

1990

# Celebrating the Truth Anniversary

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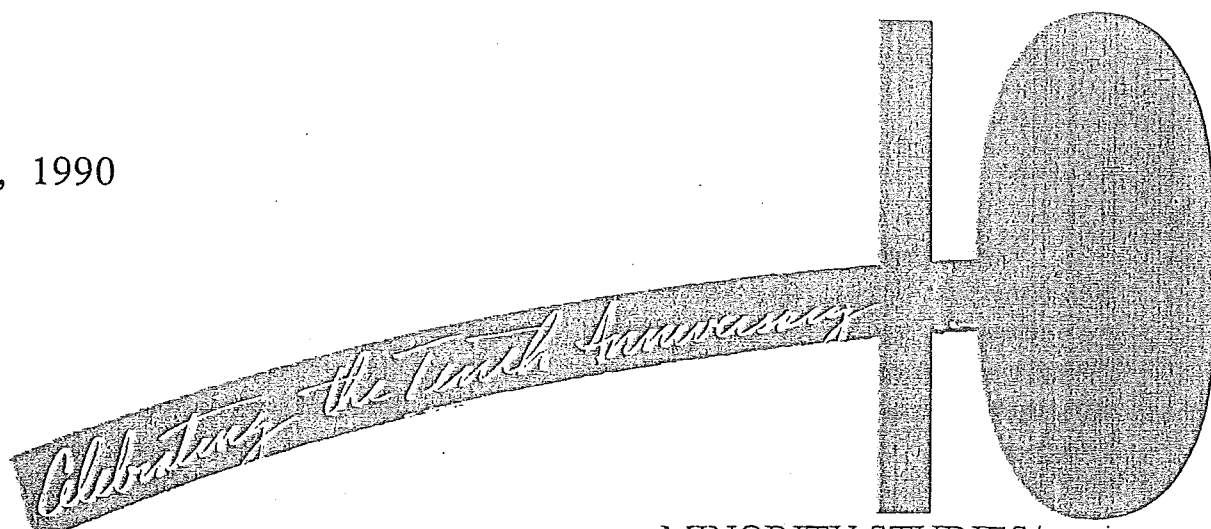
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MAY, 1990



MINORITY STUDIES/  
WOMEN'S STUDIES REQUIREMENT  
AT DENISON UNIVERSITY

Special Anniversary Joint Issue:  
Of the Denison Women's Studies Newsletter  
and Amandla, a publication of the  
Center For Black Studies

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## INTRODUCTION

This has been an enormously important year for Women's Studies and Black Studies at Denison. In celebrating the pioneering achievement of curriculum reform represented by passage of the Minority Studies/Women's Studies General Education Requirement ten years ago, Denison has both affirmed its commitment to diversity and recognized the contributions made by both programs to the institution overall. We can be justifiably proud in having been the first institution of higher education in the nation to pass such a requirement -- prouder still of the enormously successful model of cooperation that it represents.

The wide range of events scheduled this academic year in observance of the anniversary enriched the campus community immeasurably. From the opening convocation by Shirley Chisholm in September to the breathtaking performance in March by Sweet Honey in the Rock and everything in between, the intellectual, social and cultural contributions of women and African Americans were richly observed. Made possible by a grant from Acting President Sam Thios in 1988-89, the celebration featured an array of major speakers and performers as well as department-hosted colloquia. One event, however, stands out for its deep personal significance to many on campus. On March 8th, former faculty, administrators and students who were instrumental in the passage of the requirement returned to campus for the Founders' Day celebration. The day featured a Common Hour program by alumni Women's Studies and Black Studies students and leaders of the movement to pass the requirement. Lisa Pittenger, '85, Cathleen Shine, '80, Luther Tyson, '84, Deveonne Tyree, '79, and James Bell, '81, spoke movingly of their experiences ten years ago and reflected on how those experiences have been carried forward into their personal and professional lives today.

At a dinner later in the day other speakers like Tona Dickerson, '80, and former University Professor Naomi Garrett greeted the assembled group, and recently departed Women's Studies Director Margot Duley, always an eloquent and impassioned speaker, surpassed her greatest oratorical achievements as she lauded the great success of Denison's requirement. Director of Black Studies John Jackson and Acting Director of Women's Studies Lyn Robertson recognized the contributions of the many individuals who helped to pass the requirement and screened a slide show that recaptured some of the spirit of the time. The culminating event of the day was

an All-College Convocation with former faculty members Ann Fitzgerald, Chuck Henry, Joan Straumanis, and former Provost Lou Brakeman. Currently enrolled Denison students were deeply affected by the Founder's Day events as these journal excerpts from Lyn Robertson's students show:

"I was interested as soon as I sat down in my seat and watched the speakers (former Denison students) and present Denison professors rejoice with one another. They all looked so happy to see each other and it made me realize actually how proud Denison should be, being the first school who had this requirement."

"Hearing the stories of these faculty members made me proud of Denison for being open to change. With the students and the faculty backing each other important changes can be made for the betterment of Denison as a whole."

"I am looking forward to taking a Women's Studies course and/or a Minority Studies course. Who knows, maybe someday when I am long gone I can be invited back to Denison to speak about something that I was involved in, and be as proud of it as our speakers were."

"These people really got me excited about taking one of these courses. I am so thankful that there are such committed people in the field of education."

"Joan Straumanis inspired me to go out and be courageous -- to stand up for something I believe in, because more often than not, there are others who believe in the same things. They have definitely inspired me to take a Women's Studies course even if it wasn't required."

"This hour meant a lot to me. It really got me thinking how such a small requirement can really open the eyes of so many and make such a difference. Learning that the students played a major role in the beginning of this requirement shows that anyone can create changes. Denison has made such an imprint in the lives of so many -- not only the graduates and professors, but also the many other lives that the graduates interact with and help."

"Their interest and concern for their own education and the actions they took to enrich that education was inspirational. They made me proud of Denison."

"I now realize that education, when utilized properly, can bring about powerful and positive change even beyond the sphere of the institution itself."

This newsletter is a special joint issue of the Denison Women's Studies Newsletter and Amandla, a publication of the Center for Black Studies. The featured histories of the Black Studies and Women's Studies programs were painstakingly researched and written by History Department faculty member Jack

Kirby and University Historian Wallace Chessman. Both accounts also review the events leading up to and following passage of the requirement from the perspective of leaders in both programs. In addition, the text of the keynote address for the anniversary celebration given by Spelman College President Johnnetta Cole in February is also included. I hope you enjoy the newsletter and that the message it contains continues to be a big part of what makes our institution Distinctly Denison!

Lisa Ransdell, Women's Coordinator  
April 24, 1990

## THE EVOLUTION OF BLACK STUDIES: 1968-1990

Ten years before Denison embraced a Minority Studies/Women's Studies requirement for all of its students, the initial effort to introduce to the campus a racially diverse curriculum had begun. In 1968-69, urged on by a handful of Black students and supported by a number of concerned faculty and white students, an interdepartmental course entitled "Black Culture in America" was established. Faculty members Chuck Henry and Bill Nichols, participants in that effort, noted some years later that "in 1968 Denison was not rich in Black Studies scholarship." But it was out of that course, inaugurated in the uncertain times of the late 1960's and in one of the most momentous years of recent American history -- 1968 -- that the process evolved which led in 1978-79 to a Minority Studies/Women's Studies requirement for the general student population and launched the later Black and Women's Studies movements at Denison.

The evolution of Black Studies -- later joined to Women's Studies -- tells us much about how and why the college arrived at the decision, so difficult for some then and now, to promote a somewhat "non-traditional" requirement and it suggests also how Black Studies has managed to survive and maintain its present status at Denison over the past twenty years. The concept of "Black Studies" emerged at Denison and at other colleges and universities in the late 1960's and early 1970's at a critical juncture in the history of America's racial struggle. The Civil Rights movement had given way to Black consciousness and racial self-determination which, in turn, influenced movements such as the struggle for women's liberation. By 1968, when a handful of Black students and their allies sought to create a course on the Black perspective in America at Denison, America itself was in the throes of racial and social conflict. It was a year of events that changed the social and political landscape; the assassinations of Martin Luther King, Jr., and Robert Kennedy; racial violence in hundreds of cities and communities following King's death; student uprisings at universities like Columbia which drew together racial, student power, and Vietnam war issues; and street demonstrations in Chicago, site of the national Democratic party convention. These and countless other episodes in 1968 and after reflected the general racial, political and cultural upheaval in America in the late 1960's

and early 1970's which, in turn, formed the backdrop for events that took place at Denison and on other college campuses.

Beginning in 1964, Denison had made tentative efforts at expanding its Black and minority student population. The impact of the southern Civil Rights Movement, passage of the 1964 Civil Rights and 1965 Voting Rights Acts, the moral and religious emphasis that King and others gave to the non-violent struggles in the deep South, and the inclusion of white college-age students in those struggles no doubt helped inspire Denison's recruitment efforts. Yet, by 1968, the Denison Magazine in a lead article entitled "Campus Response to a Nation in Change" noted that only thirteen Blacks then attended a college which had a total enrollment of over 1850 students. Less than one percent of the student population was Black or minority, placing Denison in the unfavorable position of being almost last among similar liberal arts colleges in the midwest in encouraging a greater Black and minority student population.

