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ABSTRACT

Information is presented on issues being debated by women's studies scholars such as the possibility and advisability of curriculum integration as regards women's studies. Some believe that the focus on integration is premature, that women's studies scholars are trying to do too much too soon. Others are pursuing curriculum integration vigorously and with some success. The current directions of women's studies within academia are also discussed, and various strategies for change are suggested. These strategies include core curriculum revision, hiring feminist faculty and administrators committed to the ideal of gender balancing the curriculum, and faculty development efforts. Various models for change developed by individual schools and institutions also are discussed. (JB)

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The Importance of Women's Studies in Today's Curriculum

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Mega Lecture

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The Importance of Women's Studies in Today's Curriculum

As Peggy McIntosh, Director of the Wellesley College Center for Research on Women has noted, the "main message any school delivers about what counts is delivered through its curriculum,"¹ and it is a fallacy to suppose that career counselling, Affirmative Action hiring patterns, and revised admissions policies will not be undercut by a curriculum still biased in its lack of integration of women and minorities at all levels of study. Few would argue that we need to work toward a curriculum which reflects the fact that women constitute over half the population and that we should work away from a curriculum that asks students to empower a cultural minority --white males-- to value their ideas exclusively, and to conform to the hierarchical structures that have been created to preserve a place at the top for the very few a place at the bottom for the many. As McIntosh notes, "Until the curriculum shifts in all fields, the school hasn't really transformed itself into an institution of equity, which, more widely understood, allows people cross-culturally, multiracially, and of both sexes to be considered richly and fully human within the

¹Peggy McIntosh, The Bulletin, Noble and Greenough School (Winter/Spring 1987): 6.

McGowan 2

main systems of power and value."²

You may not be aware that in asking me to speak about the importance of Women's Studies in today's curriculum, you have asked me to address issues of curricular imbalance and to suggest measures for integrating the study of women throughout the curriculum, but because of the historical development of Women's Studies in this country, it is now virtually impossible to address intelligently the subject of Women's Studies without an awareness of the work that has been done in curriculum integration since the late '70's. For, as Catherine Stimpson suggests, "mainstreaming efforts have probably taken some of the most creative energies in women's studies since that time."³ Thus I will address in this paper more than one variety of Women's Studies -- curriculum integration, as well as "autonomous" Women's Studies programs.

The effort of Women's Studies to balance the curriculum began as a relatively autonomous endeavor on university campuses in 1969, largely, as Catherine Stimpson notes, in response to the "democratization of higher education," the "entrance of women of all classes and races into the public labor force," the "emergence of and earlier challenge to the academy and structures of knowledge by the Black movement," and

²Ibid.

³Catherine Stimpson, "Taking Women and Gender Seriously," in Bonnie Spanier, Alexander Bloom, Darlene Boroviak, eds., Toward a Balanced Curriculum: A Sourcebook for Initiating Gender Integration Projects. Based on the Wheaton College Conference. (Cambridge: Schenkman Publishing Company, Inc., 1984), 21.

McGowan 3

the emergence of 1960's feminism, which brought women's issues to public as well as academic consciousness.⁴ It is not my purpose to trace the emergence of Women's Studies within the academy. You would do well to read Catherine Stimpson's fine synopsis of that subject in Women's Studies in the United States.⁵ It is, rather, my intention to share with you current information on issues being debated by Women's Studies scholars, to present an "uneasy consensus" about the current directions of Women's Studies within the academy, to raise your consciousness slightly about phases of curriculum change, to speak briefly about models for change, as well as about initiating and sustaining a gender integration project, and lastly, to warn you about some of the problems that are likely to be encountered in any attempt to transform the liberal arts curriculum through integration of the new scholarship on women. If I can alert you to some of these issues and direct you to further relevant information, I will consider our time together to have been well spent.

Before I begin to address these issues, let me suggest that though the sources listed in the documentation of this paper may be of use to you, more completely annotated bibliographies are to be found in Marilyn Schuster and Susan Van Dyne, Women's Place

⁴Stimpson, 13.

⁵Catherine Stimpson, Women's Studies in the United States. A Report to the Ford Foundation, June 1986. In this and the article above, Stimpson neatly summarizes the development of the debate between feminist minimalist and maximalists, as well as American maximalist differences with French feminists like Julia Kristeva and Helene Cixous.

McGowan 4

in the Academy: Transforming the Liberal Arts Curriculum⁶; in Betty Schmitz, Integrating Women's Studies into the Curriculum⁷; and in Gloria Bowles and Renate Duelli Klein, Theories of Women's Studies.⁸

As Florence Howe points out, there were, from the first, "two conscious goals in women's studies: to develop a body of scholarship and a new curriculum about women and the issue of gender; second, to use this knowledge to transform the 'mainstream' curriculum, turning it into what it has never been, a co-educational one."⁹ This suggests Women's Studies as a two stage process, the second stage of which curriculum integration has begun to address. There is, however, widespread concern and debate about what effect this integration effort will have on Women's Studies. Part of this concern, I think, stems, from the knowledge that the development of a body of scholarship on women, having begun in 1969, is hardly complete, and from an uneasy feeling that the current focus on integration is premature -- that we are trying to do too much too soon. Peggy McIntosh, for instance (a strong proponent of what she calls

⁶Marilyn Schuster and Susan Van Dyne, eds., Women's Place in the Curriculum: Transforming the Liberal Arts Curriculum (Totowa, N. J.: Rowman & Allenheld, 1985).

