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Editorial

Florence Howe

Elaine Reuben

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COOPERATION AND COMMUNICATION

Those of us who work in feminist programs and woman-centered institutions in many different educational settings recognize the increasing need for cooperation and communication. Thanks to Barnard College (and the support of the Rockefeller Foundation), an exceptionally diverse group of women in higher education in the Northeast recently had an opportunity to share information and discuss strategies for the coming decades. The Barnard Conference confirmed, not only informally but in the Conference Resolutions we have printed below, the need for and the commitment to collaborative strategies for the future.

We are obviously pleased to be able to report the special recognition accorded the National Women’s Studies Association and the Women’s Studies Newsletter.

At the Newsletter and in NWSA meetings recently, we have begun discussing the need to improve our ability to communicate timely news. One suggestion is that NWSA and the feminist education community may need two publications: an expanded quarterly, modeled on the Newsletter we have been publishing, and a “newsletter” proper—a briefer and simpler publication, mailed six times a year, containing important news and announcements of jobs, conferences, resources, grants, and funding.

NWSA’s Advisory Committee to the Newsletter will hold an open meeting in Kansas on the future of the Newsletter. We hope you can be present. If you cannot, we invite you to express your views in writing to the Editor.

—Florence Howe and Elaine Reuben

The following resolutions were passed by those present at the plenary session of the Barnard College Conference on Special Programs for Women in Higher Education, March 16, 1979:

I. Whereas there are many individual complaints and class action suits involving sex-based discrimination now pending, we urge the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Office of Civil Rights, the Department of Labor, and other appropriate federal and state agencies to pursue fair and rapid resolution of these complaints and suits.

II. Whereas the Women’s Studies Newsletter is the official organ of the National Women’s Studies Association and serves as an important instrument of communication among women’s programs, we urge that the WSNL move toward functioning as a vehicle for the dissemination and exchange of concerns and information about programs for women in higher education; and that all continuing education programs, women’s centers, women’s research centers and institutes, library collections, and women’s studies programs use the WSNL to serve this purpose. We further urge that the Newsletter include in future issues information about (1) specific changes that have occurred on various campuses as a result of women’s actions; and (2) the impact on students of women’s programs in higher education.

III. Whereas the National Women’s Studies Association is a major link between programs affecting women in higher education, and whereas we see the development of a strong National Women’s Studies Association as an important task, and whereas the NWSA will develop strength through its ability to further the exchange of information and shared concerns among programs affecting women in higher education, we urge those associated with continuing education programs, women’s centers, research institutes and centers, libraries and special collections, and women’s studies programs to join the NWSA, both as individuals and for their programs; and we urge the NWSA to undertake the following:

1. Publication of a woman’s guide to higher education (tentatively entitled Guide to the Quality of Women-Centered Education) which evaluates the adequacy of support for women on campus (e.g., the provision of services, the curriculum, scheduling, and the status of female faculty and staff).

2. Establishment of provisions (such as newsletters, workshop sessions, etc.) for sharing information about funding opportunities and resources for women’s programs and research; and news about grants that have been received by women’s programs and research projects.

3. Publication of a Register of the journals, newsletters, and reports of concern to women in higher education.

4. Establishment of awards and the formal recognition of individuals and programs for their significant contributions to women’s education and feminist scholarship.

IV. Whereas homophobia is used to divide women from each other and to discredit women’s programs, we strongly deplore any and all attacks on lesbianism; and urge that all programs examine is-