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ABSTRACT

In their efforts at curriculum reform, feminist scholars need to take into account the oppression of homosexuals and lesbians. A truly evolved curriculum takes seriously the overlooked lives, action, ideas and products of those whose efforts truly make societies possible. Inclusion of homosexuals and lesbians in the curriculum is important so that the oppression these persons have endured does not go overlooked by students and faculty; so that homosexual and lesbian students feel they have a place in society; and so that courses are made richer and more honest. This paper discusses the steps necessary to establish lesbians and homosexuals in the curricula, including suggestions for changing the college community, changes both in content and teaching methods, and specific examples of classroom techniques. (DB)

INTEGRATING THE CURRICULUM:

TEACHING ABOUT LESBIANS AND HOMOPHOBIA

Moving Toward a Balanced Curriculum: The Need to Reform

We are both feminist teachers* who have spent over a decade teaching courses in women's studies and in our own disciplines: American studies (history and literature) and sociology, respectively. In our growth as feminist teachers we have increasingly become aware of the need to involve students in all our courses in a cooperative examination of our prejudices against homosexuals and lesbians and in an uncovering of the hidden lives and works of this minority.** This is in part because we believe that principles of feminism commit us to developing a pedagogy that educates about the biases against races, classes, religious and ethnic groups, women, and homosexual men and lesbians.

Feminist principles require that we re-think the course content of our disciplines which have been rooted in a tradition of exclusion of the oppressed groups mentioned above. Peggy McIntosh[1] has outlined an evolutionary process of developing a truly inclusive feminist curriculum. In

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*We spent a great deal of time deciding who the audience for this paper will be. The fact that we've submitted it to the Wellesley Center for Research on Women means that we assume our readers' interest in women's issues and that a majority of our readers are going to be feminists. The fact that the paper grew out of the Mellon Seminar on Curriculum Integration means that we assume our subject to be pertinent to teachers committed to eliminating inequalities of race,sex, ethnic group and class from their curricula. Thus we believe that when we address the reader as a feminist teacher, we mean feminism as a necessary, but not sufficient pre-condition for achieving a balanced curriculum.

**Inevitably, the question will arise, can a non-lesbian teach about the lesbian experience and should a lesbian teacher come out to her classes and at what point in her course should she do this? We would deal with these questions except that while one of us is a lesbian and one of us isn't, we can never remember which one is which.

her analysis, Phase 1 represents that body of knowledge most of us learned in our own undergraduate and graduate days. It encompasses largely knowledge defined by white privileged males while omitting almost everything else. In McIntosh's Phase 2, or the "add women and stir" approach, the ideas and lives of select "honorary" elites are added. These honorees have earned their election to the academy because they are clones of the elect. Ordinary people are still missing.

Feminist outrage powers Phase 3 of curriculum evolution, a transition stage. We begin to see purpose in the design of traditional curricula. No longer satisfied with token representation, we push deeper and ask, "Who benefits?" And we find that we as women, along with other oppressed groups, have been excluded in order to maintain a system that perpetuates not only patriarchy but also racism, anti-Semitism, class exploitation and militarism.

It is awareness of this purposeful exclusion which leads us to the revolutionary Phase 4. Here we take seriously the overlooked lives, actions, ideas and products of those whose efforts truly make societies possible. In fact, we make the lives and work of women, the under-classes, racial and ethnic minorities, and other oppressed groups not only visible but central to our analysis and teaching. We center our teaching on cooperative learning of the socially constructed realities of these groups rather than on transmitting the ideology of the elite. We overturn or adapt conventional scholarship for these new ends.

As for Phase 5, we can only glimpse its promise. It will be a curriculum which fuses values and knowledge, rejects oppression and celebrates the oppressed, joins the public with the private, and encourages reflective analysis and political action. In this paper, we want to share with other feminist teachers our reasons for making the oppression of homosexuals and

lesbians crucial to the development of Phase 4 curricula and essential for inclusion in any course content. Additionally, we will suggest some teaching strategies for integrating this material into college curricula.

If we accept the discovery and analysis of oppression, inspired by feminist scholarship, as central to the Phase 4 teaching mission, then we must become sensitive to the prejudice and discrimination suffered by lesbians and homosexuals as well as other oppressed minorities. Perhaps more importantly, we need to develop an awareness of the strategic omissions of homosexuality and lesbianism from Phases 1 and 2 curricula and of the purposes that obliteration serves. We reject arguments that such information has no relevance. We also maintain that even though this material may make us or our students uncomfortable, calling thus for special sensitivity in its introduction, it is still essential to a truly inclusive Phase 4 curriculum.

To omit lesbians and homosexuals from our courses is as much a political message as is our inclusion of feminism or any other guiding ideology. Some examples illustrate this point. Recently a women's college alumnae magazine refused to publish a notice seeking correspondence among other lesbian graduates. Despite regular announcements of marriages, husbands' achievements, and children's births, the magazine maintained that its policy was not to mention matters of sexual preference. Another example is a new political science reader on the social movements of the past two decades which totally ignores the gay rights movement except to suggest that the anti-nuclear movement followed its model. Finally,the first two editions of a popular women's studies text have no material about lesbians except for a discussion of the "gay-straight" split in the women's movement.