⁷Betty Schmitz, Integrating Women's Studies into the Curriculum: A Guide and Bibliography (Old Westbury, N. Y.: Feminist Press, 1985).

⁸Gloria Bowles and Renate Duelli Klein, eds, Theories of Women's Studies (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983).

⁹Florence Howe, "Feminist Scholarship -- The Extent of the Revolution," in Liberal Education and the New Scholarship on Women, 10-11. A Report of the Wingspread Conference. Copies available from Association of American Colleges, 1818 R Street, NW, Washington, D. C. 20009. Reprinted in Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning 14, no.3 (April 1982):12-20.

McGowan 5

"curriculum re-vision"), quotes historian Gerda Lerner as saying in 1981 that she could not at that time organize a revisionist basic text called American History: "'...it is too early. It would take a team of us, fully funded, two years just to get the table of contents organized -- just to imagine how we would create it.'" Lerner continues, "'But don't worry, we were 6,000 years carefully building a patriarchal structure of knowledge, and we've had only 12 years to try to correct it, and 12 years is nothing.'"¹⁰ McIntosh herself has repeatedly said that Women's Studies will have to flourish for 100 years before we can have an inclusive curriculum or a complete epistemology or methodology for the study of women.¹¹

Yet, since the first efforts in curriculum integration at Guilford and Stephens Colleges in the late 70's, and particularly since the Wingspread Conference in October, 1981 (composed largely of higher education academic administrators), the focus of many Women's Studies scholars has been curriculum integration.

The Wingspread Conference resulted in a four-fold series of recommendations to institutions, to administrators, to disciplinary groups, and to education associations. In brief, the conference recommended that institutions examine their curricula in the light of the new scholarship on women and build faculties able to teach a curriculum informed by research on women. The conference recommended that

¹⁰Peggy McIntosh, "Interactive Phases of Curricular Re-vision: A Feminist Perspective." Working Paper No. 124 (Wellesley, Ma.:Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, 1983), 21.

¹¹McIntosh stated this in a personal interview at the Wellesley Center for Research on Women in May, and she has stated it, among other places, in The Bulletin. See above.

McGowan 6

administrators support faculty, programs, departments, librarians, and governing bodies at every possible level to hasten incorporation of the new scholarship into the liberal arts curriculum. To disciplinary groups, the conference recommended that disciplinary leaders and feminist scholars undertake an analysis of the need for change in the methodologies of the disciplines in the light of the new scholarship on women. Under the leadership of the Association of American Colleges, the Washington-based education associations were urged to act as resources to their members in the effort to transform curricula and to underscore with their constituencies the importance of the new scholarship for liberal education¹²

Thus a paradigm was formed for "top-down" strategies for gender-balancing the curriculum, about more of which later.¹³

Other conferences and workshops in the early 80's, such as the Workshop on Integrating Women's Studies into the Curriculum, sponsored by the Southwest Institute for Research on Women (SIROW) and held in Princeton, New Jersey on August 27-30, 1981 (with support from the Rockefeller Family Fund and NEH), brought together directors of projects from both public and private colleges and universities to "exchange information and strategies on integrating women's studies into the curriculum, assess current theory and practice, and develop a paper to inform college administrators about the goals and potential impact of such projects."¹⁴ In addition, in 1979 and the early

¹²Women's Studies Quarterly 10, no. 1 (Spring 1982): 29.

¹³The top-down model, as well as the piggy-back model and the bottom-up model are described by Schuster and Van Dyne in "Models for Institutional Change," in Integrating Materials about Women into the Curriculum, Currents 5, no. 2 (Fall 1987): 10-15. The article is adapted from Chapter 7 of Women's Place in the Academy.

¹⁴Schmitz, 3.

McGowan 7

'80's, several grants were awarded by such funding sources as WEEAP, FIPSE, the Ford Foundation, and the Lilly Foundation to colleges and universities to gender-balance their curricula specifically through course revision. The Georgia State, Utah State, and Montana State projects were funded by such grants.¹⁵

In 1976 the Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, with help from the Mellon Foundation, instituted a grant program for New England faculty to explore ways of incorporating feminist scholarship into the curriculum, and in 1982 the Wellesley Center received another grant to support a National Consulting Program and a National Fellowship Program. By the time of the 1983 National Women's Association meeting at Humboldt State University, representatives of 12 different projects felt the need to form a Task Force on Curriculum Integration. Since then Women's Studies conferences and journals such as Women's Studies Quarterly and Women's Studies International Forum have been preoccupied with strategies for curricular change, so that in 1985 Betty Schmitz was able to list 80 integration projects. Clearly, curriculum integration is a project which many Women's Studies programs (currently numbering over 450) are watching closely with an eye not only to strategies for initiating and sustaining such projects, but with a focus on understanding whether they will threaten the so-called "autonomy" and existence of Women's Studies programs that are still only, at most, in the second decade of their

¹⁵Ibid.

existence.

