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## Ethnic Studies and Women's Studies at UC/Berkeley: A Collective Interview



Robert Spiegel

Berkeley, 1969

The following interview took place at the University of California/Berkeley, on July 31, 1979. **Gloria Bowles**, coordinator of the Women's Studies Program, became involved in developing that program while completing her doctorate in comparative literature; **Clara Sue Kidwell**, an associate professor who heads Native American Studies and formerly chaired the Ethnic Studies Department, came to Berkeley from Kansas, in 1974, already having branched out from her original doctorate in history of science; **Ron Takaki**, associate professor in and coordinator of Asian American Studies, is the author of two books on slavery and the forthcoming **Iron Cages: Race and Culture in Nineteenth Century America**,

a comparative analysis of the experience of Asian Americans, Blacks, Chicanos, and Native Americans within the contexts of class, race, and sex. The version here was edited from an original transcript almost twice the present length by Debby Rosenfelt with the help of Emily Abel, David Peck, and Linda Shaw.

**Debby:** Could you explain something about your programs' origins and structural relationship to the University?

**Ron:** Berkeley is divided into roughly two divisions, one the College of Letters and Science, the other the professional schools and colleges. Ethnic Studies is in neither of those major divisions; it is separate and answers directly to the Chan-

cellor. The Department of Ethnic Studies has three programs within it (Chicano Studies, Native American Studies, and Asian American Studies), functioning as quasi-departments. Each has its own coordinator, who serves as *de facto* chair; the department chair serves as *de facto* dean.

The department came out of a revolutionary situation. If you think back to 1969, people thought the curtains were coming down. There were helicopters buzzing overhead, spreading tear gas; the campus was an armed camp. The student strike made it possible to extract from the university a commitment in the form of an Academic Senate resolution to build toward a College of Third World Studies, to include our three programs and Afro-American Studies.

**Clara:** Later, Afro-American Studies split off from Ethnic Studies and is now a department in Letters and Sciences.

**Debby:** Why?

**Ron:** That's a very complicated answer. Partly it was a decision made by the Chancellor to bring Afro-American Studies under the control of Letters and Science and "improve" its academic quality. But some of us are still working toward a Third World College.

**Gloria:** The Women's Studies Program is not a department. We're a group major under the division of special programs in the College of Letters and Science. Our major is only three years old. It groups together courses from existing departments. There are about sixty courses a year on women and sex roles at Berkeley, including the courses on women in ethnic studies. Women's Studies has only four or five courses of its own.

**Debby:** I know there are some women's studies programs that have developed the "network" model as a strategy; the core of courses in women's studies, but as many courses in as many departments as possible, in order to change consciousness in those departments.

**Gloria:** Our structure was not determined by any strategy, but by the situation at Berkeley. We came in seven years later than Ethnic Studies, and the political climate was very different. We got what we could get, and that was a group major; group majors were popular because they didn't cost the university anything. After getting our major passed, we managed to get some money.

**Debby:** Do you have any control over the courses you list from other departments?

**Gloria:** Up to now, simply because we

haven't been strong enough to do anything else, we have simply listed all the courses on women at the university. We are now realizing that what we really need to do is make clear which courses are "feminist." We have to define that term, and encourage the departments, which are very jealous of their autonomy, to teach courses that our students will be interested in. We're going to go slowly, targeting departments one by one, talking with faculty, providing them with reading lists and bibliography. But it's in some ways a backhanded way of doing things.

**Debby: Are you working toward a separate, autonomous department?**

**Gloria:** Not really, because we do feel the tension between wanting a centralized department and influencing the university as a whole.

