Women of Color and the Core Curriculum: Tools for Transforming the Liberal Arts

Beginning with the Fall 1989 issue, FEMINIST COLLECTIONS carried a series of four articles by Susan Searing on "Women of Color and the Core Curriculum: Tools for Transforming the Liberal Arts." Along with explanatory text, the series noted a number of useful resources. Two review articles by C. Alejandra Elenes and Joan Ariki Varney on films and videos by and/or about women of color are now packaged with this set:

1. Part I: Basic resources on curriculum transformation and general bibliographies on women of color.
2. Part II: The problem of language in searching for information in standard sources.
4. Part IV: Creative literature as a source of information.
5. Films and videos: Asian American and American Indian women

Like most titles in the bibliography series, this set is available free of charge from:

UW System Women’s Studies Librarian
112A Memorial Library
728 State Street
Madison, WI 53706
WOMEN OF COLOR AND THE CORE CURRICULUM

TOOLS FOR TRANSFORMING THE LIBERAL ARTS: PART 1.

[Note: I would like to thank Beverly Guy-Sheftall, consultant to the Women of Color in the Curriculum project, for suggesting some of the works mentioned below. This is the first in a series of articles about incorporating the new scholarship on women of color into introductory courses in the liberal arts. For more on this initiative, see our editorial, page one.]

Creating a multicultural, feminist curriculum by revising existing courses can be both richly rewarding and supremely frustrating. Problems stem, first, from the inadequacies of the available literature and second, from the awkward ways in which that literature is made accessible. Finding relevant readings on women of color can prove a challenging task, even for the experienced library user. Published tools are essential aids in this project, even though they quickly become out-dated. After suggesting some background readings on curriculum revision, this essay will identify some recent bibliographies, noting their strengths and weaknesses.

Anyone in need of inspiration ought to peruse Leslie Wolfe’s essay, “O Brave New Curriculum.” Responding to recent debates over “cultural literacy,” Wolfe describes how Women’s Studies and Ethnic Studies challenge the canon of the humanities and argue eloquently for greater diversity in the core curriculum. One should also heed the words of Peggy McIntosh, a long-time leader in the curriculum transformation movement, who contributed an essay to the important new anthology, Educating the Majority. Discussing in some detail the phases of curricular revision and its impact on particular disciplines, McIntosh presents several convincing arguments for institutionalizing women’s studies while simultaneously striving toward a sexually- and racially-balanced curriculum.

Margaret Anderson’s article in the Winter 1987 issue of Signs, “Changing the Curriculum in Higher Education,” is an excellent starting-point for understanding the goals and mechanics of curriculum revision. Anderson traces the development of Women’s Studies in response to the exclusion of women from formalized knowledge, discusses the diversity of curriculum change projects, notes the problems inherent in such efforts, but stresses the rewards for students and faculty. She carefully covers both the theory and the practice of curriculum change. Anderson insists that “including the study of women of color in all aspects of the curriculum is rooted in a fundamental premise of women’s studies: that there is great variation in human experiences and that this diversity should be central to educational studies” (p.253).

An interesting companion piece in the same issue, “Trying Transformations: Curriculum Integration and the Problem of Resistance,” reflects soberly on the pitfalls of curriculum revision. The authors – Susan Hardy Aiken, Karen Anderson, Myra Dinnerstein, Judy Lensink, and Patricia MacCorquodale -- all took part in a pioneering, large-scale curriculum transformation project at the University of Arizona. Observing the reactions of participating male professors, they realized that gender roles and campus power dynamics are deeply ingrained and extremely resistant to change. By sharing their experiences and insights, they supply priceless intellectual and emotional armor to leaders of similar projects. (A version of this essay appears in the authors’ recently published book, Changing Our Minds: Feminist Transformations of Knowledge.)

In addition to the sizeable body of writing on integrating women’s studies into mainstream disciplines, there are many reports on campus projects that assess the barriers encountered and the tactics used to surmount them. In contrast to the proliferation of publications on “mainstreaming” women’s studies, however, few guides exist on incorporating ethnic studies in higher education. Dating back to the 1970’s, most analyses of the aims and techniques of multicultural education focus on elementary and secondary schools. Luckily, some of these articles can be read with an eye to applications at the university level. Take, for example, Johnella E. Butler’s contribution to a recent text for students of education and in-service teachers. In “Transforming the Curriculum: Teaching About Women of Color,” Butler sketches a conceptual framework for understanding the intersections of race, ethnicity, class, and gender. She illustrates how a commitment to “critical pedagogy” can create “a pluralistic, egalitarian,
multidimensional curriculum," and examines the range of possible student reactions to the presentation of new information.

Another excellent article zeroes in on the field of sociology, but presents information helpful to anyone in the liberal arts. In "Moving Our Minds," Margaret Anderson asks, What if women of color were at the center of college teaching rather than on the margins? She demonstrates how such a shift would transform sociological theory and pedagogy, and offers a list of questions faculty should ask themselves as they attempt to make their courses more inclusive.

Butler and Anderson address the individual teacher, but a wider perspective is ultimately necessary, since curriculum reform often begins at the departmental, divisional, or campus-wide level. For a nuts-and-bolts approach to curriculum transformation, nothing beats Betty Schmitz's *Integrating Women's Studies into the Curriculum.* Schmitz has been intimately involved in several projects to incorporate feminist scholarship into the liberal arts, and her experience is evident in her thorough explanations of how to design, set up, and sustain such efforts. Heavy on examples, the volume concludes with an extensive, annotated list of publications and other resources. Items on women of color can be traced through the index.

Another fine volume, *Women's Place in the Academy: Transforming the Liberal Arts Curriculum,* blends idealism and practical information in eighteen articles. Editors Marilyn R. Schuster and Susan R. Van Dyne open the anthology with essays that argue the necessity of change and trace the stages of curriculum transformation. Of particular interest are two papers on the relationship between Women's Studies and Black Studies. Other contributors describe model projects and assess the classroom consequences of revamping discipline-based education.

In Part IV, "Resources," Schuster and Van Dyne supply a useful set of field-tested "syllabus redesign guidelines" and a selected bibliography, in which citations are arranged by discipline and then split between materials for classroom use and for teacher preparation. A section labeled "Third World" covers both women of color in the United States and women in developing countries. Schuster and Van Dyne update this list periodically; the latest edition, the sixth, appeared in 1988.

Another resource, *Integrating Women's Studies Into the Curriculum: An Annotated Bibliography* by Susan Douglas Franzosa and Karen A. Mazza, offers over five hundred citations without the accompanying advice that Schmitz and Schuster/Van Dyne dispense. Unfortunately, the organization by traditional disciplinary clusters and the lack of a subject index make it difficult to cull references to women of color from this bibliography.

