

Women's Studies in Focus: **A View From the Classroom**

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(UN)EASE IN USING FEMINIST PEDAGOGY IN LARGE LECTURE STYLE CLASSROOMS

Within the literature many agree that feminist pedagogy connects the life experience of students to the knowledge being studied and produced within the classroom, with a particular focus on how race, class and gender relations are lived in everyday life (Ellsworth 1992; Lewis 1992; Elliot 1997). Boler (1999) describes this approach as a "pedagogy of discomfort" in which normative stories are disrupted and learning includes an uncomfortable recognition of social power, privilege and oppression. A pedagogy of discomfort goes beyond identifying with difference to include an interrogation of "emotional investments and the ability to account historically for our values and their effects on others" (199). Implicit within discussions of feminist pedagogy are assumptions of a seminar style classroom with small numbers to allow for dialogue between students and with the teacher.

Given economic trends in university education towards large classes and the large potential audience within these settings, the use of feminist pedagogy within these lecture halls is worthy of discussion. The challenges created by lecture style classes for feminist pedagogy are considered within this paper. The specific setting under discussion is a third year Sociology elective course called "Family Conflict and Violence" that draws students from within Social Sciences and Women's Studies. This course is approved for a credit in Women's Studies. The course had 144 students in its first year and 108 in its second. It was comprised of two hours of lecture and one seminar hour of student presentations on the readings for one term. Teaching assistants were fourth year students with strong academic skills and were

closely supervised to mark papers using a guide.

Lecture style classrooms augment the inherent tensions between the practices of university lecture style classrooms and those of feminist pedagogy. Britzman describes how lectures structure passivity and intellectual not emotional, spiritual, embodied engagement: "the lecture format is typically employed to dispense knowledge and examinations are the chief means for exchanging credits leading to credentials.... This form of presentation bestows both knowledge and the teacher representing it with an immutable quality of certainty, efficacy and authority (41).

The size of the class and the anonymity among many of its members exacerbates normative expectations of managing private information within a public setting. Anonymity increases the teacher's dependence on uniformity to ensure fairness and on grading performance through the demonstration of academic skills. Given the cross-disciplinary nature of the course students may be present with little interest in engaging in feminist pedagogy, particularly when the course is taught by sessional instructors and given a generic description. From the position of the teacher the lecture style format creates pressure: to present information clearly enough to be understood by a large group; to perform under the gaze of a large audience with limited access to information about the individuals in the room; to capture and maintain the attention of that size audience who face multiple and competing demands. In addition, the teacher must negotiate between regarding knowledge acquisition and academic performance in light of the expectations to rigorously maintain university standards and those of feminist pedagogy to interrogate social power and privilege. For sessional instructors there is the additional pressure of needing strong course evaluations to be rehired.

The lecture space constructs an "expert

driven" style of education (Friere, 1972) in which the professor is constructed as carrying authority and expertise. This sits in contradiction with feminist pedagogy's emphasis on student knowledge and expertise. Gallagher's (2000) articulation of the role of the teacher may be helpful to negotiate this tension. She says that the teacher "must not relinquish the role of leader in the collective learning space...we must be involved enough to feel the momentum of the work, but detached enough to formulate questions and conduct action" (115). Lewis (1992) expands on this in articulating the role for the teacher as being aware of and leading in negotiating the complex social relations of the classroom. Working within this leadership framework I set and hold the terms of engagement and raise questions about knowledge within the lecture space.

The terms of engagement I articulate counter normative discourses related to women and violence. I acknowledge the presence of survivors in the room through articulating my own position as survivor; establish parameters of respect for survivors by suggesting that difficulties in understanding such issues as "why women stay" is worthy of reflection rather than blame; give permission to theorize from personal experience without it being a requirement and permission not to engage with material that evokes too much personal history for those who are survivors. I encourage students to take responsibility for managing private information in the context of a large classroom. I welcome the men and articulate the discomfort in the room between the prevalence of men as perpetrators within the course material and the men that are here. This is an attempt to mediate normative expectations that women will perform care-taking roles (Lewis, 1992). The number of students limits possibilities for exchange on the terms of engagement.

