PROMISES TO KEEP
TRENDS IN WOMEN'S STUDIES WORLDWIDE

By
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Tonight we are gathered to honour the memory of J.P. Naik who will be remembered for his vision. J.P. Naik's idea of "a promise to keep" speaks to all educated persons, reminding them of their principal responsibility, to fight for the education of all. Second, he believed in the significance of research as a strategy for change, even when political power would seemingly silence all change. Third, he insisted that good work that needs to be done never gets held up for lack of resources, only for lack of determination. Fourth, he believed that men will never get liberated until women get liberated. As you will see, these ideas are central to my lecture. I regret only that I was not fortunate enough to have known the man himself.

As my field is a huge one that needs a volume or perhaps two, I shall limit myself to an assessment of "trends" in women's studies worldwide. For this, I am relying on several kinds of sources: (a) National Reports on Women's Studies written especially for the Feminist Press or the Women's Studies Quarterly over the past several years. I have some 52 of these, 40 published and 12 others about to appear;[1] (b) a scholarly essay recently published by Mariam Chamberlain and myself focussing on women's studies in developing countries in Asia (omitting Japan, Australia and New Zealand;[2] (c) my own travels to Japan, Korea, Argentina, India and various countries in Europe, as well as my presence at several dozen international conferences over the past fifteen years. These sources refer to scores of countries on every continent, thousands of scholar/activists, and millions of students. The development of women's studies as an arm of the worldwide women's movement is as important for the future of world peace as disarmament; and as important for the health of the planet's air, water, trees, and other resources as the ecology movement itself.

Education is a human right, and women as well as men need an education free of gender bias, and implicit with an understanding of women's history and culture. We know that women who have had such an education understand not only the world's fragility and that ethnic wars and the misuse of the planet's resources will destroy the world for generations to come, but they also understand the power of women to change not only their own personal lives, but the social order itself.

I probably do not have to convince you of the connections between the women's movement and worldwide movements for peace not only in the last three decades, but in the early years of this century, when peace and suffrage were twin goals that women's movement leaders worldwide discussed and worked to establish. In our time, I see as

additional goals a woman's right to control her body natally - the right to bear children, as well as the right not to; and the right to equal opportunities in employment for equal pay, with provisions for child care. From the perspective of an educator, I see the accomplishments of the past three decades as, in strong measure, the rise of women's studies as the academic arm of the women's movement. Even if one might disagree somewhat or entirely with this view, it is not possible to ignore the body of knowledge now available to those who would want to turn the clock back, to urge women to leave the work force, for example, and care for a single child or possibly two, and ignore the world's turmoil. Indeed, what I see happening worldwide now is a different agenda: the march of women out of women's movements into public office via politics.[3] And again, I see that this is connected to the worldwide study of history, and the energy released by knowledge about women that ends their invisibility, individually and collectively. Women, as Mary Beard said 50 years ago, and as some of us understand today palpably, have been a "force" in history.

I read the worldwide backlash, against individual women and against feminism in general, as evidence of the strength of this actual and potential "force". Even the republican right wing in the United States, ready to promote prayers in the schools, orphanages for indigent children of mothers under the age of 18 or 20 (rather than the welfare system that allows mothers and children to stay together), will not take on the issue of abortion, since it affects women of all social classes. It remains to be seen whether middle class women inside and outside the women's movement can rally to support indigent women and children as the radical republican right moves to end what they are calling "the welfare state".

I turn now to trends in women's studies worldwide. These connect us despite regional and national differences, even despite significant differences in the formations of our educational institutions. These trends connect us even over time, as I was recently reminded by reading a group of essays by Asian pioneers in women's studies, in a volume published recently by Kali for Women in India and by the Feminist Press in the United States.[4]

I begin with the obvious question: where did women's studies come from? Here there are striking similarities. Again and again (in the Asian stories I have just mentioned) I hear echoes of worldwide experiences. Characteristically, there are two passages through which a faculty member moves into women's studies, both visions springing from the rock of inequality. The first we shall call "personal experience", out of the life of a professional woman; the second, a professional experience. The personal passage into women's studies typically narrates a critical experience that makes visible the inequality between professional husband and professional wife.