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Equally useful in the early stages of redesigning a course are general bibliographies on women of color. Wide-ranging bibliographies function like a snapshot of the available literature; one can gain an impression of the shape of current scholarship just by skimming the citations. Two recently-published reference volumes deserve spotlighting. Both were reviewed in the winter issue of *Feminist Collections,* but we'll briefly describe them again.

Bernice Redfern's *Women of Color in the United States: A Guide to the Literature* is a concise, interdisciplinary bibliography with succinct annotations for over six hundred works. The entries include books, journal articles, chapters in books, and dissertations. The bibliography is arranged by racial/ethnic category -- Afro-American, Asian American, Hispanic American, and Native American -- with sub-categories for topics such as "literature and the arts" and "feminism and women's studies." Redfern excludes fiction, poetry, medical literature, and popular writings, and she emphasizes materials written since 1975. The researcher in a hurry will benefit from Redfern's informed selectivity, but anyone seeking a comprehensive overview of available materials will need to turn elsewhere.

Given its achievements in both research and curriculum design, it's not surprising that the Center for Research on Women at Memphis State University has produced an excellent guide. *Women of Color and Southern Women* carries the sub-title, "A Bibliography of Social Science Research, 1975 to 1988," but its definition of the social sciences is broad enough to encompass history, health care, folklore, and related subjects. Purely humanistic areas, like creative literature and literary criticism, are excluded.
The four compilers — Andrea Timberlake, Lynn Weber Cannon, Rebecca F. Guy, and Elizabeth Higginbotham — chose to organize nearly two thousand references under six broad headings: Culture; Education; Employment; Family; Health; and Political Activism/Social Movements. Within the categories, citations are arranged by racial/ethnic group: African American, Asian American, Latina, Native American, and Southern, plus a section for general works on women of color. Entries are repeated under all relevant categories, and further access is provided through a subject index based on descriptors from A Women's Thesaurus. Despite the lack of annotations and some incomplete data, this comprehensive bibliography is an invaluable tool for studying women of color. The inclusion of conference papers, dissertations, small press books, working papers, and other fugitive works is one of its strong points.

Women of Color and Southern Women was derived from a computerized database, which has just been released on diskette. The compilers' commitment to maintaining and distributing a bibliographic file in electronic format is commendable. However, the diskette file sells for $134.95, compared to $15.00 for the paper version. The cost factor, plus the ease of using the printed edition, weigh against purchasing the diskette in most circumstances.

One comes to treasure the above-mentioned bibliographies and guides all the more when attempting to identify materials on women of color using the library catalog or periodical indexes. The language used for subject indexing is inconsistent, out-dated, and sometimes downright illogical. Our next article will suggest some strategies for searching by subject.

--- S.S.

REFERENCES


TOOLS FOR TRANSFORMING THE LIBERAL ARTS: PART 2.

In the last issue of FC, I profiled some basic bibliographies on women of color. In this issue, I'll discuss searches for information on women of color in standard bibliographic tools, like the library catalog and discipline-based indexes. Anyone who's looked for background readings on women's issues is familiar with the Vocabulary Problem -- the linguistic gap between the ways we describe ourselves and the ways that indexers and catalogers see us. By outlining the dimensions of the problem, I hope to supply hints on cracking the system and reassurance that patience and persistence in the use of standard library sources will pay off.

The importance of language

Many academic fields are just starting to pay serious attention to women of color. A search for information may demand an eclectic, interdisciplinary strategy, utilizing several bibliographies and indexes in addition to the library's catalog. As with any cutting-edge topic, subject terms and index headings are far from standardized. The discrepant vocabularies derive not only from the jargon of the various disciplines, but also from a more widespread and fundamental uneasiness about labeling minority groups.

At the root of the Vocabulary Problem is the matter of who wields the power to name. The basic feminist principle of self-determination holds that minority group members should be free to choose their own label. But in our pluralistic society, it's difficult to know when consensus has been reached. Some non-white women object to the label "women of color," arguing that it blurs racial/ethnic differences, while others embrace it as a symbol of sisterhood and united struggle. And of course, most would object (and rightly so) to my use of "non-white" in the previous sentence, since that defines women of color solely in negative terms.

Debates over the political impact of language are nothing new. Historical research, in particular, requires sensitivity to linguistic changes over time. In recent decades, we've seen the shift from "Negro" to "Black" to "African American" and the stretching of the term "Asian American" to "Asian and Pacific American." We've experienced confusion over the preferred usage of "Latina," "Hispanic," "Chicana," and "Mexican American," and pondered the subtly different connotations of "Native American" and "American Indian." Language is one of the more visible grounds upon which the role of race and ethnicity in our culture is contested. The plethora of terms may puzzle us, but we must ultimately accept that the shifts are meaningful and the ambiguities themselves are significant. Looking up references on women of color is thus bound to be more complicated than researching other, more static topics.

Finding books

The phrase "women of color" is not deemed a bona fide subject heading by the Library of Congress or the many academic libraries that follow LC's dictums. MINORITY WOMEN is the approved term -- the one that appears in the library catalog to identify pertinent books in the collection. This official heading, however, applies only to books about minority women in general, or books that cover women of several races or ethnic groups. For example, Johnetta B. Cole's outstanding anthology, All American Women, is cataloged under MINORITY WOMEN--UNITED STATES--ADDRESSES, ESSAYS, LECTURES.1 In contrast, books dealing solely with one race or ethnic group are assigned narrower terms. INDIANS OF NORTH AMERICA--WOMEN, ASIAN AMERICAN WOMEN, MEXICAN AMERICAN WOMEN, and AFRO-AMERICAN WOMEN are the LC-authorized subject headings for the major racial groups.

"I want to read about Chicana history from the Chicana perspective," a women's studies student might state. It's a reasonable request, but librarians catalog books according to content, not the characteristics of the authors. The library catalog will identify publications about Chicanas but not by them.

The catalog is even more limited in its treatment of imaginative works, because subject headings are rarely assigned to fiction, poetry, or
drama. Hence the catalog fails to spotlight novels about, for example, the Japanese American experience, although exceptions are made for anthologies. *The Forbidden Stitch*, for instance, is listed under ASIAN AMERICAN WOMEN--LITERARY COLLECTIONS.6

**Finding Articles**

The greatest drawback to searching for readings on women of color in the library catalog is simply that, because scholars have neglected the topic for so long, book-length studies are few. One must turn to periodical articles to glean the latest facts and theory. Unfortunately, journal indexes magnify the Vocabulary Problem, because each discipline has developed its own standardized terminology.

Only a handful of indexing services supply an up-to-date thesaurus of terms. Consequently, you should check all possible synonyms -- e.g., AMERICAN INDIANS, NATIVE AMERICANS, and INDIANS OF NORTH AMERICA -- to discover which are used in the particular index you're consulting. Be alert also to the logical hierarchies of racial/ethnic categories. One index may lump all people of Asian descent under ASIANS (whether they reside in the United States, their home countries, or other nations), while another carefully differentiates among CHINESE AMERICANS, JAPANESE AMERICANS, and VIETNAMESE AMERICANS. (Skill in mentally shuttling between general and specific terms will likewise aid in research on American Indian tribes.)