That the Denison Magazine even published such an article suggested things were beginning to change by 1968. In February, a Black freshman student, David McBride, wrote an article for the student newspaper expressing the deepening frustrations of the College's small Black student group. McBride attacked, among other things, the administration's perpetuating an image of "token integration" by failing to develop a comprehensive program to recruit Black and minority students and increase the number of Black faculty and administrators. And he called for development of a new curriculum that would more honestly reflect the realities of Afro-American life.

Pressured then by increasingly assertive Black students and a national environment of racial consciousness, the college began in the spring of 1968 to take steps towards incorporating the Black experience in its academic program. Adding to the sense of change in this period was the death of Denison's longtime President Blair Knapp, and the establishment of an interim presidency under the leadership of Professor Parker Lichtenstein. During this period the college increased efforts to recruit Black students, faculty, and administrators and developed the course on "Black Culture," offered for the first time in the fall of 1968. Reflecting the various conflicting attitudes, assumptions and political tendencies that were part of both the national environment of the time, the Black Culture course had a shaky beginning. As former Black student

activist and later historian of these years, Monroe Little, observed in 1970: "Confusion reigned as students and faculty sought to find some kind of direction to take in the studying of the Afro-American way of life." Ten years later, Bill Nichols, one of the first faculty participants in the course, and Chuck Henry, then a Black senior and later, Director of Black Studies at Denison, wrote that "from the beginning...the course was marked by disappointment, anger, suspicion, confusion, recrimination, and finally, a student boycott." These were not easy times. And yet Nichols and Henry noted also that in spite of the conflicts, the Black Culture course not only held together but "it introduced the college to a range of themes that were to become the core of Black Studies: the history of slavery; the crisis of the inner city; the development of jazz, Black theatre and literature; the economics of the ghetto; and Black politics and religion."

From these uncertain origins, including boycotts of classes, demonstrations and confrontations, Denison's own Black revolution proceeded to shape the essence of the Black Studies program. Throughout its history, Black Studies -- as an intellectual enterprise and as a focal point for responding to the various needs of Afro-Americans within the college community and beyond -- has operated in a highly charged political and social environment. The development of a Black Studies curriculum has never been separable from other issues of equality and representation: student and faculty recruitment; the quality of life beyond the classroom for Blacks and other minorities, including women; college policies which directly or indirectly impinged on matters of race and interracial relationships; financial priorities such as investments in South African corporations; and the presence of an influential Greek social system on campus. Not only has Black Studies been interdisciplinary by its very nature, but its development and continuing presence have required attention to issues and concerns which seldom occupy the attention or the time of more traditional academic enterprises.

Thus, the efforts from 1968-69 into the early 1970's to develop an intellectual and institutional base for Black Studies determined its direction for the next twenty years. Academically, Black Studies came to embody two fundamental approaches to the exploration of Afro-American life and thought, mirrored in many respects in Women's Studies. First, Black Studies encouraged a "blackening," or what became known as a "mainstreaming" of the



existing curriculum -- that is, inclusion of a Black and minority perspective in traditional academic offerings especially within the humanities, social sciences and the arts. Teachers were urged to incorporate the study of Black life in standard courses in American history and literature, sociology, religion, political science, and the arts. The second emphasis, which came to symbolize the distinctive nature of Black Studies as a field in itself, was establishing a core of new courses that specifically focused on Afro-American life: Black History, Ethnic or Black Literature, Black Psychology, Religion, Theatre, Politics, and Music. Despite the difficulties encountered in the first Black Culture course, what it clearly showed was that any understanding of the Black experience would necessarily lead one beyond traditional disciplines and boundaries even as one sought in these early years to develop specific offerings in standard fields.

Issues of personnel -- who would and could teach such subjects -- became critically important to Black Studies as the field began to develop. In the years between 1969-70 and 1972, recruitment of faculty -- Black and white -- committed to teaching the Afro-American perspective became a crucial factor in the evolution of Black Studies. By 1972, a core of Denison faculty -- Bill Nichols and Ben McKeever in English, Clay Thorpe in Sociology, Jack Kirby and Don Schilling in History, Carleton Trotman in Psychology, and Arthur Zebbs, a Columbus-based Black minister and activist who joined Kirby in teaching courses in Afro-American history -- began offering courses in their respective fields and together began to fashion an interdisciplinary Black Studies program which ultimately led to the creation of a Center for Black Studies. The addition of Naomi Garrett during the same time as a Distinguished Visiting Professor with expertise in African and Caribbean literature was important to Black Studies in these years.

By 1971-72, the essential outlines of a Black Studies program took form under the initial guidance of Carleton Trotman, a psychologist on leave from Lincoln University. Courses were being offered by 1972 in Afro-American history, literature, religion, and sociology. In 1972, Arthur Zebbs became the first full-time Director of Black Studies, and a Black Studies Center was created first in Doane and later in its present location on the first floor of Knapp Hall. Some years later, Barbara Copeland became a full-time secretary and administrative assistant in the Center. From the start, the director of Black Studies worked with a committee made up of faculty teaching in Afro-American studies areas and

administrative staff directly involved in such areas as admissions, financial aid, and student life. In 1972-73, the Black Studies Committee and Zebbs put together the first Black Studies concentration and major, later approved by the Academic Affairs Council. Reflecting then as now the attempt to connect interdisciplinary and traditional disciplines while working within the context of Denison's existing faculty and administrative system, the major required students to take core offerings in Afro-American history and ethnic and Black literature as well as an interdisciplinary course on Black Studies (usually taught by the Black Studies Director). Courses in the arts, psychology, religion, and sociology composed some of the other electives for the major. Central to Black Studies was the effort to encourage students to major in a traditional field, such as religion, while developing a concentration in the Afro-American experience.

From the start, there was the realization that the Black Experience included more than the history of Black people in the United States. Naomi Garrett's contributions, joined later with those of Valerie Lee and Desmond Hamlet, gave the study of literature an African and Latin American/Caribbean emphasis. African specialists such as Don Schilling in History, Jim Pletcher in Political Science, and Susan Diduk and Kent Maynard in Sociology/Anthropology further expanded the curriculum. Numerous visiting artists over the years in Dance, Music, and Theatre, many of whom came from an African or Caribbean background, also enriched the curriculum and expanded the emphasis on a Black "diaspora" as part of the Afro-American heritage and cultural experience. At the same time, as the Women's Studies program evolved in the early and mid 1970's, a natural link was established between the study and teaching of racial and gender issues. In the mid 1980's, the Black Studies major was revised to require students to include a course in some area of Women's Studies and the Women's Studies major was revised similarly to require coursework in Black Studies. Black and Women's Studies grew together intellectually and politically during these early years, certainly providing the impetus and cooperative basis for the decision in 1977-78 to promote a Women's and Minority Studies General Educational Requirement.

Thus, from the time when Chuck Henry returned to Denison in 1976 as Director of Black Studies and Assistant Professor of Political Science on to the era of John Jackson, who replaced Henry in 1980-81, a close working relationship was forged between Black

and Women's Studies. Courses over the years have often been cross-listed and some have been jointly taught by faculty in both areas. Much of this was accomplished under the early direction of Joan Straumanis and Ann Fitzgerald, who taught the first Women's Studies courses at Denison, and pursued later by Margot Duley, Director of Women's Studies from 1984-88.

Passage of Proposal #382, the Minority Studies/Women's Studies General Education requirement by Academic Affairs Council, symbolized the historic ties of two movements which have sought to foster community awareness on the richness of racial and gender experiences and to assure the integration of these areas in the general curriculum. Since the fall of 1979, when the requirement went into effect, there is little doubt that it has given Denison considerable favorable publicity and both Black and Women's Studies courses have been aided by a requirement that attracts students who might otherwise have by-passed such offerings. During the 1980's, Black Studies was able to sustain many of the gains secured in the previous decade. In some respects it continued to grow. That was often not the case at other colleges and universities during the past ten years whose programs in Afro-American studies were launched at the same time Denison developed its own. Thus, GE 382 gave the study of Afro-American life and Women's Studies continuing support at Denison.

The year that the GE requirement was passed, Black Studies underwent an external review headed by John C. Walter from the Black Studies Department at Bowdoin College and Joseph Russell, Chair of the Department of Black Studies at Indiana University. Reporting to Louis F. Brakeman in July, 1979, Walter and Joseph raised a number of questions concerning the Black Studies curriculum and the general structure of the program. They singled out for special attention what they saw as the limited nature of Afro-American offerings, the absence of tenured status for the Director of Black Studies, the failure to develop a separate academic department, and a general skepticism among Black students towards Black Studies. The report pointed to questions that had been of concern to faculty in Black Studies from the start, and issues which shaped the direction of the Black Studies program over the next decade: expanding the intellectual depth and breadth of Afro-American courses; securing a tenured status for the Director of Black Studies and gaining greater visibility for the Black Studies Center; increasing the number of Black faculty and staff while

continuing efforts to recruit Black and minority students; improving the quality of intellectual and social life for Black students; and, with Women's Studies and others, helping to foster a more open, diverse, and tolerant community.

