



**Smithsonian Institution**

*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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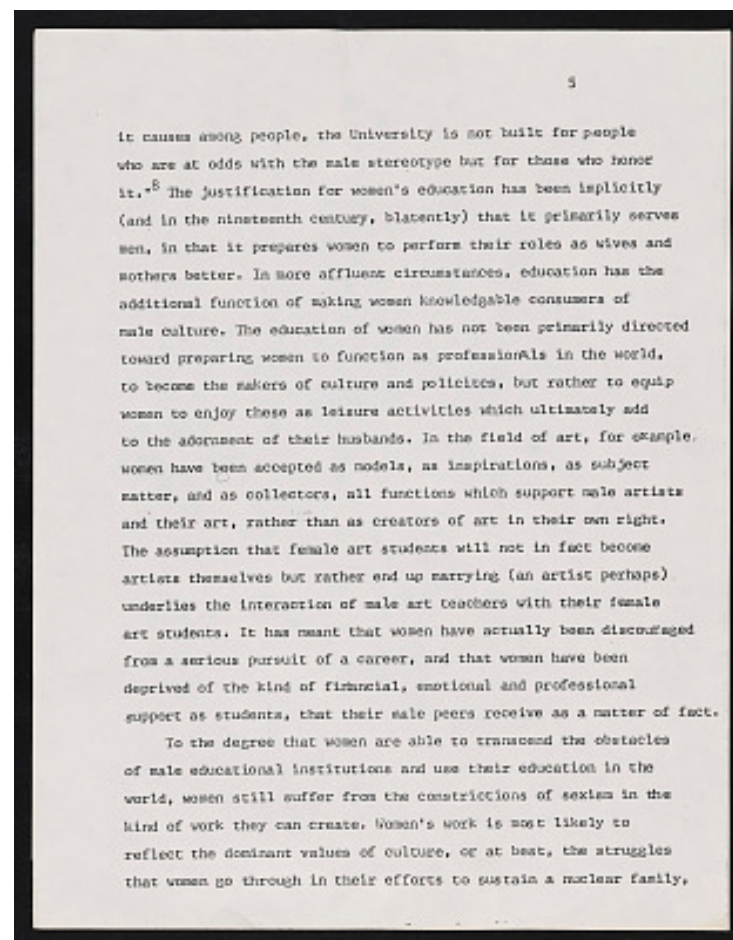
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it causes among people, the University is not built for people who are at odds with the male stereotype but for those who honor it."<sup>8</sup> The justification for women's education has been implicitly (and in the nineteenth century, blatantly) that it primarily serves men, in that it prepares women to perform their roles as wives and mothers better. In more affluent circumstances, education has the additional function of making women knowledgeable consumers of male culture. The education of women has not been primarily directed toward preparing women to function as professionals in the world, to become the makers of culture and politics, but rather to equip women to enjoy these as leisure activities which ultimately add to the adornment of their husbands. In the field of art, for example, women have been accepted as models, as inspirations, as subject matter, and as collectors, all functions which support male artists and their art, rather than as creators of art in their own right. The assumption that female art students will not in fact become artists themselves but rather end up marrying (an artist perhaps) underlies the interaction of male art teachers with their female art students. It has meant that women have actually been discouraged from a serious pursuit of a career, and that women have been deprived of the kind of financial, emotional, and professional support as students, that their male peers receive as a matter of fact.

To the degree that women are able to transcend the obstacles of male educational institutions and use their education in the world, women still suffer from the constrictions of sexism in the kind of work they can create. Women's work is most likely to reflect the dominant values of culture, or at best, the struggles that women go through in their efforts to sustain a nuclear family,



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