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News from the Campus

The Feminist Press

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and begin concentrated training for leadership. Tasks designed to achieve this objective are not confined to ecclesiastical duties but encompass community service as well. From the moment of ordination, a male’s authority supersedes that of any and all females. Instructions in secular as well as sectarian matters come directly from the priesthood. Husbands, brothers, and fathers are considered the final mediators and dispensers of divine wisdom and counsel. Girls, on the other hand, learn that their foreordained role is motherhood. The period between menopause and death is a false promise of relief, for childbirth will be her exclusive calling throughout her future and eternal life. Under these circumstances, for me to offer the possibility of self-fulfillment rather than self-denial was to encourage women to build false hopes and to deny the divinely instituted plan for womankind.

Acutely aware of the discrimination facing professional women educators in Utah who faced this religiously sanctioned attitude, I requested permission from the Department of Educational Administration at the University of Utah to construct a course in women’s studies. The broad objectives I posed were to (1) enhance the self-image of women, and (2) provide some specific skills to help women assume more active leadership in society, in education, and in the political sphere. The class, “Women and Education,” will be offered spring quarter of 1973, and includes the following: The practical how-to of publishing; women’s rights under the present laws and how to realize them; methods of developing political voice; exercises in parliamentary procedure, communication, cooperation, and decision making; techniques of writing resumes and job applications; and effective performance during interviews. Emphasis will be placed on student participation, as opposed to the lecture method, and opportunity will be provided for field-study projects. Guest speakers will include professionally successful women who can provide not only methods of by-passing discriminatory practices but also life-style models for aspiring women.

Feminine response to news of the forthcoming class was overwhelming in its support. Routine details in my office came to a standstill as I attempted to counsel women who phoned, wrote, or dropped by for a more personal chat. Even as I reveled in my unique opportunity to meet some of the needs of my sisterhood, I realized that the classes I had developed could not possibly satisfy the wide spectrum of women who were appealing to me for help.

With new educational challenges arising before the course “Women and Education” has even begun to answer previously identified problems, we can only guess at future solutions. “But women shouldn’t need special help,” objects one of my male graduate students. “Every individual has to learn to stand on his own two feet and make his own way in the world,” he chides me. I merely smile in response, and think what an interesting observation this is coming from a man whose brothers expected his achievement, who prodded him into success, who opened doors of opportunity for him, who was born to assume leadership, and who undoubtedly thanks God each day that he was not born a woman.

Dorothy J. Schimmelpfennig

NEWS FROM THE CAMPUS

In the past three months, twelve new programs in Women’s Studies have been announced, one of them—George Washington University—an M.A. program. At the University of Hawaii, students may earn a B.A. in Women’s Studies through the Liberal Studies Program. Other programs: California State University/Humboldt; College of New Rochelle (N.Y.); CUNY/City College; Oregon State University; Sangamon State University (III.); University of South Florida; University of Massachusetts/Boston; Stockton College (N.J.); Weber State College (Utah); University of Utah. The total number of Women’s Studies programs now listed with the Clearinghouse is 61.

In the past three months, the Clearinghouse has received materials on women’s courses and programs from 30 continuing education or extension programs attached to colleges and universities. While some of these courses and programs are career-oriented, most also reflect the variety of concerns present generally in Women’s Studies: courses in history and current issues; courses in “Growing up Female,” courses on “The Single Woman in Today’s Society,” and so forth.

A graduate program in practical politics with a possible special focus on the changing role of women in politics has been announced by the Eagleton Center for the American Woman and Politics. One-year fellowships are also available to women seeking political careers. The Center offers seminars in practical politics, government internships, campaign and media participation, etc. For 1973-74 applications, write to Ruth Mandel, Director of Educational Programs, Eagleton Institute, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, N. J. 08901.

The Extension Services at California State University/Sacramento offer for credit a Women’s Studies course on the radio. Called “Woman: Sexuality and Identity,” the PR for the course insists that “you deserve units even if the learning situation is convenient and entertaining.”

Fight Against Sexism in Textbooks:
A group of women in San Francisco, formerly the education task force of NOW, have made a study of the textbooks used in the city’s schools, selecting at random a fourth of the readers used. Resulting statistics and quotations successfully shocked both the Curriculum Committee of the Board of Education and the Governor’s Commission on the Status of Women. The Curriculum Committee agreed to recommend to the Board that Little Miss Muffet Fights Back, the feminist bibliography of children’s literature, be consulted when choosing new readers. The group is currently writing up their study, including suggestions for other women embarking on projects of textbook protest. They also are starting three new projects: 1) continuing education for adult women to include counseling services and a traveling panel, 2) an in-service training conference for teachers on eliminating sexism in the classroom, and 3) a letter-writing lobby in support of Patsy Mink’s women’s education bill.
Contact: Adele Meyer, 361-14th Ave., San Francisco.