RAFT: Rutgers Association for Feminist Training

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The Leadership Scholars Certificate Program is a two-year selective, interdisciplinary certificate program that prepares Rutgers undergraduate women to be informed, innovative, and socially responsible leaders.

Leadership Scholars design and implement social action projects to expand their understanding of issues and problems and to develop leadership skills.

This project gives Scholars the opportunity to apply the theoretical knowledge they have gained about leadership, advocacy, and social change with the practical and experiential knowledge they have developed about a particular policy issue or problem through the field site placement. It also further develops leadership skills by giving undergraduates the opportunity to practice leadership through action.

To find out more please visit the Institute for Women’s Leadership’s website at http://iwl.rutgers.edu.
Conceptual Groundwork

• feminist secret society
• conscious-raising, artist collective
  — “My silences had not protected me. Your silences will not protect you. But for every real word spoken, for every attempt I had ever made to speak those truths for which I am still seeking, I had made contact with other women while we examined the words to fit a world in which we all believed, bridging our differences” (Lorde, The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action)
• to introduce feminist activism to the larger Rutgers community
• use subversive public art to ignite change on campus
Foremothers

• 70s feminist artists
  – Suzanne Lacy, Judy Chicago
  – Martha Wilson
    • That [type of “high art”] has no relevance to our lives. It has no meaning in terms of your experience walking down the street or in terms of whom you perceive yourself to be in the world or your sexual orientation or your social status or anything. It’s ideas for the sake of ideas, but without any sense that the idea might have an impact on the culture. I wanted to work with the ideas that were important to me, like the social status of women, for example. (Wilson Interview 2011)

• Guerrilla Girls
  – The trajectory of the Guerrilla Girls is an example of contention and regrouping that is pertinent to the renewed action and debate around collective artistic production and participatory practice. (Anonymous 2013)

• Pussy Riot
Let’s draw about sex

• Use of art to initiate a sex-positive discussion
• Collaboration with Shanée
Consciousness-raising is complicated

• Mixed backgrounds
  – Academic, activist, neither
  – Intersectionality

• Overly conscious?
  – Have we moved beyond simply raising our consciousness?
What is a collective?

• Arise out of a desire
  – Common interests/goals
  – Out of a need?

• Non-hierarchical leadership
Leading together

- Collaboration is key
- Support individuals to support the whole
- Relationships are at the root of change
Bibliography


• Wilson, Martha. Interview. BOMB Magazine. 2011. Web Only