Neglect of lesbians and homosexuals in curricular materials leads students and faculty to overlook this oppression; or, worse, it may justify feelings of

fear and prejudice. The effect for lesbian and homosexual students can be devastating, leading them to perceive that they have no place in our society. On the other hand, inclusion of lesbianism and homosexuality will make our courses richer and more honest. As teachers, we will no longer cooperate in this particular mechanism of oppressing subordinated groups. We will create a classroom atmosphere that celebrates difference and diversity and discourages divisiveness. Further, we will encourage students to appreciate a group of people who make up a great part of the human community. In the end, our striving toward a Phase 4 curriculum will produce far more liberally educated students and teachers than Phase 1 ever pretended to.

Changing the College Community

When we look at prejudice and cruelty in the college community, other compelling reasons to teach about homophobia[2] and lesbian experience appear. Incidents of homophobia abound. During one year at a women's college, all of the posters announcing a lesbian support group were torn down or defaced; one student demanded a new room when her roommate "came out"; and another student's door was plastered with signs calling her a "dyke." Other, subtler forms of discrimination also occurred: Professors did not discuss the "personal" lives of lesbian writers and artists while they fully explored heterosexual women's lives; biology and psychology professors either ignored lesbian issues or included this subject in the "abnormal" or "deviant" unit; and the Women's Center was labeled "lesbian" and omitted from the college tour. Even well-intentioned women's studies professors often isolated the subject of lesbianism for one day's class rather than including it throughout the semester's work.

In this atmosphere, feminist, and especially lesbian, students report feeling isolated and distressed. The obvious implication of these and other

examples of homophobia for lesbians is that they are to see themselves as deviant, psychologically abnormal, invisible or, at best, barely tolerated. Pamela Keene, a lesbian student at Simmons College, explained how she felt in a classroom where it would have been appropriate to discuss lesbianism, but instead the subject was ignored or treated negatively:

> [I felt] both relieved and frustrated: relieved because I didn't have to deal with it; but mostly frustrated, because it feels so natural to me, and to have it ignored [means] that people are choosing to ignore a big part of my life. This affects my learning because any time negative emotions are aroused, this decreases my ability to learn; I am caught up in the anger and frustration and not in the material. Also, I wonder, "If this can be ignored, what else is being ignored?"

In response to concerns of this nature, more progressive educators have tried to expand the inclusiveness of educational materials, an attempt that has given rise to Afro-American studies, ethnic studies and women's studies. Human development research and educational studies of testing have shown that often whole groups of students are alienated by the traditional materials presented and even by their professors' questions.[3] Other studies demonstrate that students learn best and progress most rapidly in their cognitive development when the material they study is most closely related to their own experience.[4] Hence, if we exclude materials by and about lesbians, as teachers we risk violating our own educational goals because we will separate many of our students from the subject matter. Our lesbian students will be alienated because this material will not speak to their own experience; our non-lesbian students will miss an opportunity for appreciation of the lives of many of their peers.

Alternatives to the negative situations described above range from curriculum change to extra-curricular support for lesbian students. Specific pedagogical techniques will be described below, but at this point we will

suggest general categories of innovation which are possible.

Perhaps the most important and yet often the most difficult intervention is the establishment in the classroom of an atmosphere of positive acceptance of diversity and a commitment to confrontation toward prejudice. Teachers may attempt this both intellectually and experientially in their classes. Humanities teachers can include and use creatively materials by and about lesbian authors, artists and historical figures. In the sciences and social sciences, teachers can include homophobia in their discussions of prejudice and consider lesbianism as a positive alternative to heterosexuality. Outside the classroom, teachers should confront their own homophobia and function as supportive advisors to lesbians and to non-lesbians. Finally, there are numerous educational efforts such as films, workshops, speakers, etc., which feminist members of the college may sponsor throughout the institution.

When all or even some of the above activities are undertaken, lesbian students report a more positive sense of themselves and their educational experience. In addition, presenting teaching materials by and about lesbians and homosexual men from a feminist perspective provides all our students with a context, a sense of connectedness with a past and a wider culture, and with role models of survival and success.

Tangible results of positive interventions can also be seen in the wider college community. For example, during the year that a student group of lesbian and straight women presented educational programs at the same women's college described above, the incidents of defacing posters and public harassment of lesbians virtually disappeared. A number of women's studies teachers also followed the students' lead and included materials on homophobia and lesbianism in their teaching. All problems were not solved, of course, but the positive changes in atmosphere have allowed lesbian students an

increased measure of security and well being and have encouraged the feminist teachers at this college to continue this approach.

There are other reasons for us as educators to see learning and teaching about homophobia and lesbian experience as in our own best interest. In the first place, feminist teachers need to be able to counter the often damaging "accusations" of lesbianism leveled against them. In an atmosphere of open acknowledgement of the problem of homophobia, such accusations lose their force; and other faculty, both homosexual and heterosexual, feel freer to provide support for threatened feminists. Because demystification of any prejudice or fear directed against a group is always a politically astute move, feminist teachers should be in the forefront in confronting homophobia just as they have been in confronting racism and anti-Semitism.