I will tell my own story: back at the end of the 1960s, in Baltimore, Maryland, my former husband and I drove off in two directions each morning to our two different teaching jobs, and similarly, drove back in the evening. One evening, I forgot to stop and pick up the laundry, and my husband charged me fiercely the next morning with negligence. I apologised and said I would remember that evening. But all day long something troubled me about the morning's scene, even about my humble apology, for the laundry lay in ***his*** direction, not mine. Nevertheless, I picked up the laundry that evening and presented it to

him, with the following statement: "This is the last time I will pick up the laundry. For it occurred to me today that the shop lies directly in your path. You could pick up the laundry far more conveniently than I. Further, the laundry is yours, not mine - I wash mine by hand - and bed and bath linen which we both use. It is now your turn to deal with the laundry". What do you suppose happened? For most of that year, I had to keep buying new sheets and towels, for my husband would not take the laundry in for many months, and I kept my word. He dealt with his own things, but not with the communal ones. At least not for months.

Here is one of the Asian examples, from China. Li Xiaojiang, Director of the Center for women's Studies at Zhengzhou University, and Professor of Chinese Literature and Language, describes her life as a young girl, out-achieving all the boys in her class, working hard at studies and sports and citizenry, and succeeding. But then, after gaining a significant academic position, she marries, has a child, and finds herself, unlike her husband, expected to do all the housework and child care, as well as her academic work, while he does only his academic work. How is she to deal with this? She writes most poignantly of the love she felt for her husband and child, that she could not give them up:

> *As long as I was unwilling to part with my husband and family, I had to assume all the consequences...I was forced to...carry a load which would be twice as much as that usually carried by a man.*
>
> *All modern women are doomed to fall into such a trap. Most are wallowing in it silently and in a docile manner...But the question baffles me: why are women alone made to suffer in this manner?...*[5]

In practical terms, Li Xiaojiang asks her husband to share some chores. But she goes on to the main point of consciousness for women's studies pioneers:

> ***In an age that boasts equality between the sexes, why do women lead a painfully laborious and depressing life?...despite the fact that women's inherent status and value have been completely obliterated by the writers of history and society, I harbour the hope that my academic studies may contribute to the rediscovery of that status and value.***[6]

The second passage to women's studies is an intellectual or work-related passage. My own came from three sources, one of which I will describe to you. In a study of sex-role stereotypes, male and female clinical psychologists were asked to check off on a bi-polar scale of 132 items those that described the "healthy American male", the "healthy American female", and the "healthy American person". Twentyseven years later, the findings are still shocking; the items checked for "male" and "persons" were identical in every respect; those checked for "female" were entirely different. Thus women were "religious"; men and persons were "not religious". Thus, men and persons were "rational" and "not emotional"; women were "irrational" and "emotional".[7]

In the book by Asian Women's Studies pioneers, there are several examples of such a passage. In one of them, at the end of her research project, when Malavika Karlekar tells the sweepers who had been her subjects that "they had been of considerable help" to her, one of them responds: "You will write your book, but what will happen to us?"[8] In Korea, when Cho Hyoung presents a research proposal on poor urban women, a senior male sociologist remarks, "why should a promising young sociologist like you spend so

much time and energy on such trivial matters as women and poverty?" "Gradually", Cho Hyoung writes, she "became grateful to this man who had unintentionally prepared me to face the anti-feminist world."[9] It is, of course, not only an anti-feminist world, but often anti-reformist and anti-democratic, especially with regard to poor women or women of different races or ethnicities. The passages make wonderful stories - of blinders removed from vision, of what we have been calling re-visioning; and, of course, of idealism. These are features of women's studies worldwide.

So, in fact, I have begun with my conclusion. That though we in the West may have begun with the idea that women's studies, as an arm of the women's movement, was a strategy for changing education, it has, throughout the world, become far more than that. We have known that women's studies changes individual lives, but, and I am speaking for myself here. I have not before now understood how women's studies may turn academics and researchers into activists, that women's studies itself may galvanise a movement. This may seem strange to you, but I came to women's studies already an activist with a decade of experience in the civil rights and anti-war movements. I have always thought of women's studies as growing out of movements. But as we shall see, women's studies in some countries, in Asia and Africa as well as in Eastern Europe has been a strategic force to energise and develop a nascent women's movement. In other words, the process may be reversed.

And, of course, the good news is that it is hard to find a country without some women's studies centre or programme just beginning, or of an age between one and twentyfive. None of the planners of women's studies sessions - from the US, Canada, and India - who came to Copenhagen in 1980 for the United Nation's NGO Forum with a modest programme of panels and round-tables, hoping to be joined by 50 others, expected the hundreds that flocked to our major sessions, and who came also to our round-tables and announced their own programmes. Fourteen hundred people from 55 countries registered in what, thanks to Vina Mazumdar's vision, became Women's Studies International: A Network and Educational Project of The Feminist Press. Joined by 25 women's studies programme from as many countries, Women's Studies International went on to organise panels and round-tables for Nairobi's NGO Forum in 1985 and for Beijing in 1995.