The great "Autonomy vs. Integration Debate" was born out of alarm on the part of some Women's Studies scholars about the rapid proliferation of curriculum integration projects. Some, like Sandra Coyner and Gloria Bowles, would prefer to focus on questions germane to Women's Studies' autonomy as a discipline. Coyner, for instance, feels that "Women's Studies is not ready for integration into 'mainstream' departments, because it is still too focused on white, middle-class, heterosexual, young, able women; and it can never be truly autonomous as long as it is in the academy."¹⁶ Coyner and Bowles distinguish between integration and transformation, stating that transformation is a broader and worthier goal, in that it argues for a restructuring of the patriarchal academic hierarchies and acknowledges Women's Studies' claim to a unique focus in the academy -- "on the gender system as a central part of human social and cultural organization, and our parallel work to reconstruct knowledge itself from a woman's viewpoint."¹⁷

Gloria Bowles and Renate Duelli Klein, in positing dichotomous definitions and strategies on the part of Women's Studies "autonomists" and "integrationists," have fueled a debate which such scholars as Peggy McIntosh, Elizabeth Kammarck Minnich, Marilyn Schuster, and Susan Van Dyne believe makes

¹⁶Sandra Coyner, "The Ideas of Mainstreaming: Women's Studies and the Disciplines," in Frontiers 8, no. 3 (1986), 87. See also Sandra Coyner, "Women's Studies as an Academic Discipline: Why and How To Do It," in Theories of Women's Studies.

¹⁷Coyner, Frontiers, 94.

McGowan 9

false distinctions. As McIntosh and Minnich see it, Bowles and Klein's contention that one Women's Studies effort is "'autonomous or woman-centered' and one 'integrationist' and so (in their view) necessarily involved with having to placate the academic powers that be" is erroneous. McIntosh and Minnich elaborate:

They see 'integrationist' work as basically uncritical, accepting of the existing structures and definitions of knowledge, and therefore to the 'autonomous' type of Women's Studies. They see 'integrationist' teachers and scholars as diverting resources, energy, and political strength from Women's Studies.¹⁸

Minnich and McIntosh, on the other hand, view Women's Studies programs and their feminist scholarship "as a continuum or spectrum on which many forms of work are done, all of them to varying degrees critical of established modes and methods of knowing."¹⁹ They argue that because Women's Studies programs have almost always drawn on faculty from many disciplines, rather than departments, and have depended on departments for pay, hiring, promotion, and tenure, they have never, in fact, been "autonomous."²⁰

McIntosh and Minnich cite the sources of rhetoric for the autonomy/integration debate to be funding agencies,

¹⁸Peggy McIntosh and Elizabeth Kammarck Minnich, "Varieties of Women's Studies," Women's Studies International Forum 7, no. 3 (1984), 87. See also Sandra Coyner, "Women's Studies as an Academic Discipline: Why and How To Do It," in Theories of Women's Studies.

¹⁹

Ibid.

²⁰

McIntosh and Minnich, 140.

McGowan 10

publicity, terminology, administrators' attitudes, and "the degree to which curriculum change programs were and are mistakenly seen to accept the disciplines as they now are."²¹ They describe each of these factors in detail, noting that the impression grew that curriculum change projects were different from Women's Studies because they did not have Women's Studies in their titles, and that administrators have set up a false either/or dichotomy in seeking to choose which they will support: Women's Studies or faculty development projects. McIntosh and Minnich hope that faculty members will refuse to participate in this "us against them" thinking, and they conclude that we need both Women's Studies and curriculum integration.

In "Varieties of Women's Studies," McIntosh and Minnich also raise the issue of nomenclature, to which McIntosh has alluded often in her essays on curriculum integration. They urge dropping the term "mainstreaming," which "gives the mistaken impression that there is a main stream of knowledge and culture which women now seek to enter so that we can rush along with the main current in one happy flow."²² They reiterate that there have always been many streams, both acknowledged and unacknowledged, in which women have played a part, and they assert that the word "mainstreaming" damages all varieties of work in Women's Studies.

²¹McIntosh and Minnich, 141.

²²McIntosh and Minnich, 144. See also McIntosh, "A Note on Terminology," Women's Studies Quarterly 11, no.2 (Summer 1983): 29-30.