For feminists feeling isolated within the academy, teaching about homophobia and lesbian experience is also a good way to break down barriers to the feminist community outside and to remain in touch with current feminist theory. We also believe that intellectual honesty and progress demand that scholars and teachers must not ignore this rich and exciting segment of history and culture. One cannot fully understand the literature of Sarah Orne Jewett or Willa Cather if one ignores their lesbianism, nor can one explain the extraordinary activism of Jane Addams or Vida Scudder without exploring the support network of lesbian women from whom they drew strength. In other fields, understanding homophobia casts light on other forms of prejudice, and challenging heterosexuality contributes to critiques of science and social science by questioning accepted paradigms. Finally, learning and teaching about lesbian experience can make feminists feel good! That is, it is possible in this way to learn about our pasts as women, to lend to and gain support from other feminists, and to contribute to the continued progress of the women' movement.

Restructuring Knowledge

In this paper we support the thesis that a Phase 4 curriculum will include minorities previously excluded in Phases 1 and 2.[5] In keeping with this purpose, we will demonstrate ways that the inclusion of homosexuals and lesbians enriches Phase 4 curriculum and challenges the accepted canons of traditional disciplines. We believe that when we make our classes more inclusive of the lives and work of people who have been previously hidden, we change the definitions and the boundaries of accepted wisdom. In the case of lesbians and homosexuals, we can begin our critique by demonstrating the failure of the traditional categorizations of our subject areas.

For example, in sociology and psychology, moving toward Phase 4 would mean that discussions of lesbians and male homosexuals would no longer be restricted to the topic of sexual behavior whether described as "deviant" or "alternative". Rather, homosexuals should be included in discussions of careers, single life style, health concerns, parenthood, etc. Similarly, in literature and history, lesbians and homosexuals can be interwoven throughout the course instead of being ignored, relegated to one day's discussion, or categorized as deviants or exceptional cases.

As we transform the curriculum, we have to ask new questions about our material. For example, why did homosexuality become a major concern of American-oriented psychoanalysis during the 20th Century? How can an understanding of female bonding cause us to rethink our interpretation of a text? Or, what function does homophobia play in maintaining the traditional division of labor in families?

In the process of challenging the paradigms of our disciplines, and achieving a richer understanding of our material we begin to find disciplinary barriers limiting, and we realize that we must move to interdisciplinary

perspectives. Defining the term "lesbian" provides an illustation of an interdisciplinary approach at the same time that it demonstrates how such an exercise might work in the classroom. What follows describes the possible course of one such discussion, but it does not exhaust all possibilities. Our discipline, here social science, might lead us first to a definiton of lesbianism as "deviance from the accepted culutural norm of heterosexual behavior."[6] This is an answer which will not satisfy us or our students. When we ask students to help us work through the definition, however, we find that elements from many academic areas must enter into our deliberations.

One frequently offered student response is that homosexuality means having sex with a member of the same sex. When we hear this definition, we need to respond that it is not enough to refer simply to an instance of same-sex genital experience. Even the Kinsey Report states its percentages of women's lesbian experiences (6-14 percent of unmarried women, 2-5 percent of married women and 8-10 percent of previously married women) in terms of "more than incidental" occurrences.[7] At this point in the discussion, we can draw on sociology's labeling perspective and ask why we create an identity for a person based only on one behavior out of many in her/his repertoire. We can also explore the political implications of redefining previously pejorative labels. For example, we can explain to students why it was an important political step when homosexual men chose "gay pride" as a slogan, and homosexual women proclaimed "lesbian" identities. We can also note the importance of the homosexual and lesbian communities in identity formation and how a political movement can transform sociology's concept of deviant subculture. But these points still may not satisfy us or our tudents, and so we must expand the discussion.

Historians help us with this expansion by adding a perspective from the

past. We can observe historian Carroll Smith-Rosenberg's caution against the dangers of imposing post-Freudian diagnostic labels on people of another time.[8] History also raises questions about whether or not middle class women of the 19th Century expressed their love for each other sexually. We don't know, but we do know that their love for other women had a passionate intensity. These questions become real to students because they generally find Smith-Rosenberg's excerpts deeply moving and mourn the loss of these bonds in our time.

Moving back to the present and to feminist theory, we can discuss poet Adrienne Rich's proposal that we see lesbianism as a continuum including all resisters to compulsory heterosexuality whether or not they have claimed a lesbian identity.[9] However other theorists, such as poet Audre Lorde,[10] philosopher Ann Ferguson,[11] philosopher and theologian Mary Daly,[12] and historians Blanche Weisen Cook,[13] and Leila Rupp,[14] reject the exclusion of explicit sexuality from definitions of lesbianism. After all, they argue, denial of sexuality and the erotic have been an essential mechanism of heterosexual oppression; and they should not be ignored yet again when defining lesbian identity. A further complication of Rich's theory lies in the implication that lesbianism is the defining criterion of feminism--an assumption which may alienate heterosexual feminists. Further, not all self-identified lesbians espouse feminist principles, and thus by Rich's definition they might also be excluded from the continuum.