The minutes of the Black Studies Committee over the past ten years suggest how these and other concerns have continued to form the central focus of Black Studies at the college. Following the selection of Jackson as director in 1980-81 after a national search to replace Henry who resigned to teach at the University of California at Berkeley, Provost Louis Brakeman played a critical role in making the Black Studies Director position tenurable. At the same time, by the early 1980's, Denison had reached the goal, first proposed during the boycott days of 1969-70, of a Black student population of over one hundred. From that time to the present, Black Studies has sought to either maintain or increase that level of student enrollment and to develop programs that would provide Black students a viable support system, thus assuring them greater success once they came to the college.

One such effort was implemented by the late former President Robert C. Good. Shortly after his arrival and following the arrival of the first large class of Black students, Good created a "task force" within the administration that included representatives from student life and educational services, the Director of Black Studies and various members of the Black Studies Committee. The task force operated into the mid 1980's primarily as a means of coordinating efforts to improve the quality of Black student life. Even before Good resigned as President for health reasons, the task force had declined in importance as many of its goals had been assumed by various administrative departments.

The goal of developing ties between Black Studies and communities beyond Denison has gone through various stages over the past 15 to 20 years. Under Zebbs and continuing during the leadership of Henry and Jackson, efforts were made to build a relationship between both the academic and social experiences of Black students and the Newark and Columbus Black communities. During the 1970's, an Inter-Cultural Resource Center developed in Newark which drew both Black students and faculty, especially those in the arts. Interest in the Center declined after 1980 and there has not been any major attempt to revive it. At the same time, there have been endeavors to involve both Black Studies faculty and

Black students in other community activities -- speaking at local schools, tutoring local high school and grade school students and jointly sponsoring speakers and cultural events. These activities have been difficult to sustain although particular individuals and groups have maintained permanent links with Black churches. The 1970's were a time when both Black students and local Black communities reached out to one another; for a number of reasons, the last ten years have seen less of such activities.

Still during the decade of the 80's, Black Studies has maintained a consistent cooperative relationship with TEACH, Inc., a community-based adult education program in Columbus. Denison students are placed in the program each summer where they serve as tutors and teaching assistants. In turn, they gain first-hand knowledge of the delivery of educational services to a local Black community.

Efforts to improve the quality of Black and minority student life on the Denison campus have been a central challenge to Black Studies. Periodic "racial conflicts" have often produced renewed concern about conditions Black students face at a predominantly white, upper-middle class college. The most recent such conflict in the spring of 1988 was sparked by what was perceived by students to be an inadequate judicial sentence for a racial harassment incident. This led to a two-day boycott of classes and the formation by Denison's Board of Trustees of a Task Force on Racism and Diversity, charged with examining minority-majority relations in all sectors of campus life and proposing recommendations for change. Concerns such as these have led to many activities by the Center for Black Studies: support for the activities of the Black Student Union; Black speakers and cultural and arts events; discussions among student groups within living quarters on race and race relations issues; programs that allow Black students to attend Black colleges and universities; Black administrative support in key areas such as Student Life, Educational Services, and Admissions; and support for Black and minority representation on both student and faculty committees. In 1986-87, a Black Cultural Center was created to provide a living environment for Black and white students to explore Afro-American culture. Initiated by a number of Black students and supported by Black Studies and the administration, the Center confronted difficulties from the start in involving white students and gaining visibility on the campus; ultimately, Black students themselves lost interest. The Cultural Center was simply one of the

more recent examples of the complexities faced in finding ways to promote a more open environment for Black Studies as an academic and cultural experience at Denison.

To look back to the early years from 1968 to 1970 is to realize the degree to which Black Studies has assumed an institutional place within the Denison community. Despite the increased conservatism at both national and college levels, the study of Afro-American life and culture has become, in certain respects, an accepted part of the college curriculum. Events such as "Black History Month" have been integrated into the yearly college calendar and the presence of Afro-American writers, artists, and political and social figures has become more commonplace than was possible twenty years ago. The granting of honorary degrees to prominent Afro-Americans and the selection of commencement speakers such as Coretta Scott King suggests further progress in areas which Black Studies has long struggled to affirm.

In other respects, partly because of its programs and growth, the challenges faced by Black Studies remain. Despite ten years of the Minority Studies/Women's Studies General Education Requirement, those faculty who work in the area are not convinced that it has been successfully "mainstreamed." New generations of students, Black and white, and new faculty with little sense of the historical circumstances and struggles which have shaped some of the educational and other gains made in the area of Black life at Denison and elsewhere, confront Black Studies with the continual task of educating and re-educating and, to some extent, re-convincing skeptics as to its validity or even its necessity.

Jack Kirby, author

Additional text: John Jackson

## HISTORY OF THE WOMEN'S STUDIES PROGRAM AT DENISON

The tenth anniversary of the inauguration of the Minority Studies/Women's Studies General Education Requirement for Denison students (beginning in 1979-80 with the class of 1983) surely gives cause for celebration this 1989-90 academic year. For insofar as can be ascertained, our college was the first institution in this country to include this significant area within its general education program. Oberlin went co-educational more than sixty-five years before Granville's Shepardson College for Women in 1900 became a coordinate part of our university, but in Women's Studies, Denison has been a leader within the Great Lakes Colleges Association as well as nationally. And Jack Kirby's insightful essay on Denison's Black Studies program well indicates how our efforts there over these past twenty years have also advanced interdisciplinary work generally on this campus.

Today Black Studies and Women's Studies have achieved the status of interdepartmental majors which include also Classical Studies, Educational Studies, French Area Studies, and Latin American Studies. Yet, as this survey of Women's Studies in particular will indicate, participating faculty and staff maintain a continuing interest in "mainstreaming," i.e., promoting greater attention in departmental courses generally to the past roles and increasing significance of women. They maintain a keen interest also in focusing upon societal patterns of sexual inequality, in examining the intersections between sex, race, and class, and in calling attention to the range of women's experiences, both on campus and in the wider society. They are, as these pages will attest, a most active group of dedicated individuals.

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Initiation of the first interdisciplinary women's studies course at Denison is rightly attributed primarily to Ann Fitzgerald, who had come to Denison with an M.A. from the University of Wisconsin to be a full-time instructor in the English Department for the academic year 1972-73. Like so many others of her generation, she had read Simone de Beauvoir, Kate Millett, and Betty Friedan, and had been involved in "consciousness-raising" sessions as part of a women's study group. More than that, she had just participated in the design of the first Women's Studies Course offered at the

University of Wisconsin. So that fall of 1972, with her department's consent and the permission of a skeptical Academic Affairs Committee, she prepared to launch such a course here the next semester.

Ann found an eager ally in the philosophy department's Joan Straumanis, who from her first formal introduction to the faculty in the fall of 1971 had been typed as "a real feminist hell-raiser." She soon underscored that in a Faculty Luncheon talk of March, 1972 entitled "What Harriet Taylor Should Have Told John Stuart Mill," outlining a 14-point program for ending discrimination within the academy. In May, 1972, Joan cooperated with a local feminist consciousness-raising group that included Lyn McKenna and several faculty wives as well as a few college and high school students in celebrating the first Women's Day [later Week] at Denison, to the theme of Sojourner Truth's famed 1851 address at Marion, Ohio, entitled "Ain't I A Woman."

The existence of such a support group in the early 1970s surely testified to the reinvigorated interest in women's rights in that era, at Denison and elsewhere. As far back as the century's first decade, of course, our women students had begun to assume ever greater responsibility for the conduct of their lives in Granville. By the late 1960s that persistent effort had led to a full-blown demand for equal rights with men, including self-limiting hours and 24-hour visitation and car ownership privileges. Such a responsible call for "self-determination" largely achieved its goals in "The Year of the Student," as 1968-69 has been rightly dubbed. Beginning with the spring of 1968, moreover, the "Time for Change" agitation for a greater commitment to Black students also won its first victories with administration and trustees, presaging an even sharper struggle during 1969-70 over the newly organized BSU's "Demands" for the recruitment of 100 Black students and 10 Black faculty. By June, 1970, Denison was struggling seriously with the "Time for Change" objectives.

The hiring of four Blacks and eight women as faculty in this 1970-72 period thus revealed the college's commitment even before Ann Fitzgerald teamed up with Joan Straumanis to prepare for that first interdisciplinary Women's Studies course to be offered in the spring of 1973. That preparation called for directed studies in the fall of 1972 with a number of women students who would serve second semester as teaching assistants in group discussions



growing out of the weekly lecture session. Plans called also for open enrollment which would result in 120 students that spring, including 11 men, a satisfactory/unsatisfactory grading system which would offer a greater freedom for experimental assignments, a weekly graded seminar for the women students serving as "T.A.'s", and in the use of Kate Millett's Sexual Politics as the major text. Despite initial doubts expressed within the Academic Affairs Committee, ID 246 (now termed Women's Studies 101) would emerge that spring of 1973 as a durable foundation for the developing Women's Studies program.

