

Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women

Annual Conference
November 13-15th, 1981
Halifax, Nova Scotia

Women's Culture

Within the patriarchal context, women have always related to each other through largely non-official structures including extended kinship networks and communal support systems at times of life change, including childbirth, marriage, divorce, economic crises and death. Traditional social groups such as quilting bees and sewing circles extended this contact throughout a larger community. While women worked together, they also talked and exchanged information. They kept journals, diaries and wrote letters to each other. They made art and artifacts, sometimes for the wider public, often for themselves, their families and friends. Some groups, such as Acadian women, transmitted traditional knowledge through music and story-telling. Women's societies, clubs and institutes constitute a more formal organization for these activities.

The relationship between women's groups, organizations and activities in the past and in the present may help us to understand our own experience better. We may discover that the segregation of certain female activities has served as an important means of cultural

preservation and transmission of values. We may find aspects of this invisible culture cross age, class, racial and ethnic lines without necessarily violating the distinctive features of each. As researchers in the area, we think that new research methodologies are necessary in order to deal with material which is often informal and covert and where the means of discourse is frequently oral and experiential.

We are calling for participation by professionals, scholars, artists, writers and people with a special, albeit informal, knowledge of women's culture.

All inquiries should also be directed to:

CRIAW Conference 1981
Institute of Public Affairs
Dalhousie University
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3H 3J5

Institut Canadien de Recherche pour l'Avancement de la Femme
Conférence Annuelle
du 13 au 15 Novembre 1981
Halifax (N-E)

La Femme et La Culture

Dans la société patriarcale, les femmes ont presque toujours discuté entre elles des questions importantes de leur vie, à savoir la naissance, le mariage, le divorce, les difficultés financières et la mort, soit avec des membres de leur parenté, soit dans le cadre de rencontres informelles à des fins d'entraide communautaire. Elles étendaient leur cercle de connaissances en se joignant à des groupes de couturières, de tricoteuses ou autres où elles échangeaient leurs vues sur différents sujets. Elles tenaient un journal personnel et entretenaient des relations épistolaires entre elles. Elles créaient des pièces d'artisanat à vendre, pour leur propre usage ou pour donner en cadeau aux membres de leur famille ou à leurs amis. Certains groupes de femmes, en Acadie notamment, profitaient de ces rencontres pour transmettre les traditions en chantant et en racontant des légendes. Les sociétés, clubs et instituts plus modernes ont la même vocation, mais ce type d'organisation est conçu selon un cadre plus formel.

En étudiant la relation entre les groupes et organisations de femmes qui existaient par le passé et celles qu'on connaît de nos jours, il est possible de mieux comprendre la situation actuelle. En effet, ces activités qui étaient réservées exclusivement aux femmes ont permis de préserver certaines traditions et de faire en sorte que les valeurs soient transmises de

génération en génération. Cette forme discrète de culture transcende l'âge, la classe sociale, la race et l'origine ethnique tout en respectant les caractéristiques propres à chacun de ces aspects. En tant qu'organisme de recherche dans ce domaine, nous estimons qu'il est opportun d'élaborer de nouvelles méthodologies de recherche qui devraient servir à l'étude de témoignages souvent informels dont la signification n'est pas toujours manifeste et qui prennent fréquemment la forme de déclarations verbales fondées sur l'expérience personnelle.

Nous lançons donc un appel particulier aux spécialistes et aux autorités en la matière ainsi qu'aux artistes, aux écrivains et à toute personne ayant une certaine connaissance, si informelle soit-elle, des femmes et de la culture.

Toute demande de renseignements doit également être envoyée à:

I.C.R.A.F.-Conférence 1981
Institut des affaires publiques
Université Dalhousie
Halifax, (N.-E.) B3H 3J5

Women's Writing Conference Retreat

The 10th Women's Writing Conference/Retreat sponsored by The International Women's Writing Guild, July 24-31, 1981, has chosen "The Ethics of Writing: Conflict with Conscience," as its 1981 theme.

The topic, which will give the overall note of the week-long writing conference and retreat at Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, N. Y., will be explored and presented symposium-style on Saturday evening, July 25. Discussion will include: betrayal of confidence, exposure of privacy of persons still living, the re-writing of history for expediency and/or political bias, etc. "At a time when practical concerns are uppermost in our minds, the Guild has chosen an emphasis on the value of ethics," says Hannelore Hahn, IWWG Executive Director and Founder.

The Conference/Retreat is open to all women regardless of professional writing accomplishments and attracts 200 attendees from the U.S., Canada, and abroad. It will offer a wide range of workshops from "Writing Fiction" to "The Author/Agent Relationship"; from "How to Write a Cookbook and Sell It" to "Jazz Poetry," "Playwriting," etc.

In the past three years, IWWG-sponsored writing conferences have been responsible for the publication of 12 books written by hitherto unpublished writers.

Cost is \$300 for full week, single occupancy, inclusive of room and board. Weekend rates available. For further information contact: Hannelore Hahn, Executive Director, International Women's Writing Guild, Box 810, Gracie Station, New York, N.Y. 10028. Tel: (212) 737-7536

Women's Writing Workshops

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For information, write Mrs. Christine Patience, Hartwick College, Oneonta, NY 13820.



The 5th annual intensive training for women in karate will take place June 25-28 in East Lansing, Michigan. The cost of attending Special Training '81 will be \$95.00. This amount covers the cost of room, board and instruction. To reserve your spot, send a check or money order for \$25.00, payable to Special Training '81. Mail your deposit to FSDKA, P.O. Box 229, East Lansing, Michigan, 48823 by April 1.



WOMEN'S STUDIES
THE UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

The National Women's Studies Association will hold its third annual convention—"Women Respond to Racism"—at the University of Connecticut, Storrs, May 31-June 4, 1981. Contact NWSA Convention Coordinators, Women's Studies, U-181A, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT 06268, (203) 486-4310.

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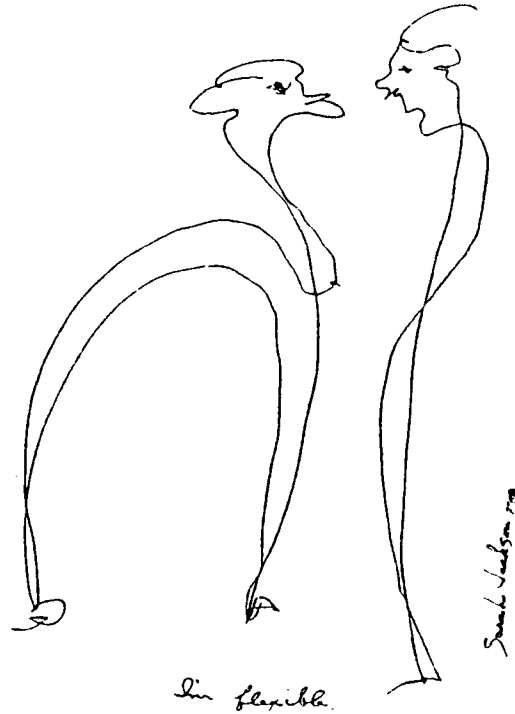
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