

Spring 1985

Program Notes- Spring-Summer 1985

Women's Studies Program Staff

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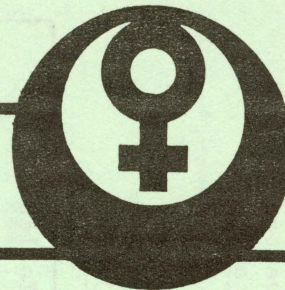
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PROGRAM NOTES



Volume 10, Number 2 Spring-Summer 1985

WHAT MAKES A FEMINIST SOCIAL SCIENCE?

At a recent Feminist Study Group meeting in the Women's Studies Resource Center, UNI's Martha Thompson, Associate Professor in Sociology and Women's Studies and several students from her graduate course "Feminist Sociology" presented a developmental framework for evaluating social science theory and research from a feminist perspective. The student participants included: Helen Nagel-Bamesberger, Audrey Karabinus, Lana Miller, and Angie Rossiter. The following list of questions represent their work in progress toward this end.

1. Does the writer describe her or his relationship to the subject? Does the writer explain why she or he has written the work in question? (Did personal experience, knowledge, political commitment, and/or human concern motivate the writer?) Does the writer indicate how her or his own biography, circumstance, or attributes have contributed to her or his interest in the subject? Does the writer discuss how her or his writing in this area has personally changed her or him? Does the writer discuss her or his social status (e.g. sex, race, class, culture) vis-a-vis the participants in the research and how these statuses might have affected the information collected? Does the writer discuss the conditions under which the work was produced, reflect on these conditions, and discuss how they influenced the work? If the writer is a member of a privileged group vis-a-vis the topic about which she or he is writing, does the writer discuss the risks and benefits in writing about the subject? Does the writer acknowledge the contributions of less privileged people to her/his understanding of the subject?

2. Does the writer acknowledge the complexity of the subjectivity-objectivity issue? Does the writer acknowledge her/his own biases? Does the writer present information about herself/himself? Does the writer discuss her/his involvement in the research or writing? Does the writer give enough information to enable the reader to distinguish between the writer's assumptions and the assumptions of the people she or he is writing about?

3. Does the writer place the subject in a sociohistorical context? Does the writer take into account other time periods and other cultures? Does the writer discuss the history of the subject and its current status in society? How does the writing compare to other writing at that time and place? If there was a visible women's movement at the time and place the writer was writing, does the writer acknowledge the issues the movement was raising?

4. Does the writer use language to make gender, females, and female experience visible? Does the writer use nonsexist language (e.g. their, her/him, humanity instead of his, men, mankind)? Do labels chosen include gender, women, and women's experience? If visible, are women presented in a way which avoids sexist, racist, heterosexist, or classist stereotypes and images?

5. Does the writer use language to demystify a subject for her or his readers? When unusual or foreign words and phrases are used, are they defined or referenced? Are vocabulary, sentences, and paragraphs simple and direct instead of unnecessarily complex? Do words and phrases chosen emphasize understanding over judgment?

6. Does the writer ground her/his work in a feminist body of literature? Are women cited? Are feminist works cited? When a work is cited that includes bias, does the writer acknowledge the theoretical limitations of the work cited? Do questions and topics chosen for study direct attention to issues of sex and gender?

7. Does the writer use concepts which illuminate the complexity of reality? Is gender a variable? Does the writer acknowledge the many possible forms of culture and society instead of assuming mono-cultural conditions exist for everyone? Are continua used for complex behaviors instead of dichotomies? Does the writer acknowledge and discuss the complex interactions between sex, race, class, and sexual preference? Are differences in power and opportunity (e.g. by sex, race, class,

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Women's Studies Courses, Fall 1985

The following have been cross-listed as Women's Studies courses because they support the goals of WSP: to encourage new knowledge about women's experience, history, contributions, and status; to bring a critical perspective to traditional areas of knowledge dealing with women and gender roles; to promote nonsexist education. All can be applied to the Women's Studies minor.

DEPARTMENT/
COURSE NO.