There we met with women's studies pioneers from China and Korea, from Latvia and Hungary, from Uganda, Ghana, and South Africa, from Peru and Argentina, from Turkey, Norway, Germany, France and Russia.[10] It is difficult to think of a country without a women's studies centre or an academic women's studies programme of some sort. The spread of women's studies since 1985 and nairobi has been especially rapid: we can count some 10 African countries with women's studies projects or programmes. Since the end of the Cold War, we can count programmes in most of the countries of Eastern Europe. And since the mid to late 1980s, we can count mainland China, as well as Taiwan, Hong Kong, Vietnam - all with some women's studies programmes or centres. So the first trend is proliferation, the spread of women's studies worldwide, which, I have no doubt, will continue for many years to come.

These programmes or centres, regardless of their geography and even their institutionalisation, have three characteristics in common: they are research-centred, formally or informally; they are teaching institutions, formally or informally; and they are

centres of activism, again formally or informally. A fourth characteristic is not as universal as the other three, but it is growing in importance: publishing of journals or even books. Often, one activity is more important than the others; often one activity leads the way to other activities.

Let me begin with research. Significantly, I see the presence of research worldwide as more ubiquitous than teaching, which is, of course, where women's studies began in the US. In India, as you know, Professor Naik urged the ICSSR to study the status of women in India at a moment that coincided with the beginnings of the worldwide women's movement, following the UN meetings in Mexico City in 1975. Just as women's studies began in India with research on women, so in Russia did women's studies pioneers spend their first two years in research that challenged the newly-established government's attempt to change laws regarding women's rights to education, employment, even to abortion.[11] Scandanavian women's studies centres report that they work on problems needed by politicians, bureaucrats, and other researchers, and are supported by government grants rather than the universities.[12] And in the US, Mariam Chamberlain at the Ford Foundation as early as the mid-1970s envisioned "centres for research on women" as adjunct arms to the women's studies teaching programme on campus. There are now 77 of these in the US alone, some of them on campuses, one-third of them are separate non-profit institutions like the Feminist Press or the Centre for Women Policy Studies in Washington, D.C., or the Centre for Women's Development Studies here in New Delhi, or the Centre for Women's Studies in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

In Argentina in the late 1970s, when fascism ruled the universities as well as the nation, women's studies began in an independent NGO centre, consisting chiefly of psychologists and other social scientists with a programme of action-oriented research.[13] In Africa, the pattern for women's studies - in Botswana, Tanzania, and Nigeria, for example, begins with university faculty setting up a research group with an agenda that includes taking on major social issues, seminars both for researchers and for dissemination, and a publishing programme.[14] The accounts I have read sound very much like Professor Naik's vision of necessary research for a political future. In Japan, where women's studies teaching is quite well-established, research is now turning to a study of women in Japan, including the past two decades of feminism, as well as minority women.[15]

Certain themes may be found in research programmes worldwide. These include the need for better nationally and internationally gathered statistics, and the need for more statistics-driven studies, that, as in India more than twenty years ago, galvanised the women's studies movement. Ubiquitous also is an emphasis on what is often called "participatory research", the effort to design research that serves women (especially the least privileged) rather than uses them to benefit the researcher. With regard to this type of research, there are increased efforts to use research not only to effect education locally, but to change public policies; hence, to educate communities to participate in politics and political activism. Increasingly, some researchers are turning to history, both the history of women in communities and nations, and the history of the women's movement over the past century. Finally, there is a worldwide concern about the human rights of women, and researchers are increasingly focused on violence against women in all its forms - in peace and during war. I see this as one aspect of women's increasing participation in

ecological struggles to preserve the trees of Africa or to provide clean water to the children of India.

As I turn to teaching, which is where my own work and the work of many women's studies pioneers in the US began, I want to add at once that, even where there were no formal teaching programmes in the beginning - as in many of the independent centres that were founded off campus and outside the mainstream of university life - there were always seminars, public lectures, and the dissemination of research findings. Of course, these also teach. But worldwide, women's studies has also built on research to create teaching programme especially for college and university students, and even to create teaching programmes for faculty, typically male faculty, who would not on their own find their way into the new research on women or into women's studies courses. And in some countries, the US, Britain, New Zealand, and Argentina come quickly to mind. Such teaching programmes extend themselves into primary and secondary education, and into the preparation of teachers.[16]