Joan Straumanis so much enjoyed this team-teaching experience that she was especially pained when her "Annie" Fitzgerald left Denison in 1973-74 for the University of Missouri at St. Louis, supposedly "for good". But the Committee W composed of concerned women faculty that had been established that spring of 1973 soon came up with what Penny Van Horn termed a "positive action program" calling for the hiring of a full-time Women's Coordinator who would cover the ID course, have a departmental offering, and coordinate women's activities generally. And in the full search that followed, though Joan looked "at a lot of other people...I never thought anyone could do the job like Annie, so we hired her back in that position." Indeed, Joan remarked, "that was my most satisfying accomplishment."

Robin Bartlett meantime was keeping the new field active in 1974 with her initial offering of Econ 350 - "The Dual Labor Force: A Female Perspective." At the same time, Joan Straumanis served in September 1973 as panelist at a two-day conference at Notre Dame University on "Government, The Family, and Abortion" and led discussions second semester in a Granville First Baptist Church course on "The Place of Modern Women in Society." With Ann Fitzgerald's return on an administrative contract as Assistant to the Provost and Assistant Professor of English and Women's Studies, the ID 246 course continued in 1974-75 in its old two-semester format, but her principal administrative activity from 1974 to 1976 "was to research, write, and implement Denison's first Affirmative Action Plan and procedures." As a matter of fact, by 1975 Denison already was in a position to name her its first Affirmative Action Officer while appointing Juliana Lightle as Women's Coordinator with a budget to head up the Women's Resource Center (first in her Beth Eden office, then on the fourth floor of Slayter, and finally in its current first floor location in Fellows Hall). From that Center,

Juliana was to edit and publish Denison's Women's Studies Newsletter, maintain liaison with the GLCA program, coordinate the annual Women's Week observance and counsel/oversee the activities of various women's groups on campus. So by 1975, Denison's Women's Studies program was firmly established and prepared for rapid development.

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From 1975 to 1979, locally as well as in GLCA and off-campus activities generally, Denison's programs registered significant progress. ID 246 continued to be taught regularly, while various departmental and January-Term offerings also developed, to the point where the English Department in 1978 made English 225: "Women in Literature" a permanent fixture. Within their 12-college Great Lakes consortium, moreover, Denison faculty and administrators took a leading role in establishing a Women's Studies Committee that planned annual conferences and obtained significant outside financing for important projects. And on campus, as the first Women's Studies Newsletter published in April 1976 well revealed, a host of activities in support of Denison women began to function effectively.

Ann Fitzgerald and Joan Straumanis continued to bear chief responsibility for the introductory ID 246, and they developed a strategy of organizing the course around various themes in order to preserve its freshness and their interest as instructors. Some of the course themes included Women in Groups and Subcultures (taught by Nan Nowik); Female Sexuality and Health Care; the Political Theory and History of the Women's Movement in the United States; Women in the Arts; Growing Up Female in America; and Autobiography and Oral History. Within departments and during January Term, moreover, at least one course was usually offered each semester that particularly studied women. English, history, economics, sociology/anthropology, psychology, political science, philosophy - the range of involvement widened appreciably, and in the English Department, John Schilb worked on research topics in the Women's Studies area with Nan Nowik. Indeed, by 1979 the Mathematics Department was addressing women's "math anxiety" in Don Bonar's summer workshop and a J-Term course planned by Andy Sterrett.

Within the GLCA, Ann Fitzgerald and Joan Straumanis had begun networking as early as the fall of 1974, and they were soon helping

to write programs for an initial Women's Studies Committee meeting of the 12-college consortium. Funds from the Lilly Endowment facilitated this and other faculty development projects, leading up to a GLCA Women's Studies workshop attended by sixty people (including seven from Denison) at Earlham College in March, 1976; there it was agreed to compile a GLCA Handbook on Women's Studies Resources, to hold a large GLCA conference in January 1977 for interested faculty and students, and to seek a major grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Post Secondary Education (FIPSE) to explore consortial cooperation in Women's Studies development. Receipt in September of that FIPSE grant (1976-1979) would support annual conferences as well as workshops, mini-grants for students/faculty, consultant services on course development, and campus evaluation efforts. And considering the key role of Denison faculty here, it seemed only right that Nan Nowik, newly an Ohio State University Ph.D. in March 1976, should be appointed a GLCA Faculty Development Fellow for 1976-77 to investigate "the problem of the reticent student, a large number of whom are women."

To San Francisco for the founding convention of the National Women's Studies Association (January 13-16, 1977) would go Ann Fitzgerald, representing the academic discipline of Women's Studies, and Juliana Lightle, Women's Coordinator. To the GLCA Women's Studies Conference at Rochester, Indiana (January 20-23, 1977), on "Critical Issues in Teaching Strategies, Curricula, and Personal Growth," would also go from each of the 12 colleges a delegation of up to ten women and men representing the faculty, administration and student body. Indeed, from this point onward, Denison would assuredly be a part of every significant off-campus development affecting the field of Women's Studies, not to speak of its role also as host, for example, for the first Women's Studies Curriculum Conference for all twelve GLCA schools on November 11-12, 1977.

Judith Elkin's 1982 history of the GLCA briefly summarizes further consortial activities in Women's Studies, including publication of a Resource Handbook in 1977 and 1978 (the most recent edition came out in 1989) as well as a GLCA Women's Studies Newsletter (1976 - 85), but of course it is Denison's own Women's Studies Newsletter (Vol. 1, No. 1, April 1976 - ), first edited by History Department faculty member Judith Laird and student Cathy Horyn, that best communicates the variety of activities associated with our Women's Studies program. Its two spring issues of 1976 thus detailed plans for "Women's Week 1976: Celebrating Women in

the Arts," announced visits by Kate Millett and Florence Howe to the Central Ohio area, told of Joan Straumanis's legal involvement stemming from her role as counselor to two Denison women students who had been raped,<sup>1</sup> and amid news of grants and conferences indicated that Denison Security would provide rides after dark and that a Whisler subcommittee was visiting women's residence halls to discuss services available at the campus hospital and at Planned Parenthood in Newark.

By 1979, Committee W's efforts had helped to secure adequate gynecological health care and contraceptive supplies for women students, while in the area of career and life-work planning Denison women had also made much progress. Three years earlier, in the fall of 1976, Patricia Somers had become Director of Denison's Career Planning and Placement Center where women students in particular had long sensed a need. Under her direction a Career Resource Library was established; links with the Women's Coordinator, the graduate school advisor and various concerned offices were made, and campus recruiting soon grew to include sixty public- and private- sector organizations holding 1400 interviews with 200 students (1978-79). In the spring of 1978, following an initiative by Ann Fitzgerald, Nan Nowik, and Provost Louis Brakeman, the Andrew Mellon Foundation awarded Denison a three-year \$132,000 grant aimed "to graduate competent and self-confident women students ready to move into responsible positions in all fields." With Mary Schilling as the new Mellon Grant Director, women students and faculty became actively engaged in the new programs which included sponsorship of 53 visiting women professionals (including alumnae), career exploration trips to places like New York City and Washington, D.C., women in science seminars, and conferences, mathematics workshops, and faculty career advising workshops.

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<sup>1</sup>In May, 1976, Dr. Straumanis was subpoenaed before a Licking County Grand Jury about two rapes she learned of while counseling the survivors. She was, at that time, threatened with criminal prosecution for withholding information regarding a felony, information which she considered confidential. These events were addressed in a 1977 January Term course on "Action Research and Women's Rights," in which Joan and two students, Susan Sutherland, '79 and Nancy Jackson, '78, drafted a bill designed to protect the confidentiality of rape counselors in the state of Ohio. With the support of the ACLU (who also defended Joan on the charge against her, which was eventually dropped) the bill was passed and signed into law by then Governor Rhodes in 1977. It still functions to protect the privacy of rape victim advocates in Ohio.

Throughout Joel Smith's presidency (1969-1976), the common goal had been to fashion a college environment "more sensitive and supportive toward minority needs...more mature in social behavior and more liberating in social perceptions." In Robert Good's first year (1976-77), moreover, a special Coordinating Committee on University Mission and Goals further explored ways to promote these objectives, while Ann Fitzgerald worked with departments to implement the new Affirmative Action policy, and the administration approved a slot for a second psychologist who would specialize in the area of human sexuality. However, a Black Student Union protest in April, 1977 over its allotment of DCGA funds, and then a Wingless Angels "unmasked dorming" in late May forecast difficulties ahead for both Blacks and women in the 1977-78 year.

First thing that September, 1977, Bob Good appointed a Special Presidential Task Force on Minority Concerns, yet events affecting women and Black students were soon overtaking deliberations. In early November a crowd of 20-50 men invaded the women's quarters in Curtis West and Shorney, shouting obscenities and breaking bottles. Then on November 15th, a Black student leader interrupted a formal debate on the Bakke reverse-discrimination case to read a long statement condemning white racism. Heated discussion that winter in Judicial Council deliberations on fraternity discrimination, on another Wingless Angels dorm incident, and of racism finally led a number of faculty/student groups including the Black Student Union and Women's Emphasis to join forces in support of a variety of remedial steps,<sup>2</sup> including a option of the Academic Affairs Committee's proposed new general education requirement in Minorities Studies/Women's Studies.

