

**Reserve your place now and sign up for a special
four-session CR discussion group hosted by NOW-NYC**

NEW (OR OLD) EXPECTATIONS FOR WOMEN

This consciousness-raising discussion group is for those of us who believe that the issues that emerged during the campaigns of U.S. Senator Hillary Clinton need further reflection and exploration. No matter how you voted, 2008 is a history-making year for women in politics. Yet it has exposed painful sexism towards women by the media, in our culture, and among men and even among some women. How do we move forward?

The success of *Sex in the City* seems to suggest that there is a hunger for more female bonding. But how do we relate to women? For example, do we expect more of women and give them less credit? Do we still expect them to conform to certain ideals of how women should behave and allow them less leeway in politics, on the job, in friendships? Or do you see new patterns emerging? Did the women candidates in 2008 flesh out new concepts about women as leaders? What is your experience?

SESSION 1, THURSDAY NOVEMBER 6, 7 PM

-- **WOMEN IN POLITICS AND CULTURE** How did women vote in the Presidential election and what does it mean? Why didn't more women support Clinton? Was it realistic to expect that most women should support her? Why didn't women in the media stop the sexism directed at women candidates? Was some of the criticism deserved? Why is there still such a gender imbalance among serious writers and commentators? Are men still more likely to be perceived as "risk takers," "brighter" or "better leaders"? Do women limit themselves and/or unconsciously try to keep other women in their place? In these difficult times, what can we change?

(This will not be a discussion of which candidates you supported. The discussion will focus on how being a woman affected Senator Clinton as a candidate...and from this we will perhaps gain a perspective into aspects of our own lives in the next three sessions.)

SESSION 2, THURSDAY DECEMBER 4, 7 PM

-- **IN THE WORKPLACE** Do we expect more support from female supervisors and co-workers or is the problem that we get less support from them? Is there more second-guessing when women get promoted? Do women supervisors micro manage or is it easier to take orders from men? Are women co-workers more or less competitive than our male co-workers? What is healthy competition among women? Do we ourselves, as bosses or teachers, have a double standard? What are

your current experiences? How difficult is it to change these dynamics in the workplace?

SESSION 3, THURSDAY JANUARY 8, 7 PM

--**IN THE FAMILY** Has anything changed when it comes to personal relationships? Were our mothers good role models or poor ones? Did they strengthen or undermine you? Did we expect sacrifice on their part or resent the choices they made? Were these different from the expectations we had of our fathers? Do we relate differently to sisters than brothers? What can change?

SESSION 4, THURSDAY FEBRUARY 5, 7 PM

-- **AMONG FRIENDS** (Using concepts of linguist Deborah Tannen's book, *You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation*.) Do men pick on the weakest man in a group while women pick on the strongest woman in a group? Does too much sympathy prevent problem solving? Do women encourage strength in other women or weakness? Do we “dis” or “trash” too much?

This is not a therapy group or a debating society. This series of open-ended discussions will use some of the principles of consciousness raising (a guide used by the early women's movement to foster insight and analysis by requiring participants to speak first from their own personal experience, rather trading opinions, and to listen respectfully to other participants). From this CR procedure, commonality and “aha” moments usually emerge, the first step in building change. The questions listed under each topic are merely a suggested guide—participants can and will change the direction of the discussion.

The discussion leaders are Mary Orovan (who taught at NY Polytechnic University, wrote *Humanizing English*, and was a member of New York Radical Feminists) and Noreen Connell, (who is past president of NOW-NYC and NOW-NYS). Both are experienced consciousness-raising facilitators.

Sign up now and reserve your place by sending in a \$15 registration fee (which covers all four sessions) by November 4th to reserve your place. No substitution of dates listed. Participants are asked to make a prior commitment to attend at least three out of the four discussion sessions, which will be held at the NOW-NYC office at 150 W. 28th Street #304, less than half a block away from the #1 IRT stop at 28th Street. Cheese and fruit will be served (along with some warmth, humor, and shared wisdom).