

THE GIFT: A Weekend on the
Contributions of Women

Detroit March 30-31, 1984

A RETREAT FOR WOMEN - adapted from the
research and work done in the Brussels
Religious House and recreated for
American women at the Detroit Religious
House.

ICA

Year of Order Council

Detroit Region

March 30, 1984

Gathering: cheese and wine in lounge / informal introductions
and conversations.

Opening Context at the Table: Welcome -- A Weekend on the
Contributions of Women

First time in USA - imported from Europe -- Brussels

Introduction of Facilitators

Introduction of Participants: What is your name and
what grounds you in history?

Presentation on the Experience of Judy Chicago's Dinner Party

What struck you about the sharing of this experience?

When and where have you had similar experiences? What was
it like? Let us experience it with you.

What are our reactions to such events in our lives?

How are we forever different? (How or why is this true?)

What do you call such experiences in your life?

Breakout Group I (Friday Evening)

- Context: * Get to know each other better.
- * Contributions of Our Lives in relation to our own experiences and journey regarding work.

The Questions:

1. Individually, write down some images you have of yourself as a child. (What did you do and how did you act?)
2. Write down some jobs you have had through the years.
3. Picture yourself working, what are you like? What are you doing?
4. How do you learn?

* * * *

5. In the smaller group and sharing with the group, let's go around the table and each one of us answer: what was your first job?
6. What did your earlier reflections (4 previous questions) reveal to you about your journey in relation to work?

- Closure: * This has been only one way in which we will explore our genuine and rather significant contributions this weekend.
- * We will see you in the morning at 7:00 AM Goodnight.

ICA: Detroit

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March 30-31, 1984

FRIDAY EVENING	SATURDAY MORNING	SATURDAY AFTERNOON	SATURDAY EVENING
<p>Dinner and Conversation</p> <p><i>THE DINNER PARTY</i></p> <p>* * *</p> <p>A Dialogue</p> <p><i>VOICES FROM THE PAST</i></p> <p>* * *</p> <p><i>THE CONTRIBUTIONS of Our Lives</i></p>	<p>Breakfast and Conversation</p> <p><i>WOMEN AND MYTHOLOGY I</i></p> <p>* * *</p> <p>A Presentation</p> <p><i>THE SOCIAL CONTEXT of the WOMEN'S MOVEMENT</i></p> <p>* * *</p> <p>A Seminar</p> <p><i>"Doing Good and Feeling Bad"</i></p>	<p>Lunch and Conversation</p> <p>A Walk</p> <p>"The Global Brain"</p> <p>* * *</p> <p>A Presentation</p> <p><i>THE SIGNIFICANCE of the WOMEN'S MOVEMENT</i></p> <p>* * *</p> <p>A Seminar</p> <p><i>In a Different Voice</i></p> <p>Reflections</p>	<p>Dinner and Conversation</p> <p><i>WHAT'S NEXT for WOMEN?</i></p> <p>* * *</p> <p><i>THE GIFT</i> Evaluation</p>

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Myth Conversation

Context: The Women's Movement has been one of the elements in today's society supporting the re-thinking of myths and stories which impact very powerfully individual images.

- * This morning we are looking at the fairy tale, Snow White.
(Read sections and then open up for the group to fill in some of the parts from memory.)

The Questions:

1. Name a fairy tale you remember reading as a child.
(before the story is read)
- * 2. Read the story
3. Who are the characters in the story? What are the scenes? Lines of dialogue?
4. What are some things that Snow White actually does?
What does the prince do?
5. What are the qualities that Snow White has as a woman?
What are the qualities the Prince has?
6. What are the things that little girls are taught through a story such as Snow White? and boys?
7. If you were writing a new story or fairy tale, what would it include?
8. What differences do you imagine that the "new fairy tale" that we have just described would make?

Closure

No doubt, our gifts are the grists of new stories of a more freeing future for ourselves and others. We all have the responsibility to create the myths and stories out of which we model and pattern our lives.

Personal Reflections

Time was allowed for each woman to workshop her purpose and intent at the close of the last study/discussion and before the closing celebration. A corporate reflection was not held regarding this work until the closing/evaluative conversation at the celebrative meal.

