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Conference: Women Learn from Women

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Most heavily subscribed was "Women in Search of Autonomy." The morning session, filmed by ABC-TV for a documentary, broke into groups of about twenty. Each woman was given newspaper and crayons and asked to make a "life-space drawing," illustrating things important to her, including areas of conflict, and daily activity. Then, moving around the circle, each woman talked about her drawing—a personal tool through which she and other women could locate and discuss their search for autonomy. Morning and afternoon sessions raised many different questions: Does autonomy necessitate similarity? Must all qualities considered "feminine" be sacrificed to success? Are there any women who would like to hold on to? What is the difference between dependence and interdependence? In the absence of a female bonding system, how can women be more supportive of one another? Are women more afraid of failure or of success?

At the wrap-up session, representatives from each workshop summarized the discussion or focused on significant questions. Betty Scott, for example, reporting on two sessions of "Who Will Take Care of the Children?" suggested that a prior question needs to be answered by feminists concerned with the future of child care and the family. "Are mothers," she queried, "willing to relinquish control—the key word that came up again and again through the day—over their children?"

In general the conference, functioning entirely without the usual papers and speakers, managed to indicate that women can and do want to learn from other women, and that regional conferences of this nature may be useful for students, faculty and members of the interested community.

Julie Denison and Lynne Kaduson

BOOKS FROM THE FEMINIST PRESS

*I'm Like Me*: Poems for people who want to grow up equal, by Siv Widerberg. Fresh, funny poems from Sweden, about growing up, female or male. For children and teenagers (5-15) but liberated adults love them too. Seven illustrations by Claes Backstrom, translations by Verne Moberg. $1.50.


*Daughter of Earth*, by Agnes Smedley. Dirt hard, proletarian feminist classic (semi-autobiographical novel) by a native American woman who worked all her life for oppressed people everywhere. Available May 1. $2.50.

Books are available from The Feminist Press, 10920 Battersea, Columbia, Md. 21044. Please include postage and handling: rates are $.40 for the first two books, plus $.10 for each additional.

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