By structuring the course around the central question of how the structure and role of the family contributes to family violence, the normative discourse that constructs "normal" and "abnormal" or "dysfunctional" families is disrupted. Early in the course I present a lecture on race, class and gender relations as a cultural and economic system that is learned, in which we are embedded and within which we can make more conscious choices. This provides a challenge to all those present to

interrogate their positionings within these social relations and creates a space between learned normative behaviour and the connections between violence and the construction of masculinity and femininity.

Conceptualizing the lecture setting as theatre furthers feminist pedagogical aims of learning through mind, body and emotional connections. Lighting candles in remembrance of survivors, reading poetry, listening to guest speakers (some of whom can be students exploring special topics), and viewing films offer possibilities for layering the students' experience of subject material. Street theatre techniques could be used in seminars to develop presentations for the lecture space. Others support this direction. Lewis (1992) articulates how dramatic interventions can assist in interrupting normative frameworks. Ellsworth's (1992) use of affinity groups developing educational presentations could enrich the lecture space.

Student engagement and discussion is difficult within the lecture space. However, some possibilities exist including wandering the lecture hall with a microphone having students report back on several minutes of "visiting" with one another on an issue. This worked more easily this year in a night class where there were a higher proportion of older adult learners.

I have also found that putting the students' language into the lecture space is a powerful tool. Examples include asking students to anonymously write down their strategies for coping with conflict at home and then beginning the lecture on survivor strategies with their words on the overhead. While the level of conflict may be different, their strategies are remarkably similar. Their ability to create a boundary of "other" of pathology between what happens in their home and in situations of violence is reduced. Discussions on violence such as sibling abuse with which many of them are familiar evokes emotional reflection on issues related to how violence is defined and the changing nature of those definitions.

Reflection papers also encourage students to connect their feelings and life experience to the issues at hand. Initially students are encouraged to and rewarded for connecting course material with their lives. Later forms of evaluation move towards a more conceptual discussion of course material.

Students have had little practice in linking personal experience within conceptual discussions on paper. Often it is survivors who can most easily traverse the gaps in theory having lived the differences within their own lives.

Often students grapple with course material in relation to the choices they are making and those their parents made. However, their interrogation of their race, class and gender positionings is limited by the lack of discussion time in which normative assumptions could be further deconstructed. While this issue is exacerbated in lecture style classrooms the interpersonal complexities of interrogating privilege is present in feminist pedagogical spaces (Boler 1999; Ellsworth 1992; Elliot 1997; Lewis 1992). What is different in large classrooms is the possibilities for confusion between presenting existing knowledge and students' efforts to deconstruct that knowledge within the conversational space.

This departure from expert driven education and the nature of the course material comes with a cost. Lewis (1992) describes the threat knowledge from subordinate positions creates. Part of the work is negotiating the presence of misogyny. In the first year a group of male students who were not in the course would appear at the end of the lecture and make derogatory comments about women, violence, sexuality and feminism. After several weeks they disappeared. In the second year there was an older male student in the lecture who would consistently raise questions with a misogynist edge. What I have learned is the need to respond succinctly and clearly and not to engage, not to allow their hatred to reproduce traditional hierarchies and destroy other possibilities. A lecture hall is contested space. What is not often articulated is the physical and emotional cost of keeping a feminist pedagogical space open when you have very limited contact with the students in the space.

The challenge of lecturing also changes within a feminist pedagogical approach. The project becomes one of both presenting the existing canon and explicating the social relations of that knowledge; who is producing it from within specific sets of theoretical and academic assumptions about knowledge. A thematic rather than a topic focus helps to maintain the critical analysis of knowledge. Examples of themes include

the social construction of dependence and of victims that can be traced over several topics. Material that develops a critical structural analysis of violence across differences of race, sexual orientation and disability also highlights issues of social power and privilege.