A 40-student demonstration by these protesting groups outside Doane Administration Building on May 5, 1978, underlined their mood: "We want action now!" And within the University Senate meeting of May 8th, a petition signed by 151 students representing eleven campus groups (including PanHellenic Council

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<sup>2</sup>Abolition of the Wingless Angels, divestiture of Denison's South African holdings, establishment of a women's center, more health services for women, establishment of a security system "which protects students," and sensitivity training for "racist-sexist institutions (i.e., fraternities and sororities)." The other involved groups were the Denison International Students Association, Denison's Christian Fellowship, the Denison Jewish Community, and a newly established NAACP Chapter.

and Interfraternity Council) called for passage of the new #382 General Education proposal as "an essential, though only initial step toward creating...a Denison Community free of racism, sexism, and all other forms of human oppression." After lengthy debate and important amendments on May 15th, University Senate by a 21-6 vote did approve the following #382 requirement:

Every Denison student enrolled in a BA or BS program shall complete a course dealing primarily with some or all of the following:

"The nature and effects of discrimination against women and minority groups in America; the roles and significant contributions of women and minority groups in American society; the ways in which historical factors have shaped women's and minorities' participation in American life; the unique experiences, identity, and art that these important groups have contributed to American culture; and examination of the moral values central to these issues."

It was further provided that Academic Affairs Council would establish a representative faculty subcommittee to recommend the criteria by which courses would be chosen to satisfy the requirement and the courses which should be initially selected for approval by Council and Senate, such implementation to be reviewed by 1982-83, but to go into effect for the class of 1983.

For Women's Studies leaders, "the strong alliance with Black Studies" in support of this trail-blazing requirement had been of key significance. "There was agreement on the part of Women's Studies and Black Studies faculty that we needed courses that would emphasize the interconnections of racism and sexism, focusing on the major effects of discrimination" later asserted Ann Fitzgerald, and "we hoped that these courses would improve the quality of life for students at Denison." And then following up upon these initial faculty discussions, said Fitzgerald, "it was students who formally raised the issue in the Senate" and accomplished the measure's passage "through lobbying efforts to members of Academic Affairs and finally through a demonstration which really convinced faculty who were only half supportive of it that we should try the requirement."

Next year, an Academic Affairs subcommittee chaired by Philosophy's Phil Glotzbach had to consider carefully what would count as a #382 course. From Women's Studies, the introductory ID 246 naturally qualified, as did Economics 350 (Women in the Labor Market) and English 225 (Women in Literature). The rest of the

fourteen courses eventually approved by Senate were in Minority Studies, and more especially in Black Studies involving history, politics, English, religion, psychology, and sociology/anthropology, as well as ID 235 (first titled "The Nature of Black Studies").

The fall of 1979 marked the initiation of this new Minority Studies/Women's Studies requirement for entering freshmen, but in the meantime the Women's Studies program had recorded other significant steps. The female clinical psychologist with special counseling skills in human sexuality had begun her work, as had Mary Schilling as director of the three-year \$132,000 Mellon Grant program to enhance "New Career Opportunities for Women." In December, Denison hosted the GLCA's 2-day conference on Women's Studies curriculum development, and during second semester the well-known Florence Howe was a Visiting GLCA Women's Studies Scholar on campus. It was Florence Howe who, on February 21, 1979, joined Provost Louis F. Brakeman, a strong supporter of Women's Studies over the years in the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new Women's Resource Center in Fellows Hall. In her vision of what the Center would become, said Women's Coordinator Nancy Nowik at this opening, "I see it as a lounge and study room, a referral service and a library, a place where we can exchange resources as well as be resources for one another."

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In the ten years since, the conspicuous placement of the Center in the Fellows Hall lobby has indeed served as a focal point for Women's Studies activities. The Women's Resource Center is a Women's Studies library, containing many books, journals, magazines and other reference materials, and it operates as an important meeting place for the Women's Studies Committee, Women's Emphasis and other groups. Currently the center is also the daytime office for the Women's Studies/Women's Programs secretary and the base of operations for Safewalk, Denison's evening hours escort service.

The first milestone of the 1980's was the approval of Women's Studies as an official academic major in April, 1983. Another programmatic rite of passage was the establishment of an annual Women's Studies Prize competition in 1983 for the most impressive scholarly and creative student work in the areas of Senior Academic Scholarship, Essay, Creative Expression, and Feminist Activism.

These were renamed the Nan Nowik Memorial Awards in Women's Studies in 1988, in honor of English Department faculty and former Women's Coordinator Nan Nowik, who died in January of that year. In 1986 a Denison Alumnae Award was initiated and named for Grace Lyon, the first Shepardson College graduate (1889) to fulfill degree requirements at Denison (finally awarded in 1900). Through collective endeavor throughout this decade, Women's Studies developed and maintained a responsible administrative structure overseeing every aspect of campus life that might pertain to and promote women's interests.

As Denison's first Director of Women's Studies, Ann Fitzgerald continued to guide the program into the Eighties. By April 1982 those students wishing to specialize in this field could not only seek approval of an individually designed major (as two students had successfully done in 1981-82) but could also develop a minor consisting of at least six courses, four of which had to be from regular "Women's Studies" offerings in ID and departmental offerings, and two of which had to be from the areas of Black Studies, Latin American Area Studies, or other intercultural studies -- the reason being "the close relationship between the problems of women and those of other minority or disadvantaged groups." On April 19, 1983, this minor rose in status to a major with virtually the same range of offerings but requiring a minimum of 32 credit hours, 22 of them distributed among Women's Studies 101: Issues in Feminism (4 credits); Philosophy 275: Philosophy of Feminism (4 credits); Advanced Seminar in Women's Studies (2 credits); two courses in Minority Studies (8 credits) and WS 451 or 452: Senior Research (4 credits). The major had course offerings also in Economics, English, History, Political Science, Psychology, Religion and Sociology/Anthropology.

At Commencement in June, 1982, three women, Anne T. DeVault, Robin F. Flory, and Ellen B. Mandeltort, graduated with Minors in Women's Studies, and Lynne A. Greene graduated with a joint major in Religion and Women's Studies. Next year, Lynne K. Gruel minored in Women's Studies, and Grace Y. McDade and L. Suzanne Turner each completed an Individually Designed Major in "Women's Studies," the only graduates to do so. In 1984, Anne M. Gutenkunst and Wendy St. Phillip minored in Women's Studies, while Carey C. Tompkins combined Women's Studies in a major with Sociology/Anthropology. Later in the decade majors included Kathy Lewis, '86, double major in Women's Studies and Religion, and Kim



Bartlett, '87, double major in Psychology and Women's Studies. The number of minors has remained strong to the present time: 11 in 1987, 4 in 1988, 6 in 1989, and 7 in 1990. Additionally, a large number of students pursued "unofficial minors," taking a number of Women's Studies courses and serving as TA's in the introductory course. A credible number of these students have been among those recognized for high academic achievement, including a number of Presidential Scholars.

Women's Studies lost three key leaders in the early Eighties with the departures of Ann Fitzgerald (1972-1984), Joan Straumanis (1971-1983) and John Schilb (English, 1978-1983), but 1984 brought historian and former Michigan N.O.W. President Margot Duley to campus as the new director. An immediate priority for Margot and the Women's Studies Committee was to "mainstream" gender issues into regular departmental courses wherever possible.

This "mainstreaming" issue went back at least as far as the GLCA Women's Studies Conference that Denison hosted in November, 1977. In the 1982-83 evaluation of the results of the new #382 requirement in General Education, it was decided that the Women's Studies Director should devote more attention to working with departments upon "very concrete, specific suggestions for integrating Women's Studies into selected courses." And during Margot Duley's first year (1984-85) as Women's Studies Director (2/3 Women's Studies and 1/3 History), an important agenda item was "assessment of where various departments are in mainstreaming and strategizing ways of encouraging more."

At a special Women's Studies Committee meeting of September 19, 1984, there was "widespread support" for Nan Nowik's opinion that faculty needed further incentives that summer institute grants or release-time over January Term might provide in order to introduce more data on women into their regular courses. Both Provost Brakeman and President De Rocco were sympathetic to the mainstreaming principle, and in April, 1987 the Robert C. Good Fund helped finance the first mainstreaming seminar, led by Cynthia Fuchs Epstein on the state of gender analysis in the social sciences. Such funding for departmental seminars would be renewed in March, 1988. In April of 1988, the Formative Evaluation Research Associates (FERA) of Ann Arbor, Michigan, made a two-day on-site visit to Denison as part of its 10-college study (for the Ford

Foundation) of selected Women's Studies Programs with regard to the relative success of their various mainstreaming strategies.

The FERA study ranked Denison "at the top of the ten schools participating in the survey with regard to the percentage of faculty using gender as a category of analysis in their teaching," Margot Duley announced in September, 1988. For the academic years 1988-89 and 1989-90, the Robert C. Good Fund would also supply \$3,000 annually toward Women's Studies Departmental Seminars, with a department like Philosophy also contributing \$300 toward its particular cost. By December, 1988, the Women's Studies Committee was beginning to focus upon what the FERA Survey had identified as "our greatest weakness, as is the case nationally,...in incorporating materials on women of color into our courses." To help remedy this, the Women's Resource Center had already acquired bibliographic publications on Women of Color, and Women's Studies organized joint faculty development seminars with Black Studies focusing upon the intersection of gender and race issues. One such seminar featuring writer Gloria Hull was held on February 18, 1988. A commitment was made by the two programs to continue such joint ventures, and the year-long celebration of the 10th anniversary of the Minority Studies/Women's Studies requirement funded through the office of Acting President Sam Thios (1988-89) represents additional collaboration in these areas.

