# Fayetteville State University DigitalCommons@Fayetteville State University

Government and History Faculty Working Papers

College of Arts and Sciences

June 1994

# On The Social Construction of a Women's and Gender Studies Major

Blanche Radford-Curry
Fayetteville State University, bcurry@uncfsu.edu

Judith M. Green

Suzan Harrison

Carolyn Johnston

Linda E. Lucas

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.uncfsu.edu/govt hist wp

#### Recommended Citation

Radford-Curry, Blanche; Green, Judith M.; Harrison, Suzan; Johnston, Carolyn; and Lucas, Linda E, "On The Social Construction of a Women's and Gender Studies Major" (1994). Government and History Faculty Working Papers. Paper 1.  $http://digitalcommons.uncfsu.edu/govt\_hist\_wp/1$ 

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the College of Arts and Sciences at DigitalCommons@Fayetteville State University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Government and History Faculty Working Papers by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@Fayetteville State University. For more information, please contact xpeng@uncfsu.edu.

## Chapter 1

# On the Social Construction of a Women's and Gender Studies Major

Blanche Radford Curry, Judith M. Green, Suzan Harrison, Carolyn Johnston, and Linda E. Lucas

On March 20, 1991, the general faculty of Eckerd College in St. Petersburg, Florida, approved without dissent a proposal for a new women's and gender studies major. This event represented the achievement of a long-held dream of the core members of the organizing committee. It was also the result of a substantial investment of time and energy during that academic year by nearly a quarter of the faculty and a group of highly committed students. This core planning committee was diverse in its composition—diverse in gender, race, generation, affectional preference, and academic status. It was also cross-disciplinary, including faculty from all five of the college's disciplinary groupings (collegia) as well as representatives of both the residential or "day" college and the evening division (the Program for Experienced Learners). Our grassroots organizational approach was successful in large part because it coincided with a call from the college administration for faculty groups to propose new liberal arts majors.

It was successful because the entire faculty of Eckerd College participates in teaching interdisciplinary general education courses, giving us a greater familiarity with synthetic interdisciplinary work and with faculty members of other disciplines than is common at most colleges and universities. Our efforts were also successful because a critical mass of our faculty had already developed courses in their own disciplines in which women's experience and gender issues were significant foci of attention; this allowed us to emphasize reorganizational goals in our proposal rather than to justify new hires or additional extensive diversions of faculty course offerings away from disciplinary needs.

Although our singular situation at Eckerd College contributed to the successful outcome, we believe that our method of developing and promoting a successful women's and gender studies major should be of interest and value to others considering similar endeavors. The following sections describe our political, theoretical, pedagogical, and resource strategies.

## The Political Construction of a Receptive Climate

In their book, The Struggle for Equality in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, Nancy E. McGlen and Karen O'Connor describe the following conditions as necessary for the emergence of a mass women's movement:

- 1. The presence of an organizational base or outside resources to facilitate its development;
- 2. Existence of lines of communication among potential leaders;
- 3. A sense of collective oppression and a recognition of the need for a common solution within a sizeable group of women; and
- 4. A critical mobilizing event (or events). (1983, 15)

In order to launch a successful new major in women's and gender studies, these conditions are also applicable. An organizational base must be in place, with communication among potential leaders who perceive a need to teach the new feminist scholarship. After a critical mass of participants has been achieved, timing and appropriate tactics are essential for the program's passage and implementation.

In 1978, Julie Empric (literature) taught a course entitled "Woman as Metaphor," and Carolyn Johnston (history/american studies) began to teach "Women in Modern America: The Hand that Cradles the Rock" and "Becoming Visible: Sex and Gender in America." These courses marked the beginning of the development of an organizational base. Shortly thereafter, Sarah Dean (human development) offered "Male-Female Socialization," and Nancy Corson Carter (literature) developed courses on women in the arts. Thus, we had the beginnings of a

women's studies program that was supported by the revival in 1978 of the Women's Resources Committee as a women's advocacy group on campus. We first formalized our academic program as a concentration in women's studies. This concentration was a student and faculty designed major with tracks in history, literature, and human development, based on our course offerings and independent study courses. In this first stage of our efforts, the primary objectives were to sustain as many course offerings as possible and to focus our energies on hiring more women and minorities into tenure-track positions. This meant placing ourselves on numerous search committees (Carolyn Johnston alone has been on twenty-six). In 1978–79, there were about seventy-five faculty members and seven full-time women on the faculty. Now, in 1992, we have twenty-five women out of eighty-six. In 1978 we had no African-American faculty members, and we now have four.