Differentiating between theoretical perspectives (psychological, sociological, feminist) also helps to dislodge normative assumptions about knowledge. Britzman supports this possibility for deconstructing the absolute nature of knowledge through "cultivat[ing] a critical awareness of perspectival boundaries" (43). By seeing the preoccupations of each discipline, students can begin to recognize the contribution each makes to family violence as well as the limits, the edges of what is not considered.

In conclusion, students sense a difference in the teaching of this lecture style course but can't articulate it clearly. They tell me my teaching is more related to real life, that my teaching is less theoretical and then stop and say "but" they learned theory. What is clear from their papers is that many of them have thought about the connection between violence within their own life story.

Feminist pedagogy within the lecture style university classroom has some possibility to raise questions about the connection between social power and knowledge generation. Given the size of the audience and the current economic realities of education, further pedagogical experiments in using the inherent dramatic qualities of the lecture hall space may uncover new possibilities for interrogating social relations of power and privilege.

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Tanya Lewis

WOMEN'S STUDIES STUDENTS NEGOTIATING FEMINIST PEDAGOGY

"A fish out of water" is an expression that we use so frequently the subtleties of its meaning are often lost. It is not that a fish does not utilize oxygen to survive, as humans do, it is just that their "make-up" is not suited to the process of extracting vital oxygen from the air. The fish only knows how to extract oxygen from water. The paradox is that this poor animal dies while surrounded by that which it so desperately needs.

Unlike fish, people are infinitely resourceful and yet the struggle that some female students face in negotiating the terrain of Women's Studies and the contradictory currents that infuse academia is not unlike the poor fish out of water. Indeed, it is not always easy to determine whether the "water" is Women's Studies or traditional academic disciplines. Students whose academic careers have largely been subsumed in traditional pedagogical practices often struggle to utilize the "oxygen" supplied to them by Women's Studies. But once they are endowed with the "tools" necessary to process this "oxygen," a new world opens up to them; ironically this event creates strain because it only underlines the limitations their earlier experiences.

This paper emerges from my project on the experiences of female students in a university Women's Studies program. I interviewed six

women at various stages in this program and from various social locations. I chose a semi-structured format so that the experiences and voices of my participants could be illuminated in the process of generating knowledge. Each participant was assigned a pseudonym so that her confidentiality would be preserved. The Women's Studies program at this particular university does not allow students to solely major in Women's Studies; therefore, all of my participants were co-majors with other disciplines and often found themselves in cross-listed courses because of the institutional limitations at their this university. This paper, then, is concerned with the challenges faced by female students who must negotiate the precarious position of being both immersed simultaneously in the feminist pedagogy of Women's Studies and that of the traditional pedagogy of other disciplines.

As Women's Studies is part of a co-major program, all of my participants are exposed to other disciplines with different pedagogical styles. Their experiences in these other disciplines illuminate the stark contrast and even contradiction that Women's Studies, through its use of feminist pedagogy and epistemology, poses when compared to these other disciplines. Hence, my participants become aware of these contradictions and often draw conclusions about the unsatisfactory approach and content in their other classes. In addition, Women's Studies promotes an atmosphere of safety for several of my participants, who find that their voices are heard and validated in these classes. Therefore, the contradiction they experience appears to be a product of dueling pedagogical and epistemological approaches contained within the university setting.

In this discussion, I disentangle the multi-faceted experiences of these contradictions one by one. Holly, when asked about the difference between Women's Studies and non-Women's Studies classes, discusses the absence of women. She shares,

I think we just focus on women more than other classes. Like I do think differently now. Like my film class is great. Every Monday we watch a movie and I notice there's only one woman movie, directed by a woman and I thought, well why is that? I think that Women's Studies just draws attention to more things like that. (Interview with Holly, 7)

It is interesting to note that earlier in my interview with Holly, she comments on the absence of men in the classes and content of Women's Studies. She states, "I get frustrated sometimes because I've had a lot of contradictions in the class...fighting for equality but it's called Women's Studies. So right there, it's segregating the men out of the studies" (Interview with Holly, 6-7). She sees this segregation as quite problematic and yet does not seem to have the same response when women are excluded from her more traditional classes. As she comments above, her "film class is great" and yet its treatment of women could be considered marginal. Holly's perspective illuminates how inundated women are with traditional academia whereby making women invisible actually seems normative, and the reversal, the de-centering men, becomes an uncomfortable stance and subject to resistance.