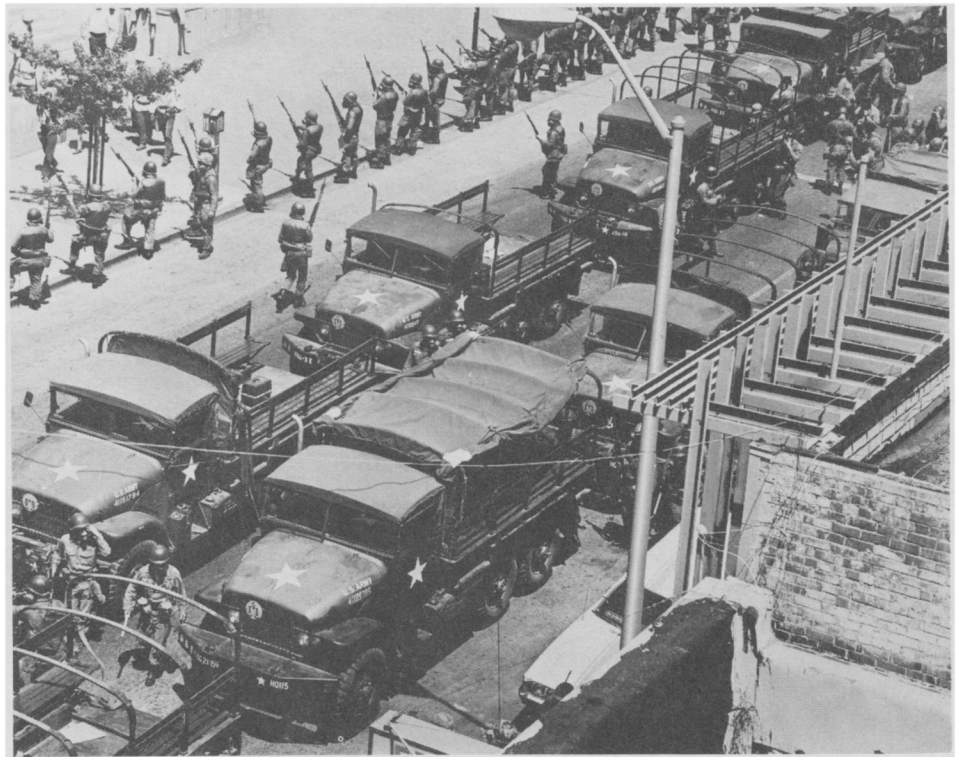
**Debby: Ethnic Studies is a centralized department. How do you feel about this issue?**

**Ron:** The main reason I decided to join the Berkeley faculty was that the Ethnic Studies Department had the power to appoint faculty, to offer courses. And here, I could see, was a new paradigm for teaching ethnic studies. Previously, ethnic studies, if they existed at all, were taught through the traditional disciplines. In the late 1960s, it was not viable to teach ethnic studies through the traditional disciplines, especially if one had a radical perspective. I had been at UCLA, where a number of professors, including Angela Davis, were fired for political reasons. There seemed to be not much future for radicals in the traditional structure of the university. Berkeley, however, had a unique situation: it could appoint faculty in Ethnic Studies, even recommend them for tenure, and develop a degree of autonomy which did not exist elsewhere in the UC system. And so I came here, primarily to build a College of Third World Studies.

Even at Berkeley, both Ethnic Studies and Women's Studies, which spring from political origins, have to confront the traditional university and the kind of "wisdom" it has provided to its students. Thus, we place ourselves in jeopardy vis-a-vis our colleagues here. I would be concerned about a decentralized program which would have to depend upon other departments to offer courses about Third World experiences, offering us no say as to the appointment of faculty or course content. I think it would be better not to have any courses than to have bad courses about Third World people or

women. My thinking about infiltrating the departments is that it is very important for us to have a strong base from which to infiltrate. In my experiences with traditional departments, there is usually a junta of senior professors who run the shop. It might be naive of us to think that through "faculty development" we can place sympathetic faculty in the existing departments. As these faculty indeed serve our interests, they endanger themselves. For one thing, they will probably give more attention to teaching. For another, they might not publish in the traditional and "reputable" journals like the *American Historical Review*, but in a journal of ethnic studies. And that's a no-no. In other words, such faculty are on a self-destruct course.

**Clara:** The budget for Ethnic Studies overall is over \$1 million. We have fourteen ladder-rank faculty and a number of part-time faculty. The problem is not money so much as it is promotion of faculty and our credibility in terms of publication and research. We get plenty of support money from the university; it has been very generous with faculty development and grants. But there is still that suspicion that we are over here being tendentious; i.e., that we are not "objective" in the search for knowledge, that because what Ethnic Studies offers as a department is a new and different perspective from that of traditional disciplines, it encourages advocacy rather than objective seeking after truth.