In the second stage of our efforts, our focus shifted as we sought to increase course offerings, thus building the major instead of proposing a major that required new staffing or courses. At the same time, we sought to integrate new scholarship on women and African-Americans into mainstream general education courses. We continued to develop a coalition of male and female faculty members and enthusiastic students. Seven years ago, Judith Green was hired in the philosophy discipline. With expertise in feminist theory, she has contributed immensely to our range of offerings. Along with hiring new faculty, we also recognized that a crucial precondition for the stability of our program was the continued tenuring and promotion of leaders in the program.

By 1990, we believed that we had the key factors in place for the acceptance of the program. Twenty-three faculty members were participating in the program and offering courses from the majority of the disciplines. We had created a receptive political climate, and we had designed a well-articulated program that resulted from weekly meetings throughout the fall of 1990. Thus, when Eckerd faculty were invited by the dean of the faculty and curriculum committee to propose new majors, we were ready with a proposal that included a realistic staffing model, a coordinator, and demonstrated student demand for our courses.

We have found that in order to insure success in proposing a women's and gender studies major, a balance is required between passion and reason, patience and impatience. Our approach was characterized by assumed legitimacy and avoidance of any defensive posture. Before the proposal was presented to the faculty, we were assured of acceptance, and thus the proposal met with genuine enthusiasm. As experience has taught us, resistance to new ideas can be

fierce, expressed subtly or blatantly depending on the nature of the opposition. Thus, sometimes political change requires long-term vision and leadership that is not vulnerable to dismissal or budget cuts. Success also depends on stamina, vision, persistence, and the demonstration of excellence as well as efficiency. Because Eckerd is a liberal arts college, we had more freedom to develop new courses easily, and we avoided the bureaucratic impediments present in a university. We decided to call the program Women's and Gender Studies because we felt that this name accurately described the current directions in feminist scholarship, while acknowledging the history of the discipline as grounded in women's studies. This was the only politically delicate issue since some of our male allies in the social sciences objected to the inclusion of the title gender studies, arguing that the male gender was essentially excluded in our courses. We were able to mollify these objections through discussion and detailed course descriptions and encountered no other difficulties in the passage of the new major.

Implementation will be our fourth stage. We have a broad coalition of enthusiastic professors and students with five majors thus far. We are excited about implementing the program, developing internships, and sending our students off to graduate programs.

#### Theoretical Considerations

In addition to organization and timing, several theoretical aspects of our proposal and our process were important and may offer some useful insights for feminist theory and feminist praxis within the academy. These comments are organized as memories of our extemporaneous answers to two questions about our proposal that were asked at the final general faculty discussion before our proposal was put to a vote. Though the larger political, historical, and practical content of this faculty discussion probably accounted for its favorable outcome, perhaps the extemporaneous answers we were able to give to these two questions accounted in part for the absence of voiced dissent. Roughly paraphrased, these two questions were "Why are you proposing such an awkward sounding title for such a major, instead of either 'Women's Studies' or 'Gender Studies'?" and "Does it make sense to create a new major to remedy a current social problem when the rest of the majors are focused on fundamental subjects of perennial interest?" The answers we gave to these questions, derived from continuing conversations within feminist theory and praxis, sketched a methodology, an

epistemology, a philosophy of history, and a set of operative ideals for our new major.

In response to the first question about the awkward-sounding title of our proposed new major, we explained that our shared methodological approach is historically embedded, growing out of developments over the past twenty years in the political field of various women's and men's movements and the theoretical field of cross-disciplinary feminist theory. We continue to work for a more woman-inclusive academic canon and more woman-empowering academic customs, as well as social transformation away from patterns of gender expression in our larger society. Believing that gender systems limit men as well as women, we emphasized that the goal of feminist praxis is the liberation of both women and men from gender restrictions. Yet, we have come to realize that it is necessary to expose the root causes of these problems in order to achieve these goals, and we have come to understand the importance in its own right of gender as a fundamental social and intellectual construct that merits serious academic study. We have come to believe that we cannot adequately understand the situation of women without understanding the broader and deeper issues of gender, and-contra Marx's critique of Feuerbach-we cannot adequately transform what we cannot adequately understand.

