

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS AND PRESENTER BIOS

Thursday 2:00–3:30 P.M.

Southern Lesbian-Feminist Activist Herstory Project * Several Panelists – See Below: Royal Palm Ballroom

Using a panel format, they will share what emerged out of *Womonwrites*, the Southeast Lesbian Writers Conference: stories about their purpose and process, what worked, what didn't, and how they went about collecting these stories to share in publication and preserve for future generations of Lesbians. They will read from their three issues of *Sinister Wisdom*. It will be interactive: questions, discussion, and comments.

Maximum attendees: 50

Panelists include:

Kathleen "Corky" Culver (1939), Caucasian, has been a Lesbian feminist activist since 1968. She has sought a life of poetry, peace and justice, community music, and dance. She is happy to have three pieces in *Older Queer Voices: Intimacy of Survival*.

Rand Hall (1945), white, is a writer, editor, publisher, artist, and activist. She is living in a Lesbian community in Northeast Alabama.

Rose Norman (1949) is a retired English professor from Alabama who, as a general editor of the Southern Lesbian Feminist Activist Herstory Project, has interviewed nearly 100 Lesbian Feminists.

Kate Ellison (1949), Caucasian, came out when she was 24 and has lived on Wimmin's Land most of the time since 1988.

Barbara Ester (1947), Euro-American: Our Herstory feeds the future as I share stories of Miami's wealth of creative Lesbian activists and artists who supported each other's venues in the past and continue to plant seeds for the future!

Barbara Esrig (1947) is a writer, cook, traveler, bubbie, and writer-in-residence in Art in Medicine, living actively as a Lesbian in the Gainesville, Florida, community since 1979. She hasn't missed a year

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at Womonwrites, which she considers her second home since her first time there in 1982.

Woody Blue (1952), Caucasian has been sailing on political winds all her life...and loving it.

Write Hear * Mimi Gonzalez: King Palm Room

This workshop aims for the old days of the 1970s “consciousness raising” living-room sisterhood where a revolution was born on our shoulders. Writing is an immediate and powerful tool to hear our own thinking, feel our true feelings. The act and art of writing, by stopping time and hearing our own voices, captures to the page what lives in ambiguous smoke inside. Listening to each other’s words shows us what we are capable of. Being heard is an immediate validation of our very precious existence.

Maximum attendees: 17

Mimi Gonzalez (1960), Cuban-Italian, is a successful stand-up comic who tours the nation and internationally with Olivia Travel and the United Service Organization (military). Throughout her long tenure as a performer, she’s committed what she calls “random acts of publishing.” She’s attended and facilitated writing workshops from Michfest to Boston to all the Olivia trips she’s been booked on over the past three years. Mimi is currently pursuing a second lifelong dream by attending Mills College for an MFA in Creative Writing.

The Ceremony of the Vulva * Katherine Wood: Sabal Palm Room

Part of mobilizing for the future is healing the hurts of the past (both the atrocities that have been committed against women for centuries and the pain we have experienced personally) so that we are energized to follow our passions. Vulva means “woman who speaks with her lower mouth.” In this spiritually-based ceremony, we will reconnect with our lower mouths, listening to the intuitive guidance there, healing the past, and re-balancing our innate power. In restoring this magical center of power, we reconnect with Mother Earth and celebrate our deep wisdom as Lesbians.

Maximum attendees: No maximum

THURSDAY 2:00–3:30 P.M.

Katherine Wood (1954), white, is the owner of Vibrant Tree Ministry, a shamanic healing and teaching ministry in Colorado, and the Chapter Coordinator for Northern Colorado OLOC.

Caregiving Strategies and Resources * Jennifer Abod and Elana Dykewomon. Two separate sessions over two days, Thursday and Friday: Queen Palm Room

Session 1

Sharing strategies for caretaking and nourishing ourselves. Stories of how we love, hold joy, and continue our relationship in the presence of decline.

Maximum attendees: No maximum

Jennifer Abod (1946), Caucasian, Jewish, is an award-winning audio/video documentarian. Her works include *The Passionate Pursuits of Angela Bowen*, *The Edge of Each Other's Battles: The Vision of Audre Lorde*, *Look Us in the Eye: The Old Women's Project*, and *Radio Profile of Audre Lorde*. Abod was a singer in the New Haven Women's Liberation Rock Band, a radio broadcaster, and a professor.