McGowan 11

It implies to administrators that it is easy, quick, and painless to add a few materials on women to the main curriculum and be done with the need for further research and for interdisciplinary Women's Studies courses. It implies to serious feminist scholars that their hard-won research findings and insights are being tossed lightly into established courses without any recognition of their significance or of the challenge they pose to existing bodies of scholarship. Perhaps more than any other factor, the word 'mainstreaming' has contributed to the impression that Women's Studies and curriculum change projects were essentially different from each other.²³

McIntosh and Minnich conclude their article with the assertion that we must continue the establishment of strong Women's Studies programs to "carry research and teaching forward into a transformed curriculum that reflects the critical importance of feminist work throughout all departments." They feel that the strongest curricular change projects will prove to have been carried on by Women's Studies programs and that a strong Women's Studies program is the "most effective base from which to begin many forms of feminist work."²⁴ McIntosh and Minnich admonish us to remember that dichotomous thinking will divide us amongst ourselves, and that the common enemy is those who have "an investment and an identification with a tradition of knowledge that is male-centered and supportive of all strategies which deny power, privilege, and self-respect" to the majority of humankind.²⁵

There seems, at present, to be an uneasy consensus

²³McIntosh and Minnich, 144.

²⁴McIntosh and Minnich, 147.

²⁵

Ibid.

McGowan 12

supporting McIntosh and Minnich's point of view. Schuster and Van Dyne, for instance, state that effective curriculum transformation "is impossible without a base of researchers and teachers whose primary concern is women; similarly, women's studies departments and programs become marginalized and risk having little effect on the experience of most students if they are not linked to curriculum transformation projects."²⁶ This point of view is hard to argue with. Those of us who teach Women's Studies are constantly aware, no matter how large our class enrollments, that we are reaching only a small segment of the student population. If we agree with Florence Howe that one of the goals of Women's Studies has always been transformation of the curriculum, we must acknowledge the need to reach outside the Women's Studies classroom. Howe stated at the Wingspread Conference in 1961 that Women's Studies scholars could at that time begin "mainstreaming" but noted that it would be impossible to begin transformation of the male curriculum "without passing through some form of Women's Studies." She also asserted that "there is no way around women's studies, if by that we mean a deep and rich immersion in the scholarship on women."²⁷ Women's Studies, then, has dual importance in today's curriculum: as the scholarly cornerstone for curriculum integration and as a rich and fertile field of discovery for knowledge about women, a field which may be harvested to good effect for years to come.

²⁶Schuster and Van Dyne, Women's Place in the Academy, 7.

²⁷Howe, 17.

McGowan 13

Before going on to describe strategies that Women's Studies scholars have adopted toward curricular change, I should particularly like to address some other less frequently noted sources of curriculum development. Proponents of curriculum integration generally concede that some college campuses may not be in advanced enough stages of curriculum development to support efforts toward curriculum integration. Before deciding to launch such an effort, perhaps it would be wise to assess whether previous efforts have been made to redress curricular imbalance. If a college or university has or is about to adopt a general education core, for instance, it will be well to check whether the core philosophy articulates a commitment to pluralism and multicultural perspectives. If it does not, institutional governing bodies, often led by white, male non-feminists, may be tempted to exclude Women's Studies courses that, like minority studies courses, are too often regarded as "marginal," "peripheral," or "supplementary" in scope. Core revision provides an excellent opportunity not only to increase students' exposure to Women's Studies and to broaden their perspectives, but to validate Women's Studies as well. It is a vote of confidence by the governing structures of a college or university in the value of exposing students to alternative philosophies and methodologies.²⁸

Another strategy for change is the hiring of feminist

²⁸See my essay, "A New Opportunity for Women's Studies: Inclusion in a Revised Core Curriculum," Frontiers 8, no.3 (1986): 110-113.

McGowan 14

faculty and administrators committed not only to affirmative action, but to the Wingspread ideal of gender balancing the curriculum. Existing feminist faculty must be willing to serve endlessly -- and at the risk of burnout -- on college-wide search committees. Almost all curriculum integration projects cite administrative support for gender issues and gender balance, but such support must not be perceived as "administrative pressure that violates the academic freedom of faculty to teach and act independent of institutional mandate."²⁹ Accordingly, Susan Kirschner, Jane Monning Atkinson, and Elizabeth Arch advocate emphasizing to colleagues that thinking about gender issues can benefit their work as teachers and scholars -- and, one might add, can benefit their students as well.

Another interim step in the movement toward curriculum integration might be what Kirschner, Atkinson, and Arch call "institutionalized consciousness raising."³⁰ Like you at Connecticut College and us at ECSU, Women's Studies scholars at Lewis and Clark had an opportunity to gain serious attention to feminist issues through a long range planning process initiated by a new college president, by which they could reexamine institutional goals and priorities. Feminist scholars at Lewis and Clark added articles on Women's Studies to packets distributed to faculty before a planning "retreat." They organized to assert the high priority of integrating

²⁹Susan Kirschner, Jane Monning Atkinson, and Elizabeth Arch, "Reassessing Coeducation," in Women's Place in the Academy, 43.