Robert Spiegel

**Gloria:** The way it happens in Women's studies is that the women do not often express an interest in women's studies until they have tenure. You'd be surprised how many appear in my office right afterwards!

**Debby: What about university support for your programs? Do you feel you're now a totally accepted and supported part of the university?**

**Clara:** We are accepted when we play the game by the rules, and the game, mainly the publish or perish routine, can be worked against us, has been in some instances. But I think we have more legitimacy now than we did ten years ago.

**Debby: What's your average operating budget?**

**Gloria:** Well, I can see the advantage of revolutionary origins. Women's Studies does not have a million dollars; we have \$30,000, and Special Programs, which runs about eight or nine group majors, has a total of about \$160,000. We have no regular faculty, none of our own ladder-rank positions. I'm not on a tenure track. The program, including my appointment, is funded on soft money year by year. I do a budget proposal and fight for the money every spring.

**Debby: So the Women's Studies Program, including your own position, is much more vulnerable than Ethnic Studies?**

**Gloria:** Yes, absolutely, though given a shorter history and a smaller budget than

Ethnic Studies, I think we have accomplished a lot in three years.

**Ron:** Ethnic Studies is actually one of the larger departments on campus. We are not suffering budget cuts, even in the post-Proposition 13 era.

**Clara:** We're maintaining the same level, though we're not getting raised, and of course inflation is cutting into the working budget.

**Ron:** There are departments which are losing positions.

**Debby:** Is the reason you're holding your own that you have such good enrollments, or is it that you have fought and won an initial political battle and people don't want to mess around with you any more?

**Ron:** I think that's it. They know that if they tried to take a position from us, it would be a political struggle.

**Clara:** There are Spanish-speaking regents and others in high places who have been able to win political battles on behalf of Chicano Studies. There is also a growing awareness among university administrators that by the year 1990, the majority of people in this state will be "minorities." There is especially an increasingly vocal Chicano population. And even post-Bakke, affirmative action is still an issue.

**Ron:** I think the administration is more subject to political pressure from us than the faculty. I think the faculty is wondering why Ethnic Studies is not suffering cutbacks.

**Clara:** We are viewed by the administration as a service. We are the multicultural component that enriches the curriculum of the university, so we have a legitimate academic place.

**Ron:** Not only a service, but a weird kind of showcase. When the governor says, "What are you doing for them?" they can say, "We have a Department of Ethnic Studies."

**Debby:** You seem to have real power on the campus, possibly because you're together as one organized program.

**Gloria:** If Women's Studies had begun in 1969, we might be in the same position. But we're stronger now than we were the first year, the second. And I think eventually we will have more support.

**Clara:** When Ethnic Studies first started most of the people who taught here were part-time lecturers; the chairman of the department was a graduate student in

sociology, who chaired on a part-time basis. The program has evolved. We have become more sophisticated about using the university committee systems; we have served on important committees; we have become known. We have evolved in directions which make us more consistent with the university system. If we had remained as we were when the program was first formed, we wouldn't have the support and visibility we have now.

**Debby:** Do you envisage more pressure on you in the future, or do you envisage a continued level of support and commitment analagous to what you have now?

**Ron:** The pressures will always be there because of our different purpose within the university. We're accused of teaching politics, but I don't think there is anything that can be called nonpolitical teaching. The only difference is that we do this without embarrassment. We have a perspective, and we lay it out. We also, however, recognize the need for scholarly integrity; we do not want to violate factual information, we believe in the need for documentation and for rigorous analysis. But nevertheless, we are here to transform this university, and so our very posture vis-a-vis the university means that there will be pressure directed against us.

**Debby:** What about your students? How many enroll in your courses or the major, and how have the figures, and student attitudes, changed over the years?

**Gloria:** In 1976, Women's Studies had about ten majors. Some of them were people who had been independent majors in women's studies. That's how I started working in Women's Studies, helping these students talk to deans who couldn't understand why they wanted a women's studies major, or even what that was. We have fifty majors now, three years later. I don't go out recruiting people; they come to me. It's easier to attract students now that the major is set up. We estimate about 1,600 or 1,700 students a year take the women and sex role courses in the various departments. The first year we taught Introduction to Women's Studies, it was mainly for majors and we had about thirty people in the class. The second year we had one hundred five; this year we had one hundred sixty.

