

ANNUAL REPORT (GRANT #845-500)

March, 1984 - February, 1985*

Community College Curriculum Project

Center for the Study of Women and Society

*Although the grant period officially began on March 1, 1984, the money was not received by the Center for the Study of Women and Society until late June, 1984. As such, this report covers an eight month period.

The primary goal of this grant is to integrate Women's Studies scholarship into the curricula of the Community Colleges. Recent pedagogical approaches and writings in Women's Studies, as well as the sentiments of the project participants, encouraged us to expand the goal to include topics and scholarship relevant to issues of race, ethnicity and class. Conference participants also felt that the collection and assessment of Women's Studies "packages" and their implementation in courses by a few faculty was a too limited goal and that a "product" in the form of a publication which would assist all motivated faculty in designing more balanced courses would be desirable. This was agreed upon and the Guide will be published during the Fall, 1985 semester.

During the summer of 1984, Rose Caporrimo, the research assistant on the grant, researched available Women's Studies material, collected bibliographies, analyzed Women's Studies course outlines and ordered books and materials judged relevant and useful for the Community Colleges. As faculty scatter during the summer months, it was impossible to contact potential project participants from the Community Colleges. As such, the summer work was carried out under the supervision of the Project Director, with the consultation of Dorothy Helly, the Women's Studies Coordinator at Hunter College and someone with expertise in this kind of curriculum project.

In the Fall, 1984 semester, faculty from the Community Colleges were contacted and their involvement in the project discussed at length with them and administrative personnel in their colleges, when required. This later act, seemingly an imposition at the time, turned out to be advantageous as it assisted us in obtaining administrative support for the project. Indeed, we have succeeded in expanding the network of faculty, staff and administrators at the Community Colleges who are taking an active interest in the project and have offered assistance. Several other, smaller projects, concerned with women's status in the Community Colleges and with Women's Studies at the Community Colleges are occurring and our project dove-tails well with these. We are in constant communication with these people, who have offered us information and assistance.

The Community College participants are:

Alline De Vore, Dept. of Behavioral Science, Kingsborough Community College

Liza Fiol-Matta, English Department, Hostos Community College

Geraldine Grant, Anthropology Department, LaGuardia Community College

Nan Bauer Maglin, English Department, Manhattan Community College

Laura Polla Scanlon, Writing & Speech Department, New York City Technical

Joan Seals, Student Activities Director, Bronx Community College

Boydenna Wilson, History Department, Queensborough Community College.

Dorothy Helly, as mentioned above, is the primary consultant on the grant. Andree McLaughlin and Ana Celia Zentella will consult on materials relevant to Women of Color. Additional consultants from CUNY, primarily from the Community Colleges, have been used when their expertise is required. Preference for Community College faculty as consultants to the grant will be continued.

The beginning phase of the grant involved participants delineating specific goals for the project. In addition to those mentioned above, they agreed that they would like to work during the summer, rather than designate two members to receive release time (particularly since schedules for the Spring had already been set and some were concerned about incurring bad feelings with their Department Chairs). It was decided that only Liberal Arts courses would be targeted. Specifically, we would direct our efforts toward those Liberal Arts courses which have the highest registration and which are most likely to include non-Liberal Arts students.

The remainder of the Fall semester and early Spring semester was spent gathering data on the status of Women's Studies and women students at the Community Colleges and on those courses which met the above criteria. That has been completed.

An analysis of the organization of the different Community Colleges revealed tremendous diversity. Student requirements and preferences varied, as did course offerings. As a result it was agreed that the material for incorporation into courses would be organized by topic, rather than by course. Courses offered in the various disciplines touch upon many common topics although they are approached from different perspectives. Women and Work, for example, may be addressed in anthropology courses, sociology courses, economics courses, health courses and so forth. The topical approach would involve global topics and subtopics with annotated bibliographies from different disciplinary perspectives. In this way, any motivated faculty member could refer to the topics and select appropriate subtopics and related readings for their courses. Participants are presently engaged in working on this and will continue this endeavor during the summer.

In the Fall, 1985 semester, participants will implement this material into their courses and evaluate its effectiveness. The Guide for the Community College faculty will be published.

The above information relates directly to the outlined grant project. Several other activities which are relevant to the goals of the grant and which involved the participants either in their design or in their attendance were carried out during the year.

