



WORKSHOP ON

Women's Studies and Systems of Knowledge: Contexts and Problems

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

C o n t e x t

A residential workshop is organised by the **School of Women's Studies, Jadavpur University**, Kolkata, with the financial support from **Sir Ratan Tata Trust**, Mumbai, from 18-26 May 2010 at the Art Land Country Club at Joka in West Bengal.

C o n c e p t

Systems of knowledge may refer to systems within a particular discipline/field of study or within a network of disciplines/fields of study. Most systems of knowledge, in particular disciplines/ fields of study, are subject to positionality - the situation and perspective - of the knower. Feminist epistemology (a broad set of approaches to the study of knowledge) is concerned with the way in which gender does and ought to influence not only our conceptions of knowledge, but also the knowing subject and practices of inquiry. Mainstream systems of knowledge, powerful as it is, is almost without exception, gender biased. As speakers or listeners, writers or readers, we necessarily draw upon and often contribute to these powerful and pervasive gender biases. If we completely reject mainstream systems of knowledge, we run the risk of marginalization, either

becoming non-functional or exclusive. We may thus lose the ability to influence others or indeed may be even fail to be seen or heard. As actors and spectators within the society, we do need to be seen and be heard. The asymmetrical, value-laden, hierarchical intertwining of gender and epistemology needs continuously to be reviewed not only as an external critique but also from within systems of knowledge. Production of alternative systems/practices of knowledge may also work as a challenge to the mainstream. What Women's Studies does is that while on the one hand it challenges/questions conventional systems of knowledge, it also creates alternative knowledge systems.

How power is exercised through the construction of knowledge has been a prime area of feminist research, pedagogy and activism. One of the aims of Women's Studies has been to revisit knowledge formations in relation to structures of power thereby recasting basic assumptions about the 'truth' value of knowledge systems. Coming from academia, activism and other related fields of study this critique is an ongoing process. The chief aim of this Workshop is to contextualize Women's Studies vis-à-vis various systems of knowledge.

The Workshop can accommodate participation from various academic disciplines/fields of studies (Humanities, Social sciences, Sciences, Technological Sciences, Biological Sciences, Law, Media and Communication and others) including activists who work on the immediate present and future restructurings.

We invite proposals on topics related to:

- Review of systems of knowledge from the gender perspective
 - Study of the dependence of knowledge systems on cultural, economical, political, historical, social conditions
 - The study of interactions between individual thinking and institutionalized systems of knowledge (eg. academic disciplines)
 - How local knowledge forms, lived experience, alternative models have contributed to/ changed/ challenged established systems of knowledge
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Please note that the workshop will be fully residential. **Travel to and from the workshop venue and accommodation and board for the period of the workshop will be covered. To check venue go to: www.artlandhotel.com**

Those who had participated in either of the two workshops held before may apply but new applications will be given priority.

Eligibility:

- College/ University Teachers teaching anywhere in India
- Research scholars working on their M. Phil dissertation/ doctoral or post doctoral thesis anywhere in India
- Researchers working in some projects/ affiliated to an institute anywhere in India
- Candidates must be Indian Citizens

Apply with:

- Research proposal (1000 words approx.) for a paper presentation in the workshop. The presentation should be an unpublished work.
- CV (mentioning involvement with women's studies cells/ centres, etc if any).
- Experience of teaching or research in Women's Studies, if any, should be highlighted.

Extended deadline for sending applications: 2 January 2010

Send applications to:

Jayeeta Bagchi,

Coordinator, SRTT – SWS, Jadavpur University

School of Women's Studies

Adult Continuing Education and Extension Building

3rd Floor. Jadavpur University. Kolkata -700032.

Tele-fax: **+33 2414 6531** (10 am – 5:30 pm, excluding sat, sun and other public holidays)

Mail to: residentialworkshop@gmail.com