the personal and social change needed if women are to gain personal autonomy. Chapters from Jean Baker Miller's *Psychoanalysis and Women* and such essays as Freud's "Anatomy is Destiny," "The Woman Identified Woman" from Radicalesbians, and Dana Densmore's "Independence from the Sexual Revolution" offer relevant readings.

Two autobiographical pieces of fiction, *The Bell Jar* by Sylvia Plath and *The Yellow Wallpaper* by Charlotte Perkins Gilman, are central to "Literary Images." The struggles and achievements of the authors, as well as the problems faced by their protagonists, reflect themes of the course. This section, subtitled "The Dynamics of Negative Identity or Why Are We Having You Read These Unhappy Stories," is followed by "Social Images," subtitled "It's No Accident Women Feel the Way They Do." The treatment and expectations of women in social institutions—the family, education, religion, law, employment, media—are probed. Students read *Sexism in School and Society* by Nancy Frazier and Myra Sadker in order to examine one institution—education—in depth. Shorter articles are used as well: e.g., Linda Gordon's "Families" and Jo Freeman's "The Sexual Basis of the Legal Caste System."

By the end of the course, students are ready for "Creating New Images for Ourselves." Here we consider in more depth relations between personal and social change, and we investigate from various perspectives the extent and nature of social transformation needed for women's liberation. Current issues in the women's movement are examined and concrete organizations and projects of women on campus and in the community are shared. Besides a take-home exam, we end with women's songs and cheer, solidarity, and energy.

Throughout the course students are required to keep a journal that includes both scholarly responses to the readings and lectures and personal reflections about the meaning the material has for their lives. The journals, shared with the instructor, are often exciting chronicles of growing awareness, pain, and change. Discussion groups are the arenas for debating the academic material as well as sharing those common personal experiences evoked by the course material. These groups often provide support and solidarity.

In sum, 'Women's Image: Myth and Reality serves a synthesizing function. It maintains a network among women faculty. It introduces students to these women as challenging models and potential teachers. The content bridges a variety of disciplines, relating body and mind, individual and society. The journals and discussion groups integrate cognitive and affective learning. Throughout Women's Image students and faculty seek intellectual and emotional power to effect personal/social change, and in the process begin to create new images and realities for women. □

### Facts about Women in Higher Education

*The Women's Equity Action League Educational and Legal Defense Fund, 733 15th Street, N.W., Suite 200, Washington, D.C. 20005, recently released a report (July 1977) on the progress women have and have not made toward equal rights and opportunities in American colleges and universities. What follows is the first half of that report. The second half will appear in our next issue.*

**Discrimination against women is alive and well on the nation's campuses.**

Some gains have been made. We document them, as well as the losses, in this fact sheet. More women than ever before are going to college and getting their degrees—some in fields like engineering and architecture, once considered for men only. Record numbers of women are going to graduate and professional schools—by 1978 an estimated 20 percent of the new lawyers and doctors will be women. With each annual commencement ceremony, the pool of qualified women expands.

But the facts reveal that, for a woman, being qualified is not enough.

Despite Title IX and other federal laws and regulations prohibiting sex discrimination, women are still consistently more likely than their male counterparts to be unemployed or underemployed and underpaid. For example: women who have met all the conventional criteria for rewards in higher education, who are well equipped with degrees and publications and all the rest, are the victims of the greatest salary inequity. The mean salary in 1976-77 for a male professor was $23,828; for his female colleague, $21,512. The dollar gap: $2,316.

Being qualified is not yet enough. We need vigorous enforcement of federal laws before women can be confident of equal opportunity in higher education and equal access to jobs upon graduation. We need affirmative action plans, with goals and timetables. We need to challenge discrimination in the courts and to support our colleagues who are plaintiffs.

Old myths still prevail. Institutions of higher education advertise their commitments to affirmative action and equal opportunity, but in the corridors and the lunchrooms and, of course, the groves of academe, you still hear that women are "bad risks"—they drop out, they don't write their dissertations. There does appear to be evidence that women have a higher attrition rate in graduate school than men.

But to stop there, and to intimate that women drop out because they are innately unmotivated to achieve or excel, is to be guilty of gross insensitivity to the condition of women.

An HEW study, "Barriers to Women's Participation in Postsecondary Education," documents the various discriminatory institutional policies and procedures that make it difficult for women to complete their degrees. For example, HEW cites a study of Harvard graduate students in 1970 which found that women did not drop out.
if given equal opportunities, such as equal chances for financial aid, fellowships, and assistantships. The HEW report noted that women are concentrated in fields where there is a high dropout rate for men also—education and the humanities.

Moreover, fewer and fewer women are dropping out every year; more and more women are getting those degrees. Indeed, as undergraduates, according to data from the American Council on Education, women are more likely than men to receive the baccalaureate within four years.

Which brings us to our refrain: being qualified is not yet enough to guarantee equality of opportunity. Look what happens to those women who persevere: they are exceptionally strong and ambitious and qualified, yet statistics show they are unemployed more often than men, underemployed, and underpaid. Maybe women dropouts should be seen in a more flattering light: they weren’t deluded by the equal opportunity slogans.

**WOMEN AS STUDENTS**

**Enrollments**

Undergraduate enrollment of women has jumped 45%, from 3 million in 1970 to almost 4.4 million in 1975 (compared to a 21% increase for men, from 4.4 million to slightly over 5.3 million). The number of women aged 25 to 34 attending college and graduate school rose more than 100% from 1970 to 1976, while the number under age 25 increased by 30%. Nevertheless, there were fewer women than men attending college in 1975.