Sisterhood is Global: A Symposium on the Changing Status of Women Throughout the World

On November 17 and 18, 1984, "Sisterhood is Global: A Symposium on the Changing Status of Women Throughout the World" was sponsored by the Center for the Study of Women and Society, Graduate Center, CUNY. This symposium was made possible in part by grants from the New York Council for the Humanities, Chemical Bank, the Ford Foundation, and the Rockefeller Foundation and was held at Hunter College through the cooperation of the Hunter College Women's Studies Program. Prominent women leaders dealt with issues of universal concern to women stressing common concerns as well as regional diversity. The panelists included women from Belgium, Brazil, the Caribbean, Chile, Colombia, Finland, Greece, India, Italy, Libya, Mexico, Nepal, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, the Pacific Islands, Palestine, Poland, Spain, Sri Lanka, Yugoslavia and Zambia. Moderators from the New York area were able to tie the issues raised by panelists to the experience of women living in the United States. In addition to the symposium itself, the two-day meeting included book displays and a Women's Shrine designed by Betsy Damon.

Sue Rosenberg Zalk, the Director of the Center for the Study of Women and Society, opened the symposium with a description of the planning involved in bringing the participants together. In the first session, panelists discussed women's health needs as a reflection of social and political change. The panelists agreed that health care should not be seen as a narrow issue, but as one that encompasses a number of women's issues. Although the panelists represented various backgrounds including industrialized and developing countries with a wide range in the quality of health care available to women, they all saw a need for involvement at the community level and for providing education and information so that women could be actively involved in their own health care. The second panel stressed the importance of cultural traditions on women's legal, social and political experiences. Participants noted the responses of women living under diverse political regimes to political, social and legal inequality. A common theme appeared as panelists stressed the way women, denied access to formal sources of power, developed informal methods of changing their societies. The formal/informal question was also discussed by members of the third panel in a consideration of women's economic roles in countries at various levels of development. As a response to the increasing

feminization of poverty, both in the United States and in the rest of the world, panelists noted the real success of women working in the more informal economic structures.

The second day of the symposium began with a discussion by those on the fourth panel of changes in employment patterns using a variety of models. From using employment at the United Nations itself to discussing employment in Communist countries, developing countries, and newly independent countries, panelists found a variety of ways to make clear that changes at a theoretical level are far easier to attain than the real economic changes that have an impact on women's lives. The day concluded with a wide-ranging discussion by those on Panel 5 of the importance of education and an international feminist perspective on true societal change.

The content of these panels was directly related to the Community College Project as it addressed the status of women from diverse ethnic, racial and social class backgrounds. Summaries of these panels and the Symposium program are attached (Appendix A). Panel presentations have been transcribed and are available to CUNY faculty.

As a result of the success of this Symposium, Center members have decided to run an annual international conference. We are presently writing up a grant proposal for one to be held next spring on "Journalism from a Feminist Perspective: An International View." Manjula Giri, who was a participant in the Sisterhood is Global Symposium and is presently at the Graduate Center and on the Women's Center staff, is a journalist from Nepal and will organize the conference.

Gender and Race at CUNY: Strategies for Change

In collaboration with the CUNY Office of Academic Affairs, the Friends of Women's Studies at CUNY, and the CUNY Women's Coalition, the Center for the Study of Women and Society sponsored an in-house conference on issues of gender and race at CUNY which was held on May 30, 1985. The topics addressed were: Balancing the curriculum for gender and race; Gender and race in teaching and learning; and the Professional status and development of women and minority faculty. The conference was attended by faculty, staff and students and was viewed as most successful by those attending the conference. The conference is directly related to the Community College project and to the goal of assisting the CUNY colleges in developing and enhancing women's studies programs and courses.

Several participants in the grant project were involved in the planning of the conference and some presented papers at the conference. The conference program is enclosed. (Appendix B).

Newsletter

The Ford Foundation provided funds for the publication of a newsletter which provides a vehicle for the communication of activities generated

from the Women's Center. In addition, the Newsletter informs readers of Women's Studies events at the various CUNY branches, conferences and meetings of interest, commentaries on issues of concern to Women's Studies (e.g. funding patterns for research on women) and reviews of books about women or by CUNY Women's Studies faculty. This newsletter is sent to faculty, students and staff throughout CUNY as well as Women's Studies programs throughout the country, women's organizations in the metropolitan area, and unaffiliated people who have expressed an interest in receiving it. One Newsletter was published this Spring and is enclosed (Appendix C). Another is planned for early Fall and, if funds are available, it is the intention of the Center staff to produce a newsletter bi-monthly.