In terms of student attitude change, I guess in some ways the students who were individual majors in 1973 or 1974 were more "radical" politically. However, I consider it a political act to be a Women's Studies major. I'm tired of hearing media stories about the apathetic

student generation. My students are not apathetic; they are very socially committed. They walk into my office and they say, "I want to be a lawyer, but I'm going to be a Women's Studies major first." Most of our students are committed to being "change agents" in society. Of course, they may be different from the average Berkeley student.

**Clara:** When Native American Studies first started, I think there were about forty students. Some of those were simply warm bodies brought in off the streets. Over the past few years, the level of student majors has held fairly steady, but it dropped this past year when we graduated fourteen. We have twenty-seven majors this year, about half of them non-Indian. Unfortunately, only four new Indian students have entered the university for next fall. Part of the reason is that there are many junior colleges springing up now on Indian reservations, so a lot of people who might otherwise go away to college stay home. Indian students who do go to four-year colleges often choose a state university near their home area—Spearfish, South Dakota, Talequah, OK—places where they feel comfortable. Berkeley has a rather intimidating image, and Indian people tend to be very conservative about sending their children to a place noted for its radicalism. Also, there are more demanding admission standards going into effect this fall, and there is increased pressure on student financial aid.

**Ron:** Not only do we have a Department of Ethnic Studies with three programs within it which have an organic relationship with each other in that our faculty members make decisions together. We also have a group major in ethnic studies, which tried to help students develop a Third World perspective, an understanding of what different ethnic communities have in common. We have been the victims not only of racism, but also of labor oppression in this country. In the development of Asian American Studies, what we wanted to do was develop students who would have a concern for the community and a political consciousness which would enable them to give that community power. Even at this time, although we do have a major, our main concern is to help the thousands of Asian American students who are majoring in engineering and in the sciences, who will become part of the corporate capitalist structure, understand the world they will be entering and begin to understand the nature of their alienation. If you take Japanese and Chinese male students you will find that about 65 to 75 percent major in engineer-

ing and in the sciences. So we're not here to recruit these students to major in Asian American Studies, but to help them acquire a Third World perspective.

Berkeley has a large number of Asian undergraduate students, somewhere between 10 and 15 percent of the undergraduate student population. This isn't entirely fortunate, though, because they're being assimilated, deracinated, taken away from their culture, away from their families, and moved into the suburbs and into corporate America. A kind of industrial reserve army is being drawn from the Asian communities, being trained (not educated) to service the employment needs of a corporate society. But many of our students who come from the sciences and engineering take one or two courses, especially the introductory ones, often to fulfill their history of institutions requirement. So here you have 3,000 Asian students coming through this university, and rather than take a course from the history department, in which they will receive no Asian American content, they will take a course from us. This allows us to help raise their consciousness, and we feel that in itself is a valid reason to be here.

**Gloria:** I think that's true in women's studies, especially in our intro course, in which we get a chance to expose to feminist ideas a large university population which may never be exposed to them again.

**Ron:** In one of our courses, Asian American Studies 20-A, a history of the Asian experience in America, we draw about 400 students every quarter. I also teach a course called "A Comparative Analysis of Racism in America," which draws around 250 students. The courses I teach help students understand the class nature of their experience as Third World people, and in order to do this, of course, we have to teach the development of capitalism in America, and the history of labor in America. Which means that when we study the history of Blacks, we not only relate that history to the history of Chinese and Mexicans and Native Americans but also the the white proletariat, and to women. In my lectures, for example, in Jacksonian Democracy, I not only talk about the development of a racist, anti-Black ideology, but also about the Cult of True Womanhood, and how this intermeshed with the degradation of Blacks, and I discuss the emergence of a female factory proletariat.

**Debby:** Obviously you bring a carefully thought out marxist analysis to your classes. Is your marxist perspective characteristic of the Ethnic Studies Program?