Elana Dykewomon (1949), is the award-winning author of eight books foregrounding Lesbian heroism, including the novels *Beyond the Pale*, *Risk*, and *Riverfinger Women*. Her most recent book, *What Can I Ask—New & Selected Poems 1975–2014*, was published as a Sapphic Classic by Sinister Wisdom/Midsummer Night's Press. Elana is a long-time social justice activist, editor, and teacher. She lives in Oakland, stirring up trouble whenever she can.

Round Singing for Old Lesbians Mobilizing for the Future * Louise Brill: Sanibel Room

Participatory round singing, all welcome, no experience necessary. We will sing rounds to inspire, energize, and comfort ourselves for the work ahead. Sheet music available. This workshop is given in memory of Pajj Wadley-Bailey (1939-2016), a Black lifelong Lesbian Feminist anti-racist activist who was a member of the Champlain OLOC chapter (Vermont and New York) and served briefly on the Steering Committee.

Maximum attendees: No maximum

THURSDAY 2:00–3:30 P.M.

Louise Brill (1946), white Lesbian: 1/2 German Jewish, 1/4 Irish, 1/4 French/English/Scottish, is the founder and director of the Vermont Women's Round Sing, a weekly Lesbian round singing group in existence for over 15 years. She has been presenting Rounds Workshops at the New England Folk Festival (Boston area) and has led participatory round singing at many camps and conferences. She is a retired, inspired teacher of international folk dance and a juried artist with the Vermont Arts Council and the New England Foundation for the Arts. She also leads a Balkan folk dance group in Burlington, Vermont.

Friday: 2:30–4:00 P.M.**The L Word * Alix Dobkin: King Palm Room**

Free-for-all discussion on the state of Lesbians in LGBT communities and elsewhere ... including the values implicit in a Lesbian identity and what it means to us all.

Maximum attendees: No maximum

Alix Dobkin (1940), Jewish: While I was on a concert tour in the 1980s, I met some OLOC leaders and they helped me look forward to turning 60, so I joined OLOC in 2000 and the Steering Committee in 2006, and became Co-director five years later. Woodstock, New York is my home, near my daughter and three grandchildren. I've produced six records, three CDs, a song book, and *My Red Blood: A Memoir of Growing Up Communist, Coming Onto the Greenwich Village Folk Scene and Coming Out in the Feminist Movement*, a 2009 Lambda Literary Award finalist.

Workshop Crafting for Creating Change Conference - 2018 in Washington, D.C. * Mary Jean Mulherin: Majestic Palm Room

Creating Change is FREE to Lesbians over 65. In this workshop, we will craft one or more Old Lesbian visibility workshops to submit for inclusion in Creating Change 2018, to be held January 24 through January 28, 2018. Bring your ideas and let's have FUN! More info on Creating Change, lodging options, meals, and transportation provided at workshop.

Maximum attendees: No maximum

FRIDAY 2:30–4:00 P.M.

Mary Jean Mulherin (1951) is an Old, bold, proud Lesbian poet, songwriter, artist, and activist. OLOC member since 2010.

Caregiving Strategies and Resources * Jennifer Abod and Elana Dykewomon. Two separate sessions over two days, Thursday and Friday: Queen Palm Room

Session 2

Sharing resources, bibliographies, websites, our experiences with what exists, and what we'd like to exist.

Maximum attendees: No maximum

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Dealing with Memory Loss * Jan Griesinger: Sabal Palm Room

We will share stories of how we struggle with this problem and discuss some approaches to working with it.

Maximum attendees: No maximum

Jan Griesinger (1942) has been on the OLOC Steering Committee since the year 2000 and has served as Treasurer since 2003. She co-founded the Susan B. Anthony Memorial UnRest Home Women's Land trust near Athens, Ohio. She serves on the board of the Appalachian Peace and Justice Network.

FRIDAY 2:30–4:00 P.M.**Does Aging Change How We Feel About Death? * Carol Anne Douglas: Sanibel Room**

This workshop will be a safe space for discussion, not a presentation. Many of us have lost partners or close friends, or worry about our own deaths. Does growing old make it harder to face death – our own, or those of others? Or do we perhaps feel calmer about our own deaths? Maximum number of participants: 15

Carol Anne Douglas (1946), white and Irish American, worked on the feminist news journal *off our backs* for 35 years and is a founding member and Chapter Coordinator of Washington, D.C.-Area OLOC.

