

Making Movement through Motion Pictures

**Period films & videos from 1968 to 1975
programmed by Julia Reichert and Ariel Dougherty**

FILM played a significant role in conjunction with this conference. In fact, a work-in-progress screening of LEFT ON PEARL ignited the whole idea for A Revolutionary Moment.

The conference featured two evenings of screenings of documentaries about Second Wave feminism, including Joan Braderman's "Heretics," Jennifer Lee's "Feminist: Stories from Women's Liberation," Catherine Russo's "A Moment in Her Story," Susie Rivo and the 888 Women's History Project's "Left on Pearl," Liane Brandon's "Anything You Want to Be," and excerpts from Mary Dore's "She's Beautiful When She's Angry." A third evening featured a range of films from the early 1970s, selected by Julia Reichert and Ariel Dougherty.

Two workshops focused entirely on women's filmmaking. Numerous others included film as a component of the context of recording issues of the period.





MAKING A MOVEMENT through **MOTION PICTURES**

Pioneering Feminist Films from 1968 - 1975

Rarely seen early gems from the Women's Liberation Movement

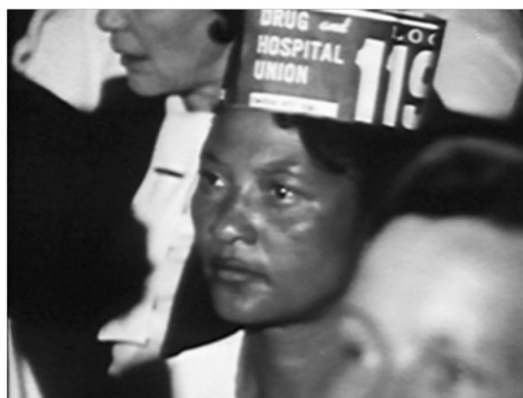
programmed by Julia Reichert and Ariel Dougherty

A REVOLUTIONARY MOMENT CONFERENCE

Saturday, March 29, 2014 • 7:30 PM
Boston University • GSU Conf Auditorium

Documentary, fiction, experimental & animated works -
authentic voices from the birth of the Women's Liberation Movement.

The works are pointedly a response to omission
of voices and /or distortion of viewpoints in mainstream
corporate media that still persists today.



MAKING A MOVEMENT THROUGH MOTION PICTURES

PROGRAM NOTES: Films of the Period 1968 – 1975

programmed by Julia Reichert and Ariel Dougherty

For A REVOLUTIONARY MOMENT Conference

/ Boston University

Saturday March 29, 2014

7:30 pm

GSU Conf Auditorium

This selection of films from the period includes documentary, fiction, experimental & animated works from all over the US. These film clips and shorts will introduce viewers to authentic voices from the birth of the Women's Liberation Movement. The works are pointedly a response to omission of voices and /or distortion of viewpoints in mainstream corporate media that still persists today. While here we show only US based work, this movement was international. Hurray for independent and radical feminist media making!!



MAKE OUT 5 mins NYC Drama

B&W 1970 16mm / DVD Third World Newsreel

by **NY Newsreel Collective**

As a young couple make out in a car, we hear the woman's stream of consciousness thoughts. She worries about her reputation and whether he'll try to "go all the way." This film is best used with discussions and/or materials about date rape. The film is a vibrant document of the early second wave women's movement, and the concerns and thinking of young women at that time. This film is unique in the Newsreel collection, as it was filmed with actors, with a voice-over script created from a women's group discussion.

Newsreel collectives evolved in response to the Vietnam War and as liberation movements mobilized worldwide. This network produced large numbers of short 16mm documentaries quickly and inexpensively and would distribute them – almost always with someone accompanying them to discuss the content, providing an alternative media that would increase public awareness of topical issues. The goal, though, was not just to educate, but to inspire action for change.

THREE IN THE PARK 7 mins NYC Drama

Color 1971 16mm / DVD provided by filmmaker to Ariel Dougherty NY Public Library

by **Bernadette Beekman, @ Age 18, YOUTH**

Girlfriends out for a day in the Park meet a young man who creates an awkward triangle with racial overtones. The placid, pastoral setting helps smooth over the strong and disturbing undercurrents.

Youth filmmaking began in the early 1960s initially in settlement houses to teach youth technical skills and develop self-empowerment. Youth Film Distribution Center in the late 60s provided an organized vehicle for these works to reach a wide audience. Ariel estimates that maybe 25% of these films were by girls and form an important body of work for Girl Studies programs.