**Ron:** No. A tension exists between the Marxists and the cultural nationalists, even in the way we are structured. Cultural nationalism is sometimes the basis for separatism, and that is another reason for the split of Black Studies from Ethnic Studies. One must remember that Ethnic Studies did come out of a cultural nationalist milieu, the search for identity of the 1960s. But I think what happened to many of us is that we began as cultural nationalists, in other words, with a concern for racism, but then as we did our homework, we began to develop a structural analysis of our racial experience. We began to see that there is a class structure in this society, and that many of us, regardless of our racial backgrounds, do share a common class identity which is denied to our perception and our consciousness. As Ethnic Studies evolves toward a class analysis, there will be tensions between cultural nationalist groups and a broader class perspective. I participated in a conference at Irvine about two years ago, "Ethnic Studies as Working-Class Studies," and questions were raised there like, say, should one study the Japanese experience within a course called History of Labor in the West?

**Debby:** Clara, what's your reaction to that?

**Clara:** I would have to class myself more as a cultural nationalist. The historical experiences of Native Americans in this country have been based more specifically in land than in labor; the history of Native Americans in the country is that of a conquered people rather than that of immigrant workers. In my courses I emphasize the theme of land. The experience of tribal groups today is largely an attempt to establish a sense of tribal sovereignty, of self-determination, and to protect traditional rights to land and water. So I would not necessarily share the class analysis model for dealing with contemporary Indian socio-economic situations and legal situations.

**Ron:** It's not entirely true that the Native American experience has not been a labor experience. If you take just California, for example, in the nineteenth century, Native American labor was more significant to the California economy than Mexican labor. On a proportionate basis, there were more Native American workers than Chicano workers. Then too, important agents of capitalism like Francis Amasa Walker, Commissioner of Indian Affairs and later President of M.I.T., suggested the need for reservation schools to "educate" Native Americans in dominant social values and for manual training

schools so they could enter the industrial labor class.

**Clara:** But Indians have a specific and legal relationship to the United States government through treaties. Yet certainly the racism suffered by Indians can be viewed very similarly to the oppression of other minority groups in the country. Some historians use the model of internal colonialism for Indian reservations.

In developing an ethnic studies department, my personal feeling is that there should be room for diversity, for a variety of perspectives. I think that may be vital to the interdisciplinary model. These differences are part of what we as faculty members in Ethnic Studies have to share with each other, and with the students. You have to prepare students to make their own analyses and choices by giving them the widest range of information and ideas. Therefore, there is a fruitfulness in the encounter between a cultural nationalist perspective and a Third World or marxist or socialist perspective. That encounter is part of the experience a student should get out of this department.

**Debby:** Is there any formal cooperation between Ethnic and Women's Studies?

**Gloria:** Up to now our ties have been pretty informal. We have an ethnic studies requirement in Women's Studies; students must take at least one course in Ethnic Studies. In the introductory Women's Studies class, we spend several weeks on women from various cultures and classes, and Clara Sue and others in Ethnic Studies come and lecture. Clara Sue and I have been talking for the last few months about doing a course together.

**Clara:** When I lectured in Gloria's class, Barbara Christian [a faculty member in Afro-American Studies] lectured right after I did. Then the three of us went to lunch with some students from the class, and we talked about how we'd love to do a team-taught course to explore fully the various perspectives on feminism and the various cultural experiences of women. That is one kind of cooperation I would definitely like to pursue. But there are limits on one's time and energy, and the structure of the university doesn't lend itself to team teaching, though perhaps we could get some grant money for faculty released time.

**Gloria:** Our students are very interested in the whole problem of the relationship between sexism and racism. We also have a course on racism and sexism in Afro-American Studies, one of our op-



Detail from *Uprising of the Mujeres*, a mural by Judith Francisca Baca, 1979.

tions to fulfill the social science requirement. Women's Studies has a lot to learn from Ethnic Studies because Ethnic Studies has been around for ten years and has gone through some of the same kinds of experiences.

**Clara:** Our programs are similar in that both are interdisciplinary in nature, both focus on a population group from a number of different perspectives. That makes a basis for more mutual faculty involvement.

**Gloria:** And in a sense we all have our roots in a political movement. Women's Studies does come out of the women's movement, even though our program didn't come directly out of women's movement activity on this campus.

**Debby:** I don't hear any of the competition between Women's Studies and Ethnic Studies that I know of at other institutions.