³⁰Ibid.

McGowan 15

women's studies into the curriculum during the planning process, and their organization paid off in that after the vote, their concerns emerged as a top priority. I would recommend examining the mission and role statements of any institution; usually, one will find commitments at least to pluralism and multi-cultural understanding. It is far easier to justify new programs using the rhetoric of such statements than to make an autonomous bid, with many others, for a shrinking pool of funds. Feminist scholars must play a proactive role in all phases of governance that involve curriculum if they seek to challenge the androcentrism and ethnocentrism that currently pervade the academy.

As Kirschner, Atkinson, and Arch note, when feminist scholars consider curriculum integration as a possibility, they should be aware that nomenclature plays a vital role. I have already alluded to McIntosh and Minnich's objections to the word "mainstreaming." More popular choices include the NWSA endorsed "curriculum integration," "curriculum transformation," (though, to my mind there is an important difference here), "curriculum expansion," "balancing the curriculum," and "gender balancing the curriculum." Betty Schmitz has chosen the title Integrating Women's Studies into the Curriculum because she wants to recognize that "women's studies is the root of the curricular reform movement and it is essential to its critical success."³¹ Perhaps, for that reason, hers is the best choice. Schmitz,

³¹Schmitz, 8.

McGowan 16

like other proponents of integrating Women's Studies into the curriculum, sees Women's Studies and integration efforts as "two points on a continuum or two versions of the same work, one carried out primarily with students, the other with faculty colleagues."³²

Indeed, most efforts at curriculum integration have begun with faculty development efforts. Some have started with grants from large foundations which have brought to campus consulting faculty such as those listed in the Wellesley College Research Center's Directory of Consultants.³³ Some, like the Great Lakes College Association, have founded summer institutes for faculty development, while others have offered colloquia and workshops to selected members of the faculty with stipends and/or released time. The national impetus towards faculty development efforts, fostered by the Washington based higher education associations, can provide an opportunity for curriculum integration. We need both funding from deans' instructional budgets for Women's Studies programs funding for faculty development programs. A review of curricular revision projects described in Schmitz's valuable guidebook can provide Women's Studies scholars with a list of foundations that have in the past supported faculty development in curriculum integration; however, campuses with a strong Women's Studies base may work with existing faculty

³²Ibid.

³³A Directory of Consultants on Transforming the Liberal Arts Curriculum through Incorporation of Materials on Women. Faculty Development Consulting Program, Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, 1984.

McGowan 17

development mechanisms to begin an integration effort, for as outside funding shrinks and becomes more competitive, curriculum integration projects must continue.

The idea of curriculum integration has become so important in Women's Studies that several feminist scholars have developed theories to explain its development. Women's Studies faculty must, I think, bring to any integration project an awareness of "feminist phase theory," so that they are likely to know just how far their own Women's Studies efforts have developed and how far they have yet to go. Phase theory is a classification of feminist thinking about the development of the Women's Studies curriculum over the past 15 to 20 years. The most widely disseminated phase theory is that of Peggy McIntosh, who locates five interactive phases that "occur both in the development of individuals and in the curricula when new perspectives and materials are brought from women's studies into a traditional consciousness or discipline."³⁴ McIntosh uses history as a paradigm in her interactive phases, calling Phase 1 Womanless History; Phase 2 Women in History; Phase 3 Women as a Problem, Anomaly or Absence in History; Phase 4 Women as History, and Phase 5 History Redefined or Reconstructed to Include Us All. She develops the image of a broken pyramid to represent our institutions and our individual psyches, and in this pyramid,

³⁴Peggy McIntosh, "The Study of Women: Processes of Personal and Curricular Re-vision," The Forum for Liberal Education 6, no. 5 (April 1984): 3. McIntosh elaborates these phases fully in "Interactive Phases of Curricular Revision."

McGowan 18

Phase 5 thinking is at the top, and Phase 1 thinking at the bottom because Phase 1 thinking reinforces what we have been taught and is therefore inadequate. Phases 4 and 5, highly placed on McIntosh's pyramid, actually correspond to what we have been taught is the bottom, in terms of priorities for developing the fiercely competitive hierarchical systems of nations, institutions, governments, universities, churches, and corporations, where winners are few and high up on the pyramid, and losers are legion and low down. The few that wield power from the summits view us and our curriculum as irrelevant and peripheral. We have been excluded from the very exclusive, very small, so-called "mainstream." McIntosh says that Phase 3 curriculum work involves getting angry at our exclusion from the curriculum, at the fact that "instead of being seen as part of the norm, we have been seen, if at all, as a 'problem' for the scholar, the society, or the world of the powerful."³⁵ Phase 3 gives way to Phase 4 when we begin to see ourselves not as a problem, but as valid human beings, and begin to explore the life "existing below the public world of winning and losing."³⁶

McIntosh states that Phase 4 work honors particularity at the same time it identifies common denominators of experience. It stresses diversity and plurality. In McIntosh's mind, the work of curriculum transformation occurs at Phase 5, though many Women's Studies scholars are still teaching with Phase 3 and 4

³⁵"Interactive Phases," 10.