I AM SOMEBODY 30 mins NYC + NC Doc

Color 1970 16mm / DVD Icarus Films

by **Madeline Anderson** (selection)

In 1969, 400 poorly paid black women--hospital workers in Charleston, South Carolina--went on strike to demand union recognition and a wage increase, only to find themselves in a confrontation with the National Guard and the state government. Supported by such notables as Andrew Young, Charles Abernathy, and Coretta Scott King, the women nonetheless conducted a strike



under the guidance of District 1199, the New York based union, and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. A testament to the courage of these women who would not be humbled, the now classic *I AM SOMEBODY* is both an inspiring film and an important historical record.

GROWING UP FEMALE

50 mins OH Doc

B&W 1970 16mm / DVD New Day Films

by **Julia Reichert and Jim Klein** (selection)

The socialization of the American woman is presented through a personal look into the lives of six females. Their ages range from 4 to 35 and their backgrounds vary from poor black to upper-middle class white. We see in action the many forces that shape women's self-conception: parents, teachers, guidance counselors, media, pop music and the institution of marriage.

In 2012 placed on National Film Registry



NEAR THE BIG CHAKRA

OR Experimental 14 mins (selection)

Color 1972 16mm / DVD Canyon Cinema

by **Anne Severson AKA Alice Anne Parker**

"A movie by Oregonian Anne Severson that consisted entirely of vaginas, and what vaginas they were". – Marni Jackson, Women & Film: International Festival Toronto, 1973 "The impression made by this film, its impact – has been enormous. ... This film is a new approach to our femininity." – Agnes Varda, *Image and Sound*

IT HAPPENS TO US 32 mins NYC Doc

Color 1972 16mm / DVD New Day Films

by **Amalie Rothchild** (selection)

Released in 1972, this film remains the classic plea for a woman's legal right to choose. Four methods of abortion are fully described by a physician and pertinent medical statistics are interspersed throughout. It presents the most cogent arguments, through the personal stories of a wide range of women both rich and poor, young and older, black & white, married & unmarried, as to why ending a pregnancy must remain an available choice. It reminds people of the consequences when it was illegal and what life was like before Roe vs Wade.

DOMESTIC TRANQUILLITY 7m NYC Drama

B&W 1973 16mm / DVD Women's Silverscreen Roadshow
by **Harriet Kriegel**

The film revolves around the conflict of a mother of three who enjoys motherhood but feels thwarted by having given up her career as an artist. Art has become objects she now dusts.

One of five short dramas produced & completed in Women Make Movies' community workshop in Spring 1973 and shown at the Women and Film International Festival that June in Toronto. In New York Public Library and Museum of Modern Art permanent collection.

SONGS SKITS POETRY AND PRISON LIFE

26 mins NY State Doc + (selection)

B&W 1974 EIAJ shot on 1/2" / edited on 1"

DVD from Ariel Dougherty Archives / Schlesinger Library

by **Women of Bedford Hills Correctional Facility**

During the summer of 1973, approximately 80 women from the Bedford Hills Correctional Facility (the only minimum/maximum security prison for women in New York State) participated in a twelve week program and taped each other as they sang songs, read poetry, acted out skits and discussed their grievances. Funded by the America The Beautiful Fund, the composite tape was edited by Ariel Dougherty, teacher of the program.



DYKETACTICS 4 mins CA Experimental

B&W 1974 16mm / DVD Barbara Hammer

by **Barbara Hammer**

A popular lesbian "commercial," 110 images of sensual touching montages in A, B, C, D rolls of "kinaesthetic" editing. *"The images are varied and very quickly presented in the early part of the film, introducing the characters, if you will. The second half of the film slows down measurably and all of a sudden I found myself holding my breath as I watched the images of love-making sensually and artistically captured."* - Elizabeth Lay, *Plexus*

THE DISTRIBUTORS

Third World Newsreel www.twn.org 545 Eighth Ave, Suite 550, New York, NY 10018 tel. 212.947.9277 fax. 212.594.6417 twn@twn.org One of two surviving newsreels (the other is California Newsreel), TWN distributes documentaries from Africa, Asia, Latin America, Palestine and the US.