**Gloria:** That's partly structural. We're not competing for the same money. And I have learned from Clara Sue and Barbara Christian and others tremendous amounts about the lives of people who come from a culture different from my own, and consider that absolutely essential to what I teach. So I need Ethnic Studies.

**Clara:** Also, all the Ethnic Studies' pro-

grams offer courses on women. We have one on Native American women, for example. In that way we fit in well to the Women's Studies curriculum. I've talked to one or two students in Ethnic Studies who were interested in developing an emphasis on women, who have taken all the programs courses in the Ethnic Studies Department on women, and who have taken other courses from the Women's Studies major.

**Debby:** Could there be a major in Ethnic Studies with a concentration in Women's Studies?

**Clara:** Yes, that could be worked out structurally.

**Debby:** You're all in positions which require you to teach, publish, administer programs, and in some ways represent or be accountable to the needs of a particular community. Do these conflicting demands ever become difficult, and how do you meet them?

**Clara:** The administrative work of building a new program is very heavy when you're hiring faculty for an expanding program, developing new curricular materials, being the minority presence, sometimes token, sometimes not, on university committees, addressing student groups at other schools and colleges, and reviewing book manuscripts in areas that

may or may not be related to your academic background. There are tremendous demands on one's time and energy. The university demands that you publish; the community demands that you produce instant results. And those two things are, I think sometimes, antithetical. Also, when one administrates and teaches, one has essentially two full-time jobs. I've thought about cloning myself; if there were only six of me I could do it all.

**Ron:** I view administration as part of my politics; I'm here to build programs, I'm here to help make this institution more socially responsible, one which not only serves the needs of a Third World student constituency but also tries to relate both the instructional programs and the research programs to the needs of the community.

**Gloria:** I'm also at the university because I want to see things change here. But I'm more vulnerable than Ron or Clara Sue, because I'm not on tenure track. A good friend recently warned me, "You've proven you're a fine teacher, you've proven you're a fine administrator, but you've got to publish Berkeley-like material." I enjoy doing that, but there's always the problem of time.

**Clara:** The fact that the Ethnic Studies Department is an undergraduate program makes it very difficult for us to play the publish or perish game. Most research seems to get done in conjunction with graduate education: one has a seminar, one has one's graduate students, one has a kind of intellectually stimulating environment that encourages publication. Teaching can be very intellectually stimulating, but it can also be exhausting and time consuming; it tends to distract from one's publication efforts. Ironically, as long as we are an undergraduate program with a very strong commitment to undergraduate teaching, then we are in a vulnerable position too. Yet most of us make that commitment because we feel that good teaching and a strong undergraduate degree program are essential for equipping, say, Native American students to cope with the world in general and higher education in particular.

**Debby:** What's the teaching load here?

**Clara:** For those of us who are also administrators in Ethnic Studies, three courses a year.

**Ron:** The normal course load is five courses a year, although this varies from department to department. That's because the universities are supposed to advance research. Publication is one of

our important missions in Ethnic Studies, but for a different reason. Many of us view publishing as a political act, as a way not only to develop our own consciousness but to share our political consciousness with our constituencies. I think we would not be fully political if we were only building programs without also developing a body of critical knowledge. Because of our origins in the 1960s, the founders of Ethnic Studies felt that everyone in the department should be full-time revolutionaries, out organizing in the community. Then after a while it became clear that social change had to take place not only in the community, but here at the university. In other words, as we deepened our understanding of the structure of oppression in this society, we began to recognize the relationship between the university and what Antonio Gramsci called cultural hegemony. At that point, many of us began to see the need to pay attention to the university as an institution instrumental in the domination of society. We had to develop a stronghold in the university; in other words, we, ourselves, had important political work which would also be academic work to do here.

**Clara:** Sometimes I envy those people who have a very narrow and restrictive field: you know, the left neuron of the right temporal lobe of the cat's brain and its relationship to some obscure chemical. The demands on people in an innovative, interdisciplinary program such as Ethnic Studies or Women's Studies are extraordinary.

The conflict that I feel most is between being a person of the community and a person of the university. I feel sometimes that these two roles are irreconcilable. We're under pressure from students in Native American Studies to be part of the community: "How can you relate to us if you're not out there where we are doing what we're doing? You should go to the meetings, join the organizations, go to the pow-wows. And if you're not out there in the community then we have no faith in your credibility as a teacher in the Native American program!" I agree very much with Ron's point that we need to develop a body of scholarship, but we also need to maintain credibility with students.

