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THE INNOVATOR

NEWSLETTER OF THE CENTER FOR PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

VOLUME I, NUMBER 3/4 Northeastern Illinois University • Chicago, Illinois 60625

MAY/JUNE, 1974

One of the more exciting activities at Northeastern Illinois this summer is the Kiddie Kollege, a kind of day-care center-plus, created and to be run by the UNI Women's Studies Program. In fact, so many exciting things are happening so fast in Women's Studies here that I have asked Dr. Jean Gillies, Associate Professor of Art and Women's Studies Coordinator, to put together a special double issue of THE INNOVATOR on "Women's Studies at Northeastern Illinois-- Places, People, Projects, and Plans" to help consolidate the growth. In this task she has been signally aided by Ms. Simone Poirier Deely, Special Program Assistant, who wrote the copy, and Dr. Donna Iven, Chairperson of Sociology, who supplied much of the historical material. Special thanks, also, should go to Ms. Carolyn Goldstein, Chairperson, and the members of the Women's Studies Board for their help. As always, I would be happy to receive your comments and feedback. Again, the next INNOVATOR, a double issue on the nontraditional projects and approaches of UNI's Psychology Department, will appear, as scheduled, in August.

Reynold Feldman
Director of Program Development
Editor

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ORIGINS

The first seeds of Women's Studies at UNI were probably sown as far back as 1968, when Dr. June Sochen from the History Department offered a course called "Women in American History." At that time there were no women's studies as such anywhere in the country. In the fall of 1971, while Dr. Sochen was on sabbatical, Dr. Donna Iven was brought to UNI as chairperson of the Sociology Department. Her experiences at Western Illinois University at Macomb, where she found that women faculty members were not treated as equal to men, convinced her that there was a real need for a structured program geared to the understanding of women: their history, their position in society, and their problems. At this time,

San Diego State College offered the only women's studies program in the U.S. So, in the spring of 1972, UNI sent Dr. Iven to San Diego to study the architecture of their program. During this early formation period, from September 1971 to September 1972, most of the organization, initial course work, and correspondence was handled by Mary Ann Schwartz of the Sociology Department.

By Fall, 1972, the women of UNI were ready. The first Women's Studies Board was elected, consisting of 6 students, 3 faculty members, and 3 civil servants. Mary Schwartz drafted the guidelines and by-laws, together with a budget and program proposal, all of which were submitted to UNI's Center for Program Development (CPD). In January, 1973, this proposal was accepted, and Women's Studies at UNI was officially born. A search was begun for a half-time coordinator, and in November of 1973, Dr. Jean Gillies was appointed to this position.

Since the beginning, Women's Studies has expanded rapidly and enthusiastically. From Fall 1972 through Winter 1974, a total of 1,252 students have enrolled in 43 courses given over five trimesters, and students continue to fill course offerings, as these increase in number and variety.

PLACES

The Women's Studies Center is currently housed in C-524, where library resource material is kept, projects instigated, and Board meetings held. But the Women's Studies Program itself has no single locus. Instead, and because it is an interdisciplinary program, you will find Women's Studies not in one, but in nine of the University's departments. Hence the Women's Studies Program offers no degrees as such. Students can earn a B.A. degree through other programs offered by CPD, such as Kaskaskia, an experimental plan which allows students to design their own majors along interdisciplinary lines, or through the University Without Walls (UWW), which allows students to pursue a degree based on a combination of experiential learning, independent study and course work. An M.A. degree, finally, can be earned in Social Sciences with a concentration in Women's Studies.

PEOPLE

To date, there are 15 faculty members whose course syllabi have been approved by the Women's Studies Board:

Dr. Jean Gillies, Art, Images of Women in Art

Dr. Donna Iven, Sociology, Socialization Processes, Marriage and the Family, Sociology of Sexuality

Dr. Joan Berman, Sociology, Communal Societies, American Women: Their Changing Image

Mary Ann Schwartz, Sociology, American Women: Their Changing Image

Margaret Schmid, Sociology, Sociology of Working Women, American Women:
Their Changing Image

Jenny Knauss, Sociology, Seminars in Health Care

Dr. June Sochen, History, The Woman in American History, History of
Women in Film

Dr. Charles Pastors, Political Science, Women in American Politics,
Comparative Politics

Dorothe Weinberg, Psychology, Psychosexual Development

Dr. Jacqueline Krump, English, Women Writers in British Literature,
Literature by and About Women

Dr. Barbara Cropper, Anthropology, Proseminar on Witchcraft and Sorcery,
Women Cross-culturally

Charlotte Waisman, Speech and Performing Arts, Analysis and Performance of
Poetry by Women Poets

Herbert W. Parsons, Physical Education, Judo and Self-defense

Mary Stoppert, Art, Seminar on the Successful Woman, sponsored by the
Program for Interdisciplinary Education (P.I.E.).

