and is linked to the Centre for Research on Women. This is the first Chair in Women's Studies in the United Kingdom or Ireland. Obviously, such an appointment adds legitimacy inside the academy to the field of Women's Studies. The difficulty arises however when the academy believes it has fulfilled its obligations to Women's Studies through such an appointment. A further difficulty is that a very small number of women staff continue to take on more and more work in this field without additional resources. As co-ordinator of the programme in Women's Studies, two major problems have yet to be overcome in the academy. One is that staff teaching on these courses should not be marginalised nor should their teaching be seen as a "luxury" for which they receive little credit. In relation to staff appraisal, it is our experience that both research and teaching in the field of Women's Studies receive a low priority rating. Consequently, "feminizing the academy" becomes a slower process since staff concentrating on Women's Studies or researching women's issues are much less likely to be promoted to senior posts. Secondly, the University in its "mission" statement makes much of its contribution to the continuity and the importance of equal opportunities for women. Within the University there is little evidence of this to date. The "market" demand for women's studies is evident but compared to engineering, science or business courses, it is not seen as a "real market". Again in relation to funding and resources for future development, or credibility for staff teaching women's studies, the struggle within the University is similar to that outside. The lessons learned within the academy continue to be as applicable as those in the wider women's movement generally.

Future Developments

Staff development must be prioritised in the future - otherwise women will continue to suffer from that notorious syndrome of "burn out". Staff need a core identity and the time and space to create this identity. We intend now to amalgamate the Centre for Research on Women and the Women's Studies programmes and create a Centre for Women's Studies. Research officers and research students who feel particularly isolated will be enabled to join with permanent members of the Women's Studies team who also feel particularly isolated within their own departments. The usual debate continued - whether to become a separate unit inside a Faculty or to remain part of individual departments, as at present, with a specific remit for women's studies sitting alongside our other duties. It is our view that we must continue to mainstream our teaching, and research, but require a separate identity in order to achieve the resources to do this. Finally, it is our view that we have made major inroads in feminizing the academy - with the support of some, and the resistance of many. We are now being invited to use our expertise in other programmes. The demand now comes from professional bodies and external evaluator's reports on current programmes. Women's studies has definitely arrived when it is no longer the "feminists" who are demanding the changes. However, if we are to continue to feminize the academy then a wider number of staff, including men, will have to be encouraged to develop expertise in this field. This can only happen if Women's Studies itself, and the staff currently developing it, are seen as academically worthy. The cynics might comment that when Women's Studies becomes academically worthy, then we should be worrying. I am sufficiently optimistic to believe that the pedagogy from which we operate, and the students who we continue to educate, will give us a different kind of legitimacy.

MONICA McWILLIAMS

3.2.92

03.02.92

Anna-Birte Ravn
FREIA - Feminist Research Centre in Aalborg
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Paper to the seminar on
WOMEN'S STUDIES - FEMINIZING THE ACADEMY?
4th-5th February 1992
Brussels

Who teaches and who is taught?

Women's studies in Denmark is taught at six interdisciplinary centres for women's studies and feminist research, as well as integrated in some disciplines mainly within the Humanities and the Social Sciences.

The six centres are placed at the universities, two at the University of Copenhagen (one within the Humanities, which offers a MA minor, and one within the Social Sciences), and one at each of the other Danish universities in Aarhus (mainly the Humanities, offers a MA Minor), Odense (the Humanities, offers a BA and a MA Minor), Roskilde (mainly the Social Sciences), and Aalborg (mainly the Social Sciences, offers a MA Minor). Besides formal women's studies programmes the centres give lectures and hold seminars for students from the various disciplines. They also contribute postgraduate training and Open University courses. None of the courses offered are compulsory.

Women's studies is taught within the disciplines of e.g. Literature, History, Political Science, and Medicine at some universities and other institutions of higher education. Courses within the disciplines are almost totally dependent upon the private initiatives of individual teachers and students. Generally, the possibilities of incorporating women's studies programmes into the curriculum are better within the Humanities than within the Social Sciences, not to speak of the Technical and Natural Sciences. Only in very few cases is women's studies a compulsory part of the curriculum.

There is by now about 12 chairs in women's studies at Danish universities and other institutions of higher education, most of them at the women's studies centres, 5 within the Humanities, 5 within the Social Sciences, 1 in Pedagogics, and 1 in Medicine. These positions are all held by women.