In a very useful 1982 article, philosopher Janice Raymond helps to resolve some of the definitional issues raised above.[15] She suggests a definition of Lesbian (here Raymond follows Mary Daly in capitalization to indicate the political component of her definition) as a woman who claims this self-identity, who is politically committed to feminism, and who relates

sexually to women. At the same time, Raymond speaks of the power of "Gyn/affection", or the realization of women's passion for and movement toward each other based on mutual recognition of the original female self in the other. We agree that both lesbian and heterosexual women share this female bonding; but it would be a mistake to call deeply-bonded heterosexual women lesbians. Raymond concludes that while the present heterosexual relations of our society obscure the true nature of femaleness, the promise of the future is the transcendence of patriarchal limits through Gyn/affection.

At this point in our discussion, we have still not reached a perfectly satisfying definition of the term lesbian. However, we can now share with our students Ann Ferguson's summary statement of the key elements of lesbianism. She says that a lesbian is

> A woman who has sexual and erotic-emotional ties primarily with women or who sees herself as centrally involved with a community of self-identified lesbians whose sexual and erotic-emotional ties are primarily with women and who is herself a self-identified lesbian.[16]

To date this is the most useful working definition we have found,and while we will not have reached a definitive conclusion, we will have demonstrated to our students both the multidimensionality of knowledge and the political importance of naming our own realities.

Along with discussions of terminology like those described above, there are numerous other approaches to bringing material on homophobia and lesbian experience into the classroom. For humanities teachers there is a wealth of modern and nineteenth-century literature available by and about lesbians.[17] In American literature, one might begin with passages from Louisa May Alcott's Work, continue with the later nineteenth-century writings of Sarah Orne Jewett and Mary Wilkins Freeman, and begin the twentieth century with Willa Cather. The example that follows describes integrating the lesbian

identity[18] of Sarah Orne Jewett into discussions of her novel, The Country of the Pointed Firs(1896).

Because in women's studies especially, biographical background of authors plays an important role in understanding their works, we should begin with a description of Jewett's life as a single woman in a rural Maine village at the end of the nineteenth century.[19] She also had a second existence, however, as a member of the Boston literary salon of Annie Fields, the wife of her publisher, James Fields. Sarah Jewett and Annie Fields shared a deep emotional attachment which became more intense after James Fields' death. Reading some of Jewett's passionate love poetry, written about Annie Fields, would be a good way to open a classroom discussion which explored the intensity of their love, whether or not the two women were lovers. This poetry will also illuminate for students the historical phenomenon of "Boston Marriages" and the widespread acceptance of women's homoerotic attachments prior to the twentieth century.

In addition, recognizing Jewett's implicit lesbianism helps to explain some of the more puzzling aspects of her fiction. For example, with this information in mind, students and teachers can ponder the relationship between the female narrator of The Country of the Pointed Firs and the novel's protagonist, Almira Todd. A larger-than-life widow in her sixties whose presence dominates her small coastal village, "Mrs. Todd" is the town's lay healer and counselor. She provides lodging and friendship for the novel's narrator, a middle-aged city woman who has come to Maine for material for her writing and the serenity to write. While we watch the narrator's growth as a writer under Mrs. Todd's tutelage, we may also be aware of a developing love affair between the two women.

The nature of the relationship between Mrs. Todd and her lodger is never

made explicit. In fact, later editors and critics have tried to bury it or ignore it in their commentary. Willa Cather, who saw Jewett as a mentor, de-emphasized the women's affair in her 1925 edition by tacking a related Jewett story on as a conclusion to the novel. The related story focuses on Almira Todd's brother William's wedding. Possibly Cather felt that this ending would draw attention away from the women's romance and thereby render the book "less offensive" to twentieth-century readers. If so, she failed in her purpose, because William's marriage is a pale and infertile union between an old man and woman--a union without possible issue. In contrast, Mrs. Todd's affair with the narrator "gives birth" to the novel we are studying! Students are struck both by the powerful contrast between heterosexual and lesbian relations here and also by Jewett's reticence in her descriptions.

When we consider the above points alongside Cather's need to add the story of the heterosexual marriage, both literary and historical questions are raised for discussion in class. We may ask whether or not the two fictional characters were lovers or for that matter, whether Jewett and Fields were. We will never know the answer, such was the discretion expected from and probably natural to a Victorian writer. But for teachers and students, the account of the unfolding relationship between the two fictional characters provides a superb introduction to the more hidden loves of Willa Cather's fiction and the explicit love scenes of much later American women's fiction such as that by June Arnold and Sally Gearhardt. In addition, students may question why fictional displays of women's affection for each other become awkward and even forbidden by the time of Cather's work in the early twentieth century.

Students have said that they find this introduction to lesbian writers and their writings moving and historically informative. One lesbian student expressed gratitude for the open discussion but also for the idea, based on

Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, that one did not have to determine whether women actually slept together in order to appreciate the intensity of their relations with other women. Other students expressed a new realization of the importance of homosocial networks in women's past experience and in their own lives.

Making the Personal Relevant

Frequently--when we consider Phase 4 curricula or, for that matter, other good teaching--we face the question of how much "personal" material belongs in our classrooms. As we stated earlier, since its inception, women studies has maintained the legitimacy of personal experience both for consciousness raising and to decrease students' alienation from intellectual material. Furthermore, because of its commitment to inclusiveness, Phase 4 curricula must address personal experience creatively as part of its content.