Syntax varies among indexes, too. The MLA International Bibliography employs multi-word terms like AFRO-AMERICAN WOMEN NOVELISTS and MEXICAN AMERICAN WOMEN POETS to index literary criticism, while the Social Sciences Index uses "dashed-on" terms: BLACKS--WOMEN and PUERTO RICANS--UNITED STATES--WOMEN, for example.3

These last examples focus directly on women of color. However, not all indexes acknowledge the intersection of race and gender. Take Psychological Abstracts, for example.4 To be sure of locating all references concerning Cuban American women, you must scan lengthy separate listings for HUMAN FEMALES and HISPANICS. Such unidimensional indexing blocks our understanding of the complex realities facing women of color.

In addition to labels for people, topic headings -- such as ETHNIC IDENTITY, RACIAL RELATIONS, and RACISM -- are often used in index pertinent writings. It's important to double check under these and similar terms and phrase. I've found this topical approach profitable when consulting the two abstracting journals devoted to women's studies. For example, *Women Studie Abstracts* (which, incidentally, uses both MINORITY WOMEN and WOMEN OF COLOR) makes fine distinctions between works on RACIAL DISCRIMINATION, RACIAL STEREOTYPES and RACISM.5 *Studies on Women Abstracts* compiled in England, adopts the British usage of "Black" for most people of color, but also employs such topical terms as RACE, RACISM, and ETHNICITY.6

While these interdisciplinary indexes centered on women's studies provide an essential complement to discipline-based tools, indexes in ethnic studies are equally important. Among the reference tools focused on race and ethnicity are *Sage Race Relations Abstracts*, the *Index to Black Periodicals*, and the *Chicano Periodical Index*. Al use WOMEN as a subject category.

**One Solution to the Vocabulary Problem**

There is a short cut through this bewildering maze of words, thanks to the wizardry of electronic bibliographic retrieval. Electronic bibliographies ameliorate the Vocabulary Problem somewhat, since the computer can quickly scan an entire database (including titles and abstracts) looking for specified words or phrases. You aren't limited to "approved" terminology, though you must specify all the possible "natural language" words that describe your subject of research.

Moreover, the computer can instantaneously combine subjects. You can demand all the references on "Black women" and "drama," for instance, or on "Chicanas" and "agriculture." And the computer can just as easily exclude whole categories of unwanted materials, such as items published before a certain date.

The present generation of electronic library card catalogs offers these sophisticated search capabilities, as do automated indexes to periodicals, dissertations, government documents, and other materials. Although many of the major indexes and abstracts were computerized years ago, only recently has the technology advanced to the point of being
both easy and inexpensive. Some indexes are now "published" on compact disks, and libraries have installed public-access microcomputers so researchers may do their own searching, usually at no cost. It's also possible to "dial up" remote bibliographic databases using a personal computer and a modem. These commercial information services typically assess usage fees, telecommunication costs, and sometimes royalty charges for printouts; yet by factoring in the time saved, you may still call them bargains. Finally, a savvy researcher can take advantage of a librarian's expertise by asking her to conduct a custom-tailored database search. The charges for this individualized service vary greatly from library to library. Inquire at the reference desk for a fee schedule and some friendly advice on the applicability of online searching to your specific research question.

Recently, the Center for Research on Women at Memphis State University released its database on women of color and Southern women on floppy diskette. (Look for a review in the next issue of FC.) In general, however, online searching remains restricted to major disciplinary indexes and such specialized databases as Dissertation Abstracts International. Indexes in women's studies and ethnic studies must still be consulted in print versions.

In many ways, the process of integrating women of color into the liberal arts curriculum echoes the early efforts to launch the fields of women's studies and ethnic studies. Published sources exist but are not always easily found. There are ample bodies of writing on some topics and scant resources on others. Inconsistent language is at best an annoyance, at worst a serious impediment. Cataloging and indexing practice lags behind scholarship. Despite these problems, dedicated teachers have already made substantial progress toward the vision of a multicultural, nonsexist education for all university students. The scholarly vocabulary and the language of subject headings can only improve as we near the goal.

-- S.S.

REFERENCES


3 MLA International Bibliography of Books and Articles on the Modern Languages and Literatures, 1921-, annual; Social Sciences Index, 1907-, quarterly (formerly titled International Index and Social Sciences and Humanities Index).

4 Psychological Abstracts, 1927-, monthly.


7 Sage Race Relations Abstracts, 1975-, quarterly; Index to Black Periodicals, 1950-, annual (formerly titled Index to Periodical Articles By and About Negroes and Index to Periodical Articles By and About Blacks); Chicano Periodical Index (ChPI), 1967-1986.
WOMEN OF COLOR AND THE CORE CURRICULUM

TOOLS FOR TRANSFORMING THE LIBERAL ARTS: PART 3.

Faculty attempting to incorporate new information on women of color into standard liberal arts courses have discovered, much to their frustration, that solid academic writing on women of color is scarce in many fields. First-person accounts must often substitute for the more detailed analyses as yet unwritten.

As it happens, the experiences of women of color in the United States come alive in published first-person accounts. Transcribed oral histories, autobiographies, interviews, diaries, and letters reveal women's day-to-day activities and thoughts in their own words. The close examination of individual lives, facilitated by printed accounts, is a method favored by historians, sociologists, literary critics, psychologists, and anthropologists. The immediacy and individuality of personal writings make them attractive to the lay reader as well.

Fortunately, more autobiographical publications are becoming available. These include not only the fruits of recent documentation efforts (e.g., the Black Women Oral History Project) but also reprints of older, forgotten sources. The Schomburg Library of Nineteenth-Century Black Women Writers, a series published by Oxford University Press under the editorship of Henry Louis Gates, Jr., includes several autobiographical works. Ethnographers' transcriptions of Indian women's life stories, gathered earlier in this century, have likewise been rediscovered and reissued. First-person accounts by Latinas and Asian American women, either historical or contemporary, are far fewer in number.

This article evaluates some recent reference sources for their usefulness in locating life histories of women of color. It concludes with two highly selective bibliographies: one of published life histories; and one of critical and pedagogical works. Recent, in-print titles are emphasized. For a more thorough bibliography, presently being compiled, contact the Women's Studies Librarian, 112A Memorial Library, 728 State St., Madison, WI 53706.

Given the attention now being paid to the intersection of gender and race in feminist theoretical discourse, it seems reasonable to expect new reference tools to facilitate investigations in this area. The late 1980's saw the publication of three guides to autobiographical works by women. How helpful are they for locating first-person accounts of the lives of women of color?