³⁶"Interactive Phases," 15

McGowan 19

perspectives. A true Phase 5 curriculum has not yet been developed, but Women's Studies scholars should be working toward its realization.

Other Women's Studies scholars who have developed phase theories are Patti Lather at Mankato State College and Mary Kay Thompson Tetreault of Lewis and Clark College, who envisions as Phase 1, Women Not Included; Phase 2, Women Worthies Added; Phase 3, Bifocal Treatment of Women and Men; Phase 4, Women's Cultures and Perspectives Presented on Their Own Terms; and Phase 5, A Multifocal Vision of us all."³⁷ Tetreault sees phase theory as providing "a record of changes in our thinking at each stage as scholars moved from a male-centered perspective to one more gender-balanced."³⁸

Perhaps most easily translatable to curricular integration efforts is Schuster and Van Dyne's model. Schuster and Van Dyne present six stages: Stage 1, Invisible Women; Stage 2, Search for Missing Women; Stage 3, Women as a Subordinate Group; Stage 4, Women Studied on Their Own Terms; Stage 5, Women as a Challenge to the Disciplines; and Stage 6, The Transformed Curriculum. The movement toward curriculum integration begins at Stage 5. A "transformed" Phase 6 course would

* be self-conscious about methodology and use gender as a category of analysis, no matter what is on the syllabus (even if all males);

* present changed content in a changed context and be

³⁷Mary Kay Thompson Tetreault, "Women in the Curriculum," Comment 15, no. 2 (Feb. 1986): 1.

³⁸Tetreault, 2.

McGowan 20

aware that all knowledge is historical and socially constructed, not immutable;

* develop an interdisciplinary perspective, to make visible the language of discourse, assumptions of a field, and analytical methods by contrast with other fields;

* pay meaningful attention to intersections of race, class, and cultural differences within gender, and avoid universalizing beyond data;

* study new subjects on their own terms, not merely as other, alien, non-normative, and non-Western, and encourage a true pluralism;

* test paradigms rather than merely "add on" women figures or issues, and incorporate analysis of gender, race, and class by a thorough reorganization of available knowledge;

* make student's [sic] experience and learning process part of the explicit content of the course thereby reaffirming the transcendent goals of the course; and

* recognize that, because culture reproduces itself in the classroom, the more conscious we are of this phenomenon, the more likely we are to turn it to our advantage in teaching the transformed course.³⁹

Schuster and Van Dyne believe that offering an intellectual overview of the process of curriculum change can offer a "key strategy to those participating in the change process to identify sources of resistance in themselves and others."⁴⁰ Most phase theorists note that an awareness of phases is necessary as faculty commitment progresses in different disciplinary, core, and institutional contexts.

It seems to me that any curricular change effort should acknowledge the fluidity of the walls between the above

³⁹Schuster and Van Dyne, Women's Place in the Academy, 27-28.

⁴⁰Schuster and Van Dyne, Women's Place in the Academy, 14.

McGowan 21

categories. A commitment to "true pluralism" has, for instance, been a goal of Women's Studies scholars from the beginning. Hopefully, any curriculum integration effort would demand attention to race, class, age, and what Adrienne Rich calls "compulsory heterosexuality" as categories of analysis.

Two important essays, "Women's Studies/Black Studies: Learning from Our Common Pasts, Forging a Common Future" by Margaret L. Andersen, and "Complicating the Question: Black Studies and Women's Studies" by Johnella Butler, ask that we learn from similar transformative efforts in Black Studies and that we develop a collaborative model for transformation.⁴¹ Curiously few of the curriculum integration projects enumerated by Betty Schmitz incorporate minority studies of any sort into faculty development models. In New England we have the example of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and in the South, the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. The University of North Dakota, the University of Illinois at Chicago, and Western Washington University have included minority studies in their projects. Information on each of these projects can be obtained from the Directors, whose addresses are listed in Betty Schmitz's invaluable guide.

For models of curriculum integration, it is best to look to Schmitz and to Schuster and Van Dyne's working paper "Feminist Transformation of the Curriculum: The Changing Classroom, Changing the Institution," as well as to their

⁴¹In Women's Place in the Academy, 62-72 and 73-84.

McGowan 22

"Models for Institutional Change." As suggested previously, it is Schuster and Van Dyne who (after warning that any integration project must have explicit administrative support, so that it is an institutional priority rather than a personal goal on the part of feminist faculty) name three models for curriculum transformation:

A top-down model that begins with an administrative directive to make sweeping changes in the curriculum by integrating introductory courses in all departments or otherwise affecting a significant number of basic courses.