**Debby:** How do you resolve this bind?

**Clara:** I can define my sense of community differently: a community of Indian people in Indian Studies programs in universities throughout the country, with whom I interact on some kind of basis. I can define going to Barrow, Alaska, to

attend a community college conference or trying to offer perspectives on, and sometimes solutions to, problems that Indian organizations are facing, as being part of the community, even if I may not have time to go to all the pow-wows every weekend. Yet I worry that I may be defining myself out of the community in the old sense by operating at a professional level in higher education. In any case, when you're faced with the strains of being all things to all people at all times, it does get very wearing.

**Ron:** There are faculty in Ethnic Studies who are community activists, who are involved in community issues, and who are organizing the community. But I agree with Clara Sue that there is a question about how one defines "community." In 1972 when I came here, we had a very narrow definition of "community"; "community" meant the physical, geographical ethnic community: Oakland's Chinatown, San Francisco's Japantown. . . . Since then, however, we have developed a broader and I think more responsible definition of "community." I would say that a community is not necessarily a physical community, although it could include a physical community, but rather a community in terms of a class. Of course there is a good deal of class differentiation within, say, the Asian community, and other Third World groups as well. Defining "community" ethnically, you run into some class contradictions, conflicting class loyalties. I define "community" as a working-class community that does not have physical boundaries. There's a wide range of ways to serve this community, and one important service which we're equipped to fulfill is to develop a critical scholarship. I think changing consciousness is crucial in the transformation of society. As Gabriel Kolko reminded us, there can be no social change when there is no suggestion for social change.

**Gloria:** I've been grappling with some of these same questions. I used to be sort of embarrassed when my friends in the "women's community"—the bookstore owners, the poets, the garage mechanics—asked, "What are you doing at the university, why are you still at the university?" And I was usually very defensive about it, and would say, "Well, I like to read books." But I stopped doing that. I think the university is one of society's most important institutions, and that that institution needs change. I think it's important that I sit down and write my papers on women poets whom nobody ever studied before. I am no longer embarrassed to have a Women's Studies

program which is an "academic" program. I think scholarship is important and I think it can be political.

**Debby:** But defining "community" in the old ethnic and perhaps geographic sense, do your graduates go back and serve their communities?

**Clara:** The original concept behind Ethnic Studies here was that these programs would provide for the professional development of minority people who would serve their communities in a number of roles. Yet as an undergraduate program it has been difficult to offer real professional-level training. The university as a whole is not oriented toward training in professional skills. The professional schools—the law school, the medical school—emphasize theory, the development of research. Lawyers, doctors, and teachers who are Native Americans find that they are serving their community more effectively in those roles than by coming and teaching in the university. So there is a problem in even developing a faculty to offer professional courses. Native American Studies has tended in the past five years to become a general, liberal arts undergraduate degree program with a strong emphasis on encouraging students to go into professional training later in business administration, in law, in medicine, in education. The shift is partly the result of our commitment to building a quality program. We do teach courses that deal with contemporary socio-economic situations in Indian communities. We do try to prepare students with an understanding of the basic orientation of Native American communities to specific problems, so that when they move into professional positions they will be able to use their skills with sensitivity to their communities.

**Debby:** So you see your primary function as both encouraging upwardly mobile Native American students and consciousness-raising with them while they're here, so that they return to their communities with a certain kind of consciousness about what they can do, what they can change.

**Clara:** Yes.

**Debby:** What specific jobs have some of them taken?

**Clara:** One of the first graduates of the program, George Horsecapture, ended up being a curriculum development specialist in the state of Montana, developing curriculum for Indian schools. He came back to give the commencement address at the first formal graduation in

spring, 1975, and he said, "When I came to Berkeley, I couldn't even spell curriculum developer, and now I am one." We have a number of students who have gone through law school and are working for various Indian legal organizations. Some have returned to their home areas to work. There is a graduate program in public health for Indian students, and a number have gone back to work with Indian organizations and tribes. Of our non-Indian majors, some have gotten jobs with Indian-related organizations, and some have gone on to law school, intending to concentrate in Indian law.