Most students of women's studies are women. So far only very few men have joined women's studies courses.

Figures showing the total number of students in women's studies are not available, but undoubtedly a large majority of Danish university students take their degree without ever being taught women's studies.

Women's studies is the only subject, which takes seriously the barriers against equal opportunity for women and men. By taking gender as a central category, women's

studies analyses gender biases in scientific research, culture, and politics, as well as structural barriers to equality between women and men.

It is therefore an important goal to integrate women's studies into the compulsory university curriculum.

The content of women's studies courses

Women's studies has a double purpose: First, to make visible the role of women in history, culture, and society. Secondly, to make visible patriarchal structures and gender biases wherever they exist, and consequently to change the body of scientific knowledge.

The content of women's studies courses in Denmark has been manifold. A general characteristic is that these courses

- are based on conceptualizations of gender as a central category in scientific analyses
- are problem-oriented and (very often) inter- or multidisciplinary
- are oriented against action and change
- aim at strengthening the selfconfidence of the students involved.

Theories and methodologies of feminist research are important topics, and central themes are e.g.:

- the gender segregated labour market
- gender and the welfare state
- women's culture and technological culture
- the construction of "femininity" and "masculinity"
- the history of the women's movement
- gender and communication.

For further information on women's studies in Denmark, see "Women's Studies in Denmark", ed. by Ann-Dorte Christensen et al, special issue of the newsletter "Kvindeforskning" ("Feminist Research"), 1991. (Can be obtained from Ellen Nyrup Pedersen, Aalborg University, Fibigerstraede 2, DK-9220 Aalborg Ö. Tel: +45 98 15 85 22, ext. 2414).

Final remarks

Concerning the resolution for the Council of Ministers:

The integration of women's studies into the compulsory curriculum of university courses is the ultimate goal, but the means to reach this goal must probably vary according to the development within specific disciplines, national cultures, university structures etc.

Generally it is important to note

- that a clear connection exists between the number of women in the scientific staff on the one hand, and the possibility of developing women's studies on the other
- that autonomous women's studies centres have been important spearheads for

- **women's studies, and**
- **that scientific research, including basic research, is a necessary condition for integration.**

The resolution should therefore contain suggestions for

- **gender quotas in scientific staff appointments**
- **building up/strengthening women's studies centres as well as women's studies within different disciplines and departments, and**
- **an EEC financed research programme in women's studies.**

FEMINIZING THE FLEMISH ACADEMY? A PERSONAL NOTE

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Steunpunt Vrouwenstudies, Universiteit van Antwerpen
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Being one of those female scholars who through the experience of being female in the academy gradual became a scholar on women, I crept into teaching women's studies. I had had the advantage of being able to take feminist approaches for granted given an American background and a long experience as an academic in Scandinavia. It was first in confrontation with the continental European reality five years ago that I realized how little that approach can be taken for granted in the European Academy, and how sorely education in women's studies is needed. My teaching experience has been with two sorts of student publics, international undergraduates and post-university Flemish students.

Programs for international students modelled on American style-curriculums allow topical courses more freely than do many European curriculums and it was here that I first had a chance to teach gender issues. Students have been male and female undergraduates from many national backgrounds. My experience has been that much teaching material in English is experienced by the students as having a heavy Anglo-Saxon bias. The concerns of social scientific feminism have not been really suitable for these students, and my search for appropriate materials on culture, identity and the situation of women worldwide goes on. The students in these courses offer an exciting teaching experience. Gender studies clearly opens new perspectives for them. They have "aha" experiences- and a teacher really feels how valuable our discipline can be at this point in a young person's life--and also how sorely it is lacking in the rest of the academy. My dream is that in the Europe of the future this material is introduced in the regular curriculum to students facing their first big decisions in life- there should not only be a concerted effort to integrate material on women into the standard disciplinary courses, but students should be able to enter specific women's studies courses which count for degree credit.