In *Personal Writings by Women to 1900*, Gwen Davis and Beverly A. Joyce cover both American and British sources. An index to the alphabetical bibliography singles out twenty-four entries under "Negroses" and fifty-one under "Indians of North America." This latter category, however, consists of captivity narratives and other accounts by white women settlers and missionaries; the only cited work by a Native American is Sarah Winnemucca's *Life Among the Piutes.* There are noindex headings for other racial/ethnic groups.

Cheryl Cline's *Women's Diaries, Journals, and Letters* offers nearly three thousand annotated references to "private writings" -- i.e., documents that were not intended for publication. This encompasses diaries and letters, but rules out autobiographies and life stories recorded with the help of another person (i.e., oral histories and interviews). Although international in scope, the bibliography covers the United States best.

Having arranged her entries alphabetically by authors' names, Cline provides several indexes. The "Index of Authors by Profession or Significant Characteristic" cites eighteen entries under "Afro-Americans"; seven of these reappear among the thirteen entries under "Slaves and ex-slaves." There are nineteen entries under "Immigrants in the U.S.," but -- with the exception of a mis-indexed item by a freed slave living in Liberia -- they deal exclusively with immigrants from Western Europe. No other ethnic groups are highlighted in this index. In the "Index of Narratives by Subject" that follows, there are three entries under the phrase "Native American life." Only one of the works, as it turns out, is written by an Indian.

The *Published Diaries and Letters of American Women* by Joyce D. Goodfriend is even narrower than the two bibliographies already discussed, since it covers women in the U.S. only. Entries are
organized chronologically, with author and subject indexes. Under "Blacks" one finds seven entries to works by Black women, plus a cross-reference to "Slaves," where works by both Black and white women are listed. The index heading "American Indians" is sub-divided as follows: --attacks by; --attitudes toward; --encounters with; --missionaries to; --teachers of. No writings by Indian women appear in the bibliography, nor any by Latinas. Goodfriend cites a single four-month interim diary by a Japanese American; otherwise Asian Americans are likewise absent.

A somewhat older bibliography reflects the same imbalances in the published literature. Compiled by Patricia K. Addis in the early 1980's, Through a Woman's I describes more than two thousand full-length autobiographies by American women published between 1946 and 1976. The subject index lists nine works under "American Indian women's experience" and a gratifying fifty-nine under "Black women's experience" -- including several from vanity publishers that probably appear in few, if any, other lists. Other ethnic groups are not indexed, but by combing the bibliography one can unearth a few scattered references to authors like Monica Sone and Jade Snow Wong.

Although not limited to autobiographical genres, bibliographies focused specifically on women of color often incorporate references to life histories. Bernice Redfern's Women of Color in the United States includes sections for "Autobiography, Biography, Life Histories" under each racial/ethnic category. Women of Color and Southern Women and its 1989 supplement do not classify personal writings separately, but keyword indexes make it easy to find "Autobiographies" and "Oral history." Rayna Green's Native American Women: A Contextual Bibliography lists fifty-one autobiographies in the subject index. By contrast, Ronda Gilkin's Black American Women in Literature emphasizes recent fiction and poetry, citing only nine authors of autobiographies in its genre index.

Anthologies by and/or about women of color often incorporate excerpts from first-person accounts. Examples include Afro-American Women Writers, 1746-1933 by Ann Allen Shockley, Making Waves: An Anthology of Writings By and About Asian American Women edited by Asian Women United of California, and Black Women in White America edited by Gerda Lerner. Lerner's volume also presents first-hand reports by white observers and other primary source materials. Unfortunately, articles in anthologies are bibliographic "orphans" - not cataloged separately by libraries, and omitted from many disciplinary indexing services that concentrate on articles in journals.

Teachers planning to use life histories in the classroom, especially if this is a strategy new to them, might find some inspiration in The Ethnic I: A Sourcebook for Ethnic-American Autobiography. James Craig Holte selects twenty-nine "representative writers from a variety of ethnic backgrounds and historical periods," summarizes their life stories, very briefly assesses the critical response, and supplies a short bibliography. Among the works profiled are Maya Angelou's I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings, Zora Neale Hurston's Dust Tracks on a Road, Maxine Hong Kingston's The Woman Warrior, and Jade Snow Wong's Fifth Chinese Daughter. For a deeper understanding of how women of color have documented the realities of their lives through autobiography, consult the critical works cited below.

NOTES


7. Andrea Timberlake, et al., Women of Color and Southern Women: A Bibliography of Social Science...


African American


LIFE HISTORIES AND OTHER PERSONAL NARRATIVES BY U.S. WOMEN OF COLOR.

NOTE: This selective bibliography illustrates the breadth of autobiographical writing by women of color. Only titles listed in the latest edition of Books in Print are included. Many are available in paperback.

General


American Indian


Asian and Pacific American


Latin/Chicana/Hispanic American


Critical and pedagogical writings


-- S.S.
WOMEN OF COLOR AND THE CORE CURRICULUM

TOOLS FOR TRANSFORMING THE LIBERAL ARTS, PART 4: CREATIVE LITERATURE AS A SOURCE OF INFORMATION.

During the 1989-90 academic year, pairs of faculty from twelve UW System campuses gathered together six times in Madison to begin the challenging task of incorporating scholarship on women of color into the basic undergraduate curriculum. In the spring, these same faculty led seminars for colleagues on their home campuses. Funded by the Ford Foundation, the "Women of Color in the Curriculum Project" is now entering its third phase -- the actual teaching of transformed courses.

Spanning the humanities and social sciences, most of the courses targeted for revision are core survey courses in the disciplines. For prospective majors, these courses form the foundation of future studies; for others, they're a one-time-only exposure to a new subject. The faculty understood the importance of assigning materials that reflect, both in authorship and content, the diversity of human experience. But how, they wondered, could they compensate for standard textbooks that give scant attention to issues of race and gender? In some fields, research on women of color is still in its infancy; the articles, dissertations, and conference papers that are now breaking new ground are too advanced and/or specialized for the average first- or second-year student. Faculty also voiced concerns about adding to already-heavy reading loads and about burdening students with the costs of additional books.

During the workshops in Madison, these problems were posed to the visiting scholars who served as consultants and discussion leaders. Surprisingly, the social scientists and the humanists agreed on the solution -- give 'em literature! A good novel or short story, they insisted, conveys the reality of life for women of color far more vividly than pages of dry statistics. A poem can evoke a whole history and culture in a few lines. And consciously or not, we all do read literature for information, not just aesthetic pleasure and entertainment.

There is a danger, of course, in exposing a class in the social sciences to literary sources by women of color only. Presenting "hard" data on white women but "soft" data on women of color can re-inforce an intellectual double standard. The ideal approach is to assign two or more creative works for cross-cultural readings.