CUNY Feminist Network Directory

The CUNY Feminist Network is a network of faculty, staff and students throughout CUNY who are involved in Women's Studies. The feminist network was first organized by the Women's Center and resulted in the CUNY Feminist Directory. This directory identifies Women's Studies scholars in CUNY, their areas of research and interest, the courses they teach, and a select list of relevant publications. The Women's Center is presently in the process of up-dating this publication which should be completed and in print by the Summer, 1985. The up-dated directory is being sponsored by the Ford Foundation grant.

Other Related Non-Funded Activities

Friends of Women's Studies is a group formed by the Office of Academic Affairs which addresses academic concerns related to all women at CUNY. Its primary goal is to encourage curriculum revision to more accurately reflect information about and the perspectives of the diverse population of women in the CUNY system. The Center Director is active in this organization and has been successful at interfacing activities with this organization and the Center.

The Center has co-sponsored meetings, seminars and workshops with other CUNY colleges and with non-academic organizations in the Metropolitan area. Thus, for example, we collaborated with the Women's Studies program at Brooklyn College on a conference on Culture and Change and on June 18 we will co-sponsor a seminar on Women and Economic Planning with the National Association of Young Professional Women.

Center members consult with a number of Women's and girl's organizations. Thus, we have been involved in a workshop by the Girl's Clubs of America, the Women's Legislative Conference and the Center for Women in Government. We are a member of the National Women's Research Coalition (a consortium of Women's Research Centers and Institutes) and attend various Women's conferences and meetings.

The Women's Center is in the process of up-dating a previous publication, A Guide to Collections on Women in the New York Area. This project is being undertaken in collaboration with the Association of College Research Libraries, New York Chapter.

The Center offers the status of Visiting Scholar and Research Associate to scholars who are actively involved in research and scholarship on women. This past year we had three foreign visiting scholars: Paola Zaccaria (Italy), Yolande Cohen (Canada) and Manjula Giri (Nepal). Several scholars from the United States have also participated in Center activities in the role of Visiting Scholar or Research Associate. They participate in Center activities and engage in formal (e.g. seminars) and informal dialogue with students and faculty.

The Community College Curriculum Project, the two conferences and the various seminars were all aspects of student development, as well as faculty development, and designed to enhance Women's Studies at CUNY. In addition, the Center reactivated the Feminist Students Organization at the Graduate School. This student group is involved in Center activities and provides a liaison with students throughout the Graduate Center. The Center organized a committee of Graduate School faculty and students with the goal of designing and implementing a Certificate Program in Women's Studies at the Graduate School. Dialogue on this has been occurring over the past five years. This year, however, a proposal has been completed and submitted for consideration. After the initial meetings, leadership emerged and the Center was no longer required to take responsibility for the project although its staff and affiliates remain active members in the Committee. This separation was desired as the Women's Center and a Women's Studies Certificate Program have a different focus although overlapping concerns.

Request for Extension of the Grant

I am requesting that the grant be extended until December 31, 1985. The reasons for this request are evident in the content of this report. The grant was originally submitted and funded as an 18 month project, to begin March 1, 1984 and end August 20, 1985. The money from the Ford Foundation was received several months late. The extension will return it to an 18 month period. In addition, as the money was received during the summer, when I first became Director of the Women's Center, participants could not be solicited and selected until the Fall. Although work on the project continued throughout the Summer, the role of the Community College participants was delayed. As such, the implementation of the grant results will take place during the Fall, 1985 semester. An extension is required to effectively complete this project.

Funding Explanation

Funds are being spent as designated by the original proposal, with the modification that \$1,500 was used toward the Sisterhood is Global Symposium with the permission of the Ford Foundation. The report from the Research Foundation gives more detail on expenditures.

Concern was expressed about the small amount of money spent from the grant. As I discussed with Alison Bernstein, about 40% of the grant was designated for faculty stipends for the Community College participants in the project, consulting fees and faculty release time. CUNY faculty

can not be given stipends, or even consultation fees, if they come through the Research Foundation during the academic year, so that money will be paid out during the Summer. For practical reasons related to the time the grant money was received and the expressed wishes of the Community College participants, rather than designate two faculty members for release time, which would slow the project down as it would have to be this coming Fall, all participants have agreed to work during the Summer so that the outcome of the grant can be implemented in the Fall. The money designated for faculty release time for two of the members will be used to compensate the participants. This will require permission from the Ford Foundation. I can anticipate no objection to this as the money is being used toward the same end, and is only being distributed among the participants. In fact, this design seems advantageous as it will facilitate the continuation of the present involvement of all seven Community College participants and provide each Community College with one "expert" on the topic. This will benefit future related projects at the Community Colleges.