Not only does Women's Studies challenge the content that makes women invisible but it also challenges the decontextualizing of the knowledge into discrete "bits" of learning. Debra shares her frustration when she says,

If I said like a feminist stand-point, which I do in communications, everyone just stops and looks at me, "what are you doing" - type thing...because oh you know, what is she talking about - type thing, that's not this class, that's supposed to be saved for other classes - No!! I'm trying to integrate it to everything, so... (Interview with Debra, 9)

Lucy discusses how the knowledge that is presented to her in her non-Women's Studies classes is decontextualized from her life and presented as objective, ahistorical fact. She states,

Most of the people I've taken English courses with think about literature as something that's, you know, anything you need to know is in the book so your personal experience is not really relevant. 'Cause I've taken many courses with profs who were kind of "old-school" and who say, "Doesn't matter who the author was, doesn't matter who you are. The meaning is in the text." So it doesn't matter who wrote this, it doesn't matter, you know,

what you bring into it. (Interview with Lucy, 15-16)

This is in contrast to what she has learned in Women's Studies. She says, "I used to think that there were some things in the world [slight laugh] that were facts, or truths. And I think Women's Studies has really taught me to question anything, particularly anything that is called a 'fact,' or called a truth" (Interview with Lucy, 22).

Thus, several of my participants became aware of the competing views about knowledge and in Women's Studies found that what they were taught was often located in their everyday worlds. As Jane shares, "It was a Women's Studies class and we talked about the books we had to read, but we also would relate it to our personal lives and experiences. How they're different, how they're the same and we, you'd get to know your fellow student better" (Interview with Jane, 10).

Additionally, Debra shares how a typical Women's Studies class is conducted,

We spend the first hour discussing women in the news in the past week, we bring in articles and we discuss how, you know, deconstruct society... And then we usually move onto the lecture part, where it's, you know, we go through topics, have a bit of a discussion and if something really bothers us, we bring it up so you know, why is this this way. (Interview with Debra, 7)

The classroom knowledge thus is continually contextualized within the students' lives as links are made between the presumably "artificial" world of the classroom and the "real" world in which they live. As Bob Peterson (1998) suggests,

A teacher cannot build a community of learners unless the voices and lives of the students are an integral part of the curriculum [students], of course, talk about their lives constantly. The challenge is for teachers to make connections between what the students talk about, and the curriculum and broader society. (89)

Consequently, Women's Studies, according to my participants, makes this connection real and allows their knowledge to be utilized and applied everywhere. As Frankie shares, "It's good because it's like a toolbox. You take from every theory exactly what you feel from it and you put it in a box to use" (Interview with Frankie, 11).

Therefore, the contradiction between the competing pedagogues within the university find their contested ground around issues of women's visibility in the curriculum and in the classroom, the de-centering of men and finally, the contextualization of knowledge. Women's Studies challenges traditional pedagogy and epistemology even as it implements alternatives.

However, notwithstanding these strengths, feminist pedagogy can also create tension and strain by the very processes it implements in the classroom. The feminist approach is one that locates itself in a tension of multiple positions. The undergirding of this approach rests in an appreciation of diversity; this can be a difficult position to negotiate, however, especially for students who have been immersed in a discourse of traditional epistemology and pedagogy. The traditional approaches offer monolithic categories that subsume difference and almost promote uniformity. This pedagogical practice instills hierarchies of power and unidirectional learning which becomes normative in the life of the student. For this reason, students in Women's Studies often struggle with the contradictions and at times feel the strain of negotiating this unfamiliar territory. Holly was particularly uneasy with this terrain. She states,