In this spirit, FC offers a brief, selective guide to anthologies of creative writing by women of color. We focus on anthologies because they include many short works, thus making it possible to assign several works by and about women of different racial, class, and geographic backgrounds. Unless noted as out-of-print, all references include the paperback price.

ASIAN AMERICAN WOMEN

One of the newest and nicest anthologies is HOME TO STAY: ASIAN AMERICAN WOMEN'S FICTION, edited by Sylvia Watanabe and Carol Bruchac (Greenfield Review Press, 1990, $12.95). The twenty-nine contributors claim varied heritages -- Chinese, Hawaiian, Filipina, Indian, Pakistani, Vietnamese, Japanese, Indonesian, Caucasian, and many mixtures. They include well-known writers like Maxine Hong Kingston and Amy Tan (represented by excerpts from China Men and The Joy Luck Club, respectively) and others who have published in small press reviews but remain unfamiliar to a wider reading public. The stories deal with life in North America, often charting the tensions between generations and the conflicts among cultures.

We also recommend two other recent anthologies by Asian American women. THE FORBIDDEN STITCH (Calyx, 1989, $16.95) was published as vol. 11, no. 2/3 of Calyx, a respected feminist literary magazine. Editors Shirley Geok-lin Lim and Mayumi Tsutakawa assembled fiction, poetry, artwork, and book reviews to counteract the "homogenizing labelling of an exotic" by giving voice to women of many different Asian backgrounds. MAKING WAVES (Beacon, 1989, $16.95) combines fiction, poetry and essays by fifty-three Asian American women. Edited by members of Asian Women United of California, the volume
groups writings under seven themes -- immigration, war, work, generations, identity, injustice, and activism. This organizational-scheme pairs factual and creative treatments of the same subjects and contrasts writings by women of different national/cultural backgrounds.

AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN


Two out-of-print anthologies may still be found in libraries and mined for relevant texts. A volume produced by Roseann P. Bell, Bettye J. Parker, and Beverly Guy-Sheftall -- STURDY BLACK BRIDGES: VISIONS OF BLACK WOMEN IN LITERATURE (Doubleday, 1979) -- offers an eclectic sampling of twenty-five Black women writers from the United States, Africa, and the Caribbean. The creative writings in various genres are complemented by critical commentary, interviews, and bibliographies. Although published a decade ago, this anthology remains an important cross-cultural reference tool. An interesting selection of forty-nine writers, some justly renowned and others hitherto unpublished, can be found in CONFIRMATION: AN ANTHOLOGY OF AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN, jointly edited by Amiri Baraka (LeRoi Jones) and Amina Baraka (Quill, 1983). "There is a lot of poetry in this volume" admit the editors, who are poets themselves, but there are also ten stories, two critical pieces, and (unusual for such anthologies) two short plays.

Two anthologies are devoted solely to African American women poets. Erlene Stetson's BLACK SISTER: POETRY OF BLACK AMERICAN WOMEN, 1746-1980 (Indiana University Press, 1981, $10.95) offers a chronological survey. Starting with Phillis Wheatley, Stetson serves up samples of the work of fifty-eight poets, including not only the better known figures but a number of neglected writers as well. She appends an excellent bibliography. SHADOWED DREAMS: WOMEN'S POETRY OF THE HARLEM RENAISSANCE (Rutgers University Press, 1989, $12.95) is more restricted in its time frame, 1919-1931. Editor Maureen Honey organizes 148 poems by thirty-four Black women by their broadest themes -- "Protest," "Heritage," "Love and Passion," and "Nature" -- and adds a substantial critical introduction, biographical notes, and a bibliography. A new compilation by Kathy A. Perkins -- BLACK FEMALE PLAYRIGHTS: AN ANTHOLOGY OF PLAYS BEFORE 1950 (Indiana University Press, 1989, hardcover, $35.00) -- is the first collection specifically devoted to drama by women of color. Since no works after mid-century are included, its appeal is primarily historical.

Like Honey's and Perkins's collections, Ann Allen Shockley's scholarly volume, AFRO-AMERICAN WOMEN WRITERS, 1746-1933: AN ANTHOLOGY AND CRITICAL GUIDE (NAL, 1988, $14.95) documents an African American female literary tradition. Shockley selects examples of poetry, biography, autobiography, essays, fiction, diaries, and journals, from the colonial era through the end of the Harlem Renaissance (which Shockley prefers to call the "New Negro Movement" in recognition of its widespread impact on American culture). The introductions for each time period, biographical sketches, and source lists elevate this from the ranks of classroom anthologies to the stature of an essential reference tool.

In HOME GIRLS: A BLACK FEMINIST ANTHOLOGY (Kitchen Table/Women of Color Press, 1983, $12.95), Barbara Smith builds on material published previously in Conditions: Five: The Black Women's Issue (1979). Conditions describes itself as "a magazine of women's writing with an emphasis on writings by lesbians," and, although not every piece in Smith's thick volume directly addresses lesbian concerns, they are highlighted in a chapter headed "Black Lesbians--Who Will Fight for Our Lives But Us?" and in
selections on literature and politics. Like a number of the works under review, *Home Girls* uses a range of genres to present diverse viewpoints.

**NATIVE AMERICAN WOMEN**

Stories are important to the traditions of many Native American tribes. The two dozen "war stories" in *Spider Woman's Granddaughters: Traditional Tales and Contemporary Writing by Native American Women*, edited by Paula Gunn Allen (Beacon, 1989, $19.95) reflect Native women's experiences over most of the twentieth century. Both contemporary (Louise Erdrich, Vicki L. Sears, Leslie Marmon Silko, and Linda Hogan, among others) and earlier writers draw on traditional stories to tell of endurance, loss, resistance, and survival.

In her introduction to *That's What She Said: Contemporary Poetry and Fiction by Native American Women* (Indiana University Press, 1984, $12.50), editor Rayna Green laments the neglect of Native American women writers by critics and the reading public. This excellent anthology has increased the visibility of sixteen deserving writers. The volume is notable for its depth of coverage; the mean number of poems and/or stories per author is ten.

A somewhat earlier attempt at anthologizing Native American women writers produced *A Gathering of Spirit: Writing and Art by North American Indian Women*, edited by Beth Brant (DeGogawadonti). Originating as no. 22/23 of *Sinister Wisdom* (1983), it was later published as a book (Sinister Wisdom Books, 1984; repr. Firebrand, 1989, $9.95). The selections embrace fiction, poetry, letters, and autobiographical writings by a range of writers from many tribes. A few of these authors also appear in vol. 8, no. 2 of *Calyx*, which carried the title, "Bearing Witness / Sobreviviendo: An Anthology of Writing and Art by Native American/Latina Women" (spring 1984, $8.00). The first half of this special issue is given over to Latina poetry, fiction, and art, the second half to the works of Native Americans. Different women edited each half, but *Calyx*'s editor describes the issue as a "tangible expression of the power shared by Native and Latina/Chicana cultures."