A piggy-back model in which interdisciplinary courses or programs already sanctioned within the institutional agenda are targeted by women's studies groups or by administrators as the best way to begin curriculum transformation and to reach a broad range of faculty.

A bottom-up coordination or consortial model that originates with faculty expertise and student interest and seeks to highlight, connect, and maximize internal or regional resources. Retraining is accomplished through collaboration among peers.⁴²

Schuster and Van Dyne emphasize the importance of asking before the adoption of any of these models in an institutional context: "Who can change? Where is the locus for change? And how do we evaluate change?"⁴³ They warn that using a departmental structure as a locus for change is not enough, that a strong interdisciplinary Women's Studies program is a necessary locus, and that because external sources of funding are shrinking, we must develop models that can be managed within current

⁴²Schuster and Van Dyne, "Models," 12.

⁴³Ibid.

McGowan 23

institutional resources. They argue that "The commitment to research and teaching about women, which is easy to articulate when an outside funding agency is paying for it, must become an integral part of fund-raising objectives, of appeals to alumni donors, and of the operating budget when no more grants are forthcoming."⁴⁴

The original projects, externally funded for two or three years, must be replaced by institutional commitment if curriculum integration is to succeed. Schuster and Van Dyne caution the need for patience and for understanding that curriculum integration is a long term project.

In gaining commitment to these goals from administrators and teachers, we need to counter their impatience for the finished product, their understandably urgent demand for the transformed syllabus, the fully integrated textbook, the inclusive general education requirements, the truly liberal core curriculum. The shape and substance of these products become clearer the more we understand about the process itself. The curriculum, like education, is not static, and our eagerness to have closure, to touch actual products, should not make us forget that because knowledge is historical we will need to revise the curriculum continually.⁴⁵

It is generally conceded that these long term projects, often facilitated through peer interaction and visits from outside consultants, require faculty members whose research and teaching are women-focused. These faculty must be visible leaders of the project, and they must have administrative authority. The seminars in which they participate should demand

⁴⁴"Stages of Curriculum Transformation," in Women's Place in the Curriculum, 14.

⁴⁵Schuster and Van Dyne, "Feminist Transformations," 23.

McGowan 24

some tangible product of the participants, whether it be a syllabus, a paper, or participation in a team teaching experience.⁴⁶ Academic support personnel, such as librarians and middle level administrators must also be involved, so that the effort is truly institution wide. Short term goals such as revised syllabi must not obscure the long range need to encourage ever increasing faculty and administrative participation.⁴⁷

Betty Schmitz, Myra Dinnerstein, and Nancy Mairs caution that a requirement for curriculum transformation is the participation not only of junior, untenured faculty, but of senior faculty as well; there must be an investment by people with power to influence peers or who are well placed in internal curricular decision making processes.⁴⁸ Although resources are needed to inspire interest and spark the initial professional development efforts, the authors feel that stipends, while desirable, are not necessary, and that released time might be adequate to enable faculty to read and reflect. Once faculty are excited about the project, they are likely to use means available from

46

The first book that provides examples of the significant scholarship that can emerge from curriculum integration projects has just been published by three scholars involved in the University of Arizona project. See Susan Hardy Aiken, Karen Anderson, Myra Dinnerstein, Judy N. Lensink, Patricia MacCorquodale, eds., Changing our Minds: Feminist Transformations of Knowledge (Albany: SUNY Press, 1988).

⁴⁷Schuster and Van Dyne, "Models," 11

⁴⁸Betty Schmitz, Myra Dinnerstein, and Nancy Mairs, "Initiating a Curriculum Integration Project," in Women's Place in the Academy, 126.

McGowan 25

general or departmental funds to support and sustain their interest.⁴⁹

Schmitz, Dinnerstein, and Mairs list the following "critical conditions for success":

- * a key group of committed individuals who will act as change agents
- * administrative support for the project
- * women's studies expertise and resources on campus
- * resources to support faculty development activities
- * an impetus for reform or specific opportunity for faculty development
- * a reward mechanism for participating faculty
- * a legitimate home base for the project within the institutional power structure
- * salary or released time for a project director to oversee the effort for a specific period of time⁵⁰

If all of these conditions are met, the results can be gratifying. It remains only to institutionalize the goals and methods for change.

We would do well to profit from the well-documented experiences of others who have launched curriculum integration efforts. Betty Schmitz, for instance, warns us not to do the following: "set project goals that are too ambitious or too abstract; set short term goals with no longer term vision; assume who is with you and who is against you (check it out!); avoid essential intellectual and political issues; try to

⁴⁹Schmitz, Dinnerstein, Mairs, 127.

⁵⁰Schmitz, Dinnerstein, Mairs, 128.