Oral histories are one excellent way to bring personal experiences into courses on the family, human development, women and work, twentieth-century history, personality folklore, etc. Interviewing lesbians, for example, might increase understanding of women's lives alone or with each other today and during earlier periods of time. These oral histories can also broaden cultural horizons and allow a breakdown of prejudicial barriers.

In humanities classrooms, students' journals, published first-person accounts by lesbians,[20] and shared written assignments, all bring new personal content for consideration. A writing or journal assignment might begin with the student's first perception that someone she/he knows well is a lesbian and then go on to describe the individual's reaction. These assignments can be shared anonymously among class members. Sometimes with this assignment, a student says that she herself is the first lesbian she has known well. Teachers, relatives, and friends are also frequently cited; and ensuing

classroom discussions are usually both sympathetic and probing.

Another useful assignment-- based on anti-racism methods--is to write about one's first encounter with homophobia. This can lead to a discussion of how prejudice is learned and of course how it may be "unlearned." The follow-up writing assignment for discussion and perhaps role-playing is to describe a successful encounter with homophobia or a fantasy of a personal triumph against this prejudice. Reading and discussing "personal-experience" literature by lesbians are other ways to expand curriculum content in humanities and social science courses by including the personal. Additionally, these readings have obvious potential for encouraging similar student efforts.

Most important, however, throughout all of the above attempts to expand Phase 4 curricula, is the teacher's role. Students will take their cue from the teacher's attitudes. If the teacher takes personal material seriously, she automatically confers legitimacy not only on the material being discussed but also on the students as partners in the creation of a transformed curriculum. Additionally, incorporating personal experience aids students in making links from the individual case to a general concept, or conversely, in finding a specific illustrative example for an otherwise murky or seemingly incredible generalization. Including the diverse backgrounds of the students enables them to move beyond the limits of their own personal experience to an appreciation of multiple perspectives in understanding the course content.

Adding Balance: Those Who Prevailed

We conclude this discussion of curriculum content by reiterating the importance of studying women and other oppressed groups not only in terms of their victimization by oppression but also as they survived, struggled, and transformed their worlds. Peggy MacIntosh has found that Phase 2 curricula include exemplary and successful women and minorities while Phase 3 treats

these oppressed groups as victims or problems. We believe that a fundamental requirement of Phase 4 curriculum is the balancing of these two views--studying and analysing oppression and also concentrating on successful struggles to survive and transform existence. As in many other content areas, material concerning homophobia and lesbian experience illustrates this balanced approach of understanding both oppression and successful counter-activity. A discussion of lesbian experience furnishes an analysis of women's oppression while at the same time it provides a model of resistance that has application beyond one particular group.

Feminist theories all share certain common assumptions, the first of which is that change is necessary; that the present social, economic, legal, family and political institutions need alteration if women are ever to achieve equality. Most feminsts also agree that women must decrease or eliminate their dependence on men if they are to be able to analyse a system dominated by men and move toward change. It is at this point--where dependency is recognized and repudiated--that attention to lesbian feminism becomes essential.

As Charlotte Bunch has pointed out,[21] lesbians are the one group of women in this society who are independent from men. They have thus, out of necessity, provided both an analysis of patriachy and examples of women's independence and survival. Additionally, discrimination against lesbians demonstrates some of the worst forms of female oppression. Without an attachment to men, lesbians are faced with the very real economic gap between male and female earning power--that women can earn less than 60% of what men earn is a fact that dominates the life of a woman without access to male earnings. Lesbian lives also demonstrate the impact of discrimination in every area from job security and custody battles to privacy rights and the

right to be free from harassment. Lesbian life-styles, independent from men balance this view of oppression with an alternative model of survival and strength. Students learn from their study of lesbian lives that women can exist independently, do all kinds of work, live in loving, supportive relationships and communities, be sexually active and satisfied and create their own culture. Nowhere else is there a better example of the transforming power of feminism and of the force of women working together against oppression to create positive alternatives.

So far in this paper we have presented an argument for including lesbians and homosexuals in our vision of a transformed curriculum, and we have made some suggestions about specific content and courses into which this material can be incorporated. We believe that these changes will have the effect both of correcting omissions from the traditional curriculum and of enriching and transforming the educational process. In the next section, we will discuss teaching strategies that can be used for including materials on lesbians and homophobia.

Creating Classroom Atmosphere

We are convinced that it is most effective to integrate material on homophobia and lesbians into the classroom by using a dual approach which blends intellectual content and personal, experiential methods.[22] However, resistance is sometimes encountered from teachers and students when alterations are sugrested in customary teaching approaches. For example, some teachers state that they do not have time to include every "special interest category," or that personal issues and/or sexuality are irrelevant in understanding an artist or author's work. Other teachers fear declining

enrollments if minority issues become part of their curriculum or express concern that students will become fearful and alienated. And students do indeed express resistance ranging from comments that "this subject is boring and irrelevant" to actually refusing to attend class or participate in discussions.

These negative responses directed specifically at the inclusion of homosexuals and lesbians in courses demonstrate the need for both teachers and students to confront their own homophobia. In this section we will suggest some classroom techniques for defining homophobia and understanding its causes. We believe that teaching techniques that involve students on both an emotional and an intellectual level are necessary if we are aiming at making real and lasting changes in our students' consciousness and actions.