While undergraduate teaching programmes have been women's studies' most visible form in the US, such programmes have not been exportable as such, simply because the US organisation of undergraduate education does not translate itself into other systems. I shall have more to say about this when I speak later about institutionalisation. There are now 620 of these teaching programmes in the US, a third of them offering some graduate as well as undergraduate degrees. I should add at once that there is hardly a college in the US that does not at least offer some courses in women's studies, and if that sounds confusing, courses are small units in the US system; whereas programmes or majors are what you would call "courses". Almost all of the 1800 four-year colleges and universities in the US offer some women's studies courses; one-third of these institutions offer programmes comparable to what you might think of as departments, but with some differences. Most of the larger programmes are located in the 160 universities that offer graduate degrees as well as undergraduate degrees. The US system of higher education allows for additions to the curriculum in processes usually described as "difficult" or "complex" by those attempting to work through them. On the other hand, there is a process, and in more than 2000 (two and four-year) colleges and universities, countless thousands of individual faculty members have been able to add countless women's studies courses to the curriculum. Such easy additions to the curriculum might just as easily be eliminated, for when specialists capable of teaching such courses move from one campus to another, often the courses disappear with them, especially if there is not an organised programme standing guard..[17]

But what do women's studies programmes teach? In the US, some single units - what we call "courses" - are arranged as interdisciplinary **'Introduction to Women's Studies'** as an area of study. But the curriculum that follows may be disciplinary, and may consist of courses (again small units) in any one of 15 or 16 broad fields, disciplines, or interdisciplinary areas. They may range from a course called "US Women Writers in the 19th Century" (crosslisted in English and Women's Studies) to "Women in Politics" (crosslisted in Political Science and Women's Studies), to "Women and the Family" (crosslisted - depending on emphasis _ with History or Sociology and Women's Studies), to "Women and Violence", and "Women in Developing Countries". And I am merely skimming the surface of the curriculum here. The important point is that, because of the

US educational structure, women's studies faculty have not thus far had to choose between "autonomy" or "integration"or between "separation" or "ghettoization" and "inclusion".

In India, as well as in most countries of the world, there are two or three strategies with which to create teaching programmes, all of them difficult to achieve. Several of you years ago were hopeful about the institutional route through which questions on women could be appended to the degree examination in history, political science, and sociology, among other fields, thus forcing the inclusion of lectures on women through those courses. But few women's studies pioneers have been sanguine about introducing whole new degrees (read "courses" in women's studies) into the university structure. There are at least two obstacles: the theorising of women themselves about such a strategy; and of course, even more difficult as obstacle, the patriarchal university.

I can name a few success stories, however in India, for example, there are "courses" and "papers" on women, chiefly at postgraduate levels in selected departments - sociology in Bombay, political science and history in Delhi. While there are 37 research units in India and 20 independent research centres, there are relatively few degree-granting teaching programmes. My experiences in Hyderabad, and even in Delhi, in 1994, convinced me that women's studies faculty were not especially interested in teaching programmes, even at the graduate level, and were not thinking about the fact that, without teaching programmes, there will not be subsequent generations of researchers in women's studies. And there seems to be no easy route - given the undergraduate system of education - to allow the adding of a new area of inquiry called women's studies.

On the other hand, in Argentina, for example, after a long hiatus outside university structures, Gloria Bonder and her colleagues in the independent Centre for Women's Studies in Buenos Aires, were invited into the faculty of psychology at the University of Buenos Aires, and asked to establish an M.A. course in women's studies for practicing psychologists or others who wanted that degree. The faculty has now been invited to establish a second degree-granting programme in women's studies, this one for health professionals.

One of the important elements in women's studies in the US has been an emphasis on changing pedagogical practices in the classroom to encourage more independent thinking and more long-lasting integration of the content of the curriculum. In other words, feminist educators like me were especially aware that the passivity, especially of women students in the classroom merely reinforced their social conditioning as lesser beings. When I was asked to consult recently with Argentine educators devising a new graduate curriculum, and wanting some new pedagogical ideas, I was dismayed to learn that all of what we have been taking for granted in the US for two decades was news to them.

Had I been preparing this paper a decade ago, I would have begun with activism. I would have said that the very first trend was a significant relationship between women's studies and women's movements. I would have said that women's studies has emerged and has continued to emerge from women's movements all over the world. In the US, for example, one can date the women's movement from Betty Friedan's 1963 book or from the founding of the National Organisation for Women in 1966. While I began teaching

courses in 1964 that eventually I saw as women's studies courses, that phrase - "Women's Studies" - did not come into use until 1969 at the earliest, and it was somewhat later that women's studies named itself "the academic arm of the women's movement". I would say that all the programmes founded before the mid-1980s - in India and Japan, Argentina and elsewhere in Latin America, all over Western Europe, in Canada, Australia, and new Zealand, as well as in the US, came out of women's movements.

