



Many Floridas: Women Envisioning Change

Judy A. Hayden, Sharon Kay Masters, Rhonda L. S. Ovist and Kim Vaz

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Many Floridas: Women Envisioning Change began with a group feminist researchers, teachers, advocates and activists in Florida, long isolated and marginalized in small, under-funded and under-valued departments, programs and organizations, who worked together to form the Florida Consortium for Women s and Gender Studies (FCWGS). The essays in this collection report on the status of women in Florida, discuss service-learning as a feminist pedagogy, describe graduate student s research on issues concerning women in Florida, and debate the value and consequences of internationalizing Women s Studies. This collection of feminist papers, originally presented at the inaugural Florida Consortium for Women s and Gender Studies conference in April, 2006, reflects the deeper meaning of its title. Each of the authors write from the standpoint of various intersections of class, race, ethnicity, age, sexuality and profession, and it is from these unique social locations that they dare to envision change. 'Everyone talks about bridging the gap between theory and practice, but the Florida Consortium for Women s and Gender Studies (FCWGS) is actually walking the talk. Their work represents an exportable product! I immediately envisioned feminist academics in every state developing similar consortia to bring the concerns of everyday women into the heart of the academy. Women s and Gender Studies Departments/Programs represent the gold standard for interdisciplinary and culturally-diverse studies. Yet, despite the fact that virtually every university and college stresses the value of interdisciplinary studies and a culturally-diverse curriculum, all too few academic institutions adequately fund and support their Women s and Gender Studies Departments/Programs. Were Women s and Gender Studies Departments/Programs amply staffed and financially supported, their faculty members and students could engage in the kind of meaningful service-learning initiatives and outreach activities described in Many Floridas.' -Rosemarie Tong, Ph.D., Distinguished Professor for Health Care Ethics, Affiliate Professor of Women s Studies, Director, Center for Professional and Applied Ethics 'This new collection responds to that clarion call by addressing the local and the global by interrupting and inserting unique voices within and outside of the classroom, making meaningful and durable connections between the educational institution and the community. In this cultural moment, where the struggles between and among communities, resources, and institutions multiply, it is vital that we push for nuanced conversations, courageous inquiry, and responsible suggestions. This collection is an exemplary model of transformative conversations; the kind of conversations that I hope are manifesting locally and globally.' -Orathai Northern, PhD, Visiting Instructor, University of South Florida Lakeland

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