New Day Films www.newday.com/ 190 Route 17M Suite D, Harriman, NY 10926 tel. 888.367.9154 fax. 845.774.2945 orders@newday.com New Day Films, founded in 1972 as a filmmaker-run cooperative for films about women, empowers filmmakers. Over the years New Day's collection has expanded to include many multi award winning films, with an emphasis on gender, race, history and the environment. New Day's diverse membership of over 100 filmmakers make decisions democratically.

Women Make Movies www.wmm.com 115 W 29th St, suite 1200, New York, NY 10001 tel. 212.925.0606 fax. 212.925.2052 orders@wmm.com Incorporated in 1972, Women Make Movies is a multicultural, multiracial, non-profit arts organization which facilitates the production, promotion, distribution, and exhibition of independent films and videotapes by and about women.

Canyon Cinema www.canyoncinema.com 1777 Yosemite Ave Suite #210 | San Francisco, California 94124 tel. 415.626.2255 info@canyoncinema.com Canyon Cinema is an organization of filmmakers, which supports, promotes, distributes and preserves cinematic works of art. They are devoted especially to the art of film, as opposed to works transfer to video/DVD.

Icarus Films www.icarusfilms.com 32 Court St, Brooklyn, NY 11201 tel. 718.488.8900 fax. 718.488.8642 mail@icarusfilms.com Icarus Films distributes innovative and provocative documentary films from independent producers around the world. Of special note: *Fundi: The Story of Ella Baker* by Joanne Grant.

INTERNATIONAL VIDEOLETTERS 25 mins

San Francisco Doc / News (selection)

B&W 1975 1/2" video EIAJ / Schlesinger Library

by **Just Us Video** ©1976 Interface Productions, Inc.

Jaime of Just Us introduces "the news": A clip in a studio for Margie Adam's album SONGWRITER. Linda Tillery, on drums; the Lily Theatre troupe rehearsing "Moonlighting"; and a concert, first, Cris Williamson at the piano, followed by Holly & Timothy Near, Meg Christian & Cris performing SISTERSONG. Timothy gives an empowering lesson in deaf signing.

VIDEOLETTERS evolved out of two feminist media conferences in 1975 as an experiment to increase communications and a news exchange among feminist communities. Bi-monthly videotapes were produced and exchanged among 14 women's communities across the US & internationally: Rochester, LA, Tucson, Chicago, Santa Cruz, San Francisco, San Diego, Portland, Tampa, Boston, DC, NYC, Toronto, and Sydney. As many as fifty tapes were produced. Today only three known tapes survive.

CHICANA 23 mins LA Doc (selection)

Color 1979 16mm / DVD Women Make Movies

by **Sylvia Morales**

CHICANA traces the history of Chicana and Mexican women from pre-Columbian times to the present. It covers women's role in Aztec society, their participation in the 1810 struggle for Mexican independence, their involvement in the US labor strikes in 1872, their contributions to the 1910 Mexican revolution & their leadership in contemporary civil rights causes. Using murals, engravings & historical footage, CHICANA shows how women, despite their poverty, have become an active part of the political and work life in both Mexico and the US.

CROCUS 7 mins MN Animation

Color 1970 16mm MOMA Circulation /

DVD provided by filmmaker to Ariel Dougherty

by **Suzan Pitt**

Naked, a heterosexual couple, aroused, prepare for sex, but the awakened, thirsty baby interrupts. Once the baby is settled again in his crib the couple renews their lovemaking. Vegetables, flowers, and birds float through the doorway, around the room over the pair then out a window. The conclusion is affirming about the woman's chosen work.

Museum of Modern Art -Circulating Film & Video Library

www.moma.org/learn/resources/circulatingfilm#aboutcircfilm 11 West 53rd St, New York, NY tel 212.708.9400 MOMA has an extensive catalog of cinematically historic film works. In addition to Pitt's work, look for Lois Weber's films (& much more).

Schlesinger Library www.radcliffe.harvard.edu/schlesinger-library 3

sJames Street, Cambridge, MA tel. 617.495.8647 in Ariel Dougherty archives. Once permission is granted material can be viewed privately via Vimeo; Two other VIDEOLETTERS are in the **Getty Collection**: www.getty.edu/research/library/ 1200 Getty Center Dr, Suite 1100, Los Angeles, CA 90049-1688 tel. 310.440.7335 One by Susan Mogul of the Woman's Building; the other by Spectra Feminist Media Project of DC on the Coalition of Labor Union Women.