On the other hand, programmes founded since then, especially in Eastern Europe, Africa, and parts of Asia, *are or are becoming* women's movements. In some ways, this is interesting, baffling, exciting, and worrisome all at the same time. It is interesting and exciting because, of course, those of us who have been in women's studies for 20 to 30 years know that one of the problems in India, in Canada, in parts of Europe, and in the US is the widening separation between the women's movements and women's studies. Older women's studies programmes share a trend that is potentially very dangerous: the split between the women's movement and women's studies, brought on in part by the development of highly specialised fields of scholarly inquiry, in part by what I can only call a "generation gap", differences between the activist pioneers who began women's studies, and the young graduate students becoming instructors in the field. The new generation of scholar/teachers in the university often are as little aware of the history of the women's studies movement as their students. The research findings they teach, the theorising they are often totally absorbed by, may be as remote from women's lives as the traditional male agenda has been for centuries. So, as a real trend, this is a significant worry for all of us in women's studies.

On the other hand, from reports of developing women's studies perspectives in Asian and African countries, one gets the impression of women's studies *as the women's movement*, or perhaps assuming leadership in, or teaching future leaders of, a nascent women's movement. Perhaps you understand at once why this worries me, especially in countries where all academics, researchers or teachers, would be a tiny minority of a specially privileged class: Can these women's studies pioneers ***be*** or ***become*** a women's movement? In other places, for example, some countries of Latin America, women's studies practitioners have been viewed by members of some sections of the women's movement as out of touch with reality like other academics.

Perhaps one way to begin to understand these trends is to consider what has happened in the world over the past decade, especially in the world. While some walls came down in Europe and in the middle East, fiery nationalisms have begun to burn in their place, and radical fundamentalisms to grow more boldly visible. Carnage and the religious right affect women even more adversely than they affect men. It is as though, since women have been traditionally the vessels of culture and the vehicles through which it is carried into the next generation, they must be the bloodiest and most brutalised victims of culture wars.

In certain environments, therefore, it is understandable that there is too much political turbulence or just plain danger for a women's movement to develop in ways that it did in the West, for example, or in India. Rather, scholars, some of them teachers as well, touched by the international movements now opened to them - as in eastern Europe,

China, parts of Africa and the Middle East - have seized on women's studies as a relatively non-threatening, even seemingly non-activist form of women's movement. After all, seminars and publications are different from street demonstrations.

And perhaps, I should add as well that, in some of these countries, these activists have decided to substitute the term "gender studies" for women's studies or feminist studies, especially in Eastern Europe where the communists allegedly settled "the woman question" decades ago, and where the term is linked to the old order and hence anathema to the new. As Anastasia Podsadskaya, an economist at the Moscow Academy of Science and one of the pioneers of women's studies in Russia tells the story, when she first mentioned "gender studies", which is what she and her colleagues determined to call their new programme several years ago, she was inevitably asked, "What is this 'gender'? There is no Russian word for "gender", she explains to an international audience, and so she and her colleagues could describe their perspective - one we would call feminist or women's studies - under this new label "gender studies", which is how women's studies is known in Russia.[18]

Though my own experience in the US could have told me that a publishing arm moved women's studies forward more rapidly and coherently than otherwise, and though I have long urged the establishment of feminist presses in many countries of the world, only this past year, working on this and other lectures, have I come to the conclusion that publishing needs to be named as the fourth essential arm of women's studies. Obviously, we have all known this: take the publications programme of the Women's Studies Unit of the SNDT Women's University; or *Samya Shakti*, the original journal of the Centre for Women's Development Studies in Delhi. But there are a couple of new indicators I would like to mention here. For instance, with respect to Latin America: I have continued to wonder why the profile of women's studies in Latin America is not more visible even to Latin Americans. One reason may be that there is no press, no journal that circulates through the region. On the other hand, there are new efforts, in Peru, Chile, Agentina and Mexico, to found feminist presses and even scholarly journals. In China, where women's studies began in the mid-1980s, the first major activity of Li Xiaojiang, Director of the first Centre, was to edit and publish the *Women's Studies Series*, more than 20 volumes by and about women to be used in teaching.[19]

I want to turn now to the unfinished agenda: what are the trends that need more than naming, and not simply for their ubiquitous presence, but for other reasons?