**LATINAS**

*Cuentos: Stories by Latinas* (Kitchen Table/Women of Color Press, 1983, $7.95) gives a literary voice to U.S. Latinas and validates their experience of biculturalism by including works in Spanish, English, Spanglish, and Tex-Mex. Editors Alma Gomez, Cherríe Moraga, and Mariana Romo-Carmona divide the fictional works into three sections, centered around the themes of passion denied, growing up, and challenges to traditional Latin cultural values.

Juanita Ramos gathers oral histories, essays, poems, short stories, and art work by and about Latina lesbians in a unique volume, *Compañeras* (Latina Lesbian History Project, 1987, $8.95). Forty-seven U.S. women, born in ten different countries, contribute their writings, including a few in Spanish. Ramos opts for a five-part thematic organization: "The Other Side" (about affirming ethnic and sexual identity); "Coming Out"; "Lovers and Friends"; "Families"; and "The Struggle Continues."

Two other readers had their genesis in special issues of journals. *Woman of Her Word: Hispanic Women Write* (Arte Publico, 1987, $12.00) was first published as *Revista Chicana-Riquena* 11, no. 3/4 (Fall/Winter 1983). Works of poetry, prose, and criticism, in both English and Spanish, were assembled by Evangelina Vigil. The following year Mari del Carmen Boza, Beverly Silva, and Carmen Valle edited a special issue of the *Bilingual Review* 11, no. 2 (1984), now available as a book with the title *Nosotras: Latina Literature Today* (Bilingual Review Press, 1986, $8.00). These two collections complement the issue of *Calyx* described in the above section.

**ACROSS RACIAL LINES**

*The Third Woman: Minority Women Writers of the United States* (Houghton Mifflin, 1980, $29.16) has achieved an enduring popularity as a textbook for literature courses. Editor Dexter Fisher organizes the anthology around the four major ethnic groups -- American Indian, Black, Chicana, Asian American. For each, she supplies a short introduction, a set of contextual readings on history and culture, and ample selections of prose and poetry. Appendices suggest discussion questions and paper topics.
THIS BRIDGE CALLED MY BACK: WRITINGS BY RADICAL WOMEN OF COLOR (Kitchen Table/Women of Color Press, 1981, $9.95) intersperses powerful poetry among first-person accounts and essays. The editors, Cherrie Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa, are themselves poets. Anzaldúa honed this approach in her most recent work, MAKING FACE, MAKING SOUL / HACIENDO CARAS (Aunt Lute, 1990, $14.95). Sub-titled "Creative and Critical Perspectives by Women of Color," this hefty anthology values creativity as a "coping strategy" for women of color in a racist and sexist society. Conceived as a reader for a women's studies class, the volume includes previously-published materials (including provocative articles on feminist theory and racism in women's studies) as well as new poems and stories.

Anthologies by and about women of color often have a regional flavor. In any collection of writings by Asian American women, for example, authors from California and Hawaii are likely to predominate; Latina collections tend to emphasize the Southwest and West. Occasionally, editors make the geographic angle the focal point of an anthology. Wisconsin poet Angela Lobo-Cobb, for example, compiled WINTER NEST: A POETRY ANTHOLOGY OF MIDWESTERN WOMEN POETS OF COLOR (Blue Reed Arts, 1987, $5.00). Co-editors Jo Cochran, J.T. Stewart, and Mayumi Tsutakawa shone a spotlight on new writing and art by Northwest women of color in GATHERING GROUND (Seal Press, 1984, $9.95).

Despite the richness and variety of these anthologies, the challenge of choosing a few pieces of creative writing for the classroom remains daunting. After all, a single story or a half-dozen poems don't begin to explore fully the experiences, thoughts, and emotions of women of color. Nor, one suspects, would the editors of these volumes wish their selections to be read as representative. Mayumi Tsutakawa, in her introduction to The Forbidden Stitch, forcefully expresses her feelings on this subject:

No one should think of this book as the single definitive text on the lives and thoughts of Asian American women. This is not a book with a shelf life of forever, as with many textbooks resembling packaged foods shot with preservatives. (p.14)

Which is precisely why works of literature have the power to spark student interest and liven up a list of required readings!

-- S.S.
FEMINIST VISIONS

ACTIVISTS, NATIONALISTS, FEMINISTS: THE EXPERIENCE OF WOMEN OF COLOR IN THE U.S.

As part of the Women of Color in the Curriculum (WOCC) Project, the UW-Madison Women’s Studies Research Center has been purchasing films about the experiences of women of color in the United States, particularly as those experiences are shaped through involvement in the civil rights, nationalist, and labor movements of our communities.

Bought with a grant from the Ford Foundation, the films are intended to enhance classroom lectures with a medium that has more impact. In videotape format, they may be borrowed free of charge from the UW System Women’s Studies Audiovisual Collection, which is housed in UW-Platteville’s Karrmann Library. Place requests through your local interlibrary loan office.

In this issue of Feminist Collections, I will review the first six films purchased, which focus on African American, Chicana, and Puerto Rican women. In future issues I will discuss films on Asian American and American Indian Women.

The films reviewed in this article are:

**ETHNIC NOTIONS**
**THE LEMON GROVE INCIDENT**
**WATSONVILLE**
**JULIA DE BURGOS**
**NEVER TURN BACK: THE LIFE OF FANNY LOU HAMER**
**FUNI: THE STORY OF ELLA BAKER**


This is a superb film that explores the roots of African American stereotypes. The 150-year historical survey demonstrates precisely the viciousness of those stereotypes in promoting racist hegemony. The historical roots and usefulness of several African American stereotypes are examined: Uncle Toms, Mammiss, pickaninnies, coons, and savage brutes.

Actress Esther Rolle narrates the film. Historical footage is juxtaposed with a roundtable discussion by academic commentators. This mix is very helpful in placing in contemporary perspective the continuous development of African American stereotypes. Many of these disturbing images persist in greeting cards, advertising, commercial television (including children’s cartoons), and even household artifacts.

**Ethnic Notions** is a very versatile film, useful in history, literature, anthropology, communication arts, journalism, psychology, education, and many more courses. It provides an excellent opportunity for post-civil rights movement generations to learn about historical race relations and how they shape contemporary racism.


Very few people know that one of the first school desegregation battles won in court was fought in Lemon Grove, California in the 1930’s. In spite of the massive deportations that immigrant Mexicans suffered during the Depression, the Mexican community of Lemon Grove was able to stop the efforts of the local school board to segregate Mexican from white students.