Like I said, I find a lot of contradiction. I think 'cause Women's Studies is so new, and it's so diverse, that it's really hard to come up with a com-... a distinct theory. And, it's the fact that they're saying, "This is how it is." You know like, they'll try and teach you something, but then I'll think, "well no! because what about blah blah blah" So I think that there's a lot of contradictions and I get really frustrated about that sometimes. (Interview with Holly, 13)

Holly's struggle seems to be located in her difficulty in grasping a multi-faceted knowledge that shifts depending on one's social location. The simplicity of traditional knowledge that hands the student a definitive "chunk of truth" that then can be universally applied, robs students of their critical and creative response to education. It ultimately pacifies the student. As Britzman (1991) argues,

Implicit in these critiques is a concern about the pacification of knowers and what is to be known. When knowledge is reduced to rigid directives that demand little else from the knower than acquiescence, both the knower and the knowledge are repressed. Knowers are bereft of their capacity to intervene in the world, and knowledge is expressed as static and immutable (29).

Consequently, students who have been subsumed in traditional pedagogy experience strain at this knowledge that requires their active participation and that is not easily compartmentalized. They feel like the proverbial "fish out of water."

Thus, feminist pedagogy and epistemology are both sites of contradiction and strain. It is a site of contradiction because it challenges the dominant pedagogical and epistemological discourses that operate in tandem within the university. Women's Studies provides a safe space for women through its application of these alternative knowledges and also illuminates the contradiction experienced by students as they "straddle" both ideologies in a co-major program. At the same time, some students experience strain in negotiating the foreign territory of the Women's Studies classroom. Its implementation of feminist pedagogical techniques and its embrace of multiple positionings disrupt students from their passive stance of simple acquiescence.

Nevertheless, Women's Studies must continue its challenge to the dominant structures of the academy so that women may continue to be empowered by their sense of community and thus, pursue feminist scholarship unfettered by the constraints of patriarchal structures that dominate much of the institution. Debra summarizes these aspects when she says,

It's very empowering, it is, to know that there are people that think the same way you do, um, getting like TAs and professors encouraging you to say what you think and to get your point across, you know, your topics and your essays are your own, do what you're interested in, not what they think is the best thing you should be learning type of thing. (Interview with Debra, 18)

Hence, the implementation of feminist pedagogical techniques and the application of feminist epistemology create a safe and encouraging space for female students in their pursuit of feminist scholarship within the academy.

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Amy McGrath

"OH THE FEMINISTS, THEY'RE JUST BLAME, BLAME, BLAME": FEMINIST PEDAGOGY AND CONTENT IN CROSS-LISTED COURSES

My interest in developing this project arises mainly from my personal experience teaching undergraduate courses in both Sociology and Women's Studies Departments. Regardless of the location of my courses, whether in Sociology departments, Women's Studies departments or cross-listed between the two, I always utilize feminist content and my own version of feminist pedagogy.

There always seems to be some level of resistance to feminist content. Sometimes the resistance appears only at the end of the course on the course evaluations with comments such as "too feminist," "too male bashing," etc. Other times the resistance comes through in seminar discussion

where women will speak up with statements like "we're not being fair to men" following a summary of an article outlining that the majority of violence against women is perpetrated by the intimate men in those women's lives.

Another example happened recently in a sociology course cross-listed with women's studies on the sociology of family. The third lecture of the course was spent outlining various models of divisions of labour found in contemporary Canadian families. Following this lecture, two of the approximately ten men registered in the course (total course enrollment = 90) stayed behind to speak with me. Two of the course's three teaching assistants (both women) were also present. One of the men asked "is the whole course going to be male bashing like this?" I was stunned by the question since I had no sense prior to this lecture that the material was even the slightest bit "controversial" or that it would raise flags with students. I asked the two men to describe to me what they thought was male bashing about the lecture. They replied that they were not sure exactly but they felt bashed. I pushed them for a concrete example from the lecture that made them feel this way. Again, they were unable to present a concrete example. I told them that I took what they raised seriously and that they should think about this over the weekend and I would raise it in lecture the following week.