When women's studies first began more than two decades ago in the United States, pioneers envisioned significant change in consciousness and knowledge. Women and men were to be re-educated in women's history. They were to rediscover the lost literature once important to various cultures. They were to rework almost a century of male-focused social science, to allow into experimental design and data the female half of the population. At the same time, since the US is a multicultural nation, from the beginning, women's studies claimed that race and class, and later sexual preference, age, disability, also needed to be considered along with patriarchal omissions and distortions. The explosion of women's studies - both in research and teaching - was an explosion only in consciousness and knowledge. It was as though we were following Simone de Beauvoir's message at the conclusion of **The Second Sex**: one could not change the

status of women by fiat, as the Chinese or the Russians had attempted early in their separate revolutions; one had to change consciousness firsr or at least at the same time.

Certainly, we seemed to have heard her message: it explained for us, why, regardless of revolutionary goals, in post-revolutionary societies, women remained "the second sex". We were going to begin from the other end: changing consciousness, and more than that, producing a revolution in epistemology that some have compared to the Copernican. Feminist philosopher Elizabeth Minnich has said that one could not simply "add" the idea that the world is round to the previous idea that the world is flat; the new idea changed, indeed eradicated the old idea - which is why it was revolutionary.[20] Similarly, the idea that women are not inferior creatures either in brain or body cannot be "added" on to the idea of women as "the second sex". Feminism displaces patriarchy - at least where it is allowed to live.

But then we come to the hard question: "where it is allowed to live". If women's studies pioneers can be faulted - and I count myself among these pioneers - it is for a failure of long-range ***institutional imagination, strategic institutional imagination***. In the US, we knew what not to do. That is, to take myself as an early strategist: I was strongly opposed to separatism, what has been called "autonomy". I knew that home economics had been a dismal failure, not only because of the limitation in its intellectual vision, but also because its institutional strategy had called for separate programmes, even "schools". I knew also, from a study in the 1960s of efforts to reform higher education in the US, that separate islands of excellence called "experimental colleges", and spawned by large universities themselves, had had no significant impact on the host institutions. Large, sprawling institutions were not about to "imitate" the intellectual successes of academic Edens, even when they had established these Edens in their own backyards. Further, I could see the isolation and budgetary penury suffered by Black studies departments formed as separate enclaves in response to the demands of Black students in the second half of the 1960s. And so, when I could, I recommended a very different kind of institutional model for women's studies in US higher education.[21]

I said, let women's studies be a strategy for change. Let women's studies form programmes, not departments. Let women's studies form programmes with a strong administrative centre, a director, an office, a staff, a budget that will pay for faculty to teach in the programme, even a budget that will pay half the salaries of faculty located half in women's studies, half in traditional departments of sociology, history, english etc. Let women's studies expect that each year its outreach into traditional departments and into professional schools of the university will broaden and deepen until every part of the college or university has been reached and changed. Let women's studies expect also that those brave faculty within departments with a strong allegiance also to women's studies will begin to transform their own discipline-based courses, and perhaps also begin to interest their colleagues in change.

Further, even as early as the middle of the 1970s, intrepid faculty members were thinking about how to change their colleagues, mostly male, mostly unacquainted with what was happening in the world of feminist scholarship. This movement, called "mainstreaming" gathered force in the 80s, and has had some modest effect upon the traditional curriculum in perhaps a hundred institutions of higher education. This kind of work, slow at best,

was paid for in the late 1970s and through the 1980s by the federal government and by private foundations, chief among them was the Ford Foundation. Some of this work continues into the 1990s. But it is clear that none of it speaks to questions of long-range significant institutional change. As Cora Kaplan, formerly at Rutgers University, said at a City University of New York Conference in 1994, the university has not changed at all in the 20 years, we in women's studies have changed our minds and hearts. But the university in the US has, I would add, made room for us in women's studies, and sometimes in privileged positions.[22]

Over the past 20 years, throughout the discussion on institutionalising women's studies has run the refrain of "autonomy" versus "integration". I have been one of those who claimed, first, that neither position was tenable, that one had to have a hybrid: an interdisciplinary programme inside a university, with certain ingredients - a director, an office, a budget, an approved course of study and students earning degrees, but without the right to tenure faculty, though one might hire them either temporarily or through the cooperation of many departments in the university.[23]

What is the next step for women's studies in higher education? Or are we in the US and elsewhere to remain as fixed in our semi-autonomous/semi-integrated pattern as home economics remained as a separate department/division? And are you and others in the rest of the world to continue to try to change degree examinations? This question takes for granted, of course, that the male-privileged university moves forward as it always has, making room for women's studies, and that we continue to educate another generation of scholar/activists to do our work. It is certainly true that the US system of higher education is uniquely suited to absorbing change from outside, without itself changing. Despite the presence of 620 women's studies programmes, the campus moves on as before, having "absorbed" or "added" women's studies along with such new areas as African studies, African-American Studies, Asian Studies, Asian-American Studies. And in the rest of the world, where universities are organised to be resistant to easy change from within or without, where they are structured to withstand side attacks, boring from within, or establishing enclaves inside and yet outside power structures - in such institutions, change is more difficult still.

