Convention Update

The Feminist Press

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Sister true, join us too
Where the Kanzas flows,
Let the Northern Lily bloom
With the Southern Rose.
Brave brother, true sister,
List! We call to thee,
We'll sing upon the Kanzas plains,
A song of Liberty!

From Lucy Larcom, “Call to Kanzas,” a prizewinner in a contest for the best-suited song for Kansas immigrants, ca. 1840

By now, many of you will have already registered for the upcoming NWSA Convention in Lawrence, Kansas. The Convention promises to be a memorable one, including:

- over 100 sessions on research, theory, and practice of women’s studies in colleges and universities, secondary schools, and the community across the country and abroad;
- displays and exhibits of feminist wares and publications;
- feminist theater, poets, and musicians (including Bernice Reagan, Meg Christian Audre Lorde, Ama Ata Aidoo, Ivy Bottini, At the Foot of the Mountain, the Woman’s Collage Theater, the Women’s Experimental Theater, and others);
- an exhibition of women’s art and crafts and an exhibition of the work of first woman press photographer Frances Benjamin Johnston;
- a continuous showing of women’s films;
- a job exchange (For information contact Lori Gold, 8175 Winged Foot Drive, Atlanta, GA 30338; 404-394-4961; job-seekers should send her a one-page laminated résumé).

A sampling of proposed Convention offerings gives some indication of the diversity of interests that will be represented. For example:

Women Artists and Cultural Change
Women and Photography

Media Images of Third World Women
Lesbian Aesthetics
Feminist Philosophy: New Directions
Women’s Studies and Theological Studies
Currents in Feminist Political Theory
The Women’s Movement and the Environment
Sociobiology
Writing Courses and Feminist Pedagogy
Teaching Women’s Studies in the Bible Belt
Teaching Women’s Studies and Women’s Issues in Non-Academic Settings—in Prisons, Nursing Homes, and the Pink Collar Ghetto
How to Start Your (PreK-12) District on the Road to Women’s Studies

Other sessions will focus on issues that run the gamut from the how-to’s of publishing to the work of rape crisis centers and shelters for battered women, from federal policy as it affects women in education to sexual harassment; from the dialectics of success in nationally-known feminist projects to the techniques of self-defense; from the survival needs of academic women to the work of lay midwives.

NWSA Meetings and Working Sessions

Opening Sessions. The Convention will begin on Wednesday afternoon, May 30, with informal gatherings of caucuses and other interest groups. Exhibits will be open. Dinner will be from 5:30 to 7:30 PM, to be followed by the Formal Opening of the Convention. The first evening will conclude with regional gatherings.

Coordinating Council. Sessions of the semi-annual Coordinating Council meeting will be held before, during, and after the Convention. Agenda items will include review of Delegate Assembly business, election of the 1979-80 Steering Committee, assignment of new Council members to committees.

Delegate Assembly. Regional, caucus, and group member delegates will meet to help set priorities for Council action in the coming year. The Delegate Assembly will be preceded by open hearings on resolutions and constitutional matters, and by meetings of the caucuses and regions. Credential delegates will receive agenda materials in advance of the Assembly.

Standing Committees of the Association. Meetings and working sessions are scheduled for NWSA’s Membership, Finance, Conference, and Publications Committees; those interested in contributing to or participating in the work of these groups are invited to attend. Information will be available on the mandates of each committee, and discussion of issues will focus on work to be done in the coming year.

A working session for regional newsletter editors and a meeting of the Women’s Studies Newsletter Advisory Committee are also scheduled.

Closing Session. The Closing Session of the Convention will take place on Sunday morning, June 3. It will end at 11 AM, followed by brunch.

NWSA has been invited to prepare and submit a final proposal to the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education, for a project “to improve service learning in women’s studies.” NWSA would undertake a survey of service learning curriculum and instruction in women’s studies (practicum, internship, field placements) and produce a resources handbook for faculty. Selected faculty would participate in an Institute. NWSA would develop and maintain the capacity to provide information, referral, coordination, and further faculty development services. More information about the proposal will be available at the Convention from the National Coordinator.