COURSE TITLE

CREDITS TIME

ROOM

INSTRUCTOR

WSP 101-01	INTRODUCTION TO WOMEN'S STUDIES	3	8:15-9:30 am TR	CLS-3096	Bette Tallen
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This course will introduce students to the philosophy of Women's Studies, to members of the Women's Studies faculty and the courses they teach, and to key issues affecting women's lives; open to all women and men; required for the Women's Studies minor; fulfills the general education requirement for 3 hours of interdisciplinary/professional studies.

ECED 336-31	NONSEXIST STRATEGIES FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS OF YOUNG CHILDREN	3	4:15-6:55 pm W	CLS-3044	Sandra Styer
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Students will explore principles of effective parenting and of child growth with emphasis upon sex-role development, in addition to analysis of familial and societal influences such as children's literature, toys, games, play experiences, and television. (Prerequisite: junior standing.)

EDFN 325-31	THE CHANGING ROLE OF WOMEN IN AMERICAN EDUCATION	3	7:05-9:45 pm W	CLS-3106	Nancy Green
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Study of women in education: past, present, and future. Topics include views of women's mental abilities and "nature"; history of the schooling of women; women as teachers and educational leaders; education for the professions; minority women and education; implications of current research on sex differences and sex roles; and education for the woman of the future.

HIST 464A-31	GRADUATE READINGS IN 20TH-CENTURY AMERICAN HISTORY: AMERICAN WOMEN	3	7:05-9:45 pm R	CLS-4091	June Sochen
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An indepth study and analysis of readings dealing with the history of women in 20th-century America. (Graduate students only.)

HPERA-PEMT 342J-01	PROSEMINAR IN HPERA: WOMEN IN SPORTS	3	11:05-12:20 pm TR	A-110	Betty Fields
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The purpose of this course is to provide the student with an initial understanding of the problems, patterns, and processes associated with the sport involvement of women in our culture.

MNGT 378-31	THE CHANGING ROLE OF WOMEN IN BUSINESS	3	5:40-6:55 pm MW	CLS-2071	Martha Alexander
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This course examines the emerging role of women in the labor force and male-dominated professions from World War II to the present. It focuses on career mobility strategies, enabling legislation, psycho-social constraints and other dynamics that serve to impede and/or facilitate women's career mobility in the professions in particular and in the labor force in general. (Prerequisite: MNGT 370.)

PHIL 105-01	FEMINIST PHILOSOPHY	3	11:05-12:20 pm TR	S-240	Sarah Hoagland
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An analysis of recent work in feminist theory in order to investigate women's situation and its foundation in culture, perception, and reality.