The Lemon Grove Incident is a well-produced docu-drama of this historical event. School board meetings, community organizing, court proceedings, a school boycott, and threats by Immigration officials are all reenacted. The film is made even more powerful by including memories of the then-students affected by the segregation policy. The participants give us incredible insight into an important event in their childhoods.

Another important aspect of this film is its demonstration that (contrary to popular belief) Chicano parents do value education and have fought for the right of their children to a quality education. Many of the current debates over Chicano school underachievement and dropout rates largely blame parents and community.

**The Lemon Grove Incident** can be used in history, education, ethnic studies, and a variety of
courses. It is well researched and includes archival footage in addition to the reenactment and interviews.


Watsonville, California is known as the frozen food capital of the country, since the major source of employment is frozen food packaging. Watsonville's population is predominantly Chicano, as is the labor force in the packing industry. As the market for frozen foods started to shrink, during the 1980's executives demanded cuts in workers' wages and medical benefits. In the mid-1980's, the workers -- most of them Chicana and Mexican women -- went on strike to protect their benefits and incomes.

*Watsonville* was filmed during the strike and follows its progress from beginning to end. The film documents the struggle these women endured in declaring a strike against the advice of their own union, which was unwilling to defend their rights. The establishment in Watsonville (including banks and police) supported the companies, while the workers received support from students at the University of California, Santa Cruz as well as from community activists.

Not only does this film depict the strength and struggles of Chicana working-class women, but it demonstrates the anti-union, anti-worker climate that grew during the early years of the Reagan administration. This is an excellent film for history, ethnic studies, political science, women's studies, and English courses.


This docu-drama narrates the life of Puerto Rican poet Julia de Burgos through her poetry. Opening with her untimely death in New York City, the film returns to the poet's childhood in Puerto Rico, her college years, and her career as a teacher in rural Puerto Rico. The background scenery is primarily the beautiful landscape of her native country. Not only do we gain an understanding of Julia de Burgos’ poetry, but also of the liberation movement of Puerto Rican people both on the island and in the continental U.S., especially in New York. It was de Burgos' involvement in the Nationalist movement that led to exile from her homeland.

Narrated in Spanish with English subtitles, *Julia de Burgos* is excellent for Spanish, comparative literature, history, women's studies, and ethnic studies courses.


This film celebrates the life of African American activist Fanny Lou Hamer, who participated in the voter registration drives in Mississippi during the 1960's and fought against legal segregation in the South. Hamer led the Mississippi Freedom Democratic party to the 1964 Democratic Party Convention, where she denounced the official all-white Mississippi delegation.

*Never Turn Back* makes clear the strength and commitment of Fanny Lou Hamer. As an activist, she dedicated her life to the liberation of the African American community. However, the film ends with an overly optimistic view of race relations today. While it is true that the 1960's civil rights movement brought about positive changes, we cannot argue that racism no longer exists in our society. Faculty showing this film should make sure students do not get the impression that racism was eradicated during the civil rights movement.

The film is good for history, political science, women's studies, and ethnic studies courses. A sixty-minute version is also available.


In depicting the life of Ella Baker, *Fundi* uses interviews with Baker and other activists that worked with her, as well as film of the African American struggle juxtaposed with footage of Governor Wallace, the Ku Klux Klan, and images that say "Negroes are communists." Baker provides insight into her life-long activism, including her respect for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), with whom she preferred to work rather than with other civil rights leaders. During an interview, Baker says that she worked with SNCC because the people of her generation
did not have the nerve to fight segregation in the way that young people did. She was referring to the sit-ins.

*Fundt* points out the difficulties women organizers faced because many men had never dealt with a woman who said no with a strong voice. Resistance persisted even though Baker acknowledged she did not need to be recognized as a leader. But Baker’s activism was not limited to the African American community. She had the vision to recognize that the liberation movements of all people of color are interrelated. Toward the end of the film, Baker speaks in front of hundreds of people in Puerto Rico. She mentions that the struggle toward liberation is a struggle against capitalism and imperialism.

Although she might not have viewed herself as a leader, Baker’s community and history in general do recognize her contributions toward the civil rights movement. This film is so powerful because it demonstrates the strength a woman like Ella Baker can bring to activist movements. *Fundt* is very useful in history, literature, ethnic studies, and women’s studies courses.

-- C. Alejandra Elenes

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FEMINIST VISIONS

THE EXPERIENCE OF ASIAN AMERICAN AND NATIVE AMERICAN WOMEN: A VIDEO REVIEW

The Spring 1990 issue of Feminist Collections carried a review of films focusing on African American, Chicana, and Puerto Rican women. Purchased by the UW-Madison Women's Studies Research Center with a Ford Foundation grant as part of the "Women of Color in the Curriculum" Project, those videos and the titles in this review are all available through interlibrary loan from UW-Platteville's Karrmann Library. The films/videos in this column cover Asian American and Native American women.


Sari Red is a short, powerful video directed by Pratibha Parmar, an Indian lesbian in Great Britain. Parmar examines the duality of messages that Indian women residing in Britain receive and re-enact in their daily lives. The color red has double significance, representing blood and violence as well as sensuality and intimacy. In this expressive video, the impact of racism is probed through a look at the death of a young Indian schoolgirl at the hands of young white British boys who go unpunished. By combining this story with depictions of Indian women in private and public settings, Parmar gives keen insight into the often-unarticulated colonial legacy of a racially arrogant society. Though not set in the U.S., the film is clearly relevant to American experience.


Juxta deals with the impact of racism on the offspring of mixed parentage, highlighting its effects on the children of Japanese women and American servicemen. Through the eyes of a "hapa" (half) girl with a Japanese mother and Caucasian father, we see the differential treatment given her young male friend of Japanese, African, and American heritage. Yamazaki effectively reveals the complexity and particularity of the American context of difference as she depicts the tensions and growth in the children's relationship over the years. She also explores differing manifestations of racism, from the painful experience of "passing" to the blatant taunting and exclusion of the African Asian child. Filmed in black and white, JUXTA gives us a stark but poignant look at the Japanese "war bride" experience and the perplexing problems faced by the children of these immigrants as they try to understand their hybrid worlds.

MILA. Dir. by Hei Sook Park, 1989. 30 mins., color. 7526 Amanda Place, Vienna, VA 22180.

Hei Sook Park's video presents an absorbing look at the family unit while focusing on a young, divorced Korean American woman who has yet to come to grips with her mother's death several years earlier. Since she is living in a boarding house, the woman's "family" now consists of fellow boarders, who seem blown by the wind, with no sense of belonging in a harsh, cold America.

Reunification of the family has become an emblematic issue, since half the original population of North Korea lives outside the borders of the country. Park highlights this theme in a holiday
scene where boarders watch a TV show depicting
the reunification of a family after a lengthy
separation. The search for family provides a
counterpoint for a sense of separation experienced
by many Koreans of the diaspora. Viewers
accustomed to the fast-paced action films of U.S.
culture may find that the slow-moving video makes
them uncomfortable. Park effectively uses this
discomfort to demonstrate a sense of alienation and
loneliness that permeates the lives of many Korean
immigrants.