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Thus this "mainstreaming" effort has brought Women's Studies leaders once more to recognize their bond with Black Studies. At the same time, however, they have remained concerned about making their field more attractive in its own right to Denison students. Much thought has gone into ways to increase the visibility of Women's Studies students and alumni, and to attract more applicants for college admission who might be initially interested in Women's Studies courses. To these efforts, carried out chiefly since Margot Duley took over Ann Fitzgerald's position as Director in 1984, let us now turn.

Under Ann Fitzgerald's leadership, of course, a basic organization to handle Women's Studies concerns was in place. Beverly Purrington, assistant professor of Sociology/Anthropology, served one-third time as Women's Coordinator from 1980 to 1982, at which time Mary Schilling added Women's Coordinator (half-time)

to her position as Affirmative Action Officer (half-time). In the fall of 1981, moreover, a Women's Studies Committee formally organized with six "core members" and a rotating chair to meet at least monthly to oversee and develop the Women's Studies program generally. By the fall of 1982 that group in turn was forming subcommittees to choose Women's Studies-related speakers to be brought to campus under a new speakers' budget, and to supervise acquisition of journals and books for the Resource Center. Two student majors, Grace McDade and Suzanne Turner, were invited to attend full committee meetings, which by now had agendas set forth in advance.

Approval of a Women's Studies major in April, 1983, coincided with Ann Fitzgerald's suggestion that "a prize of some sort should be offered acknowledging the work of students in Women's Studies." Following discussion, a faculty subcommittee was selected to determine guidelines for awarding such a prize, and then another subcommittee to act as judges. Janet Shibley Hyde, Acting Provost (1985-86) generously financed the Women's Studies Prize out of her D.C. Heath Company book royalties from Half the Human Experience, and continues to do so even today. On May 16th on the lawn of Stone Hall on the Lower Campus, at a picnic sponsored by the Women's Action Group for all students and faculty involved in Women's Studies and Women's Programs, the judges announced that "after difficult and trying deliberation" they had chosen the work of both Sita Ranchod and Melissa Von Stade for the First Annual Women's Studies Prizes. The Commencement Program that year and each year since has carried these Women's Studies awards among Denison's "Endowed Scholarships, Prizes and Awards."<sup>3</sup>

Responsibility for administering and promoting the new major must have led Ann Fitzgerald to suggest in the spring of 1983 that a special brochure on Women's Studies/Women's Programs be prepared for use by the Admissions Office. But not until the fall of 1984 did Mary Schilling and Nan Nowik undertake to assist the new Women's Studies Director, Margot Duley, in this project designed "to attract Women's Studies students to Denison." At last in March, 1986, after broadening coverage to bring in "all programs of achieving women, including Women's Programs, Women's Athletics and internships," Margot had a brochure approved, financed, and ready for distribution by the Admissions Office.

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<sup>3</sup>See appendix for full listing.

In the wake of Ann Fitzgerald's resignation as Director in February 1984, the Women's Studies Committee reorganized into a more formal elective body consisting of four people teaching Women's Studies courses, three not teaching such a course, the Women's Coordinator, the Women's Studies Director and one student to be selected. In the Fall of 1984 this enlarged "core committee" also agreed that in place of "chair-for-a-day," Margot Duley would regularly direct deliberations; in February 1985 she also began to attend meetings of Departmental Chairs. Criticism of the limit on attendance to these elected members soon would arise -- even though Women's Athletics received a permanent seat in May, 1985 -- and by the fall of 1986 meetings were re-opened to "any interested person." All in all, the Women's Studies Committee has provided the continuity of responsible supervision to Denison's program.

To raise funds among alumnae and to increase the visibility of Women's Studies among present and prospective students -- these were also early concerns of Margot Duley. So in 1984-85 there was not only a Women's Week in the Fall, but also a Women's History Week that spring. In 1985-86, Women's Studies not only sponsored its usual four colloquia to showcase creative activity and research in the Women's Studies field, but also conducted three publishing conferences (one led by Rutgers University Press editor Karen Reeds in October, the other two in February/March with several editors and authors leading discussions) to stimulate faculty/student interest. And for Women's Week in the Fall of 1986, it was decided to honor Denison alumna Edie Van Horn, '41, once a union organizer and the first female Shop Steward in UAW/ER history, a founder also of the Coalition of Labor Union Women and The National Women's Political Caucus.

Thus on September 25, 1986, Edie Van Horn returned to Denison to receive the First Grace Lyon Alumnae Award. It had been hoped that Gloria Steinem could attend this event honoring her mentor and friend, but due to illness, Ms. Steinem sent a tape to be played for Edie's introduction. At Van Horn's Common Hour talk in Slayter Auditorium, President Andrew De Rocco presented her with this new award named in honor of Grace Lyon, Denison's first female graduate. The Fall, 1986 issue of Denison Magazine, mailed to all alumni/alumnae, would give full coverage to the life and work of "Union Activist" Edie Van Horn '41.

In October, 1988, Barbara Furin Sloat, '63, biologist and first director of the Women in Science Program at the University of Michigan, became the second recipient of the Grace Lyon Alumnae Achievement Award, presented by Acting President Samuel J. Thios, prior to her Common Hour address on "Perspectives on Women in the Sciences." The Women's Studies Committee has continued to cultivate alumnae support through Alumni College participation by Denison's women faculty, and Denison Magazine has run feature articles on Astronomer Sandra Yorka, Economist Robin Bartlett, and Plant Ecologist Juliana Mulroy, all former or current Women's Studies Committee members. Through recommendations for alumni citations and honorary degrees, the Women's Studies Committee has been mindful of the need to highlight the role of Denison women in the larger community.

Since the late Sixties, the number of women faculty at Denison has risen significantly. The 1969-70 catalog listed seventeen women teaching full-time, and three part-time, with foreign languages and physical education being the prominent disciplines. By 1979-80, however, the thirty-four teaching full-time included five in English; three in Psychology; two each in Biology, Dance, History, Philosophy; and one each in Economics, Mathematics, Physics, Political Science, Religion, Speech Communication, and Sociology/Anthropology. And by 1989, with 52 female faculty members, the net loss of one woman in Philosophy could be balanced against the addition of two in Religion and one in Education, plus two more mathematicians, a research associate in Chemistry, a visiting lecturer in Art, and a number of new faculty members in Biology, Economics, History, Sociology/Anthropology, and Speech Communication. With English, Modern Languages and Physical Education maintaining their strong women's representation, Women's Studies/Women's Programs at Denison had a broad base of scholarly support.

Over the same period, the Women's Studies Director and the Women's Coordinator maintained their watch on the welfare of Denison women students. The Women's Resource Center in Fellows Hall became even more useful as Margot Duley pushed for more books and periodicals. Reference Librarian Joann Hutchinson worked with

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student Karen Hall to produce a bibliography of holdings in Women's Studies after librarian Mary Prophet collaborated with Nan Nowik on researching and expanding library acquisitions in the field. Out in residence halls and sororities, Mary Schilling, in 1985-86, began to use an "acquaintance rape" tape to begin discussions, while in May, 1986, the first training sessions for Rape Victim Advocates were scheduled for staff and faculty. The next fall, alleged battering incidents on Denison's campus aroused much Women's Studies Committee discussion of possible responses, which Margot Duley and Mary Schilling then pursued with Lex Smith, Dean of Student Life, and the Student Life Staff as well as Committee W. Though no task force was appointed, Staff Counselor Chris Paisley did report to a Women's Studies Colloquium in May, 1987 on her research into "Outsiders' Responses to Incidents of Relationship Violence." The next fall, moreover, Safewalk was reorganized to make escorts available from the Women's Resource Center from 10:00 p.m. until 2:00 a.m. every night.

The year 1987-88 would witness a continuing concern for the Denison campus climate. Representing Denison on the GLCA Women's Studies Committee, Mary Schilling chaired a sub-committee drafting, implementing and analyzing a major GLCA survey of the quality of life for women students on the eleven coed campuses. In February, 1988, Margot Duley and new Women's Coordinator/Affirmative Action Officer Lisa Ransdell (1988- ) conducted a faculty-meeting discussion of the findings from the Denison survey and Lisa chaired a task force addressing the problems of sexual harassment and sexual assault in the student subculture that met throughout the spring. When the Black Student Union's protest over a racial incident erupted in April, moreover, the Women's Studies Committee came out for "more Black Studies programming, and anti-racism training parallel to what is occurring for sexual harassment in the wake of the Campus Climate for Women Survey." In May, Judith Thomas of the Sociology/Anthropology department became the Women's Studies representative on the Task Force on Racism and Diversity sanctioned by the Board of Trustees to devise programs to cope chiefly with racism and secondarily with sexual harassment at Denison.