This is not to suggest that the feminist political struggle should grind to a halt until the academy has finished its work, but rather that results in each domain are likely to be roughly comparable in adequacy to those in the companion domain. Theory will be no more insightful than praxis and praxis no more effective than theory allows. In short, we have sketched a pragmatic epistemology of theory-in-praxis shorn of a false, impartial objectivity, yet stabilized by cross-cultural, historical, and meta-theoretical reflection. We suggested that we cannot achieve the original compensatory and transformational goals of women's studies as a curricular field without broadening and deepening our understanding of existing gender systems and their feasible alternatives. At the same time, the role and meaning of gender in existing human societies cannot be understood without compensatory attention to the experience of women given the current masculine-focused state of the contemporary academic curriculum.

Our answer to the second question, concerning whether it is appropriate to create a new major focused on women and gender within a curriculum of majors focusing on subjects of fundamental and perennial concern, was related to our answer to the first question. Referring to some of the "Great Books" that have become increasingly

important parts of Eckerd College's curriculum as well as favored texts among antipluralist, "traditionalist" curricular reformers, we pointed out that women and gender issues are of perennial concern; indeed, these issues were discussed with careful attention by Plato, Aristotle, Shakespeare, and Freud, and these discussions held great interest for their contemporaneous audiences. Moreover, we reminded the faculty that the struggle to transform the broader gender structure of our society as well as to revalue women's place within it dates to our country's earliest days, making it older than many unquestionably important contemporary academic disciplines such as psychology, sociology, and anthropology.

We argued further that it was modernism's emphasis on the universal sameness of persons in all the significant fundamental ways that allowed feminist women and their supporters to argue for the need to improve women's condition relative to this universal standard yet, ironically, made it difficult to theorize about women's experience per se, even to show systematic injustice, as well as to value differences among women and between women and men. The contemporary critique of the modernist vision to which feminism has contributed has shown the need not only to acknowledge and include aspects of experience and discourse that were excluded and ignored, but also to rethink the fundamental categories of Western thought and experience upon which our academic curriculum rests.

These points sketched half of a temporally grounded defense of the fundamental and persisting importance of women's and gender studies. As for the future, we suggested that the faculty try to estimate by what year gender-based inequality would no longer be a focus of basic interest, anxiety, and concern. Because that future date, whenever it will be, is clearly well beyond the horizon of our own lifetimes, the importance of studying gender and women's experience is as practically perennial as anything else that now matters in academe. We concluded by reminding our colleagues that human liberation has always been the goal of the liberal arts and that widespread literacy and access to books were advocated by democratic theorists in ancient times precisely because deeper understanding and transformative ideas were thought to have the power to free and fulfill human beings. Thus, in calling for the study of women and gender, both in a new major and across the curriculum, we were governing our curricular proposals by one of the oldest and most lasting academic ideals.

# Erasing Invisibility: A Multicultural Framework for Empowerment

A critical component of the theoretical construction of an interdisciplinary approach to the study of a multicultural, multiracial, and intergenerational field is its application. Women's and gender studies programs are a natural medium by which we can further recognize and understand significant differences among women. However, since the initial formal development of women's studies programs in the 1960s, the echoes of exclusion ring on. It remains a fact that the leadership of women's studies programs continues to be mostly white women (Zinn 1986, 290–303). The curriculum, in general, still reflects the standpoint of white, middle-class, heterosexual, Christian women. The result is a very distorted theoretical construct of universal womanness that is applied in practice. Accordingly, women of color are relegated to invisibility or at best marginalized in both theory and practice.