As we have said before, a beginning step is to create a classroom atmosphere which affirms diversity and confronts prejudice. We can do this from the beginning of our courses by stating our principle of opposing all forms of discrimination against minorities of race, religion, ethnicity, sex, or class. We should also state that our definition of minority includes lesbians and homosexuals and that we will not allow the belittling of any minority in the conduct of the class.

At the same time we inform students of our opposition to discrimination, we need to help them to feel safe enough to grapple with their own prejudices and fears. Teachers who have worked with their peers on homophobia, racism or anti-Semitism will feel stronger and more able to support students in their struggles. A teacher should begin gradually and work from a positive, non-threatening base. Trust may be built through journals, small group discussions and especially by asking students to talk about positive aspects of their own ethnic, racial or religious histories. It is important to allow

all views to be heard and discussed. As idealistic as this may sound, teachers should allow prejudiced students to give expression to their views so they may be responded to as part of the class. It is crucial that the student not feel personally rejected, but at the same time the teacher will have to make it clear that the prejudiced views are not condoned. The ideal classroom should feel safe, but open to challenge and to a wide range of opinion.

Countering Stereotypes

Students enter college with a world view shaped by family, friends, church, school and media. Some of them will have acquired cultural homophobia, that is, a prejudice which is a consequence of socialization in a society in which negative stereotypes of lesbians and homosexuals abound.[23] For prejudiced students, factual information often serves as a corrective to these negative images. In classes where it is appropriate, a teacher can remark on the American Psychiatric Association's removal of homosexuality from its diagnostic classifications. This reminder serves as an important counter-argument to the belief that homosexuals and lesbians are "sick."

As another example, one pervasive myth holds that homosexuals are lecherous child molesters. In classes where child abuse and incest are discussed, it is important to point out that heterosexual molestation of children accounts for the vast majority of cases. These classes also provide an opportunity for consideration of the media's portrayal of this issue in a discussion comparing the sensationalistic reporting of a homosexual rape case or of sexual abuse in day care centers to the infrequency of articles on the much more prevalent incidence of father-daughter incest.

In classes dealing with propaganda techniques, the media, or minorities, teachers with access to film libraries could include a class critique of the CBS film, "Gay Power, Gay Politics." This film promotes other myths about

homosexuals and lesbians such as their "dangerous political power" and their offenses against the general sexual morality. Viewers will find the voice-over commentary particularly offensive in its intimations that homosexuals are the only group who engage in sado-masochistic torture or that there is no counterpart in the "straight" world to the alleged promiscuity of homosexuals. So obviously distorted was the film's picture of homosexuality that CBS was later forced to make a public apology.

Guest speakers from local gay rights organizations can dispel the stereotype that "you can always tell" homosexuals or lesbians by their appearances. Similarly, positive media presentations such as "The Word is Out"[24] or "Woman-Loving Women"[25] can demonstrate the diversity of lesbians' class, family, racial, and ethnic backgrounds as well as leading to a discussion of why people become homosexuals or lesbians. Class discussions often dispel fears, for instance that all lesbians seek to seduce non-lesbians. Students can often reason through this fear if they are asked how they have dealt with unwelcome heterosexual advances and if there would be differences in a same-sex situation.

Understanding the Consequences of Homophobia

Students will often be shocked to learn that lesbians and homosexuals have limited or no legal protection against loss of their jobs, of child custody, of housing, of financial security, or even of life itself. One way the position of lesbians and homosexuals in our world can be made more concrete is to conduct the following exercise[26] or guided fantasy: Students are asked to imagine the world to be a homosexual one. In this fantasy world the normal relationship is one of same-sex couples, and heterosexuality is regarded as deviant and subject to severe social sanctions. Any person engaging in a heterosexual relationship must exercise extreme caution at all times to avoid

detection and possible legal penalty or at least social ostracism. Students are asked to imagine how, as participants in this fantasy world, they might handle certain situations, for example the serious illness of the clandestine lover and problems of gaining access to the intensive care unit; saying goodbye at an airport to the lover who is leaving on an extended trip; or attending a career-related party where all the other guests are in homosexual couples. Discussions of these exercises lead to empathy for lesbians and homosexuals as well as to an understanding of the dynamics of institutional homophobia. Sometimes students decide to take action against campus discrimination.

Arriving at Strategies for Action

Role playing[27] exercises can aid students in developing stategies to counter homophobia. Generally the technique is to describe a situation involving a lesbian, for example, coming out to parents or friends. Participants are assigned characters, allowed preparation time, and instructed to play the scene through to its resolution. After the presentation, the teacher asks the remainder of the class what they liked about the role-play and what they would have done differently. This usually allows a non-threatening evaluation, and often the discussion that follows is the most valuable part of the exercise.