Barbara Hammer 17 DVDs by Barbara Hammer available for personal and institutional sales: including *Dyketactics* and *Other Films of the 1970s*. Visit www.barbarahammer.com

New York Public Library Reserve Film & Video Collection, <http://www.nypl.org/locations/lpa/reserve-film-and-video-collection> Library for the Performing Arts, 40 Lincoln Center Plaza, Manhattan, NY 10023-7498 tel 212.870.1741 NYPL has a large collection of titles of youth films from the 1960s & 1970s. A plan for their restoration and preservation is underway.

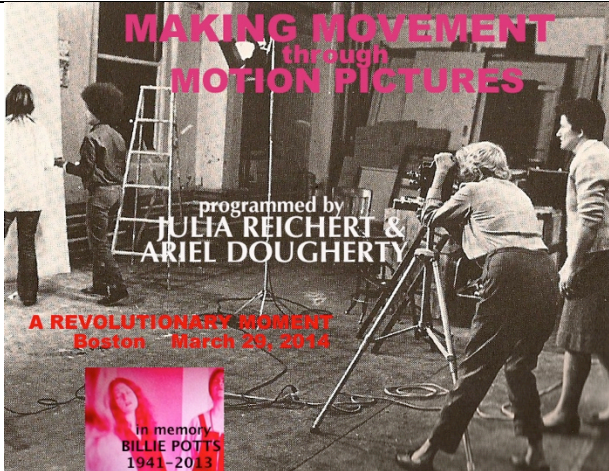

Women's Silverscreen Roadshow 1580 Caballo Road, Truth or Consequences, NM 87901-3013 575.740.5868 ArielCamera@gmail.com An evolving tour of a collection of women-made films from communities of 1970s to present. DOMESTIC TRANQUILLITY & a few other early WMM shorts available via the Roadshow.

Making Movement through Motion Pictures

A sampling of twelve Films and Video produced during the period 1968 to 1975
programmed by Julia Reichert (a founder of New Day Films)
and Ariel Dougherty (a founder of Women Make Movies)

An Introduction

by Ariel Dougherty presented before the film screening,
March 29, 2014, A Revolutionary Moment, Boston University

Slide	Talk
 <p>B&W production still from Suzanne Armstrong shoot, JUST LOOKING (a Women Make Movies production) by Susan Meiselas</p>	<p>It is fantastic to learn that LEFT ON PEARL has been the impetus for this conference.</p> <p>Let's all salute the power of film!!</p>
<p>TOOLS:</p>  <p>Left, cover Jeanne Betancourt book, Women In Focus (1974); right, flyer for screening of Videoletters, Washington, DC, 1976</p>	<p>About half of the films Julia and I have selected, were shot with a Bolex. – the camera held by the woman in the mirror (art by Suzan Pitt). This camera is a 16mm workhorse. It means the picture and voice are not lip-synced to one another. Voice and other sounds are over-laid.</p> <p>On the right is a woman, drawn, carrying a half-inch porta-pak tape deck and in her stretched out arm a camera. These video recorders were revolutionary new tech in the period enabling media activists to record and immediately playback sessions. Some of the most radical and dynamic feminist material was recorded on these porta-paks..</p> <p>Film is physical, and tactical. Video is electronic with invisible impulses or waves. The two different media come from and register in our human synapse in different circuitry.</p>

[illegible]

I quote from a proposal in 1970 by the NY Women's Video Collective to the NYSCA:
 "Proposed Project: *"Experiment with ways in which videotape can assist in the consciousness-raising of a women's liberation group over a 6-month period."*

What's NOT on DVD? Too Much



For this screening tonight we show **ONLY** works on DVDs. We've been through the transfer to VHS phase, now we are in the DVD era. What's next?

As I worked with a few filmmakers to get their 16mm films transferred to DVD we all chuckled about how the DVD process costs as much as the original productions.

Many important works like Jackie Shearer's *A MINOR ALTERATION* or Alile Sharon Larken's *YOUR CHILDREN COME BACK TO YOU* – both short narratives by African American women are not on DVD.

Far too much material is not readily available. We need a massive campaign to ensure that the 1970s works remain available to audiences in multiple formats.