The extent and significant costs of exclusionary practices in women's studies programs are well documented by many feminists of color such as bell hooks [sic] (1981), Paula Giddings (1984), Maria C. Lugones (1991), Patricia Hill Collins (1989), and Angela Davis (1989). Such is also the case for some white feminists like Margaret Simons (1979), Alison Jaggar (1983), and Elizabeth V. Spelman (1988). From the research of these feminists, both women of color and white women, it is clear that the exclusion of women of color from feminist theory renders it incomplete and incorrect and perpetuates unacceptable applications of theory. Two examples include the fact that

- failure to explore fully the interplay of race, class and gender has cost the field the ability to provide a broad and truly complex analysis of women's lives and of social organization; and
- emphasis on the shared experiences of women has negated the important differences among women. (Zinn 1986)

Maria C. Lugones (1991) points out that the value of including excluded voices is that society needs new models to transform itself to accommodate rapidly changing circumstances. We are in urgent need of a new process of feminist theory construction that respects women speaking in their own culturally different voices, separately if they prefer to do so, or in equal cross-cultural collaboration if they presume to comment on each other's lives and call each other to a common cause. A framework is possible for considering each other's standpoints

without giving up our own or denying another's. As Elsa Barkley Brown explains:

all people can learn to center in another experience, validate it, and judge it by its own standards without need of comparison or need to adopt that framework as their own. Thus, one has no need to "decenter" anyone in order to center someone else; one has only to constantly appropriately, "pivot the center." (1989, 923)

Research on the invisibility of women of color in women's studies programs represents the initial step of bridging the gap between knowing and acting upon our knowledge, through acknowledging other voices, making a conscious commitment to choose change, and going beyond knowing what is right to doing what is right. This is what Patricia Hill Collins (1989) calls an ethics of personal accountability. We at Eckerd College have made the conscious commitment to change, to do what is right, to be accountable.

After this initial step, the question becomes how to design a women's and gender studies program for maximum inclusion of other voices? This question provides the turning point for change. As Margaret Simons points out, "[our] efforts on a theoretical level are not sufficient. We must extend our efforts to a personal and practical level ... as feminists, we must ... [act] on both a personal and theoretical level" (1979, 379, 399). What have we done at Eckerd College to structure our Women's and Gender Studies Program to make it reflect an interdisciplinary approach to the study of a field that is multicultural, multiracial, and intergenerational? To bridge the gap between theory and application, the knowing and acting upon our knowledge, we began with two general observations that Maxine Baca Zinn (1986) discusses: 1) that structural changes in our academic practices and policies are necessary; and 2) that we should not expect leadership from administrators. With this understanding, we realized that it rested upon us to bring about the change in the political construction.

Among the specific efforts we have taken to diversify our Women's and Gender Studies Program at Eckerd are:

- 1) taking advantage of opportunities for temporary and/or permanent faculty positions to include a representation of women of color;
- 2) including research by women of color in each of the course offerings;

3) engaging in ongoing dialogue with as many women of color as possible to bridge the gap between what is read and what is understood in terms of cross-cultural collaboration;

4) having women of color as guest lecturers or panel participants

in each of the course offerings;

5) including discussions of gender and various disciplines by guest lecturers of each gender who specialize in these disciplines;

6) continuing our ongoing evaluation and dialogue with other women's and gender studies programs about what works in enhancing and maintaining diversity.

Our future plans of enhancing and maintaining diversity in Eckerd's Women's and Gender Studies Program include a general focus of broadening the representation of diversity on all levels.

## Methodology and Competency in the Major

In addition to our concerns about political climate, theoretical construction, and diversity, we realized that our answers to pedagogical and methodological questions would be essential to the success of our new major. The question of methodology is one that plagues any interdisciplinary field of study. What unity we find in "traditional" disciplines comes not just from the subject matter, not just from the types of texts (in the broad sense) studied, but in great part from the methodology. Thus, studies of Beowulf, Virginia Woolf, and Tom Wolfe can be encompassed by the methodologies of literary study. Studies of voting patterns, parking patterns, and language patterns can be encompassed by the methodologies of sociology. The question of how to traverse these wide differences in methodologies becomes important for any interdisciplinary study, especially when differences in methodology are at the heart of so many of the long-standing disciplinary rivalries in academia. Where, then, do we find coherence and agreement in a multidisciplinary field?

The methodological questions that vex interdisciplinary studies are problematic for women's and gender studies in additional ways. First, if we take into account the theoretical issues raised earlier, the issue becomes more complicated: Where do we find coherence in a field that is not only multidisciplinary, but also multiracial, multicultural, and intergenerational? Second, questions raised by writers like Robin Lakoff and Deborah Tannen,2 who illuminate gender differences in language use; by writers like Carol Gilligan,3 who suggest gender differences in moral reasoning; or by writers like Nancy Chodorow,<sup>4</sup> who suggest gender differences in psychological and social development, add another layer of complexity. If, as these theorists lead us to believe, our traditional methodologies are predominately masculine, what does it mean to read, write, think, talk, observe, and teach through the lens of gender?