In Flanders there were no organized university level courses about women until The Women's Studies program in Antwerp began in 1987. Here the audience was not the curious undergraduate, but an audience of women searching for greater depth and a higher level of abstraction and guidance to understanding their reality. The students are almost always entirely female, and post-university. The women come from the women's movement, and from professions such as teaching and medicine, depending on the focus of the course. Like many programs, the courses in Antwerp evolved from being lectures about "Women in..." society, government, welfare, or literature, to an increasingly integrated program requiring a basic core course on feminist theory and a selection from courses specially designed to deal with key issues in the social sciences and the humanities. Because the program is organized outside the university, it suffers from a lack of continuity, and an ability to regenerate itself. The most crying need is in the development of competent professors who are able to present the latest developments in feminist research, and are themselves making contributions. While the quality of the courses has increased markedly, the program rests on the contributions of external professors with a part-time commitment. There is little possibility to employ or train graduate students or to assure continuity among the student or the professorial corps from academic year to academic year. We look with envy at programs in Holland and the United Kingdom, who are able to grant degrees and have professorial chairs.

The two publics, people searching for continuing education and guidance in women's studies after the university, and the beginning student, are both poorly served by the current possibilities for doing women's studies in Flanders. In a situation where scientific researchers

and doctoral candidates try to survive on ever shrinking funds, and university personnel are forced to take to the streets to demand at least the same level of funding as previously, it seems a philosophical luxury to even toss around the issue of how "feminist" our course offerings actually are. Our post-graduate students demand a higher level of feminist consciousness in the courses than has sometimes been the case, but without a formation of feminist scholars in the universities, we are sorely pressed to meet this demand. Equally so, the sorts of scientific Fora where women of the academy gather together to press scientific and professional issues which can be found in Scandinavia were a step that has been missing in Belgium until the foundation of Sophia recently. This ends with a pessimistic estimation about the future- for even though things are slowly changing, most of the signs along the road are not optimistic--without a generation and regeneration of feminist scholars from our own ground we are ill-prepared to either satisfy the curiosity of our students or to be equal participants in preparing a future curriculum which would succeed in "feminizing the academy".

GRACE

FEMINIZING THE ACADEMY

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In this seminar 'feminizing the academy' we have been talking about women's studies teaching. In the Netherlands there are many promising initiatives in the area of post-graduate projects in the Anne Maria van Schuurman school in Utrecht, the Belle van Zuylen Institute in Amsterdam, PIVON (post-graduate women's studies Researchers Network), and Erasmus, the student-exchange programmes organised amongst others by Women's Interdisciplinary Network on Gender and Society. But now I want to draw your attention to the undergraduate education.

I want to put the following question concerning women's studies: how can we attract students in the nineties? In a Dutch newspaper on January the 25th, Rosi Braidotti talked about students as young people who don't like dogmas and utopian visions. To her this does not seem to be a problem for teaching women's studies: in feminist research we no longer analyse differences between the sexes as unchangeable and universal but as changing through time and different for contexts. According to the article her department in the Humanities Faculty is flourishing and students are satisfied. However ...feminizing the academy calls for more than a facultative programme women's studies, however attractive that may be.

What I see as the 'feminist project' in women's studies teaching is to integrate questions, concepts and theoretical constructs in the social sciences curricula. This must be done in order to promote knowledge about gender relations and power that women's studies has generated. Through social change there are chances to alterate the power relations between the sexes. It is important that students in social sciences learn about the gender bias in their disciplines. These students are who have to make decisions in a changing world in the near future, either as policy-makers or as social scientists. Apart from those students who want to specialize in women's studies and to develop new ideas and concepts there is another group important for women's studies: the students who specialize within one of the social sciences and do some women's studies as a part of their studies. So, if it's true as Rosi claims that students do not want to talk about politics any more, then it is important for these students to acknowledge the fact that women's studies has changed and isn't as political as it once was- that means the propositions investigated transcend the interests of women and the women's movement. To make students aware of what women's studies is about, women's studies has to participate in compulsory courses. In addition to the above

I want to raise two other points:

- I In examining women's studies teaching in order to identify the feminist element in it, we must avoid essentialism.
- II For our subject to be a structural component of the social sciences curricula, it is better to speak of gender studies

