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*Archives of American Art*

## **"Feminist Education at the Feminist Studio Workshop, The Woman's Building in Los Angeles" by Ruth Iskin, 1976**

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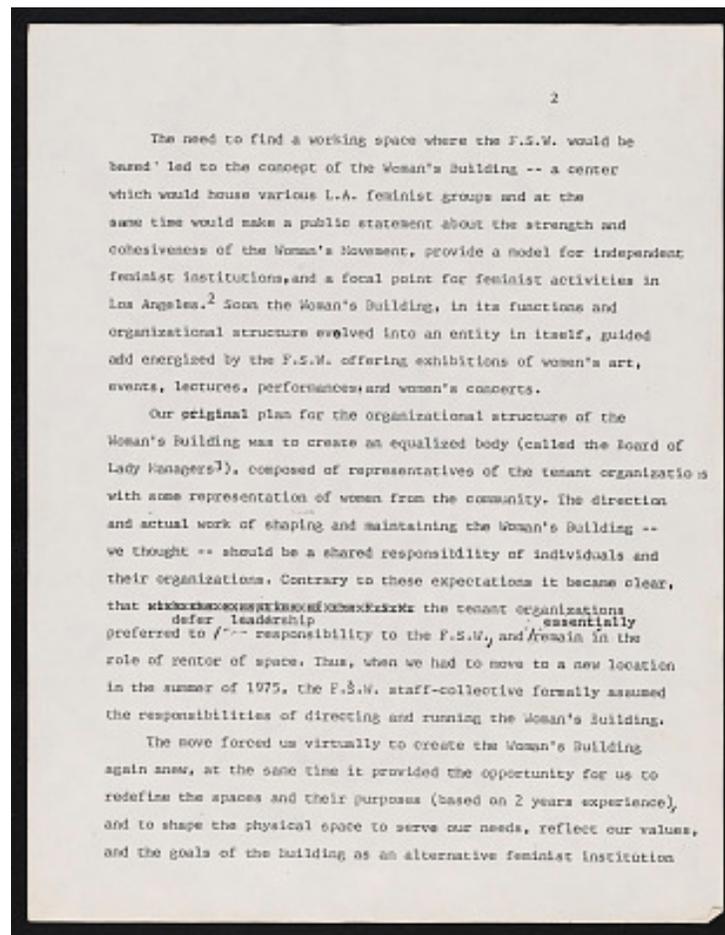
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The need to find a working space where the F.S.W. could be based led to the concept of the Woman's Building -- a center which would house various L.A. feminist groups and at the same time would make a public statement about the strength and cohesiveness of the Woman's Movement, provide a model for independent feminist institutions, and a focal point for feminist activities in Los Angeles.<sup>2</sup> Soon the Woman's Building, in its functions and organizational structure evolved into an entity in itself, guided and energized by the F.S.W. offering exhibitions of women's art, events, lectures, performances, and women's concerts. Our original plan for the organizational structure of the Woman's Building was to create an equalized body (called the Board of Lady Managers<sup>3</sup>), composed of representatives of the tenant organizations with some representation of women from the community. The direction and actual work of shaping and maintaining the Woman's Building -- we thought -- should be a shared responsibility of individuals and their organizations. Contrary to these expectations it became clear, that ~~the tenant organizations~~ preferred to defer leadership responsibility to the F.S.W., and essentially remain in the role of renter of space. Thus, when we had to move to a new location in the summer of 1975, the F.S.W. staff-collective formally assumed the responsibilities of directing and running the Woman's Building.

The move forced us virtually to create the Woman's Building again anew, at the same time it provided the opportunity for us to redefine the spaces and their purposes (based on 2 years experience), and to shape the physical space to serve our needs, reflect our values, and the goals of the Building as an alternative feminist institution



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