That same 1987-88 year witnessed the sorrowful loss of Denison's first released-time Women's Coordinator, Nan Nowik, in whose memory the Women's Studies Prize was renamed and expanded. 1988-89 would make a significant transition in the

Women's Studies Director post also. Margot Duley went on research leave second semester and Robin Bartlett capably filled in as Acting Director during that time. Clinical psychologist Marci McCaulay, formerly with the Psychology Department and now engaged in private counseling practice in Granville, took over Margot's teaching responsibility in "Women's Studies 101: Issues in Feminism." At the end of spring semester, 1989, Margot resigned to accept a position as Director of the Honors Program and Associate Dean of the College at the University of Toledo.

During the 1989-90 academic year, Assistant Professor of Education Lyn Robertson has graciously and capably served as Acting Director, also chairing the search committee for Margot Duley's replacement. Marci McCaulay was fortunately able to continue teaching Women's Studies 101. Continuity is well preserved elsewhere: Lisa Ransdell is still Women's Coordinator and Affirmative Action Officer (having taken over in 1987-1988 when Mary Schilling became Director of the Career Development Center), and Clare Green is entering her third year as the first part-time secretary Women's Programs/Women's Studies has been permitted to employ.

In the late Eighties Women's Studies and Women's Programs have changed in ways that are consonant with changes in the membership of the Women's Movement and in the organization of Women's Studies as a discipline nationally. The proliferation of feminist scholarship and the growing number of speakers dealing with women's issues resulted in the mainstreaming of women's programs at Denison, as Women's Coordinator Lisa Ransdell moved away from a yearly Women's Week observance to the integration of programs in various formats throughout the year. Another related trend is the activism of new groups around women's issues on campus. Members of the Denison chapter of 9to5, the National Association of Working Women, have attended the GLCA Women's Studies conferences, as well as holding conferences of their own through the GLCA Staff Network. Other events sponsored by this group include yearly Women's Health Month activities in September and librarian Mary Prophet's 1988 library exhibit on "Women in the Office." The student organization Women's Emphasis has included men as members since 1988, and in 1989 male students and faculty formed a men's support group to engage in examining the limitations of the male sex role and the relevance of feminism to their own lives.

Although fewer students identify primarily with the label "feminist," there is a great deal of activism on campus around a number of global women's issues, such as reproductive freedom. In April of 1989, Lisa Ransdell and Robin Bartlett organized a trip for 140 Denison students, faculty, staff, family members (including children) and friends to the March For Women's Equality/Women's Lives in Washington, D.C. Presently, women students at Denison are actively involved in other campus organizations that address inequality, such as the Black Student Union, the Central American Task Force, Amnesty International, and Outlook (formerly Gay and Lesbian Advocates at Denison). In 1988 students became part of Denison's Advocate Counselor network for the first time, completing extensive training to prepare them to serve as crisis counselors to victims of rape and sexual harassment. Denison's Greek organizations have begun an active collaboration with the Women's Coordinator and others to establish regular programming on topics such as sexism and rape prevention.

The selection of Annette Van Dyke as Denison's new Director of Women's Studies (to begin in the fall of 1990) is in part an indication that the paradigm for Women's Studies as a discipline is now centrally organized around the intersections of gender, race and class, for she brings a specialization in Native American Studies as part of her background in Women's Studies. The range of events scheduled in observance of the 10th Anniversary of the Minority Studies/Women's Studies Requirement demonstrates the broad, interdisciplinary focus of Women's Studies, the success of mainstreaming efforts on campus, and the productive collaboration between Denison's Black Studies and Women's Studies programs. The important and outstanding contribution of Clare Green to the work of the Women's Studies community can be seen in the smooth functioning of the Women's Studies/Women's Programs office and in the planning of conferences, colloquia, and other events.

Office workers, alumnae, trustees, administrators, faculty, students -- by the end of the Eighties, the concerns of Women's Studies/Women's Programs reached out to include them all. Within the GLCA and indeed nationally, moreover, Denison's leading role in this now established area is well acknowledged. Indeed, it is especially fitting that as this Tenth Anniversary year of the initiation of the Minority Studies/Women's Studies General Education Requirement proceeds, the college is still celebrating



the inauguration of its first woman President, Dr. Michele Tolela Myers. Surely the many efforts recorded in this survey -- and in Jack Kirby's companion study of the history of Black Studies at Denison -- will continue to have an ongoing role within President Myers' administration. Best wishes to all those involved!

G. Wallace Chessman, author  
Additional text: Lisa Ransdell

## HISTORY OF AWARD RECIPIENTS

| YEAR    | AWARDED TO:   |
|---------|---|
| 1982-83 | Sita Charlotte Ranchod<br>Melissa Field von Stade   |
| 1983-84 | Colette Lillian Picard  |
| 1984-85 | 1st Place: Amy Lynn Manolis<br>2nd Place: Lisa Jane Pittenger   |
| 1985-86 | 1st Place: Jeffrey Allen Masten<br>2nd Place: Elizabeth Joan Ostar  |
| 1986-87 | <b>Feminist Creative Expression:</b> <b>Feminist Scholarship:</b><br>Loraine Elizabeth Jeffery      Karen Jeanne Hall<br>Katharine Cumming Atcheson   |
| 1987-88 | <b>Senior Academic Scholarship:</b> <b>Essays:</b><br>Deidra Marie Brown      Christine Julia Coon<br>Honorable Mention: Amy Marie Miller<br><br><b>Creative Expression:</b><br>1st Place: Debra Ann Benko<br>2nd Place: Karen Anne Hoffman<br>Honorable Mention: Elizabeth Moorhead Brown<br><br><b>Feminist Activism:</b><br>Christine Julia Coon<br>Jennie Marie Benford |
| 1988-89 | <b>Senior Academic Scholarship:</b><br>Tracy Christine Law<br><br><b>Essays:</b><br>1st Place: Amy Beth Judge<br>2nd Place: R. Charles Riedinger, III<br>3rd Place: Suzanne Lynn Miller   |
| 1989-90 | <b>Creative Expression:</b><br>1st Place: Laura Harman<br>2nd Place: Robin Schneider<br><br><b>Essays:</b><br>1st Place: Stacie Corbin<br>2nd Place: Michael Campbell<br>Honorable Mention: Tiffany Apple<br><br><b>Senior Academic Scholarship:</b><br>1st Place: Karolyn Mallarnee<br>2nd Place: Kim Updegraff<br>Honorable Mention: Anne Davies                          |

**"WOMEN'S STUDIES/MINORITY STUDIES:  
A NECESSITY FOR US ALL"**

Keynote Speech for the 10th Anniversary Celebration Given By  
Spelman College President Johnnetta Cole  
Thursday, February 22, 1990, Swasey Chapel

I appreciate the opportunity to participate in your celebration -- a celebration of 10 years of Minority Studies/Women's Studies at Denison. But I cannot just celebrate by jumping up and down and shouting: yeah, yeah, yeah! I've got to say something meaningful, and that's no minor task!

First of all, let us acknowledge that your efforts over the past 10 years, in terms of curriculum reform, must be applauded. You took certain steps 10 years ago. In doing so you were ahead of many institutions and many individuals.

Remember, it was only a couple of years ago that former Secretary of Education Bennett chastised Stanford University for daring to include in their core curriculum the realities of those who hold up at least half the sky (women), and those we call minorities. Perhaps we call 60% of the world's people minorities to hide the fact that we are the numerical majority in the world. The then Secretary of Education was vigorously protecting the three "W's" of American education: Western, white and womanless.

June Jordan, writing in her 1981 publication, Civil Wars, said of her undergraduate years at Barnard:

"...no one ever presented me with a single Black author, poet, historian, personage, or idea, for that matter. Nor was I ever assigned a single woman to study as a thinker, or writer, or poet, or life force. Nothing that I learned, (there), lessened my feelings of pain, confusion and bitterness as related to my origins: my street, my family, my friends. Nothing showed me how I might try to alter the political and economic realities underlying our Black condition in white America."

Yes, we can say that you were ahead of the times. Indeed, in our nation today we seem to be going in reverse. These are times when tolerance, not to mention respect for differences is particularly low. From many quarters of our country comes the message: all people of color are in the category of "other" in relationship to white Americans; the proper place for women is in

the house; heterosexuality is the only "normal" way; and the poor are that way either because they prefer it to being "normal" middle and upper class folks, or their plight is, for a host of other reasons, their own fault.

It is 1990 and still white supremacists openly scream "kill the niggers." Racial incidents on our college and university campuses continue day after day and grown men and women maintain that they are protecting unborn life by bombing abortion clinics.

It seems clear then that such a climate of intolerance demands that we in the academy redefine our sphere of inquiry to more seriously include a concern for all of us. Such a climate also requires that we rededicate ourselves to analyzing and understanding such violent reactions to difference. And surely, such a climate of bigotry requires that we reinstall into our departments and programs the kind of activist component that would make us among the leaders of community responses against racism, sexism, anti-semitism and all forms of bigotry.