NEW YEAR. Dir. by Valerie Soe, 1987. 20 mins.,
color. Distr. by Women Make Movies.
In the first part of this video, the artist
uses coloring book characters to recall her
childhood feelings of alienation as the only Asian in
school. She explains how she feels both cute and
exotic when dressed in her native clothes for a
"Show and Tell" for Chinese New Year. It is the
one token time each year that Chinese culture is
addressed in school. When her class takes a field
trip to Chinatown, Soe is caught between two
worlds. Because she goes to eat every month with
her grandparents, Chinatown is a familiar place, yet
her class finds it alien and exotic. The pressure to
assimilate is made evident, as Soe and her siblings
would rather watch TV than play traditional games,
and shun their Chinese foods in favor of "American"
ones. She also breaks the stereotype that all Asians
cook good rice by revealing that her parents can't
make rice well at all.

Soe's experience is juxtaposed against the
images of Asian Americans in the mass media that
make up part II of the film. Clips from present-
day television programs, Hollywood films, and comic
books offer various misrepresentations of Asians.
Five sets of stereotypes are explored: Japs, Slopes,
and Gooks; The World Wide Empire of Evil; Geisha Girls and Dragon Ladies; Fortune Cookie
Philosophers; and Kung Fu Masters. These
types represent the dominant images of Asians
before the American public. The contrast between
the lived experience and the media representations
provides background and a starting point for
classroom discussion about the specific operations
of racism against Asian Americans.

HOPI: SONGS OF THE FOURTH WORLD. Dir. by
Pat Ferrero, 1983. 53 mins., color. Distr. by
Ferrero Films, 650 Fifth Street #202, San
Francisco, CA 94107.
Using the beautiful landscape of
Northeastern Arizona as background, this film
document the lives of the Hopi people. It is also
framed with Hopi music -- in the background we
hear songs that bring harmony not only to the film
but also to Hopi life. The film is a tribute to Hopi
resistance and strength.
Since the first contact with Spanish
"Conquistadores," the Hopi have resisted religious
conversion and assimilation. In 1906 the U.S. Army
surrounded the Hopi reservation and took the
children to boarding schools. In spite of such
efforts on the part of the government, the Hopi did
not assimilate to the Anglo cultural norm.
Although Ferrero's film does not focus
only on women, it does pay tribute to their strength
and importance. In Hopi society, children are born
to the mother's clan, and only women can make
pottery and keep the corn. The significance of
weddings and motherhood is also made clear in this
film. It is important to keep in mind that the
notion of motherhood differs from culture to
culture, and that motherhood is not a form of
oppression for Hopi women.
The Hopi world is rooted in nature and
religion. Every aspect of Hopi life -- farming,
harvest, weddings, and art -- is part of the life cycle,
a circular journey. The love and respect that the
Hopi have for nature is an important message
carried by the film. In an era of environmental
destruction, the Hopi show us a more positive,
Earth-affirming way of life. This film can be useful
in literature, Native American studies, anthropology,
education, history, and women's studies courses.

-- Joan Ariki Varney and Alejandra Elenes
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multidimensional curriculum,* and examines the range of possible student reactions to the presentation of new information.

Another excellent article zeroes in on the field of sociology, but presents information helpful to anyone in the liberal arts.7 In "Moving Our Minds," Margaret Anderson asks, What if women of color were at the center of college teaching rather than on the margins? She demonstrates how such a shift would transform sociological theory and pedagogy, and offers a list of questions faculty should ask themselves as they attempt to make their courses more inclusive.

Butler and Anderson address the individual teacher, but a wider perspective is ultimately necessary, since curriculum reform often begins at the departmental, divisional, or campus-wide level. For a nuts-and-bolts approach to curriculum transformation, nothing beats Betty Schmitz's Integrating Women's Studies into the Curriculum.8 Schmitz has been intimately involved in several projects to incorporate feminist scholarship into the liberal arts, and her experience is evident in forthright explanations of how to design, set up, and sustain such efforts. Heavy on examples, the volume concludes with an extensive, annotated list of publications and other resources. Items on women of color can be traced through the index.

Another fine volume, Women's Place in the Academy: Transforming the Liberal Arts Curriculum, blends idealism and practical information in eighteen articles.9 Editors Marilyn R. Schuster and Susan R. Van Dyne open the anthology with essays that argue the necessity of change and trace the stages of curriculum transformation. Of particular interest are two papers on the relationship between Women's Studies and Black Studies. Other contributors describe model projects and assess the classroom consequences of revamping discipline-based education.

In Part IV, "Resources," Schuster and Van Dyne supply a useful set of field-tested "syllabus redesign guidelines" and a selected bibliography, in which citations are arranged by discipline and then split between materials for classroom use and for teacher preparation. A section labelled "Third World" covers both women of color in the United States and women in developing countries. Schuster and Van Dyne update this list periodically; the latest edition, the sixth, appeared in 1988.10

Another resource, Integrating Women's Studies Into the Curriculum: An Annotated Bibliography by Susan Douglas Franzosa and Karen A. Mazza, offers over five hundred citations without the accompanying advice that Schmitz and Schuster/Van Dyne dispense.11 Unfortunately, the organization by traditional disciplinary clusters and the lack of a subject index make it difficult to cull references to women of color from this bibliography.

* * *

Equally useful in the early stages of redesigning a course are general bibliographies on women of color. Wide-ranging bibliographies function like a snapshot of the available literature; one can gain an impression of the shape of current scholarship just by skimming the citations. Two recently-published reference volumes deserve spotlighting. Both were reviewed in the winter issue of Feminist Collections, but we'll briefly describe them again.

Bernice Redfern's Women of Color in the United States: A Guide to the Literature is a concise, interdisciplinary bibliography with succinct annotations for over six hundred works.12 The entries include books, journal articles, chapters in books, and dissertations. The bibliography is arranged by racial/ethnic category -- Afro-American, Asian American, Hispanic American, and Native American -- with sub-categories for topics such as "literature and the arts" and "feminism and women's studies." Redfern excludes fiction, poetry, medical literature, and popular writings, and she emphasizes materials written since 1975. The researcher in a hurry will benefit from Redfern's informed selectivity, but anyone seeking a comprehensive overview of available materials will need to turn elsewhere.

Given its achievements in both research and curriculum design, it's not surprising that the Center for Research on Women at Memphis State University has produced an excellent guide.13 Women of Color and Southern Women carries the sub-title, "A Bibliography of Social Science Research, 1975 to 1988," but its definition of the social sciences is broad enough to encompass history, health care, folklore, and related subjects. Purely humanistic areas, like creative literature and literary criticism, are excluded.