At the beginning of the next lecture I informed the class that two students had raised concerns about the course content as male bashing and that I would like to discuss this as a class. We tried to work through defining what constitutes male bashing. The students had difficulty with this. Interestingly, of the two students with initial concerns, one participated minimally in the dialogue, and the other student did not participate at all. What came out of this discussion that interested me, in addition to the notion of male bashing as quite nebulous and difficult to isolate, was that the majority of students who registered for the course were unaware at the time that the course was cross-listed with women's studies. Roughly ten percent of the course registered for the credit as a women's studies credit. Further, even though it states clearly on the course outline and in the undergraduate calendar that the class is cross-listed, many students were unaware that they were sitting in a women's

studies classroom. This raises questions for professors and teaching assistants within these courses. There is an institutional framework which sets out that the course is to be equally a sociology course as it is a women's studies course. Yet, many of the students, for whatever reason, are unaware that they are signing up for women's studies and hence a "feminist" course. That is not to say that I would have taught the course any differently had it been strictly a sociology course, but with other professors, the potential exists that the course would not be feminist.

This piece (very much a work in progress) represents the start to a larger project organized around feminists' claiming of space through content and pedagogy in social science courses cross-listed with women's studies. Women's studies courses themselves represent a major component of feminist space within the academy. But what about courses cross-listed with women's studies? Are they places of feminist academe? Do professors organize their courses differently if they are cross-listed? Is there resistance to feminist content/pedagogy from students or teaching assistants? What form does this resistance take? What about men as students, teaching assistants or professors? What is their role?

To this point, I have interviewed six women: two faculty members, two teaching assistants and two students. The criteria for participation was an involvement in a social science credit cross-listed with women's studies as either a faculty member, teaching assistant or student. All of the women are members of the same university which is primarily an undergraduate university.

The interviews with participants resonate the variety of ideas expressed in the feminist pedagogy literature. Participants talked about their ideas of feminist pedagogy, ranging from allowing students to locate themselves, having high expectations of students (otherwise devaluing the pedagogy/spirit behind it), wanting people to grow, change and learn by expanding minds, preserving dignity and treating students as valuable. As one teaching assistant describes,

Good pedagogy includes a feminist pedagogy, which is about empowering students, engaging the students, acknowledging that knowledge is mediated through a relationship and these

relationships are not one sided...you know, that professors stand at the front of the class and just go blah, blah, blah.

Both faculty discussed the difficulty of achieving the kind of classrooms that feminist pedagogy literature discusses in their increasingly larger undergraduate classes. This difficulty is not hard to understand when one considers that they are sometimes dealing with 350 students in a lecture hall.

When feminist pedagogy is utilized or feminist content is presented in their classes, participants often experience/witness what they describe as resistance or difficulty. As one teaching assistant stated,

That resistance to feminist content, you know, people making comments, for example, in lecture about all this, this is about male bashing, or you know, why are we always talking about women, that type of thing. Coming back to the department, it's almost like a debriefing. Having people in the department talk about it is good for us, good for the profs and some of the TA's because it makes you realize that it's not just me they're challenging, it's like the whole paradigm, so it's sad we're all experiencing it, but there's some comfort in knowing we're all going through the shit at the same time.

Sometimes the resistance to content appears on students' exams. One teaching assistant describes this,

Oh things like, well I mean, I even had some of my exams where they were asked to discuss welfare reforms from a conservative, centrist and liberal feminist perspective. A lot of them were going "Oh well the conservatives, they have it right, we need to get these people off of welfare" and I can think of 2 actual exams where people wrote "Oh the feminists, they're just blame, blame, blame, it's everybody else's fault but themselves."

One of the faculty members interviewed

commented on the feeling of misogyny in the room and the collective groans in the classroom when she brings up "we're going to look at this from a feminist perspective."