I

At various points in the history of women's studies 'feminine learning processes' and 'feminine teaching methods' have been proposed. I don't have information about all countries, but I do know that in Germany feminists are busy developing 'feminine teaching methods'. In the Netherlands, however, this issue has nearly disappeared from the feminist agenda. Research on feminine learning and teaching made way for a discussion of femininity in relation to learning. To put forward a method of education as especially appropriate for women is to suggest that women differ from men in the way they learn. The danger with this is that a definition of femininity is reproduced. That's why the dominant question in Dutch women's studies research on education is how to prevent an essentialist approach to learning. When we participate in academic discussions concerning educational innovations, we in women's studies- as in other disciplines, must be aware of essentialism. This does not mean that we have to give up our goal to optimise the educational opportunities for women. We have to choose methods that acknowledge differences in the way people learn, differences between men and women but also among women. ¹

II

My experiences with the integration of women's studies in compulsory, multidisciplinary courses in the social sciences gave me some second thoughts on how to name the subject of our discipline. In terms of integrating women's

¹ In my project 'the integration of women's studies in the compulsory curriculum of the Faculty 'Public and Business Policy' Catholic University of Nijmegen, I had to work with a teaching method which is called 'Problem-Based Learning'. It would be interesting to evaluate the advantages (and disadvantages) this method has for teaching 'women's studies'. It would take too much time in this seminar to give you the details of this method, so I will confine myself to some of its basic principles like 'multi-disciplinarity', 'working in small groups' and 'learning as an individual process' all of which make this method applicable for teaching women's studies'.

studies in compulsory education programm of Social Sciences, I think it would be better to speak of 'gender studies' instead of 'women's studies'. Our perspective has actually shifted from women to gender: we are gaining insight not only in the position of women, but also in the relationship between men/masculinity and women/femininity. As Margo Brouns puts it: genderedness is one of the major structuring principles in social life and extends into the formulation of images, social attitudes, academic attitudes and practices, concepts and definitions of reality. Despite my efforts to make students in the social sciences aware of this, they continu to see women's studies as being about women as victims or as generally backward people. As a consequense, especially women distanced themselves from women's studies. I think these prejudices have to do with the name. To save the cultural critical element in teaching women's studies it would be better to talk of gender studies. For our research feminist scholarship is a good term.

ETUDES FÉMINISTES - FÉMINISATION DU SAVOIR ?

INTRODUCTION

Il s'agit du rapport intermédiaire du séminaire d'études féministes intitulé "Etudes féministes - Féminisation du savoir ?" qui s'est déroulé à la Commission des Communautés Européennes le 5 février 1992. Le séminaire était organisé par le GRIF dans le cadre de la deuxième phase du projet **grace**. Ce projet est financé par l'Unité pour l'Egalité des Chances de la CE et fait partie intégrante du Troisième Programme d'Action pour l'Egalité. Un rapport complet de la deuxième phase du projet sera disponible fin 1992. Il couvrira tous les aspects de notre travail (la banque de données, la dissémination des informations sur les études féministes, les publications et les séminaires).

Le thème du séminaire résulte des travaux menés lors du séminaire préparatoire organisé en mars 1991 au cours de la première phase du projet **grace** (voir rapport phase 1, mai 1991). Lors de cette première réunion nous avons passé en revue la situation des enseignements en études féministes dans tous les états membres de la CE, à l'exception du Luxembourg. A l'issue de cette journée de travail, il nous apparut clairement que nous devions poursuivre et approfondir notre information et notre réflexion dans deux directions : d'une part, sur le contenu des cours; d'autre part, sur les étudiant-e-s et les enseignant-e-s. Cette orientation est venue confirmer notre décision de faire de l'enseignement des études féministes l'axe prioritaire de la seconde phase du projet **grace** en vue de la publication d'un guide européen des études féministes.

Le titre du séminaire a été choisi pour indiquer notre intention de considérer l'impact des études féministes sur le savoir et sur la vie académique. Le travail réalisé précédemment, et en particulier la banque de données, nous ont permis d'enregistrer une croissance très rapide du domaine des recherches, des cours et des enseignements féministes à tous les niveaux académiques. Sans information détaillée, toute tentative de comparaison européenne s'avère toutefois difficile du fait de différences essentielles qui caractérisent aussi bien les cultures scientifiques que les institutions académiques.