This is a discussion not confined to the US European women's studies faculty raised these questions at a United Nations meeting in Vienna in October, 1994. In Europe, women's studies teaching and research programmes are 20 years old, or older. In some countries, especially the Nordic and the Netherlands, women's studies can be found in a variety of formations, often on the margins of universities, sometimes in well-funded, well-staffed centres, producing significant research. Yet I heard little satisfaction expressed. Rather, I heard ugly stories, painful accounts of rejections of women's studies scholars by the university "fraternity". I was somewhat surprised by these complaints, and for two reasons. In the US, such complaints were commonplace a decade ago. But feminist scholarship in some fields has become vanguard enough to attract male scholars, and feminist female scholars have gained positions at the most elite universities in the country. Moreover, US feminists have created their own networks and institutions outside the patriarchal ones, and many of them are now able to function in both worlds.

Second, I heard nothing from the Europeans that spoke to action, on how to move their agendas forward. Indeed, the only account that I have found that prescribes institutional change is from Australia. In a lecture on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the first women's studies "topic" in an Australian university, Lyndall Ryan of Flinders University describes the "fragility" of women's studies in Australia, though 30 of the 43 higher education institutions in the country offer women's studies "topics" and programmes at the undergraduate or graduate level, and though there are also seven research centres. The "fragility" she describes is institutional: she describes the units as "additive", dependent on "voluntary" labour of feminist faculty whom she depicts in the "category of unpaid housework". She sees women's studies through university administrators's eyes as "an academic hobby with no clear long-term purpose". She depicts women's studies as "dwellings on the margins of the academy where it has ceased to be a threat to the mainstream because it uses few resources".

And not unexpectedly, her demand is for resources: the establishment of permanent, well-funded professorships and permanent, well-funded departments. The senior positions would reflect the importance of women's studies as a research area; and the "administrative coherence" would allow for the appropriate education of "the next generation of feminists".[24]

The education of the next generation of feminists is my concluding topic and my all encompassing concern, as it is, I am sure, your own. What would J.P. Naik make of the idea of "difference" wiping out "essentialism", and in some quarters of the women's studies world forbidding the very connections that made for the movement in the first place? he would probably chuckle - I am sure his sense of humour was rich. And then perhaps he would urge what I am about to urge, not only to deal with this problem but also with the fascination of students with theory, including deconstruction, even when such theory mandates a total disbelief in such ideas as "truth" or "reality", and hence, in the ability to mount research and action programmes aimed at specific and urgent social issues. What I worry about most these days is what I call "amnesia", forgetting - or never knowing about - the first 25 years of women's studies, and, in the process, losing all that we have recovered during that period.

And so I will conclude with some prescriptives for women's studies education:

First, remember and honour your foremothers, in literature and history, and in the recent period of pioneering women's studies. Whatever your speciality, teach and learn history, including the history of the past 25 years. Unless we know this history, unless we carry it with us, we will lose what we have gained, and generations long after we have gone will need to begin again.

Second, remember that women's studies has been multicultural from the start, despite its "essentialism", and that without the "essentialism" we would not have had a movement. While significant differences separate women, significant characteristics connect them, not only across race and class, for example, but across nations.

Third, remember that the future of women's studies is international, which means that beyond the women's history and culture of one's own country, one must begin to teach, to do research and publish cross-culturally.

Fourth, remember that still largely untapped body of students, professors, researchers who are the other half of the human race, the men some of us live with, mother and love. How are we, in the next century, to teach them? Or will they teach themselves?

Fifth, and finally, remember and never underestimate the strength of patriarchy, that it is far more complexly entrenched ideologically and institutionally than we had imagined some 30 years ago. In the late 1960s, when some women of my generation first began to see that patriarchy controlled every aspect of women's and men's lives, we naively believed that visibility was the answer. If we could make everyone see it, we could, through vision alone, destroy it. Very simple, very wrong. It will take countless visions, innumerable sightings and namings in our lives and our books to help us see the strategies for changing the patriarchal world into one fit for humans.