Finally, the questions raised about methodology in a women's and gender studies major often mask a subtext of resistance to the notion of "gender in academe." Questions such as—"But will this be a rigorous major or simply group therapy?" "But will students know how to do X?," and "Will students take my course in X?"—while sometimes expressing legitimate concerns, can also express deep-seated resistance to women's increasingly powerful presence in academic politics.

We formulated our developmental, competency-based women's and gender studies curriculum in response to these concerns. Rather than taking for granted our students' development of a methodology (or methodologies), we sought first to identify skills or competencies common to most academic disciplines, and to include instruction in these areas in all of the courses in the major. We came up with seven areas: bibliographic instruction, writing excellence, close reading of texts, creative problem solving, small group communication, oral communication, and expressive awareness. To reinforce and expand our students' mastery of these skills, we incorporate into both our required introductory and senior level courses explicit discussions of the methodologies of various disciplines.

のできた。 The Audit of the Audit

Under the heading of bibliographic instruction, we ask introductory students to 1) learn to select and read appropriate periodicals; 2) develop familiarity with significant primary sources; 3) locate underlying premises, assumptions, and conclusions in scholarly literature; 4) understand how the disciplines that contribute to the field relate to each other; and 5) complete a collaborative project concerning a human problem or issue in the field, producing an annotated bibliography and summary oral report. In the senior research seminar, we ask students to use these methods to produce an extended bibliography, a review of the significant literature in their subfield, and a thesis that synthesizes these views and advocates a position.

Writing excellence in the introductory course includes 1) reading assigned and/or optional readings accurately, retelling the main ideas, and reacting in the student's own voice; and 2) formulating questions that lead to collaborative writing projects that include shared research, writing, presentation, and critiques. In the senior research course,

students are asked to build upon these skills in order to 1) work in a collaborative research group in which members read and critique each other's work, and combine efforts in order to reflect interdisciplinary views on an important human problem; and 2) write a research paper (or senior thesis) on a topic of current research in the field.

Close reading of texts on the introductory level includes 1) analyzing texts to differentiate between fact and opinion, and to identify logic or arguments and point of view, qualifications of author, word choice, and tone; and 2) identifying the modes of thinking and learning within the disciplines by analyzing articles about women and gender in various journals and periodicals. On the senior level we ask students to fine-tune their reading skills, to ascertain accuracy, clarity, and authority as well as validity and reliability of research design and development of arguments, hypotheses, and conjectures.

Creative problem-solving develops students' ability to 1) identify a problem by using a case study and brainstorm multiple solutions as a collaborative small group activity; 2) cultivate open-mindedness by engaging in a debate, defending first one side of an issue and then the other; and 3) express feelings about a gender issue through some artistic medium.

Small group communication on both the introductory and senior levels requires students to evaluate their own and others' contributions to the large group and the small task groups, asking questions such as 1) How well did you listen? How sensitive were you to others' views?; 2) How carefully did you pay attention to the attitudes of others that were hidden below their verbal cues?; 3) What role did you play in the group most of the time?; and 4) What do your answers say about you as a learner?

Oral communication demands of introductory students that they 1) observe models through the use of videotapes, classroom lectures, movies, and guest lectures, and analyze the qualities that make effective speakers; and 2) design and deliver an effective in-class presentation, including a videotape and critique. On the senior level, we ask students to demonstrate these skills through an oral presentation based on their written work. Finally, the expressive awareness competency requires that students become familiar with various plays, paintings, poetry, music, and fiction that give expression to issues relating to women and gender. To this list, in the senior level research course, we added a leadership component requiring that each student become active in an organization in the college or broader community that addresses human problems that are a direct result of issues relating to women and gender.