Nous souhaitons montrer concrètement la contribution différente et/ou singulière des études féministes au savoir, et, dans le même temps, les contraintes que leur imposent les institutions académiques. Afin d'identifier l'élément "féministe" à l'oeuvre dans cet enseignement, nous avons cherché à répondre aux questions suivantes : Qui enseigne et qui suit les cours d'études féministes ? Quelles sont les modalités des relations enseignant-e-s/enseigné-e-s ? Quel est le contenu des cours ? Nous souhaitons que les participantes examinent ces questions à la lumière du "genre", de l'orientation sexuelle, de la classe sociale

cours ? Nous souhaitons que les participantes examinent ces questions à la lumière du "genre", de l'orientation sexuelle, de la classe sociale et de la "race" des étudiant-e-s et enseignant-e-s et qu'elles nous indiquent comment ces éléments sont pris en considération dans les cours eux-mêmes.

ORGANISATION

Notre premier séminaire s'est déroulé sur base de rapports nationaux. Malgré un apport d'informations intéressantes, cette procédure n'engendra pas la discussion générale attendue, aussi avons nous décidé de procéder autrement pour le deuxième séminaire. Comme point de départ à une discussion générale, nous avons sollicité quatre intervenantes à présenter des exposés sur base de leur propre expérience d'enseignante en études féministes. Les autres participantes étaient invitées à préparer une synthèse de leur position sur le thème du séminaire (voir papiers en annexe).

Les intervenantes ont été sélectionnées par le Comité Scientifique, après discussion avec nous et l'Unité pour l'Égalité des Chances. Les exposés avaient également pour objectif de rendre compte de la diversité de l'enseignement féministe et sur les femmes ainsi que de la diversité culturelle des problèmes soulevés. Pour faire face aux problèmes de langues, nous avons demandé que les documents écrits soient rédigés en anglais ou en français, les 2 langues de travail du projet **grace**.

Les quatre exposés ont été présentés par Marie-France Brive, membre du groupe Simone et maître de conférences à l'Université Toulouse le Mirail (France); Louise Morley, chargée de cours au Department of Community Studies de l'Université de Reading (UK); Maria Repoussi enseignante au centre Diotima d'Athènes (Grèce); Inger Schaumburg, maître de conférences à l'Institute of Community Health de l'Université d'Odense (Danemark).

La diversité des études féministes était bien représentée par les intervenantes aussi bien du point de vue des disciplines (sciences sociales, médecine et histoire) que du point de vue des types et niveaux d'enseignement. Deux d'entre elles enseignent au niveau des premier et deuxième cycles dans le cadre de filières universitaires établies; les deux autres enseignent dans le cadre de l'éducation pour adultes (l'une dans une université, l'autre dans un centre d'études féministes indépendant) et s'adressent par conséquent à un public étudiant différent (étudiant-e-s sans qualification universitaire préalable et/ou femmes en reprise d'études).

Les autres participantes ont été sélectionnées avec l'aide du Comité Scientifique en fonction de deux critères : l'expérience d'enseignante

en études féministes et l'intérêt pour un travail à l'échelle européenne. Afin d'assurer la continuité du projet, certaines invitations au premier séminaire ont été renouvelées.

Bien que certaines personnes invitées n'aient pu participer du fait d'autres engagements, le séminaire réunissait des participantes de tous les états membres (à l'exception du Luxembourg). Le rôle des participantes aux séminaires est de communiquer les informations et le contenu des discussions au milieu des enseignantes et chercheuses en études féministes de leur pays.

Outre les exposés et la discussion sur le thème du séminaire, deux autres points figuraient à l'agenda de la réunion. Il s'agissait, d'une part, de poursuivre la discussion amorcée au cours du séminaire précédent sur un projet de résolution à soumettre au conseil des ministres de la CE, et, d'autre part, d'envisager la question de la dissémination de la banque de données **grace**, et ceci pour tenir compte de l'impatience croissante des futures utilisatrices/teurs.

**THÈME
PRINCIPAL**

Les exposés et les courtes synthèses des participantes étant repris en annexe de ce rapport, nous proposons ci-dessous une synthèse de la discussion et des questions fondamentales qui ont été soulevées concernant le développement d'une politique de promotion des études féministes.