But of course we have what we did not have 25 or 30 years ago: we have countless adherents, pioneers, and the daughters and grand-daughters of pioneers on every continent, prepared for educational battle. We stand with J.P. Naik, a peaceful army of liberated women and men, with many *"promises to keep"*.

NOTES

1. See **Women's Studies in Europe,** edited by Tobe levin and Angelica Koster-Lossack, *Women's Studies Quarterly*, Vol.XX, Nos. 3-4, Fall/Winter, 1992; and **Women's Studies: A World View**, edited by Florence Howe and Mariam K. Chamberlain, *Women's Studies Quarterly*, Vol. XXII, Nos. 3-4, Fall/Winter 1994; and **Beijing and Beyond: Towards the 21st Century for Women**, edited by Florence Howe with the assistance of Mariam K. Chamberlain, Tobe Levin and Gloria Bonder, *Women's Studies Quarterly*, Vol. XXIV, Nos. 1-2, Spring/Summer, 1996.

2. See Mariam K. Chamberlain and Florence Howe**, "Women's Studies and Developing Countries: Focus on Asia",** *The Women and International Development Annual*, Vol. 4, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1995.

3. See **A Rising Public Voice: Women in Politics Worldwide**, edited by Alida Brill, The Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 1995.

4. See **Changing Lives: Life Stories of Asian Pioneers in Women's Studies**, edited by the Committee on Women's Studies in Asia. The Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 1995. Kali for Women published this book in 1994 under the title **Women's Studies, Women's Lives**. All page numbers below are to the US edition.

5. Ibid., Li Xiaojiang, **"My Path to Womanhood";** p. 114.

6. Ibid., p. 115.

7. Inge K. Broverman and others at Worcester State Hospital in Massachusetts, reported in a scholarly journal in 1968.

8. Malavika Karlekar, **"A Fieldworker in Women's Studies"** in *Changing Lives*, op. cit., p. 141.

9. Cho Kyoung, **"To Grow with Women's Studies**" in *Changing Lives*, op. cit., p.55.

10. See *Beijing and Beyond*, op. cit.

11. See Anastasia Posadskaya, "Women's Studies in Russia: Prospects for a Feminist Agenda**,** *"Women's Studies: A World View"*, op. cit., pp. 157-170.

12. See Tove Beate Pedersen, "Women's Studies in Norway: Sisters Are Doing It for Themselves", *Beijing and Beyond*, op. cit.

13. See Gloria Bonder**, "Women's Studies in Argentina: Keeping the Feminist Spirit Alive",** *Women's Studies: A World View*, op. cit., pp. 89-102.

14. See "Reports from Four Women's Groups in Africa". *SIGNS*, Summer 1991, Vol. 16, No.4; pp. 846-869. Marjorie Mbilinyi and Ruth Meena wrote the Introduction and the section of Tanzania; Athaliah Molokomme wrote on Botswana; Bolanie Awe and Nina Mba wrote on Nigeria; E. Manxine Ankrah and Penina D. Bizimana wrote on Uganda.

15. See Kazuko Watanabe, "Japanese Women's Studies", *Women's Studies: A World View*, op. cit., pp. 73-88.

16. See *Women's Studies: A World View*, op. cit.

17. The term "course" in the US has nothing in common with the word "course" as it is used to describe an entire programme of study in an Indian college or university. A US "course" is a small unit, one of 32 to 40 that undergraduates need to complete their Bachelor Degrees. Undergraduates take four or five such "courses" each semester, generally for eight semesters. Some of these might be in a "major" area of study, usually a discipline like Economics or History or English or Biology. Since the mid-sixties, it has also been possible at some colleges and universities in the US to major in an interdisciplinary area of study: Black Studies, Asian Studies, or Women's Studies, just to name a few out of scores of such.

18. See Posadskaya, *Women's Studies: A World View*, op. cit.

19. See Li Xiaojiang, *Changing Lives*, op. cit

20. See Elizabeth Minnich, **Transforming Knowledge,** Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Temple University Press, 1991.

21. See Florence Howe, **Myths of Coeducation: Selected Essays, 1964-1983,** Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1984.

22. I will add parenthetically that where there once had been a handful of women college presidents, most of them at women's colleges, there are now some 400, some of them at major universities like Duke and the University of Pennsylvania.

23. See Florence Howe, "Myths of Coeducation: Selected Essays"**,** op. cit.

24. See Lyndall Ryan, "Women's Studies in the University Seminar" in Newsletter, *Australian Women's Studies Association,* Vol. VIII, No. 2, November 1993.