



Maggie Humm

Women's Studies – the act of translation. We were discovering a common language. In order to understand each other, for an immigrant from Guyana to talk to a trained health worker, to a member of Solidarity, and to me we have to find a language that is at once complex and simple.

My different kinds of Women's Studies for me, then, have begun to break down the barriers between 'educational' knowledge and 'valid' knowledge, because they break with the artificial distinction between discipline knowledge and social need. The criterion of knowledge selection in all Women's Studies is the particular needs of women as social representatives. To that I try to add my ability to equip women students to make comparative evaluations of the various methods of explanation available to them – not in an idealist way but in a materialist analysis of particular problems. I have clearly given up any notion that Women's Studies should be the *sum* of other disciplines (adding psychology to literature and economics). It is precisely the inappropriateness of these disciplinary divisions that is my reason for being in Women's Studies in the first place.

I cannot overcome all gender conflicts in the distribution of power in educational decision-making, if only because I am a permanent member of the institution and students are transient. But I am cheered when a student shows that the personal is political. Catherine, while researching male violence to women, managed to fund a local refuge for battered women. The complications of arranging grant-aid in Britain are horrendous. Catherine's ability to surmount them and to make her research an integral part of her political activity was, for me, a wonderful example of 'conscientization.' Women's Studies at NELP may be multifaceted and ambivalent, but I hope this means it has potential to change the limitations of my institution. Certainly we will never reproduce the educational parameters chosen by men.

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THE HOUSEWIFE

She scrubs the windows
until they are hardly there
leaving
from the outside
a shining reflection
of the world
that lures the birds
all unsuspecting
to self-destruct
like kamikazes
against the inviting facade;
while from the inside
those same windows are
so clear
so nonexistent
so connective
to the outside world
that instead of venturing
forth
to risk
struggle
perhaps
succeed
she can safely imagine
that she is/has always been
out,
and so she
flutters weakly
with only vague misgivings
towards her death.

Judith Johnson
Winnipeg, Manitoba

jazzmin

i don't
want this
blue colored love
covered
by
layers (of sand).

Clara Valverde
Montreal, Quebec