Saturday: 9:30–11:00 A.M.**The Power and Joy of Women's Drumming * Ubaka Hill: Royal Palm Ballroom**

Bring your hand drums, rattles, bells, percussion, and voice to learn, play, experience, and enjoy the power of drumming and singing in women's community. Learn rhythms and songs that can be shared, played alone, or performed, in healing circles and community drum circles everywhere.

The workshop is a celebration of the female-centric lineage of women's music-making from the sacred to the secular, including women's empowerment, leadership, activism, and culture.

Join Ubaka on stage as the Drumsong Orchestra during her performance. Share the power and joy of rhythms and drum songs from the workshop.

Hand drums and percussion instruments are required. All drums, percussion, and skill levels are welcome.

Maximum attendees: No maximum

Ubaka Hill (1956) is a master drum teacher and performer of percussion, poetry, and song for positive change.

SATURDAY: 9:30–11:00 A.M.**Writing with All Our Senses * Elana Dykewomon: Majestic Palm Room**

A participatory workshop for Lesbians who want to explore ways of accessing more information about their material (memories, life experiences). Facilitator will outline a sense-based approach (physical, emotional, psychological, spiritual), based in her ongoing practice. Participants should bring pen and paper, and be prepared to write for two 15-minute periods. No experience as a writer necessary – only the desire to write.

Maximum attendees: Limited to 10 participants

Elana Dykewomon (1949) is the award-winning author of eight books foregrounding Lesbian heroism, including the novels *Beyond the Pale*, *Risk*, and *Riverfinger Women*. Her most recent book, *What Can I Ask—New & Selected Poems 1975–2014*, was published as a Sapphic Classic by Sinister Wisdom/Midsummer Night's Press. Elana is a long-time social justice activist, editor, and teacher. She lives in Oakland, stirring up trouble whenever she can.

Challenging Ageism – Old is Not a 4-Letter Word * Jan Griesinger and Bonnie Wagner: Sabal Palm Room

“You don’t look your age” is not a compliment. The best age is the age you are. Isn’t everyone older than someone? Old is spelled O-L-D, not B-A-D. Discuss how growing old affects us and how to challenge old being perceived as bad.

Maximum attendees: No maximum

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Bonnie Wagner (1942), Jewish, is a member of the Steering Committee. She is the former Executive Director of the New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence and a founder of the Family Shelter in Ulster County, New York, a program for battered women and their children. Bonnie taught Women’s Studies at the State

SATURDAY: 9:30–11:00 A.M.

University of New York at New Paltz for 10 years. She is a retired guidance counselor and a mother and grandmother.

SAIL = Survival, Activism, Independence, and Loving for Old Low Income Lesbians * Mary Jean Mulherin: King Palm Room

Low-income single Old Lesbians have survival challenges, but also much wisdom to share with one another. This workshop is designed to be a sharing circle for women to share their "secrets" to aging well in spite of lack of income. Women are encouraged to bring anything creative they do to foster their activism and loving in the wider web. Workshop open to any Old Lesbian who identifies as a low-income activist.

Maximum attendees: No maximum

Mary Jean Mulherin (1951) is an Old, bold, proud Lesbian poet, songwriter, artist, and activist. OLOC member since 2010.

Stopping the Many Wars on the Poor * Pat Gowens: Queen Palm Room

This workshop will describe how you can help. This includes the successes and challenges of women-led groups fighting to end the wars on the poor. Welfare warrior mothers and grandmothers of disappeared children fight to stop the unjust removals of poor children from safe homes on unproven charges of abuse or neglect. They work in coalition with the "Fight for \$15" movement. They participate in Black Lives Matter, the Mexican immigrant movement, Code Pink, Jewish Voice for Peace: Fighting for Free Palestine, and National Advocates for Pregnant Women fighting the war on fertile poor women.

Maximum attendees: No maximum

Pat Gowens (1944) has been the director of Welfare Warriors and editor of *Mother Warriors Voice* in Milwaukee since 1986. This national publication reports on resistance in the wars on the poor. In 1995, she received the Tides Foundation's *Excellence in Public Advocacy* award for protecting the civil rights of families on welfare. In the 1970s, she was the NOW state director of the Womyn and Poverty task force in Wisconsin. She is a mother, grandmother, and great grandma.