Role playing has certain distinct advantages when dealing with difficult topics like racism and homophobia. In the first place, acting a part allows a student to express feelings rather than to remain emotionally detached in a purely intellectual discussion. Moreover, the role-play instructions provide limits and hence safety for the actors because, in a short time, they must work toward a resolution. Role-plays also allow expression of emotions not felt to be appropriate otherwise and also the development of empathy for the

situation of another person. For example, a student may have a chance to play the "villain"--the one who is homophobic or racist. In another instance, a lesbian student may play a frightened non-lesbian, and the non-lesbian may find out how a lesbian feels for a short while. Finally, role-plays allow students to be active, to do something, rather than simply sitting around and talking. The usual outcome is that students feel good about themselves because they have solved a problem, and they also feel encouraged about their ability to take action in the real world beyond the institutional walls.

Other role playing can build on situations at the students' own college. For instance, how does a dorm counselor respond to a student who wants to change rooms because she suspects that her roommate is a lesbian? Or what is the proper response in a group telling anti-gay jokes or gossiping about two women who may be lovers? Role plays might also probe responses to teachers who ignore lesbians in a discussion of sex roles, who relegate homosexuality to the unit on deviance, or who fail to discuss the lesbianism of a writer or artist in evaluating her work. Most institutions report or inadequately cover up a number of homophobic incidents each year, so a little investigation should help a teacher locate home-based role playing scenarios. Role playing is successful because it allows students to "act" against homophobia and to practice ways of dealing with other forms of prejudice as well.

Looking Beyond Phase 4

This is a working paper--a report on work in progress and part of an on-going process of curriculum reform. In the paper, we have established the importance of including lesbians and homosexuals in a balanced curriculum; we have examined the changes in both content and teaching methods necessary to effect the additions; and we have given specific examples of classroom techniques. Because the process is not yet complete, this paper offers no

final conclusions. Instead, we hope we have argued against divisiveness among feminist educators and strengthened our shared respect for diversity. We have learned that this is not just our project, but that many of the authors we have cited and those who have shared their thoughts, their teaching and learning experiences, and their books with us will also continue to address this important subject. Finally, we realize that we can hardly imagine the completely transformed curriculum of the future; indeed, we are only beginning to map out the reformulations needed to achieve balance. Still, we hope that this paper is a contribution which will encourage other teachers to consider homophobia and lesbian experience as essential to a transformed curriculum.

ENDNOTES

[1]The following discussion of interactive stages in curriculum transformation relies on Peggy McIntosh, "Interactive Phases of Curricular Re-Vision: A Feminist Perspective," Working Paper No. 124, Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, 1983.

[2]Homophobia can be defined as "an obsessive or irrational fear or anxiety focused on gay men or lesbians." (from "Homophobia--A Dangerous Trend," handout by Patricia Gozemba at The National Women's Studies Association Annual Meeting, Douglas College, June 1984.) Homophobia is a term which has come into current usage but which we find somewhat unsatisfactory because it conveys neither the intense hatred some people feel toward homosexuals nor the violence of the bahavior sometimes directed against them. In this sense homophobia bears more resemblance to racism or anti-Semitism than to other "phobias."

[3]See, for example, Carol Gilligan, In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development (Cambridge: Harvard University Press,1982) and Roberta Hale and Bernice Sandler, The Classroom Climate: A Chilly One for Women (Washington D.C.:Project on the Status and Education of Women, Association of American Colleges, 1982).

[4]Kathleen Dunn and Frances Maher, "The Practice of Feminist Teaching: A Case Study of Interactions Among Curriculum, Pedagogy, and Female Cognitive Development," paper presented at the Research on Women and Education Symposium, Annual Meeting of the American Education Research Association, New Orleans, April, 1984.

[5]The most useful general bibliography for those who wish to include lesbians and homophobia in their courses may be found in Margaret Cruikshank, Lesbian Studies: Present and Future (Old Westbury, N.Y.:The Feminist Press, 1982). As supplements to Cruikshank, see Trudy Darter and Sandee Potter, eds., Women Identified Women (Palo Alto, Ca.: Mayfield Publishing Company, 1984) and Signs: The Lesbian Issue 9 (Summer 1984). Several works have begun to express the diversity of lesbian experiences, most notably Cherrie Moraga and Gloria Anzaldua, eds., This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color (Rochester Station, N.Y.: Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press, 1983); Evelyn Torton Beck, ed., Nice Jewish Girls: A Lesbian Anthology (Trumansburg, N.Y.: The Crossing Press, 1982); and Barbara Smith, ed., Home Girls: A Black Feminist Anthology (Rochester Station, N.Y.: Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press, 1983).

[6]In the social sciences, lesbianism has usually been subsumed under the general topic "homosexuality' with the result that often the research applies only to males. In a few instances, studies have been carried out on lesbians among prison populations and therefore are not generalizable to the wider lesbian group. A bibliography of more recent community-based studies has been presented in Susan Krieger, "Lesbian Identity and Community: Recent Social Science Literature," Signs 8 (Autumn 1982): 91-108. On issues of social class and lesbianism see Kathleen Weston and Lisa B. Rafel, "Sexuality, Class and Conflict in a Lesbian Workplace," Signs 9 (Summer 1984): 623-646. Also see

Philip Blumstein and Pepper Schwartz, American Couples, (New York:William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1983). In American Couples there is an extensive analysis based on both survey responses and interviews of couple relations that compares married and cohabiting heterosexuals with gay male and lesbian couples.

[7]Alfred Kinsey, Wardell B. Pomeroy and Clyde E. Martin, Sexual Behavior in the Human Female (Philadelphia: W.B. Saunders Company, 1953).