In celebrating a curriculum that claims to explore the realities of the human condition, I challenge us to do just that. Let us not continue to do the half-way reforms that have characterized a good deal of the curriculum changes of the past. For example: In the 1960's, Black Studies was a response to the near absence of the perspectives and experiences of African Americans in our curricula.

But notice how often Black Studies concentrated on the experiences of Black men! And how often Women's Studies has focused on the experiences of middle class white women! And thus one could pose the question: Where are the women in Black Studies? And where are the Black folks in Women's Studies?

Thus as you celebrate 10 years of a Women's Studies/Minority curriculum, I urge you not to go half way, not to do some of the task. Your core curriculum must reflect the realities of all women and all folks of color. For if you have seen one of us women, or one so called minority, you have not seen us all. We are as diverse as any other group of people. For while we are bound by shared oppression, we are also divided by differences in race, ethnicity, class, age, sexual preference, religion, geography and physical ableness.

The task is a truly tough one then -- for the realities of each of these folks must be captured without trivializing or homogenizing what are in fact very serious and diverse streams of the human condition. But as one says in Spanish: ¡Vale la pena! (worth the effort!).

I think that understanding and respecting differences among us is one of the questions of the 21st century. In our colleges and universities, in our society and in our world, either we learn to deal with diversity or we will be "unified" in our destruction!

Because it is difficult to bring such diverse voices into the curriculum, let us be clear about why we must do it. Very simply, because excellence requires it! There is an enormously destructive myth -- that excellence in education is impossible if there is diversity. I am convinced that excellence in education is only possible if there is diversity: diversity in the content of the curriculum; diversity among the students, faculty and staff who make up an academic community; and finally diversity in the pedagogy of our academies -- the kind of dynamism which can flow from diversity in who is teaching and learning and what is being taught and learned. I want to develop each of these three points:

First, excellence in education requires the incorporation of diverse perspectives and experiences in our curricula. For excellence, we need our students to confront, explore, wrestle with Shakespeare and Robert Frost. But they should do no less with the works of Chinua Achebe, Maxine Hong Kingston, and Jose Marti. They need to read Joy Harjo and Paula Gunn Allen on Native American women's realities; the works of Audre Lorde and Adrienne Rich, and the powerful words of Gwendolyn Brooks and Toni Morrison.

To make this point about diversity in the content of what we teach, I want to draw on an exciting passage from a speech recently delivered by Dr. Beverly Guy-Sheftall of Spelman College. "Students come to us having learned a particular perspective on the world, having been taught to see and analyze the world in particular ways and having been taught that there are normative experiences, and that they are those of white, middle-class, Christian, Western men, and to a much lesser extent, women of the same group. One of our most difficult challenges ... as faculty and administrators is ... how to foster in our students the ability to CENTER (their own) experiences. How do we help our students to overcome years of

notions of what is normative, which is in many ways the antithesis of who they are as human beings? ...This is not merely an intellectual process -- providing students with the appropriate content. It is also about coming to believe in the possibility of a variety of experiences, a variety of ways of understanding the world, a variety of frameworks of operation without imposing, consciously, or unconsciously, a notion of THE norm.

Dr. Sheftall then says: "Let me explain that CENTERING in another experience, even when it means centering in your own experience, does not mean that one has to invalidate someone else. One does not have to decenter the experiences of men in order to center women or decenter the experiences of Euro-Americans in order to center African Americans or decenter Europeans in order to center Africans. How is this possible one might ask?" Dr. Sheftall offers three African American cultural practices, one from the visual arts, one from linguistics, and the other from music, which provide us with the frameworks to be able to do this.

The first is the distinctive practice of African American women's quilting. Traditionally, Black women quiltmakers operated from a different aesthetic sense than Euro-American quiltmakers. The colors of their stripes are different from the colors in the rows of blocks or designs. And two distinct movements can be seen -- one along the stripes, the other within the designs. They don't seem to be interested in a uniform color scheme. Contrast, rather than uniformity or symmetry is used to structure and organize. There is also the African American linguistic practice of GUMBO YA YA, the Creole phrase for "everybody talks at once." In a book called Jambalaya, Luisa Teish describes what for her was a family norm, mainly passed on through generations of women in the family. When she returned home to New Orleans to visit and was met by her family at the airport, they all crowded into the car and everyone talked at once -- gumbo ya ya -- and it went on for days. To an outsider this would be labeled chaos or the absence of communication. How can anyone be listening to everyone else at once while they are also themselves speaking? But we know as African Americans that this is possible. Finally, the notion of polyrhythms is also characteristic of Black musical traditions (African and African American). Jazz is referred to by Professor Ojeda Penn as an expression of "true democracy" because each musician has to listen to what the other is doing and know how to respond while each is at the same time required to work on his/her own improvisation. Each person is

allowed to be an individual, to go his or her own way, and yet does so in concert with the group -- one is an individual then within the context of the community. What a shame to rob students of these different voices, different ways of seeing, different ways of being!

Second, excellence in education also requires that the very participants in the process bring to the academic table different ideas, different perspectives, and different experiences. With respect to the need to diversify our faculties, we know that even on the most progressive of campuses, it is difficult to instantly bring about a more multi-racial/multi-ethnic composition. I hope that we also know that taking a business as usual procedure will never bring color to our all white faculties. And so, we must be creative, we must demand of the white American teachers who are there that they struggle to bring folk of color to their campuses. But they must also struggle to raise their own consciousness and engage in the kind of study and human empathy that will permit them to teach, as my mom would have said, "as if they had a touch of color."

Anthropology has taught me the power of empathy. And thus, I think that with enormous hard work, men can come to empathize with the realities of women; Gringos with the realities of Hispanic folks; and White Americans with the realities of Black Americans.

In terms of increasing the number of students of color that we attract and graduate, American education has a long way to go. It is helpful here to turn to the words of the President of Kennesaw College, Betty Siegel. Her ultimate concern is the creation of communities of diversity in the academy. Most immediately Dr. Siegel argues that we must seek to increase the number of Black faculty and students on our campuses. Toward that end, she argues that we must affect every aspect of the academic environment. Here are her words:

"Enhancing minority participation in higher education is not just a matter of establishing special scholarships for minorities or offering undergraduate degrees in Black studies or improving the relationship between white and Black students. American higher education must come to grips with the fact that virtually every aspect of the collegiate experience has been tainted by a subtle bias against minorities -- that it has been unintentionally disinviting."

When our curricula reflect the diversity of perspectives and experiences which constitute the human condition, and when those who teach and learn in the academy mirror that diversity, there is a third need. It is this: Excellence in education requires attention to, experimentation with, and diversity in pedagogy.

Of course we need to be concerned with what we teach -- that's scholarship. But we also need to be concerned with the process by which we teach -- that's pedagogy. You see, I think we need to develop liberatory classrooms. In an article in the Women's Studies Quarterly, Carolyn M. Shrewsbury wrote about such classrooms.

"The concept of a liberatory environment suggests a new way to be with one another in the classroom. A classroom characterized as persons connected in a net of relationships with people who care about each other's learning as well as their own is very different from a classroom that is seen as comprised of teacher and students. One goal of the liberatory classroom is that members learn to respect each other's differences rather than fear them. Such a perspective is ecological and holistic. The classroom becomes an important place to connect to our roots, our past, and to envision the future. It is a place to utilize and develop all of our talents and abilities, to develop excellence that is not limited to the few. The classroom becomes a place in which integrity is not only possible but normal. The web of interrelationships in the classroom is seen to stretch to the local, regional, and global communities, and potentially, even beyond the boundaries of our earth. You see, changing the process of how we teach is often more difficult and risky than changing the content of what we teach.

Process and content are in fact inextricably intertwined -- and thus we struggle for cooperative, integrative and democratic approaches to learning that will empower our students to create personal and societal change."

And so, colleagues, as you continue, 10 years into it, to take on the difficult but do-able task of diversifying and democratizing your curriculum; take comfort in the fact that excellence is the reward, and that what you are doing is in the interest of all of us.

I want to end with the words of a great Black woman whose very name stands in opposition to false images: Sojourner Truth, the great 19th Century soldier in the battle for the rights of Black people and women.

"My friends, I am rejoiced that you are glad, but I don't know how you will feel when I get through. I come from another field -- the country of



the slave. They have got their liberty -- so much good luck to have slavery partly destroyed; not entirely. I want it root and branch destroyed. Then we will be free indeed. I feel that if I have to answer for the deeds done in my body just as much as a man, I have a right to have just as much as a man. There is a great stir about colored men getting their rights, but not a word about colored women; and if colored men get their rights, but not a word about the colored women theirs, you see the colored men will be masters over the women, and it will be just as bad as it was before. So I am for keeping the thing going while things are stirring; because if we wait till it is still, it will take a great while to get it going again. I want women to have their rights."

"Then that little man in black there, he says women can't have as much rights as men, because Christ wasn't a woman! Where did your Christ come from? Where did your Christ come from? From God and a woman! Man had nothing to do with Him...."

"If the first woman God ever made was strong enough to turn a world upside down all alone, these women together ought to be able to turn it back, and get it right side up again! And now they are asking to do it, the men better let them."

"And a final message: Sisters, I ain't clear what you be after -- If women want any rights more than they got, why don't they just take them and not be talking about it?"