Etudiantes

Dans tous les états membres de la CE, les étudiant-e-s en études féministes forment un groupe très diversifié que ce soit en termes d'âge, de qualification, d'expérience et de milieu d'origine, même si l'on note une homogénéité plus forte dans quelques pays. Dans les états membres où les études féministes ne constituent pas un domaine académique autonome ou reconnu, les étudiant-e-s accèdent à cet enseignement via les disciplines traditionnelles. Mis à part le fait qu'il s'agit en majorité de femmes, le profil de ces étudiantes est similaire à celui de tous les autres étudiants universitaires. Il est donc intéressant de remarquer que des cours explicitement intitulés "études féministes", qu'il s'agisse de cours à option ou de cours obligatoires, attirent les étudiant-e-s "traditionnel-le-s" (filles et garçons). L'appellation études féministes n'entraîne donc pas ipso facto la marginalisation de ce champ d'études. De toute évidence, les étudiant-e-s choisissent ces cours parce qu'elles/ils leur reconnaissent une qualité académique similaire à celle des cours traditionnels. Les études féministes suscitent également l'intérêt de personnes qui ne correspondent pas au "profil type" de l'étudiant universitaire et cela du fait de l'originalité de leur contenu comme de leur pédagogie.

Les motivations et centres d'intérêts des étudiant-e-s en études

féministes varient en fonction du niveau d'études et des traditions culturelles et académiques des différents pays. Au niveau des deux premiers cycles, le choix des cours est rarement lié à un intérêt pour la dimension politique du féminisme. S'il s'agit de cours obligatoires ou de cours liés de manière évidente à certains domaines professionnels comme la gynécologie ou la psychiatrie, la motivation des étudiant-e-s porte surtout sur l'acquisition de connaissances jugées nécessaires. Les motivations sont moins claires à l'égard de cours à option en histoire ou en philosophie, par exemple. A la curiosité scientifique et à l'attrait pour la nouveauté vient se substituer, au fur et à mesure de l'accumulation des connaissances, un véritable engagement personnel motivé tout à la fois par un intérêt croissant pour le sujet et une prise de conscience de ses lacunes.

Les études féministes concernent aussi, et c'est même l'une de leurs caractéristiques majeures, les adultes (en majorité des femmes) en reprise d'études qui le plus souvent n'ont pas de diplôme d'accès à l'enseignement universitaire. Plusieurs participantes ont expliqué le rôle vital joué par ces cours dans l'insertion ou la réinsertion universitaire des femmes. En général, ce groupe spécifique d'étudiant-e-s manifeste un engagement politique par rapport au sujet étudié, engagement qui s'enracine le plus souvent dans l'expérience acquise dans le mouvement des femmes. Les enseignantes sont d'ailleurs unanimes pour déclarer que ce lien politique est par comparaison beaucoup plus difficile à établir avec la nouvelle génération d'étudiant-e-s.

Enseignantes

Le fait que les enseignantes en études féministes soient majoritairement des femmes n'a fait l'objet d'aucune discussion au cours du séminaire. En ce qui concerne les hommes, certaines intervenantes ont clairement indiqué qu'il leur arrivait d'inviter des collègues masculins dans le cadre de leurs cours, tandis que d'autres ont estimé que la présence d'hommes dans l'équipe enseignante jouait en faveur d'une meilleure intégration des études féministes. Les débats qui avaient eu lieu sur cette question lors du séminaire précédent nous autorisent à penser que la situation précaire des études féministes européennes (en termes de statut, d'argent, de postes et de possibilités de carrières) n'exerce pas d'attraction sur les hommes. La réalité étant ce qu'elle est, aucune controverse ne risque de surgir à ce sujet pour le moment !

Les diverses informations sur les conditions de travail dans le domaine des études féministes confirment largement cette hypothèse. La plupart des enseignantes assurent en effet une double charge de cours : aux enseignements dans leur spécialité disciplinaire viennent s'ajouter les cours d'études féministes assurés la plupart du temps sans salaire et sans reconnaissance académique. Cette situation qui entraîne une charge de travail intolérable est cependant considérée comme une étape

inévitables vers l'autonomie des études féministes, sauf en Italie et au Portugal où cet argument joue en défaveur de leur institution en tant que sujet autonome. Sans moyens financiers adéquats, l'intégration dans les disciplines académiques existantes est en effet jugée préférable à un accroissement de la charge de travail des enseignantes.

