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1978

Are They the First Two Women's Studies Ph.D.'S?

Sally Wagner

Karen Rotkin

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READERS' SPEAKOUT

that Women's Studies Programs, although growing in number, are far from receiving even the semblance of a fair share of the institutional resources in most colleges and universities. It is also apparent that the women's studies area, even when funded, has not been a haven of agreement and support. We wonder, therefore, if the continued reluctance to share, in print, the real difficulties of women's studies administration, teaching, grant-getting, etc., is really to our advantage.

There was a time when feminists behaved as though no one would notice our developmental problems; that it was, in effect, "just us chickens" out here scabbling and pecking. We acted as though we had no audience and hurt each other and the movement with our naiveté. But now we have become overly reluctant to discuss our problems in public forum, as if our very existence were at stake any time we acknowledge any difficulty at all. While we realize that paranoia in the area of women's studies may be justified—we *are* being watched!—we feel that the current failure to communicate problems and difficulties is far more stifling than can be tolerated. Dealing with women's issues, especially in scholarly and funding areas, requires a good deal of cross-pollination and informational interchange. We submit that we can now afford to treat failures—or just plain mediocrity—with an openly critical eye.

Sincerely yours,

Annette Niemtow
Bryn Mawr College

Paula Mayhew
Queens College, CUNY

ARE THEY THE FIRST TWO WOMEN'S STUDIES PH.D.'S?

Dear Ms. Reuben:

In June we both graduated from the History of Consciousness program at the University of California, Santa Cruz. The History of Consciousness Board of Studies is interdisciplinary, and it is possible within

the program to concentrate in an established discipline. Both of us concentrated our study within the area of women's studies; we had women's studies faculty on our oral and dissertation committees. Karen's dissertation was "The Social Construction of Female Sexual Experience," and Sally's was "That Word is Liberty: A Biography of Matilda Joslyn Gage" (a nineteenth-century American feminist). We helped to create a Feminist Sub-group within History of Consciousness, and continue to work in women's studies, Karen coordinating and teaching in the program at Santa Cruz and Sally teaching at California State University, Sacramento, where she helped form the program seven years ago.

When we each entered graduate school there were no Ph.D. programs in women's studies, and we chose History of Consciousness as the only graduate program (of

which we were aware) in which we could focus our work in the area of women's studies. Our degrees read: "Doctor of Philosophy in History of Consciousness (Women's Studies)." (Technically, the program refers to this as a parenthetical degree notation.)

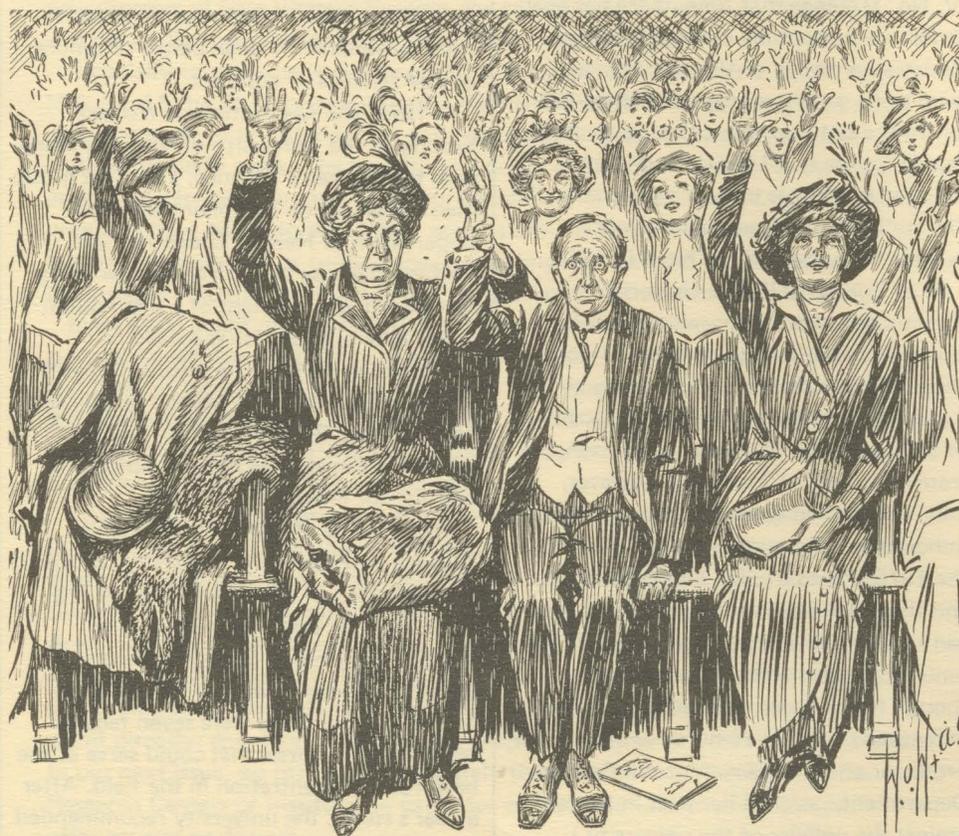
We are both very curious to know whether we are the first two Ph.D.'s in the area of women's studies in this country. Could anyone who has information on this please let us know?

Thanks for your assistance.

In Sisterhood,

Dr. Sally Wagner
Women's Studies
California State University, Sacramento

Dr. Karen Rotkin
Women's Studies
University of California, Santa Cruz



"The Speaker: All those in favor of Woman Suffrage hold up their hands."

Readers are encouraged to send in their favorite historical or contemporary photographs, cartoons, graphics, etc., for possible publication on these pages. Above cartoon reprinted, with permission, from *Life Magazine*, 1913.