The Questions

1. What are the issues that this retreat has raised in my life?
2. What are my three months goals related to these issues?
3. What are the risks that I take in solving these issues?
4. Who can/will support me in carrying out the resolutions?
5. Write a statement on my contributions at this moment. Start by listing five of my gifts as an individual. Then compose the paragraph length statement on contributions at this moment.

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The Environmental Accessories

A table in a lounge area with articles, books, poetry, children's stories on various contemporary writings of the women's movement. Some of the material was used directly in the retreat; some was brought by participants to share with others.

Cassette Music was played during each interlude period.

Materials Packets were distributed before the first guided study/discussion on the first evening. Unifying color and the United Nations' Decade of Women's Symbol on each packet commonized the packet. When first distributed the packet only held the retreat's agenda and the first evening's reading materials plus extra white note paper.

Celebrational Modes began the first gathering and the last. For openers, the retreat borrowed from the experience and theme of Judy Chicago's Dinner Party Exhibition (only a few of the participants had actually gone to the exhibit). The dinner table was set very colorfully. Each place setting was unique and "unrepeatable". Votive candles used, as well as a common quotation at each place.

The closing feast, "Celebrating the Future" was not as flamboyant in its style -- a quieter more reflective glow. Singing was done here (the only time of the weekend). Wine and a fancy dessert were final celebration components. (We did not serve dessert at any other meal.)

Summary of Table Decor:

Friday Evening: "The Dinner Party"

- * Every place setting is unique and unrepeatable -- beautiful as well as striking.
- * Placemats, white plates, water goblets with flaired napkins in each, silverware, and individual votive candle.
- * No overhead ceiling lighting; corner indirects on and candlelight.
- * Quote at each place: "Women conscious of the..."

THE GIFT: A Weekend on the Contribution of Women was designed by the Women's Studies Group of Brussels, Belgium in 1981 together with staff members of the Institute of Cultural Affairs. Both groups donated their time and talent in order to create this series of sessions. The intention of this course is to expose women to the area of Women's Studies in a practical way that is applicable to their living situation. The weekend in Detroit will be led by Katherine Barton and Paige Cousineau, both of whom were in the design group.

* * * * *

GENERAL INFORMATION

THE GIFT is sponsored by the Institute of Cultural Affairs, a private, not-for-profit, non-sectarian organization which offers services through research, training and demonstration projects. In several Third World nations, the ICA has actively participated in improving the welfare of women through Women's Advancement Modules which focused on leadership skills and the increased participation of women. The Global Women's Forum, offered in some 30 developed and developing nations, also deals with the issue of women's engagement.

The ICA's services are designed to catalyze grassroots participation in improving the quality of life by serving the worldwide need for self development.

To register for the Weekend, please
complete the registration form below
and mail to:

The Institute of Cultural Affairs .
1024 Parker
Detroit, Michigan 48214

The cost is \$40.00 and includes
materials, meals, and lodging if
necessary. If you would like more
information, please phone Katherine
Barton at 313-822-8300 or Barbara
Smith at 313-352-8518.



I wish to participate in THE GIFT:
A Weekend on the Contributions of
Women on March 30-31, 1984 at the ICA.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Phone _____

I have enclosed \$20.00 as a registration
fee and understand that the balance of
\$20.00 is due at the Weekend.

-- Betty Friedan, THE SECOND STAGE

It was, is, awesome--that quantum jump in consciousness. A whole literature, a new history, new dimensions in every field are now emerging, as the larger implications of women's personhood and equality are explored. The women's movement, which started with personal truth, not seen or understood by the experts, or even by women themselves, because it did not fit the accepted image, has, in the span of a single generation, changed life, and the accepted image.

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. . . is an opportunity for women to learn about their hidden history, women's lives over the centuries, and how their attitudes have affected their work and personal lives. During the weekend, there will be time for informal interchange concerning the skills needed by women in the eighties.