JUMP CUT

A REVIEW OF CONTEMPORARY MEDIA

Women's Happytime Commune New departures in women's films

by E. Ann Kaplan

from *Jump Cut*, no. 9, 1975, pp. 9-11
copyright *Jump Cut: A Review of Contemporary Media*, 1975, 2004

A study of Sheila Paige's *WOMEN'S HAPPYTIME COMMUNE* provides an opportunity to survey the kinds of films women have been making



The present women's movement is unique historically in the emphasis that has been placed on women's art and women's culture generally. Interest in films by and about women began in 1969 as part of the larger focus on women's creative activity, and on analysis of women in art and specifically in the media. The reasons for this emphasis need thorough analysis, but probably they have to do with the forms the women's movement took in general, particularly consciousness raising with its emphasis on personal expression, and with the influence of the 60s counterculture.

Screen shot of Kaplan's article (<http://bit.ly/MHwHeY>) with an overlay of frames from the actual film provided by Sheila Paige, director.

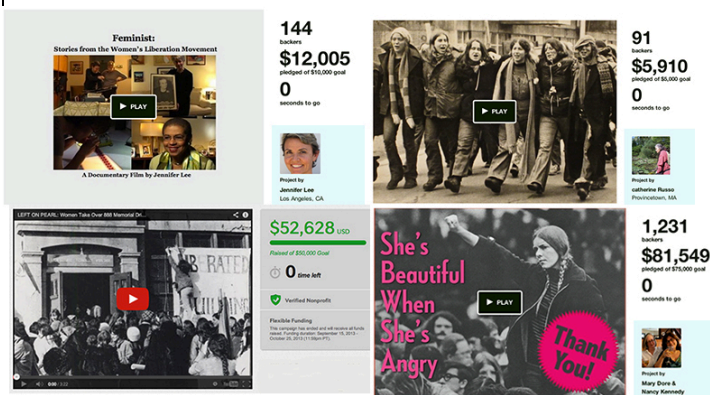
Narratives

Feminist filmmakers made far too few narratives. We are still making far too few. Narratives instill visions – provide us opportunity to see where we might go or came from. They can create hope and view of a place we might grow into.

In the 1970s we feminist filmmakers evolved new terms like wishful-filmmaking or fanumentary that you've never heard of, in hopes these forms might take and evolve.

This 1975 article by Ann Kaplan discusses the uniqueness of Sheila Paige's *Women's Happy Time Commune*, in a sea of documentaries.

The Economy of Feminist Film Making



Screen shots of crowd funding campaigns of four of the contemporary history films shown on the previous two nights.

In part, narratives were few due to money.

Maybe today access to money is BETTER than ever – but way NOT GOOD ENOUGH.

Explicit feminist content in films are particularly difficult for funders to grasp and or to want to fund.

Fortunately crowd-funding has emerged. How many have participated in some kind of crowd funding effort??

This enables a range of new works to seek a funding audience. But even here we need a more developed tool or network, so that each project does not begin anew.

Ensuring the History



Rose Lowder puts more films into distribution at Filmmakers Cooperative, 2010.

As the women's liberation movement dawned some of us choose films as our tool to make feminist change. At the time, even then, we knew we were making history.

If we are going to ensure a legacy of the women's liberation movement—all these films need to be added to your university's media collection. These films need to be put into your budgets and purchased so new generations get to enjoy and learn—in our own words and pictures—what our movement was like.

STUDY & PRESERVATION



Clockwise, from upper left: Film reels of Joann Elam's under archiving; one of the five covers of the too short-lived publication, *Women & Film*; still from Videofreex video on August 1970 Women's March down Fifth Ave; video class at the Women's InterArt Center, c. 1974.

I cannot underscore enough the necessity for study of this era and preservation of the films from the birth of women's liberation. You within academia have an enormous responsibility here.

Unlike publications like *Heresies* that helped document feminist art, *Women & Film* was short lived. No central publication exists of feminist film & video. Our archives, works and ephemera are scattered, and in desperate need of historic detectives to unearth and assemble them.

For new historic films to come of the period don't neglect home movies and amateur filmmakers as source material.

THE FUTURE



Poster from recent event in Providence, RI

Even though New Day Films and Women Make Movies, and others from the early 1970s created new venues to get works before audiences, we need new sister / progressive organizations to augment that work, deepen the channels of distribution and especially exhibition.

We need an active grassroots screening campaign of these works that we are showing tonight and many others including those of the last two nights.

The fiftieth anniversaries of many WLM milestones come up over the next few years. Why not a fifty states feminist film festival to celebrate the great successes of feminism, and the work we still have to do.

Ideas abound. Will power to execute new possibilities is needed.