Dr. Edward Maxwell, Linguistics, Language and Sexuality

PROJECTS

Literary:

The Women's Studies Center is in the final stages of preparing an anthology of student papers--papers written for courses in Women's Studies given over the last two years. This anthology contains a wide sampling of topics and styles, ranging from a scholarly account of the political involvement of women since they received the franchise to an informal, personal account of the problems of being a lesbian. There is a great deal of original student research presented in the anthology as well, on subjects ranging from sexism in Webster's 7th New Collegiate Dictionary to profiles on working mothers. This is valuable research that would probably otherwise remain unknown. The revised anthology will be available to all interested parties in August 1974. For further information, contact the Women's Studies Center, care of the UNI address.

Because of the enthusiastic response to the unrevised version of the anthology, Women's Studies has decided to begin a semi-annual journal, consisting of outstanding papers originally submitted to fulfill course requirements. Once again, the papers will view the history and problems of women as well as their

treatment in art, literature, etc., and offer more original research. We hope to present our first issue in Fall, 1974. Non-profit subscriptions will be available to both individuals and institutions.

Community:

This summer, Women's Studies will be sponsoring for the second time the UNI Kiddie Kollege, a unique educational program available to the children of UNI faculty, staff and students. The program serves a three-fold purpose: the most obvious benefit is that it provides day-care for students with children--students who would be otherwise unable to continue their studies over the summer; secondly, it provides a unique field-experience for students of various departments to practice their skills along interdisciplinary lines by designing and leading projects with groups of children, for which the students receive course credit; and thirdly, it provides an original and expansive learning experience for the children themselves. Many of the faculty are volunteering their services and offering the use of many UNI facilities for this program. Some of the projects include a "Science is Fun" course, an Indian Pow-Wow, theatre games and use of the T.V. studios, and extensive art and physical-education projects.

Seminars and Conferences:

Because Women's Studies is not an independent department where faculty are housed together, special faculty conferences and luncheons are given to provide an opportunity for faculty participating in the Women's Studies Program to share with each other their experiences and researches. Women's Studies also combines with other departments to sponsor periodic symposiums on subjects relating to women. One such symposium on "Language and Sexism" was offered on April 6 by the Linguistics Club in co-sponsorship with Women's Studies. Papers and talks were given by the authors of the Feminist English Dictionary as well as faculty from the University of California, the University of Illinois (Urbana), and the University of Georgia.

An innovative symposium was offered by Women's Studies in late May. During two afternoon sessions, outstanding papers in Women's Studies were delivered by our own students and faculty. The intention was to provide a public forum for our own original contributions to this field. This is the first time that any such opportunity has been given to students at UNI to personally present their own work in a professional manner. This practice is especially appropriate because the field is so new and unexplored.

PLANS

Women's Studies has extensive plans for the coming academic year, working through or in conjunction with other established CPD programs.

WS/UWW:

Through the structure provided by University Without Walls (UWW), Women's Studies this fall is offering a cluster in law-related careers for women. This program will provide job-training and lead to a B.A. degree. Over a two-year

period, six women students will explore various aspects of the law as it relates to women. Each will have her own specific area of interest, e.g., police women and their work, women and the judicial system, crimes relating to women (rape, prostitution), women in prison, etc. During this time, they will also meet for conferences and seminars to pool their separate researches for the purpose of working on one main research project together. It is hoped that this project will culminate in a recommendation for legal reform in the thematic area.

WS/PIE:

Also this fall, Women's Studies, in conjunction with the Program for Interdisciplinary Education (PIE), will offer a seminar on "The Successful Woman." Designed for women intending careers in management, business or the professions, the seminar will explore the factors and qualities needed for successful performances in these fields. The reasons which account for the low percentage of women in high-ranking positions will be studied, and women prominent in business and the professions will be invited to share their "stories" and expertise.

WS/Continuing Education:

In conjunction with the concept of continuing education are seminal plans for developing a counseling service for mature women who are entering college or returning after several years absence. Recognizing the need to provide guidance for this growing group of women, Women's Studies hopes to work with the Counseling Center and the Placement Office of UNI on this project.

Chicago Area Conference:

Since there are no established channels of communication among the various universities in the Chicago area which offer or plan to offer women's studies programs, UNI Women's Studies is planning to hostess a conference geared to the exchange of information and the formulation of new directions in women's studies programming. This two-day conference, scheduled for October, 1974, will feature speakers on specific themes, followed by workshops, where new ideas can be aired and evaluated.

As the needs of women change and develop, so will Women's Studies at UNI. Because our approach is experimental and interdisciplinary, we have a built-in flexibility which encourages new growth and development. Our people, places, projects, and plans now reach into a great many areas of University life because women's studies is a concern that is too important to compartmentalize, too important to be just another academic department. For women's studies concern life itself, and the attitudes and structures that directly affect one half of the human race. Through women's studies we are preparing for a new world, a world in which men and women will understand each other better, and accept their similarities and differences as part of the richness of life.

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For further information on our programs or any suggestions you might wish to offer, please write Dr. Jean Gillies, Coordinator, Women's Studies Program, Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago, Illinois 60625.