- PHIL 351-31 SEXISM AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE 3 5:40-6:55 pm TR S-240 Sarah Hoagland**
An analytic examination of sociolinguistic investigation of sexism in English in order to facilitate discussion of the relation between language, thought, and reality.
- PIE/SEM 282A-01 ASSERTIVENESS TRAINING FOR WOMEN 2 10:00-11:50 am M CLS-3096 Jacquie Harper**
The purpose of this course is to assist women in finding effective alternatives for the solution of many familiar problems. It is designed to teach women how to handle themselves and their situations in an assertive manner. (Only 2 credits.)
- PIE/SEM 283R-01 SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ISSUES 3 12:00-12:50 pm MWF S-228 Luz Del Alba Acevedo**
CONFRONTING LATINA WOMEN
Women in Latin America have a both common and diverse history. This course will attempt to address our common histories from pre-colonial times to the present and confront issues that affect our daily lives. Among the topics to be discussed will be: culture and identity, immigration and migration, triple oppression, involvement of women in political revolutionary struggle.
- PSYC 315-01 PSYCHOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT IN WOMEN 3 11:05-12:20 pm TR S-323 Dorothe Rigby**
This course deals specifically with how women develop, in terms of personality and cognitive growth. It discusses the different theories of women's development and treats subjects which include adult sexuality, the process of finding one's own identity, and the problems women face in making choices and setting goals in the various periods of their lives. (Prerequisite: PSYC 201.)
- SOC 214-31 SOCIOLOGY OF MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY 3 5:40-8:20 pm M CLS-2044 Mary Ann Schwartz**
Areas of study include the historical role of the family (including the development of sex roles), family types (including family structures and living arrangements), sexuality (including parental attitudes toward sex, birth control and its implications for children).
- SOC 306-01 AMERICAN WOMEN: THE CHANGING IMAGE 3 11:05-12:20 pm TR S-144 Martha Thompson**
Drawing on interdisciplinary theory and research, this course will examine the image of American women and how it has changed. We will consider how this image reflects and shapes the lives of American women who differ in age, ethnicity, race, sexual identification, and social class. The efforts of feminism to change the image of American women will also be considered.
- SOC 340-01 SOCIOLOGY OF SEXUALITY 3 8:15-9:30 am TR CLS-2094 Vera Milam**
Discussion and reading to examine current research and literature on human sexuality; the continuous psychosexual development of children; adolescents and adults; heterosexuality, homosexuality, and bisexuality; the use of sex by the media; pornography; sex and the law; institutional sexuality; population control; marital sex; the effects of class background on sexual practices. (Prerequisite: SOC 202.)
- SOC 357L-01 PROSEMINAR: SOCIOLOGICAL PORTRAIT 3 2:00-2:50 pm MTR CLS-0006 BarBara Scott**
OF THE BLACK WOMAN
The aim of this course is to expose students to a wide sampling of the research and literature, both past and present, on the Black woman. This course will also deal with the historical position of the Black woman in America society. (Prerequisite: SOC 202.)

The Women's Studies Resource Center is open about 20 hours per week. The specific schedule varies from term to term; consult the schedule posted on the door for current hours (room A-108).

WHAT MAKES A FEMINIST SOCIAL SCIENCE?

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sexual preference) acknowledged and discussed? If the writer is discussing a multi-dimensional concept, does the writer focus on those dimensions which emphasize traditionally male concerns? Does the concept or label chosen reflect the reality of the phenomenon rather than masking it (e.g. woman abuse rather than spouse abuse)?

8. Does the writer avoid double standards in theoretical explanations? When unexpected data are found, does the researcher avoid stereotypes and myths to explain the phenomenon? If sex differences are mentioned, are they explained in the analysis? Is the sexism of people being studied acknowledged and discussed? Are concerns of females and female experience treated as important in the analysis? Does the writer encourage understanding of people who do not fit sex role stereotypes?

9. Does the methodology make gender and women's experience and concerns visible? Are women included in the sample? Are generalizations appropriately made (i.e. does the researcher avoid generalizing to female experience based on data collected about male experience)? Are problems and limitations of a method, statistic, or measurement discussed? Do case studies and examples include both women and men, where appropriate? Does the researcher use sexist frames of reference when presenting the study to participants in the research? If an interview is edited for presentation, does the writer indicate how this reflects the priorities of the interviewee? Are open-ended questions used so that participants have an opportunity to use their own language for talking about themselves, their emotions, and their

experiences? When a work is cited that includes bias, does the writer acknowledge the theoretical limitations of the citation? In a critique, does the writer avoid criticizing other writers for failing to meet expectations of femininity?

10. Does the writer act as an agent of change?

Does the writer discuss how problems in doing research or writing were handled and whether or not attempts were made to resolve the problems in a way consistent with feminist principles? Is the power of ordinary people recognized, and are solutions, actions, or strategies for ordinary people proposed? Does the writer discuss ways in which privileged people contribute to the problem? Does the writer address privileged people as an audience about changing? Does the writer discuss her or his accountability to the people she or he has studied? Does the writer indicate she or he provided information to research participants when requested? Does the writer discuss whether or not she or he has or will share the results of the research and/or analysis with the people she has studied? Does the writer encourage readers to raise questions about her or his analysis, to test her or his hypotheses, to pursue further lines of inquiry? Does the writer identify future directions for research and action?

[A list of readings in feminist sociology may be obtained from Martha Thompson, Sociology Department, x 8205.]

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PROGRAM NOTES

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