I'm making this tool to aid us all in this quest.

Please hold & remember in your heart –

- + The Women's Movement Effected Everyone
- + It took place in All corners of the Country
- + It was Leaderless Allowing The Many to Rise
- + We Women Were Innovative and Grand in Our Visions

Enjoy the films.

Recapping The Post Screening DISCUSSION -- PRESERVATION

MAKING MOVEMENT THROUGH MOTION PICTURES

One evening's program at A Revolutionary Moment conference BU March 29, 2014

By Ariel Dougherty May 1, 2014

An invigorating discussion emerged at the conclusion of showing the twelve radically different works representing feminist filmmaking of the early women's liberation movement. Regrettably we all (but especially myself) missed Julia's viewpoint and input, as a family emergency had sent her home that morning at the crack of dawn.

As the *very last event* of A Revolutionary Moment conference our numbers had dwindled to an audience of about fifty, but a dedicated group it was who hung in there. The discussion centered exclusively around preservation.

Jennifer Lee (FEMINIST: STORIES FROM WOMEN'S LIBERATION / <http://www.feministstories.com/>) broadcast a bit of the discussion out in real-time via Twitter:



Jennifer Lee @JenniferLeeUSA · Mar 29

Listening to @MediaEquity Ariel Dougherty talk about early feminist films that have been forgotten. She is trying to get them to be shown.

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A woman from Chicago mentioned that all of Joann Elam (1949-2009) works are archived at the Chicago Film Archives.

<http://www.chicagofilmarchives.org/news/joann-elam-collection-update>. Elam made one of the first films on sexual violence, RAPE (1975) still in distribution, but only on 16mm, at Canyon Cinema (<http://canyoncinema.com/catalog/film/?i=825>).

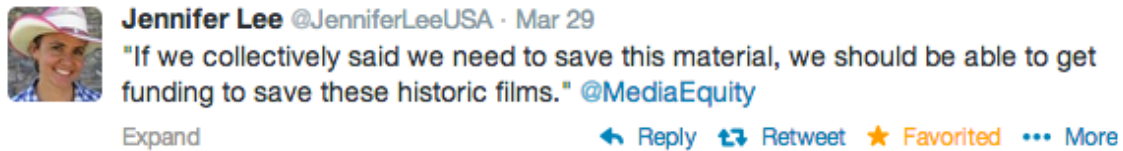
I added that the four founders of New Day Films, Julia Reichert, Jim Klein, Liane Brandon and Amalie Rothchild had all decided that their papers and works will go to the Rubenstein Library at Duke University. (<http://blogs.library.duke.edu/rubenstein/2012/04/02/new-day-films-events-at-full-frame-to-celebrate-rubenstein-library-acquisition/>). And that my own collection is at Schlesinger Library (<http://oasis.lib.harvard.edu/oasis/deliver/~sch01216>). We are currently discussing how some of the film works (<http://oasis.lib.harvard.edu/oasis/deliver/~sch01360>) can be made available via a private Vimeo stream.

Further, I mentioned that the Sophia Smith Collection at Smith College had acquired the collection of Alida Walsh (1933-2007) (<http://asteria.fivecolleges.edu/findaids/sophiasmith/mnsss486.html>), a central figure in Women/ Artists/Filmmakers. Sophia Smith also has all the videos, over 60, which were produced at the National Congress of Neighborhood Women, including the celebrated documentary by their founder Christine Noschese, WOMEN OF THE NORTHSIDE FIGHT BACK. (1974). The material can all be viewed on line: http://media.smith.edu/departments/ssc/ncnw/ncnw_playlist.html) Fantastic!

During our discussion in real-time, one of Jennifer's tweets was 'favorited' by the LA based radio show, Feminist Magazine:



Catherine Russo (A MOMENT IN HERSTORY / <http://catherinerussodocumentaries.com/>) raised the concern of how we might be able to pay for all this archiving. My response:



Extra effort now needs to go into the preservation process to ensure that these works are enjoyed by generations to come. The germinal film and video work of the Second Wave generation must be studied and understood in the context of their period. The more and better we collectively know our feminist cinematic history, the greater enabled we will be to effect grander feminist film advances in the future. These works are a vital moving visual record of the labor, burst of ideas and mammoth change that women undertook at the birth of the women's liberation movement.

To preserve the film & video works of this period there is much work to do and money to raise. Let's begin.