MARCH 30th - 31st, 1984

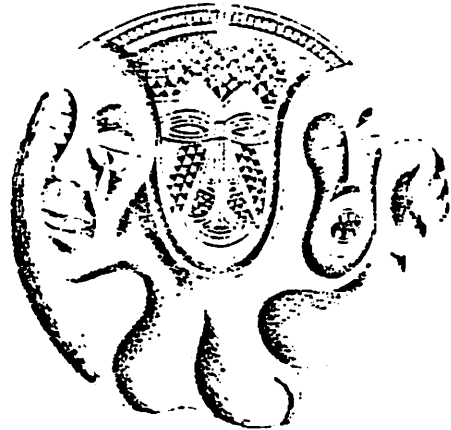
FRIDAY: 6:30 pm - 10:00 pm

SATURDAY: 7:00 am - 8:00 pm

THE INSTITUTE OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS

During the weekend, there will be opportunities to share some of the contributions made by women to civilization. Following is a glimpse of the vast, untapped resources which we will have the chance to uncover taken from Judy Chicago's THE DINNER PARTY.

Kathe Schirmacher b. 1911 a German feminist who argued that women needed vision as well as opportunity...
Isabel Pinochet b. 1870 Chilean educator who founded the first school for women...
Lorraine Hansberry 1930-1965 first black author of a play, A Raisin In The Sun, to be produced on Broadway...
Willa Cather 1873-1947 an American writer who left a legacy of heroines who were powerful and independent...
Dorothea Lange 1895-1965 American photographer who changed history by her poignant depiction of migrants during the depression...
Ibu Kartini b. 1880 an Indonesian who founded schools for women, now honored by a national holiday.



Sojourner Truth
1797-1883

WEEKEND SCHEDULE

Friday Dinner - Opening Session

What has been the contribution of women over the last 200 years in the area of work?

Women from the past talk to us about their lives through autobiographical sketches.

* * * *

Saturday Morning

How have women been affected by their own self images in their relationships, work and worldview?

A seminar on how women's psychology has altered the way in which women see themselves.

Saturday Afternoon

What is the significance of education to a woman's lifelong journey?

A workshop on the influence of formal and informal education on women's educational decisions.

Saturday Dinner - Closing Session

What next for women today?

A review of the accomplishments of the last several decades and the next crucial steps for women in the future.

WOMEN'S NIGHT 1983 - 1984

OCT.	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE
DINNER AT GALLICAN'S WITH HEROINES	COLOR ME BEAUTI- FUL	SHARING POETRY	XXXXXXX X	TERMS OF OF ENDEAR- MENT	WOMEN'S RETREAT	REFLECT- TION ON RETREAT	STRENGTHS	ASSER- TIVENESS AND PURPOSE OF THIS GROUP
DOWNTOWN	SMITHS	HOUSE		OAKLAND MALL	HOUSE	HOUSE	HOUSE	SMITHS

PURPOSE OF WOMEN'S GUILD:

This group focuses on the perpetual discovery, affirmation and development of the full potential of the gifts of women at a time when their contribution is needed for a more human world.

PLACE SETTING MODEL

Fri Evening: "The Dinner Party"

Every place setting is unique
and unrepeatable.

Plates, water goblets, napkins,
silverplateware

Sat Morning: "New Day in the Making"

Light blue/turquoise

plates, silverware, napkins,
cups

Sat Noon: "The Greening of Freedom"

Green paper/light green napkins
paper products,

Sat Evening: "Celebrating the Future"

Salmon/multi-colored napkins

plates, silverware, wine goblets
cups

Friday Dinner

Women conscious of the vocation to raise up this half of humanity to the stature of acting subjects in history, constitute an ontological locus of history.

Saturday Breakfast

It seems to me you can trust feminists - or any other "ists" for that matter - only when they speak from personal truth in all its complexity.

Saturday Dinner

IF . . . IF . . . you don't get out and risk and involve yourself radically in doing, profound human-ness does not occur.

The Environmental Accessories

continued

- Saturday Morning: "NEW DAY IN THE MAKING" (beckoning)
- * Light blue placemats/tourquoise napkins
 - * plates, silverware, napkins, cups
 - * Overhead lighting
 - * Quote at each place (turquoise) "It seems to me that you can trust feminists - or any other ..."
- Saturday Noon: "The Greening of Freedom" (fresh release)
- Buffet Style (dark green/light green colors)
- All paper products plus silverware
- No quote
- Saturday Evening: "Celebrating the Future" (triumphant glow)
- Salmon placemats/multi-colored salmon, brown and beige napkins
- Plates, silverware, wine glasses, cups, parfaits
- Quote at each place (beige) "IF...IF...you don't get out and risk and involve yourself radically in doing, profound humanness does not occur."