In our descriptions of the various methods or competencies, we begin to map out a methodology and epistemology for women's and gender studies, and here we employ Sandra Harding's distinctions between method as "a technique for . . . gathering evidence," methodology as "a theory and analysis of how research does or should proceed," and epistemology as "a theory of knowledge" (1987, 2-3). We are working toward a methodology and epistemology informed by feminist theories, one that values women's experiences as well as men's, process as well as product, collaborative learning as well as individual endeavors, listening as well as speaking, and openmindedness as well as the ability to defend a position. To underscore our emphasis on methodological awareness and to develop our students' ability to identify and articulate their own assumptions as researchers, readers, and writers, we are incorporating into our introductory and senior level required courses presentations on methodology by faculty from the different disciplines.

In considering these questions of coherence and methodology, it is useful to draw upon a metaphor that turns up again and again in feminist studies: the metaphor of quilting, an art of creating coherence from fragmentation, meaning from chaos. Like most women's and gender studies majors, quilting is an art that cuts across the boundaries of race, region, and class. It is also, in Elaine Showalter's words, "an art of scarcity, ingenuity, conservation and order" (1986, 228). In "Piecing and Writing," Showalter describes the process of quilting:

'piecing' means the sewing together of small fragments of fabric cut into geometric shapes, so that they form a pattern. The design unit is called the block or patch; 'patchwork' is the joining of these design units into an overall design. The assembled patches are then attached to heavy backing with either simple or elaborate stitches in the process called quilting. (1986, 224)

If the individual courses in our women's and gender studies major form the pieces of the quilt, and gender provides the backing, then our competency-based curriculum serves as the patchwork, the stitches that join the pieces together in an overall design that is multidisciplinary, multicultural, multiracial, multigendered, intergenerational, and rigorous.

### Gathering Resources

With our theoretical, political, and pedagogical issues resolved, we faced the question of resources. The resource problem before us was to

maximize our course offerings while minimizing additional workload on participating faculty. There was no budget allotted for the new major, and faculty were already pressed to capacity. Through weekly meetings we recognized that creating the major would involve reallocation of some resources and sharing of others.

The first task was to identify all of the appropriate courses that were already being offered. We considered every discipline in the college and approached faculty to discover whether any of their courses not clearly identified as gender oriented might address gender issues or fulfill a competency requirement, such as research or statistical skills. We found twenty-three courses that made up the core and elective selections for the major. Courses existed in American studies, anthropology, art, economics, history, human development, literature, sociology, philosophy, psychology, and religious studies. The diversity of course offerings clearly reflected faculty recruitment efforts over time. Among the courses were "Human Sexuality" (anthropology), "Women in Modern America" (history), "Socialization and Gender Issues" (human development), "Women in Literature," "The Family" (sociology), and "Varieties of Biblical Interpretation" (religious studies). We also identified several courses that were being planned but not yet offered. These included "Gender and Economics," "Gender and Writing," Writers," "Spanish Women and "Women in Cross-Cultural Perspectives." A third category included those offered by independent or directed study: "American Women's History," "The Goddess in Art and Literature," and "Women in the Arts."

We then approached faculty not otherwise included and solicited their agreement to develop a course within the next five years or to begin giving attention to women's and gender related topics in their current courses. Many of these faculty replied that they would be willing but needed guidance in material selection. In the end, we found that we needed only two new courses: an introductory course and a senior capstone course required of all majors in the college.

The final listing of courses well exceeded the minimum to demonstrate that the major would have stability and adequate offerings on a regular basis. Women faculty were underrepresented in the behavioral (social) sciences, natural sciences, and mathematics, and this was reflected in the courses offered. In spite of this, we received commitments from male faculty members in some of these areas to consider developing courses such as "Women and Math." We were able, after this process, to set the course schedule years ahead to accommodate leaves and other demands on faculty.

This process cost us time and energy. We had thirteen two-hour meetings over the fall semester with regular attendance by twenty people. Three people spent additional time drafting and editing the proposal that went before the faculty for approval. All twenty faculty engaged in formal and informal lobbying activity. However, we created a community of interest around a common goal that made the process fun and reduced the stress on particular individuals.