Contenu des cours

Une discussion détaillée du contenu des cours n'était pas l'objet principal de la réunion, mais ce thème peut être retenu pour un prochain séminaire. Notre propos consistait plutôt à mettre en évidence la perspective féministe à l'oeuvre dans cet enseignement et à cerner les contraintes imposées par les structures académiques.

Les réponses à ces questions sont évidemment très différentes selon les états membres. Dans certains cas, cet enseignement a délibérément évité une identification au féminisme. Quelques universités françaises ont choisi l'appellation "études féminines" plutôt que celle d'"études féministes". Au Portugal, certaines enseignantes préfèrent recourir à l'intitulé "études sur les femmes".

Cela ne signifie toutefois pas que les femmes qui travaillent dans ce domaine le font sans référence féministe, mais simplement que la manière d'intégrer cette perspective à l'enseignement est très variable, et tient compte des traditions et structures académiques. Dans certains pays, l'intégration des études féministes doit se plier à des exigences académiques qui portent atteinte, aux yeux de certaines enseignantes, à la radicalité du féminisme. D'autres enseignantes estiment au contraire qu'une approche scientifique rigoureuse est une condition nécessaire à l'acquisition d'un statut académique pour les études féministes, statut qui leur permettra d'intégrer le savoir général. Cette démarche n'empêche pas de transformer le cadre conceptuel de l'enseignement par l'introduction de nouvelles matières et de nouvelles pratiques pédagogiques. Tout en partageant l'idée de l'importance d'un statut scientifique pour les études féministes, certaines enseignantes ont insisté sur le fait que la spécificité de ces études repose avant tout sur la relation enseignante/enseigné-e et sur le mode de transmission du savoir. Toutes les participantes ont reconnu l'importance de ces questions qui prennent cependant des significations différentes selon le type d'enseignement et de culture académique.

Des distinctions similaires peuvent être faites au sujet de l'attitude des étudiant-e-s à l'égard du contenu des cours. Les plus jeunes étudiant-e-s acceptent que le contenu des cours soit défini par l'enseignante, tout en se réservant le droit de ne pas y participer ! Les étudiant-e-s plus âgé-e-s et celles/ceux qui accèdent à l'enseignement supérieur sans

qualification préalable sont plus enclins à questionner le contenu des cours et à proposer de nouveaux sujets d'enseignement. Mais encore une fois cette question doit être considérée dans le contexte culturel plus général des relations enseignant-e-s/enseigné-e-s. L'approche que nous avons définie a permis de mettre en évidence l'impact des pratiques féministes sur le contenu des cours et la pédagogie.

Conclusions

Les variantes enregistrées dans les réponses à nos questions révèlent deux conceptions fondamentalement différentes du rôle académique des études féministes. La première insiste sur la question des "différences" telle qu'elle a été élaborée dans la pensée féministe, et vise à l'incorporer dans l'enseignement, le principe de base étant que la reconnaissance de ce questionnement constitue l'aspect fondamental de l'enseignement en études féministes. Cette approche, perçue par certaines comme typiquement anglo-saxonne, met surtout l'accent sur la dimension participative des études féministes, et concentre son intérêt sur l'origine ethnique, l'orientation sexuelle et le genre des enseignant-e-s comme des enseigné-e-s.

La seconde approche, qui reconnaît l'importance de la question des "différences" sur le plan théorique, ne considère toutefois pas qu'il faille l'appréhender sur le plan subjectif et en faire la base du processus éducatif. Cette question est donc traitée de façon objective, le but premier des études féministes étant d'acquérir un statut scientifique équivalent à celui des disciplines traditionnelles. Dans cette optique, le caractère novateur des études féministes réside moins dans sa pédagogie que dans son mode de transformation du savoir.

Le statut des études féministes comme celui des enseignantes, et les problèmes soulevés par les intitulés "études féministes/études du genre" ont également été abordés au cours du séminaire. Pour certaines participantes, le développement des études féministes est étroitement lié à la présence des femmes dans l'ensemble de la vie académique. Elles sont donc persuadées qu'une politique d'action positive en faveur des femmes aiderait à promouvoir les études féministes et, inversement, que l'institution des études féministes entraînerait une amélioration du statut de toutes les femmes universitaires. Un tel lien n'est cependant pas vrai partout : au Portugal, par exemple, la proportion élevée de femmes dans l'enseignement supérieur ne va pas de pair avec l'existence d'études féministes autonomes. Cette question qui n'a pu être approfondie pourrait faire l'objet d'un prochain séminaire.