**Debby:** Aside from the very existence of your programs and the production of scholarship, can you talk about specific ways the university has changed as a result of your presence?

**Clara:** Part of it might be stated as faculty development. There is a cross-fertilization of ideas. The university, though it has a long, long way to go, nevertheless has individuals within it (and this is a collection of individuals, not a monolithic entity) whose initial hostility and suspicion have changed. Material on ethnic studies has been integrated into other courses. We are attempting now to get the School of Education to include an Ethnic Studies requirement as part of teacher education. We are also working with the School of Social Welfare. I am intending to start a master's degree next year based on Native American studies, and dealing with management of resources on reservations. And I've gotten sympathetic responses from people in the College of Natural Resources, even from the Dean of the Graduate School.

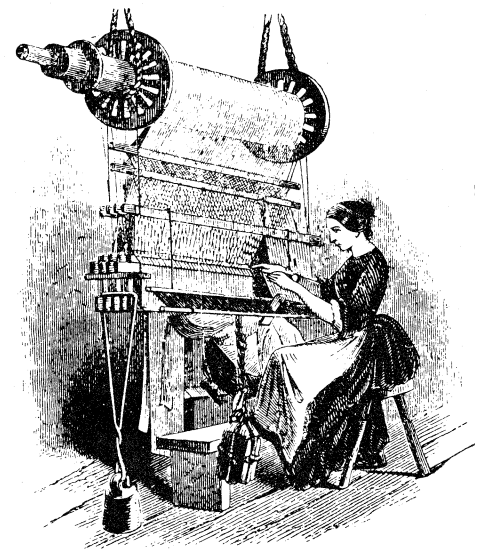
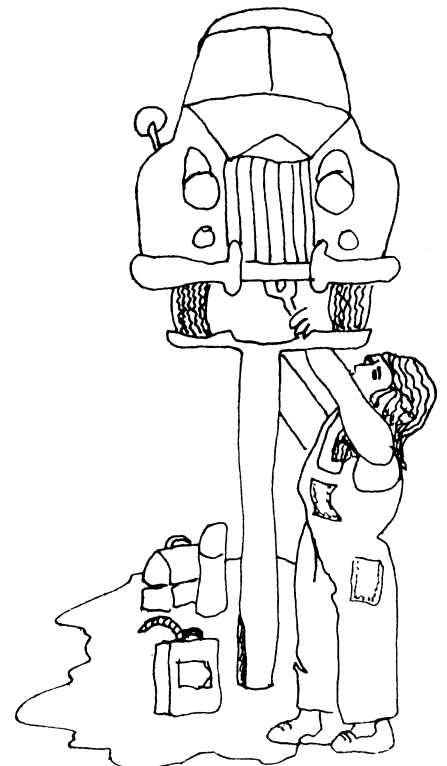
**Ron:** For me the most important change has been the building of an alternative curriculum. Because we're here, students who come through Berkeley can say, "I can take an Ethnic Studies course and

realize that there is an alternative way to study society and also a buried body of knowledge which the university traditionally has not recognized." I think we also bring a commitment to teaching which historically has not existed here. In a way, we view ourselves as a kind of sanctuary in this university, and what we would like to do is to create dissatisfaction. We want students who take courses from us to go into other courses feeling dissatisfied.

**Gloria:** The fact that we now have a Women's Studies major means that more people have an alternative. And it is common in women's courses, not because I've taught them but because of the subject matter, for students to say, "This course changed my life." I think, too, in terms of change, that more faculty are doing work on women and admitting it. I think that has to do with the existence of the program as well as the increasing emphasis on scholarship on women in the last few years.

**Debby:** Any last words for the 1980s?

**Ron:** I think there's widespread discontent on this campus, a discontent that had a community during the 1960s, and in the 1970s there was a search for shelter, but I think there is still a Left community here. We are fragmented, isolated from each other, but I think that the Ethnic Studies faculty and Women's Studies faculty, who have such undeniable political origins, can play a clear, decisive leadership role in helping to reforge this political community, bringing it back together again. That is already happening in the anti-nuclear weapons labs issue. I see the Ethnic Studies and Women's Studies faculty working together to unite this fragmented community to work on common issues in the 1980s.



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