[8]Carroll Smith Rosenberg, "The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations between Women in Nineteenth-Century America," Signs 1 (Autumn 1975): 1-29.

[9]Adrienne Rich, "Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence," Signs 5 (Summer 1980): 647-50. The complete text of this essay is available from Antelope Press, 1612 St. Paul, Denver CO 80206.

[10]Audre Lorde, "The Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power," in Lorde, Sister Outsider (Trumansburg, N.Y., 1984): 53-59.

[11]Ann Ferguson, "Patriarchy, Sexual Identity, and the Sexual Revolution," Signs 7 (Autumn 1981): 159-72.

[12]Mary Daly, Gyn/ecology: The Metaethics of Radical Feminism (Boston: Beacon Press, 1978).

[13]Blanche Weisen Cook, "'Women Alone Stir My Imagination':Lesbianism and the Cultural Tradition," Signs 5 (Summer 1979): 718-39.

[14]Leila Rupp, "'Imagine My Suprise': Women's Relationships in Historical Perspective," Frontiers 5 (Fall 1981): 61-70.

[15]Janice Raymond, "A Genealogy of Female Friendship," Trivia 1 (Fall 1982): 5-26.

[16]Ann Ferguson, op. cit., p. 166.

[17]See, for example, Elly Bulkin, "'Kissing Against the Light': A Look at Lesbian Poetry," in Cruikshank, op. cit.; Lillian Faderman, Surpassing the Love of Men: Romantic Friendships between Women from the Renaissance to the Present (New York: William Morrow & Co, 1981); Estelle Freedman, "Resources for Lesbian History,"in Cruikshank, op. cit., pp. 110-114; Frontiers: Lesbian History Issue 4 (Fall 1979); Signs: The Lesbian Issue 9 (Summer, 1984); Bonnie Zimmerman, "What Has Never Been: An Overview of Lesbian Feminist Literary Criticism," Feminist Studies 7 (Fall 1981): 451-75.

[18]On the subject of Jewett's "lesbian identity", Sharon O'Brien has suggested that a definition which requires self identification would omit Jewett, as neither the term nor the sense of a sexual identity as a lesbian were available to her. We disagree and feel that Jewett probably understood the difference between acceptable emotional love between women and "unacceptable" sexual expression of that love in her day; hence her reticence about describing anything beyond emotional attachment. See Sharon O'Brien, "'The Thing Not Named': Willa Cather as a Lesbian Writer," Signs 9 (Summer 1984): 576-[illegible].

[19]On the subject of female friendships in Jewett's writing and life, see especially, Laurie Crumpacker, "The Art of the Healer: Women in the Fiction of Sarah Orne Jewett," Colby Library Quarterly 19 (September 1983): 155-66; Josephine Donovan, "The Unpublished Love Poems of Sarah Orne Jewett," Frontiers 4 (Fall 1979): 26-31; Lillian Faderman, "Boston Marriage," op. cit., pp. 190-203; Marcia Folsom, "'Tact is a Kind of Mind Reading': Empathic Style in Sarah Orne Jewett's Country of the Pointed Firs," Colby Library Quarterly 18 (March 1982); Glenda Hobbs, "Pure and Passionate: Female Friendship in Sarah Orne Jewett's 'Martha's Lady'" Studies in Short Fiction 17 (Winter 1980): 21-29.

[20]A number of excellent anthologies of personal writings by lesbians are listed and reviewed in Bonnie Zimmerman, "The Politics of Transliteration: Lesbian Personal Narratives," Signs 9 (Summer 1984): 663-82.

[21]See Charlotte Bunch, "Not For Lesbians Only," in Quest Staff, eds., Building Feminist Theory: Essays from Quest (New York: Longman, 1981): 67-73.

[22]Pedagogical issues related to teaching about homophobia and homosexuality are discussed in Radical Teacher: Gay and Lesbian Studies 24 (No date); Bulletin for Interracial Studies: Homophobia and Education 14 (1983); Cruikshank, op. cit. and Charlotte Bunch and Sandra Pollack Learning Our Way: Issues in Feminist Education (Trumansburg, N.Y.:The Crossing Press, 1983).

[23]This discussion owes much to Gordon Allport, The Nature of Prejudice (Cambridge: Addison Wesley, 1954). Allport's analysis of prejudice as having many causes, ranging from inequities in the social structure to personality needs, applies here. Additionally, Allport commented long before our current awareness of homophobia that the most deep-rooted prejudice in the United States is directed against homosexuals and that only the absence of a visible identifying sign, unlike the case of racism, prevents much more wide-spread violence against lesbians and homosexuals.

[24]Available from New Yorker Films, 16 West 61 Street, New York, N.Y. 10023.

[25]Available from Lavender Horizons, 17 Sutton St., Salem, MA. 01970.

[26]We adapt this exercise from Off Our Backs 14 (January 1984): 5.

27Many of the role-plays discussed below were developed by Marcia Folsom and Laurie Crumpacker for their team-taught introductory women's studies courses at Simmons and Wheelock Colleges in 1981 and 1983. Others originated with Simmons SALT (Straights and Lesbians Together), a student group which uses role-plays to educate the college community.