Currently, operational decisions are made by a five-person rotating steering committee drawn from across the disciplines. The current committee includes faculty from American studies, economics, literature, philosophy, and rhetoric. Since the major is interdisciplinary, funding comes from the budgets of various disciplines. The Women's Resources Committee, a faculty standing committee, overlaps in membership with the steering committee of the women's and gender studies major. The Women's Resources Committee has office space and a small budget that has been used for supplemental materials, work scholar hours, and speaker fees. We have used the college's library small grant program to build library holdings. Thus far, no additional faculty lines or funds have been necessary. As student response grows, however, we may need to press for administrative support or course releases. However, we will by then have demonstrated enough student interest and enrollment to support such requests.

Essentially, therefore, we created the new major from existing resources and minimal effort and anguish. This process has deepened our understanding of our shared interdisciplinary field, in addition to enriching the quality of our ongoing collaborative and consultative efforts. However, the fact that our efforts sufficed to achieve approval of the major has not lulled us into ignoring the substantial practical, political, and theoretical obstacles we still face in making the proposal of our dreams a long-term reality. We have been enlightened and uplifted by our success thus far in beginning to realize a broadly inclusive women's and gender studies major. If our initial experience of collaborative energy and cohesion without coercion is any indicator, this new major may have real transformative power within our academy.

こうない かいかい かいかん かんかん こうこう はれない あんしょかかい おもかる しゅうかい しゅうない はないない でしゅうない ないない ないない ないない ないしゅう

#### Notes

- 1. Total enrollment at Eckerd College is approximately 1,350, with thirty-four disciplines from which students select majors as well as self-created majors.
- 2. See Robin Lakoff, Language and Woman's Place (New York: Harper & Row, 1975); and Deborah Tannen, You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation (New York: Morrow, 1990).
- 3. See Carol Gilligan, In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982) and Mapping the Moral Domain: A Contribution of Women's Thinking to Psychological Theory and Education (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988).
- 4. See Nancy Chodorow, The Reproduction of Mothering: Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender (Berkeley: University of California, 1978).

#### Works Cited

- Brown, Elsa Barkley. "African-American Women's Quilting: A Framework for Conceptualizing and Teaching African-American Women's History." Signs 14 (1989): 921-29.
- Chodorow, Nancy. The Reproduction of Mothering: Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978.
- Collins, Patricia Hill. "The Social Construction of Black Feminist Thought." Signs 14 (1989): 745-73.
- Davis, Angela. Women, Culture, and Politics. New York: Random House, 1989.
- Giddings, Paula. When and Where I Enter: The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex in America. New York: Bantam, 1984.
- Gilligan, Carol. In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982.
- —, ed. Mapping the Moral Domain: A Contribution of Women's Thinking to Psychological Theory and Education. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988.

Harding, Sandra. "Introduction: Is There a Feminist Method?" In Feminism and Methodology, ed. Sandra Harding. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987.

hooks, bell. Ain't I a Woman: Black Women and Feminism. Boston: South End Press, 1981.

Jaggar, Alison. Feminist Politics and Human Nature. Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1983.

Lugones, Maria C. "On the Logic of Pluralist Feminism." In Feminist Ethics, ed. Claudia Card. Lawrence, Kans.: University of Kansas Press, 1991.

Lugones, Maria C., and Elizabeth Spelman. "Have We Got a Theory For You! Feminist Theory, Cultural Imperialism and the Demand for 'The Woman's Voice." Woman's Studies International Forum 6 (1983): 573-581.

McGlen, Nancy E., and Karen O'Connor. The Struggle for Equality in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries. New York: Praeger, 1983.

Showalter, Elaine. "Piecing and Writing." In *The Poetics of Gender*, ed. Nancy K. Miller. New York: Columbia University Press, 1986.

Simons, Margaret. "Racism and Feminism: A Schism of Sisterhood." Feminist Studies 5 (1979): 38-401.

Spelman, Elizabeth V. Inessential Woman: Problems of Exclusion in Feminist Thought. Boston: Beacon Press, 1988.

Zinn, Maxine Baca, Lynn Webber Cannon, Elizabeth Higginbotham, and Bonnie Thorton Dill. "The Costs of Exclusionary Practices in Women's Studies." Signs 11 (1986): 290–303.

"On the Social Construction of a Women's and Gender Studies Major,' with Judith M. Green, Suzan Harrison, Carolyn Johnston and Linda Lucas, in *Gender and Academe: Feminist Pedagogy and Politics*, eds. Lagretta Tallent Lenker and Sara Munson Deats, Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 1994.