

PROPOSAL FOR A CHICAGO RADICAL WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

TO BE HELD OCTOBER 31, NOVEMBER 1 & 2

Dear Sister,

A group of women have been meeting this summer to plan a conference for the Chicago women's movement. We would like to share with you our thoughts on the purpose of such a conference and what it should look like.

We see the conference as being held for the women who are primarily committed to the development of an independent, multi-issue women's movement and who see in particular the need to develop program and structures to enable us to get beyond the strage of personal discussions and to reach out to new women. We realize that differences have emerged in the women's movement. We would like this to be a conference in which women who hold these differing opinions can sit down and talk. There has been too little opportunity for this in the past.

The most important questions we must answer for ourselves are what programs should we initiate to reach out to new women and why. Structural or organizational discussions should flow out of a consciously articulated purpose and commitment to work. It follows from this that the conference can only be seen as one step in an ongoing process.

We see the work leading up to the conference as being as important as the conference itself and hope that as many women as possible get involved. This can be done if women take part in:

1. The writing of working papers on perspectives, strategy and program
2. The planning of the conference in the weekly meetings and the distribution of leadership at the conference
3. The administrative tasks which include registration before the conference, typing and printing working papers, setting up child care, etc.

We would appreciate any suggestions you have for names of other women who should get this notice and for changes in the conference idea. The following pages will provide more of the ideas behind the conference. Call DO 3-1348 with your criticisms .

Yours for the liberation of women and
all oppressed people,

Barbara Alter
Carol Ackerman
Liz George
Vivian Rothstein
Naomi Weisstein
Alice Keller
Hedda
and others

September 2, 1969

SUGGESTIONS FOR WORKING PAPERS

Writing and distributing working papers well before the conference is one of our most important tasks. We encourage people to write papers in which theory, long range strategy, and short range programs are all related, although we realize that many papers will emphasize one of these areas. Here are some suggestions.

Please call DO-3-1348 if you are planning to write a paper or would like to suggest other topics for papers. Mail completed papers to 5406 S. Manchester so that they can be mimeographed and distributed well before the conference.

I. Papers on programs and projects

Papers could be written on work already in progress, such as organizing in factories or universities, working with young women in communities or high schools, day care fights, abortion counseling, Women's Militia, WITCH, and others.

Papers could be written on work which needs to be done - suggestions for organizing women around issues or demands - either women's issues or other issues which relate to women like to war or community issues. Suggestions for where and how to organize women at school, on the job in their communities. Proposals for how to work with single, married, divorced women. Proposals for Newsletter, speakers bureau, WITCH, or other theatre groups. Proposals for development of counterinstitutions.

PLEASE STATE WHY THE WORK YOU SUGGEST IS A PRIORITY. PLEASE STATE THE BROADER THEORETICAL ASSUMPTIONS AND IMPLICATIONS OF YOUR SUGGESTIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT. STATE WHAT KIND OF ORGANIZATION WOMEN DOING THIS TYPE OF WORK WOULD NEED AND WHAT RELATIONSHIPS TO WOMEN DOING OTHER TYPES OF WORK WOULD LOOK LIKE.

II. Papers on strategy

Papers could deal with such questions as the relationship of women's liberation to the larger movement, the relationships of white and middle class women to brown and black and working class women, the relationships of other constituencies of women to each other. What long range demands or principles should the women's movement uphold - and to what extent and how should we work to relate "women's issues" and issues like the war, imperialism and racism, and the need for a socialist revolution.

PLEASE STATE THE IMPLICATIONS FOR FORMING A WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION. WHO SHOULD THIS ORGANIZATION BE FOR? WHAT SHOULD IT LOOK LIKE? WHAT PURPOSE OR STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES SHOULD IT UPHOLD? WHAT ISSUES SHOULD IT DEAL WITH AND HOW?

