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# Editorial

Florence Howe

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## EDITORIAL

Many people continue to inquire about the status and future of women's studies. With this issue we wish to announce that our annual updating of information about academic women's studies programs in the United States is under way. If your program was listed in the issue dated Summer 1977, you will receive an inquiry from us about your 1978 listing. If yours is a new program or a program-information, please write to us at once. The deadline for the 1978 program list will be July 1: the information will appear in the Fall issue.

Although there are more than 276 women's studies programs in academe, to our knowledge there are but two among the 17,000 public school systems in the United States. With reference to the oldest of these, established by the Berkeley public schools in 1974, we note with dismay the first significantly bad piece of news about women's studies in its eight-year history. In February, as we announced in our Winter issue, Berkeley's School Board voted to cut off the budget and effectively shut down the Women's Studies Program and three ethnic studies programs—Chicano Studies, Black Studies, and Asian-American Studies. Awarded a Women's Educational Equity Act grant in 1977, the Women's Studies Program had been developing nonsexist multiethnic curriculum materials for junior high school history classes. We have reviewed early, field-testing versions of these new materials; they promise excellence equal to such other pioneering Berkeley women's studies products as *The House that Jill and Jack Built*, a unified carpentry, writing, and reading curriculum. As this issue goes to press, major efforts of the feminist community on and off campuses are under way to reverse the school board's decision. Inside these pages, a full report and photographs of children participating in the program.

With this issue, we begin to consider women's studies abroad. In India, where we recently attended a conference on Women and Development, women's studies courses like Neera Desai's Sociology of Women (at S.N.D.T. University in Bombay) are rare. Inside these pages, we describe the work and publications of two Women's Studies Research Institutes—in Bombay and New Delhi; we print an essay written by an Indian feminist and also our own "Letter from India." In forthcoming issues, we will review women's studies in such countries as Canada, England and Wales, Germany, and Sweden.

The status and future of women's studies are bound intimately to the growth of the National Women's Studies Association, now a little more than one year old. As we go to press, NWSA is planning the second annual meeting of its Coordinating Council at the end of May. The Coordinating Council is the representative body constitutionally established to govern the Association between its Annual Conventions. It is also responsible for planning the Annual Convention. Although NWSA has not met nationally since January 1977, in the interim most of its 12 regional associations have met at least twice. Indeed, in addition to the meetings, newsletters, and taskforces of the regional associations, there have been state-wide and local meetings, and still other newsletters and taskforces established. The plethora of groups and groupings may be bewildering to those who want to see the neat outlines of a national professional organization. While we counsel patience on all sides, we hope the regional, state, and local groupings will "think national" as they plan their futures. Our Association needs many conscious links. Like others, we look forward to the stimulation of sharing that only a National Convention can provide.

—Florence Howe