McGowan 26

accomplish too much too fast or with too few resources; rely on token rather than real administrative support."⁵¹

Catherine Stimpson, who supports both integration and "autonomous" Women's Studies, warns that not all institutions are yet ready for gender-balancing projects. A budget line for Women's Studies must be maintained in these institutions. She adds that we are encountering an increasingly conservative intellectual climate and that, while an institution might be willing to support curriculum integration efforts, it might not (as in Estelle Freedman's case at Stanford) be willing to tenure involved junior level faculty in difficult times. Another problem Stimpson cites is a generation of students who think Women's Studies is passe, that equity issues were fully resolved in the '60's and '70's.⁵² Peggy McIntosh adds, however, that in terms of curriculum integration, the greatest problem may be resistance by a threatened, traditional faculty, whose self-defense mechanisms come into play when their hard-won disciplinary knowledge is challenged:

The new scholarship in its volume and complexity shows us that we were not so intelligent if we overlooked so much of human life, and not so fair-minded if we were oblivious to the omissions. Our sense of being knowledgeable is threatened by two decades worth of scholarship on women -- by the pile of journals, books, bibliographies, reprints, and archival materials which are increasing monthly, making us wonder where to start, and whether we can swim in the deep

⁵¹Schmitz, Integrating Women's Studies Into the Curriculum, 61.

⁵²Stimpson, "Taking Women and Gender Seriously," 23.

McGowan 27

interdisciplinary waters of the new work.⁵³

But perhaps the greatest reservations about curriculum integration are voiced by Elaine Showalter, who, in an article entitled "Critical Cross-Dressing: Male Feminists and the Woman of the Year," asks if men's entry into feminist studies through curricular integration finally legitimates feminism as an acceptable form of academic discourse because it makes it "accessible and subject to correction to authoritative men."⁵⁴ Showalter warns that "merely having men study women as new objects of academic discourse does not necessarily represent a transformation in men's thinking."⁵⁵ Male faculty must be active agents for change in women's status both within and outside the academy if the integrity of feminist curriculum transformation is to be maintained.

Margaret Anderson rightly states that "For women and for men, working to transform the curriculum through women's studies requires political, intellectual, and personal change."⁵⁶ Like Peggy McIntosh, she believes that these are "mutually reinforcing changes" that accompany curricular revision through women's studies and that "understanding the confluence of

⁵³McIntosh, "WARNING: The New Scholarship on Women May Be Hazardous to Your Ego," Women's Studies Quarterly 10, no. 1 (Spring 1982): 30.

⁵⁴The quotation is from Margaret L. Anderson, "Changing the Curriculum in Higher Education," in Elizabeth Minnich, Jean O'Barr, and Rachel Rosenfeld, eds., Reconstructing the Academy: Women's Education and Women's Studies (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1988). Anderson refers us to Gayatri Spivak, "Politics of Interpretations" Critical Inquiry 9 (Sept. 1982): 259-78.

⁵⁵Showalter paraphrased by Anderson, 45.

⁵⁶Anderson, 45-46.

McGowan 28

personal and intellectual change...helps women's studies faculty deal with the resistance and denial --both overt and covert-- that faculty colleagues in such projects often exhibit."⁵⁷

Women's Studies scholars who are reluctant to participate in curriculum integration projects because they feel either that Women's Studies is thereby co-opted by nonfeminist men, or is diluted through their efforts, would do well to examine assessments of the outcomes of curriculum integration projects. Schmitz, Dinnerstein, and Mairs, for instance, state that involved faculty at Montana State University "showed significant attitudinal changes," as well as changes in their teaching styles, such as "(a) modification of language style to avoid linguistic bias; (b) greater attention to nontraditional students in classroom discussions; (c) conscious efforts to place equal demands on women and men students; and (d) attempts to modify traditional hierarchical structures in the classroom."⁵⁸ Other projects cite similar gains.

It seems to me that such gains are significant, and that if Women's Studies can accomplish them through curriculum integration, we not only avoid marginalization, but benefit a great number of students. "Autonomous" Women's Studies is important as a source of feminist scholarship and feminist methodologies. But in a time of shifting demographics, when women constitute the majority of the college population and by

⁵⁷Anderson, 46.

⁵⁸Schmitz, Dinnerstein, and Mairs, 118-19.

McGowan 29

1990 groups currently designated as minorities will constitute "30 percent of the youth cohort nationally,"⁵⁹ we must question the validity of "minority" as a designation and reconstruct the curriculum so that it reflects the culture and concerns of the true majority of students; we must educate these students responsibly, and we must seek to establish pedagogical models that serve well the largest group of older students now returning to college to prepare, out of economic necessity, for work in a multicultural world -- adult female students.

In short, we must make the cultural traditions of women and so-called minorities visible in a curriculum in which they have been invisible. We must respond not only to demographic trends, but to a moral imperative that grows out of the recognition of the previous exclusivity of the traditional liberal arts curriculum. That is the task of Women's Studies today. We cannot afford to underestimate its importance.

⁵⁹Schuster and Van Dyne, "Curricular Change in the Twenty-First Century: Why Women?" in Women's Place in the Academy, 6.