III. Papers on theory

Papers could deal with such questions as: Why are women oppressed? To what extent is this a function of their role in maintaining capitalism? In what ways and to what extent does socialism provide the solution to women's oppression? Is the main basis for women's oppression their role in the system of reproduction and the family or their role in production, and how do these different modes of oppression relate to each other and to the oppression of other peoples? How are women divided and played off against each other? In what similar and different ways are different groups of women oppressed and how to some groups of women help to perpetuate the oppression of others?

PLEASE STATE THE IMPLICATIONS REGARDING THE KIND OF ORGANIZATION WE NEED AND WHAT PROGRAMS DEMANDS, OR ISSUES IT WOULD RAISE.

REGISTRATION FORM

The Chicago Area Women's Conference will be held October 31 - November 2, 1969, at Camp Rhineber in Palatine, Illinois. The cost is \$17.00 per person for the weekend, including Friday dinner (at 6:00 P.M.) through Sunday dinner. Sheets and blankets will be provided. We are trying to help make babysitting arrangements available for children here in Chicgo. Daughters who are old enough to participate in the conference are welcome on the same basis as everyone else. If you are interested in attending the conference or if you can help others make babysitting arrangements, please return this form to 5406 S. Dorchester, Chicago, by October 10th, at the very latest. In addition, please pass this information on to anyone you know who is active in the Chicago area women's movement

Call DO-3-1348 or DO-3-1485 for further information.

Driving directions will be mailed out at a future date.

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ Org. Affil. _____
(if any)

I plan to come to the conference and am enclosing a check for \$17.00 to Pat McGauley, % Womens' Liberation, 5406 S. Dorchester. (If you cannot come for the whole weekend, beginning Friday at 6:00 P.M., please state when you will arrive and when you will leave. This information is needed for meal planning.)

I would like to attend the conference, but cannot afford it. (We are trying to get money for scholarships and will get in touch with you.)

I can drive to Camp Rhineberg and take _____ passengers. I am leaving Friday at _____ (time) from _____ (place).

I need transportation to Camp Rhineberg. I will be ready to leave on Friday at _____ (time).

I (my husband, a friend) can provide childcare for _____ children, ages _____, at _____ (place) for the following days _____.

I would like help making babysitting arrangements for my children, ages _____ for the following times or days _____.

I plan to write a working paper on the following subject _____.
(All papers received at 5406 S. Dorchester, by October 10, will be mimeographed and distributed to those attending the conference before October 31st.)

Please state what kind of organizing work with women you are interested in or plan to be doing in the next year. Also indicate any questions or topics you would especially like to see discussed at the conference.

SUGGESTED AGENDA FOR THE RADICAL WOMEN'S CONFERENCE
(October 31, November 1 & 2)

Friday, October 31

- 4:00 pm - registration begins
- 6:00 pm - dinner
- 7:30 pm - presentation of the history and development of the women's movement; how it started and why, what it's done; who it is; where we are now and why.
- 8:30 pm - break down into random workshops to discuss the presentation and the nature and general direction of the women's movement.

Saturday, November 1

- 9:00 am - (!) breakfast
- 10:00 am - a panel made up of women from the various political perspectives will give presentations on what they each feel is the nature of women's oppression, what strategies are necessary to liberate women, and how the women's movement relates to the rest of the movement. The panel will be followed by a limited period of questions and answers and then the conference will break into workshops led by each of the women who presented a theoretical position. The workshops will give conference participants a chance to explore further the implications of each of the theoretical positions.
- 1:00 pm - lunch
- 1:30 pm - time for the continuation of the above workshops if the time is required
- 2:30 pm - workshops on specific organizing projects in which people can discuss their work or what organizing they would like to do. (e.g., high school organizing, work-place organizing, organizing around abortion, medical care for women)
- 6:00 pm - dinner
- 7:00 pm - panel of black and brown women
- 9:00 pm - planned Halloween entertainment

Sunday, November 2

- 9:00 am - breakfast
- 10:00 am - reports from the organizing workshops. Position papers presented to the whole group on proposals for a women's membership organization and group discussion of the proposals.
- 1:00 pm - lunch
- 2:00 pm - plenary for women interested in creating a women's organization.