A study from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education revealed that many colleges which responded to declining enrollments of younger students by recruiting older women made inadequate efforts to respond to the special needs of these nontraditional students. The educational institutions that conducted successful programs had to do more than offer back-to-school orientation sessions and new brochures. Implementing a quality program for older women students often meant revising class schedules, financial aid systems, faculty composition, and courses of study.

**Traditional and Nontraditional Majors**

Women continue to major in the few fields where they have traditionally clustered. In 1975-76, they were:

- 72.6% of the majors in education;
- 64.2% of the majors in health professions;
- 59.1% of English or journalism majors;
- 48% of humanities majors; and
- 44.4% of social science majors.

But women are a growing minority in traditionally male fields. The American Council on Education reports that 17% of women college freshmen intend to become business executives, doctors, lawyers, or engineers, as opposed to only 6% a decade ago.

In 1974, women were 7% of the engineering majors (up from 2% in 1966), and 14% of the majors in agriculture and forestry (up from 3% in 1966). In the last ten years, more women earned bachelor’s degrees in the following nontraditional fields:

- computer science: 18.9% in 1975, up from 4.6% in 1965;
- mathematics: 41.8% in 1975, from about a third in 1965; and
- architecture and environmental design: 17.4% in 1975, from 5.3% in 1970.

At the master’s level, degrees awarded to women in architecture and math rose by 12.5 percentage points over the decade to reach 20.3% and 32.9%, respectively, in 1975; in communications (including advertising, journalism, and radio/television),
degrees awarded to women rose by 16.6 percentage points over the decade to reach 42.1% in 1975.

Women in Graduate and Professional Schools

Graduate and professional school enrollment among women rose about 75% between 1970 and 1975, compared to an increase of 23% for men. But their representation is still relatively small; from 1970 to 1975, the percentage of women increased:

- in law: from 7.5% to 23.4%
- in veterinary medicine: from 8.8% to 20.4%
- in dentistry: from 1.4% to 7%.

Women were 24% of the full-time students in graduate science programs in 1974, a 13% increase over 1973. The number of men increased by 3%.

In medical school, the latest statistics show that women are a full 25% of the 1976-77 freshman class (up from 9% in 1970). The number of medical schools with female enrollments of 30% or more has also increased. At some schools, the proportion of women medical students is above the national average of 25%:

- Medical College of Pennsylvania—62% women;
- State University of New York, Stony Brook—46% women;
- Rutgers—36% women;
- Harvard—35% women.

This year the ratio of acceptances to applications was higher for women medical students than for men—35.7% of all male applicants were accepted, while 38% of all female applicants were accepted. This does not mean, as a headline in The New York Times suggested, that it is easier for women to get into medical school than for men. Even if 50% of the men and 50% of the women were admitted, this equal rate of admission would not guarantee equal access. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, men and women who were accepted for medical school in 1973-74 had similar qualifications; however, the women accepted had slightly higher mean college grade point averages than the men.

Degrees Earned

From 1974 to 1976, the total number of doctorates earned has remained nearly constant (32,923 in 1976), but women are earning a larger proportion of them. Women earned 23.3% of all doctorates granted in 1976. This is an all-time high, exceeding the previous high figure of 20.5% in 1945 which was associated with the large drop in male doctorates during World War II.

Advanced degrees in education, arts and humanities, and social sciences account for 80% of the increase in women doctorates over the past decade.

Between 1972 and 1975, doctorates awarded to minority women increased by 133%—from 414 to 964.

In 1975, women earned 15.1% of the law degrees, as compared to 5.6% in 1970. It is expected that in 1978 women will receive over 20% of the degrees awarded in medicine, veterinary medicine, and law, and about 10% of those in dentistry.

Are Women More Likely to Drop Out?

Data from the American Council on Education show that women are more likely than men to receive the bachelor's within four years after college entry. For instance, of 1968 first-time, full-time freshmen followed up four years later, 44% of men but 53% of women had received their degrees.

Degree performance varied by type of institution: in four-year colleges, 65% of the women but 55% of the men received the baccalaureate within four years. The corresponding figures for those enrolled in universities were 60% and 51%, respectively.

Women maintained their lead in baccalaureate completion five years after college entry: among 1966 freshmen followed up five years later in 1971, 64% of the women but 59% of the men had received the degree. Men caught up eventually, however; among 1961 freshmen followed up in 1971, i.e., 10 years after college entry, 83% of the men and 81% of the women had at least the bachelor's degree.

As for women in graduate school, the Census Bureau found that women represented about half of all the first-year students in 1973, but after the first year or more, they accounted for only one-third of all graduate students. While this is an improvement over the 22% figure recorded in 1970, the implication is that women have a higher attrition rate than men.

We do not have enough data on the attrition rate of doctoral students in general to draw any conclusion. However, the latest statistics from the National Research Council on women law students show that:

- equal proportions of men and women earned their law degrees within the standard three-year period;
- there is no appreciable difference in attrition rates for men and women. In fact, women had slightly lower attrition rates for the period between 1970 and 1975.

We also know that those women who earn graduate degrees do so at virtually the same rate as their male counterparts. The 1976 statistics from the National Research Council show that men receive their doctorates at a median age of 31.3; women earn them at 32.6. The median time lapse between bachelor's degree and doctorate is 8.4 years for men and 9.7 years for women, but both groups are actually registered as graduate students for about 6 years.

A slightly higher percentage of women than men planned employment immediately after earning their doctorates, 78.8% of the women as compared to 75.8% of the men. But more men planned postdoctoral studies, 17.6% of the men compared to 13.2% of the women.

(To be continued)