The present report describes the results of an evaluation study of the first course in the new Women's Studies program at the University of Minnesota and the resistance of the teaching assistants for the course to the evaluation. A hypothesis to explain this resistance is that an outside evaluator may face inherent difficulties in evaluating new social-political curricula such as women's studies because of the understandable suspiciousness of students, to which Grier and Cobbs' (1968) term "cultural paranoia" has been applied. Suggestions are offered to future evaluators of the social-political curricula that may help lessen this "paranoia." (Author)
Method

At the request of the Women's Studies department in 1973, Measurement Services Center of the University to do a study of the first course of the new women's movement of these students.

In this study, three questionnaires were composed. The Feminist Questionnaire, was an attitude scale assistants for the course, unknown to the MSC on the first day of class. The authors composed two Questionnaire 1, given in class at the end of 2, administered in small group sessions by the last week of class. These two questionnaires, tapped attitudes toward the role of women's movement of these students.

Data Source

The three questionnaires described above provide data on student attitudes toward women and assistants for the course provided information.

Results and Conclusions

The results from the questionnaires revealed 97% of whom were women, were highly interested
movement. Furthermore, most did not accept the roles that have assigned to women. Specifically, the following: children are necessary for the family, come before his wife's, women should at first have to do with children are less decisive and more nurturing than men, double standard of sexual morality, and marriage, as an institution for rearing children. Studies have shown that marriage, relaxation of sex roles, equal demand, and day care centers for working women are necessary for the family.

Only 53% of the students completed the study. It is uncertain whether the results obtained are representative of the total group of students. This occurred because of the suspiciousness of outside evaluation of women's studies and the lack of cooperation from students. "cultural paranoia." Both the authors and faculty members throughout the study, but it became clear that teaching assistants ignored instructions and completed questionnaires and realized the last weekly small group meeting. It was too late to readminister the study.

It should be noted, however, that faculty and staff members from the Women's Studies Department were cooperative and facilitated the study.
Educational Importance of the Study

One important aspect of the study described here is the data on attitudes toward the role of women and student reaction to the first Women's Studies course at the University of Minnesota. Of wider importance is the examination of the special problems in evaluating what we have called social-political curricula. We have hypothesized a special sensitivity on the part of those involved in such programs, to which sensitivity we have applied and Cobbs' term "cultural paranoia." It is important to take account of the natural attitude of group members who have had to struggle for the acceptance of their respective curricula. Researchers must design any evaluation to overcome the resistance to evaluation that "cultural paranoia"

References

