

Who Inspires You?



Today we celebrate the 101st birthday of the remarkable Gerda Lerner. She was the foremost historian in defining the scope and importance of women's history, and had an enormous influence on the formation and continued work of the National Women's History Alliance.

Gerda Lerner: My Inspiration

(April 30, 1920 – January 2, 2013)

NWHA Executive Director Molly Murphy MacGregor writes about women's historian Gerda Lerner, and her influence on the work of the National Women's History Alliance.

You can read the full article on our website: [Gerda Lerner: My Inspiration](#)

In 1979, I was selected to attend the 19-day Women's History Institute for Women Leaders, held at Sara Lawrence College, and chaired by Gerda Lerner. The 39 participants included the Presidents of many women's organizations including the Girls Scouts of America, NOW, and Women's Action Alliance, as well as noted scholars and women who had served with Bella Abzug in organizing the National Women's Conference held in Houston in 1977.



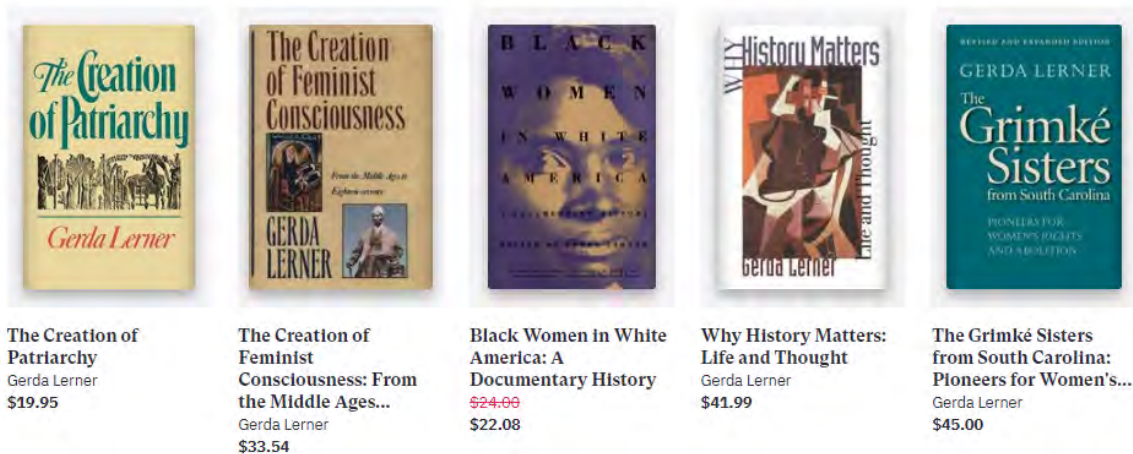
My invitation was issued because I had written a plea to the organizing committee to consider introducing the idea of a National Women's History Week. Along with my plea, I had sent copies of the materials we had produced for the celebrations of [Women's History Week in Sonoma County](#) in 1978 and 1979.



To determine a time to make my pitch to the conference participants, I needed to meet with Gerda. As I write this, I remember my quivering knees and pounding heart. At that moment in time, I could not have imagined our future relationship. It was inconceivable to me that she would become my personal champion as well the essential champion for the establishment of what has become National Women's History Month and the National Women's History Alliance.

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"Women's History is women's right. It is an essential, indispensable heritage from which we can draw pride comfort, courage, and long range vision." Gerda Lerner



We've made a list of some of our favorite [Gerda Lerner books](#) on our Bookshop site.

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Who are the women who inspire you?



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