When male students make overt comments in class that are both challenging and negative, professors often stop the lecture and confront the comment. Students reported seeing faculty stop lectures and ask "why would you think that?" or "let's look at that comment and see, talk about the validity of it" or "where would you get those ideas from," attempting to confront privilege. The students I interviewed reported that they believed it important that faculty address the negative comments because there are a lot of misconceptions with material. However, the students reported that it gets tiring because they hear it in every class. The students can feel that their learning is not being pushed forward because the class is continually lodged in a mode of defending a feminist lens for examining social relations. The following example given by one of the students interviewed is illustrative,

During one class, 2 male students who weren't in the course came up to the prof and said "we hope you don't mind, we want to stop and listen, we heard this class was about male bashing from our female friends and we wanted to come for ourselves and see what it's about, we think that you really bash men." I stood there, I think my mouth dropped to the floor and then I look at the prof...she was very calm about it, I think because it happens so frequently you almost learn to expect that. So she said "that's interesting, why would you think that?"

The faculty member agreed to let the men sit in and participate in her lecture. The men asked if they could pose questions during the lecture. Again, the faculty member agreed but reminded them that she was trying to teach a course and would need to get back to her own material.

The notion of "male bashing" was raised in all of the interviews as a challenge for faculty, teaching assistants and students of cross-listed courses. Participants described it as a tricky line to negotiate with undergraduates who are being

exposed to feminist or critical thinking, perhaps for the first time in their lives. Sometimes what is said by faculty members is taken out of context. The students recognized the difficulty for faculty. One student commented, "I think in the family violence course, there was always walking that sort of fine line about male bashing, you know, being accused of male-bashing because you're talking about the abused women as being a serious problem and largely due to men, so I think that was a difficult line to negotiate for the professor."

The participants discussed various strategies that they use to deal with anti-feminism in their cross-listed classes. As one professor stated,

The feminism part I'd rather that they learned to think it than I'd be labeled feminist if that's going to turn people off. So I think I've used as a strategy feminism is good theory because you can see stuff from a feminist lens that you can't see anywhere else.

Several participants made similar comments about not overtly labelling themselves as feminist or their pedagogy as feminist, they just "did it."

Institutional relations also entered into the participants' talk. One example provided was of a man hired on a sessional contract to teach a law and society sociology course cross-listed with women's studies. A problem arose when this instructor was unwilling to incorporate any material that would qualify the course as also being a women's studies course. His teaching assistant for the course describes herself as aggressive, and certainly a feminist. She approached the professor after reviewing his course outline and questioned the lack of material relating to women and informed him that the course was cross-listed. His response was that they would examine abortion during the course. After this exchange the teaching assistant decided to incorporate the feminist content into her own tutorials. She explains,

The course was not set up with any kind of feminist content. I felt it had to be, I mean, it's cross-listed. I did it in my seminars with a particular feminist approach by looking at race, class, gender, sexuality and looking at the implications of that

within the law. I know that students felt that that was too much, but that's what the course was initially intended to do, right? I'm not like everybody else, I'm cocky that was, other TA's would have gone, "well this is what I do and not do anything about it."

This teaching assistant felt she needed to be loyal to the women's studies students in the course, however not all teaching assistants would feel this comfortable in deviating from the professor's content and style.

One faculty member who was working on a sessional basis talked about feeling disconnected from the other professors teaching cross-listed courses. She describes wanting to work together with other feminist faculty,

I wish that we got together, is there a head of women's studies? What are we trying to do with this feminist focus in the course? And how do I fit there? I know where the women's studies office is and that's about it. So as a group of feminist teachers what are we trying to do? What's the best way, what's the place of women's studies in that? What are they doing? That might help me to see what I can do over here because it would be different. But there's no conversation like that.

This faculty member's experience tells us that as feminists we need to work together, we need to think about the connections between all of our classes, and as other participants shared earlier, we need a place to discuss our difficulties as well as our successes. We need to develop feminist pedagogical strategies that work for undergraduates, large lectures, cross-listed courses and faculty who are untenured and part-time.

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