Au cours du séminaire, la question des études du genre a été

étroitement liée à celle de l'autonomie et de l'intégration. La majorité des participantes ont estimé que ces deux modalités de développement des études féministes étaient compatibles et pouvaient être poursuivies en même temps en vue d'une reconnaissance académique. En réalité, les participantes semblaient privilégier l'intégration des études féministes au savoir constitué, en particulier au niveau des premiers cycles, à condition que cette intégration offre la garantie d'une consolidation institutionnelle et permette une transformation effective du savoir. Certaines participantes qui avançaient l'idée que les études du genre permettaient d'atteindre au mieux cet objectif ont rencontré une vive opposition. (Il s'agissait moins de nier la valeur de ces études que de les envisager comme un domaine séparé auquel les études féministes peuvent contribuer). En conclusion, les études féministes, qu'elles soient intégrées aux disciplines traditionnelles (le processus suit son cours lentement) ou qu'elles existent en tant que discipline autonome, doivent préserver leur identité et améliorer leur statut académique

RÉSOLUTION DU CONSEIL

La question d'une stratégie politique de promotion des études féministes dans la CE avait amené les participantes du séminaire précédent à suggérer l'idée d'élaborer une résolution à soumettre au Conseil des Ministres. La procédure à suivre a été exposée par Dearbhal Ni Charteigh, auteure d'une résolution similaire dans le domaine de la formation des enseignants.

Le soutien de la Présidence du Conseil des Ministres étant un préalable, il a été décidé que la résolution serait soumise aux ministres lors de la Présidence danoise. S'appuyant sur l'intérêt manifesté au cours des séminaires **grace**, Ann-Birte Ravn s'est engagée à prendre des contacts informels au Danemark.

Un énorme travail sera nécessaire avant de soumettre la résolution à la présidence danoise car il faut s'assurer le soutien des fonctionnaires et décideurs aussi bien sur le plan national qu'europpéen. Ce n'est qu'après avoir obtenu l'accord de ces derniers que la résolution pourra être soumise au Comité chargé de l'Education du Conseil des Ministres.

Si les contacts informels pris au Danemark s'avèrent favorables, le texte de la résolution sera élaboré au cours des prochains séminaires. A plus court terme, il est nécessaire que ce projet fasse l'objet de discussions au sein des réseaux d'études féministes dans chaque pays.

DISSÉMINATION

Nous avons demandé à Jytte Larsen et Marieke Kramer, auteures d'un rapport d'évaluation des centres de documentation dans la CE,

d'envisager la question de la dissémination de **grace**. Elles ont indiqué que tous les états membres, à l'exception de l'Irlande et du Luxembourg, possèdent des centres de documentation sur les femmes et l'égalité. Leur étude permet de discerner ceux qui peuvent être considérés comme les plus importants. Tous ces centres (sauf en France) sont équipés d'une technologie avancée. Ils ne sont toutefois pas nécessairement reliés à des centres d'études féministes, ce qui peut entraîner quelques difficultés notamment du point de vue de l'intégration de la fonction "études féministes" de la banque de données **grace** à la fonction "documentation". Comme la banque de données est relativement complexe et fait l'objet de révisions régulières, ce qui paraît inévitable lorsqu'on utilise ce type de technologie, les deux auteures recommandent que la dissémination de **grace** s'opère en distinguant le travail d'information du travail de collecte des données. Le premier travail serait assuré par les centres de documentation de chaque pays. Ce serait un service rendu aux utilisatrices/teurs afin d'éviter l'accès direct de celles/ceux-ci à la banque de données. La collecte des données serait, dans un premier temps, menée au niveau national via les réseaux d'études féministes, puis, dans un deuxième temps, toutes les données collectées seraient rassemblées au GRIF qui procéderait à leur encodage.

**PROCHAIN
SÉMINAIRE**

Le prochain séminaire se déroulera les 18/19 mai 1992 à Bruxelles et aura pour thème l'impact des études féministes sur le curriculum académique. Les participantes seront sélectionnées sur la même base que ce séminaire et les invitations seront lancées au début du mois d'avril.