

# The Dinner Party Curriculum Project

## Classroom Connections: A Feast of Women's Contributions

**Grade Levels:** Upper Elementary (adaptable to Middle and High School)



Andrea Horn

Art teacher Andrea Horn, who teaches at Muhlenberg Elementary School in Allentown, PA, created a fifth-grade lesson entitled "*The Dinner Party: A Feast of Women's Contributions*." This is the second lesson in a unit of study entitled *Mothers of Mother Earth*. In this lesson, the teacher and students view the DVD *The Dinner Party: A Tour of the Exhibition*, explore a poem by Judy Chicago, and study the entry banners which reflect the voice of the artist. Through an investigation of the artist's voice, students deepen their understanding of *The Dinner Party* and the contributions of women that have improved the world.

### Enduring Ideas:

1. Across cultures and throughout history, women have made great contributions in improving the world.

### Lesson Two: *The Dinner Party: A Feast of Women's Contributions*

Class: Fifth Grade

Time Allotment: Three 45-minute class periods



#### Overview:

#### Lesson Summary:

Students will look at an overview of *The Dinner Party* using the Power Point presentation and DVD. They will also explore and find meaning in the various aspects of *The Dinner Party* (entry banners, place settings and the *Heritage Floor*) through group discussion, art criticism, and language arts activities.

#### Artworks and Artists:

1. *The Dinner Party* by Judy Chicago
2. Assorted images such as an installation overview
3. Susan B. Anthony, Anne Hutchinson, Theodora, Hatshepsut, and Hypatia place settings

#### Key Concepts Addressed in Lesson Two:

1. Women have made great contributions to the world that should be considered of equal importance to those of men.

2. Women have made contributions to the world that have been undervalued, ignored, and erased.

3. Art can educate people about the past and motivate them to make a difference for the future.

4. The Jewish concept of “tikkun olam” means “to heal or repair the world” and can guide all people in making significant contributions to make the world a better place.

5. One person can make a difference in the world.



#### *Essential Questions:*

1. Why is it important to learn about the contributions of all human beings?

#### *PA Standards:*

##### ► 9.2.5 Historical and Cultural Contexts

A. Explain the historical, cultural and social context of an individual work in the arts.

D. Analyze a work of art from its historical and cultural perspective.

E. Analyze how historical events and culture impact forms, techniques and purposes of works in the arts.

F. Know and apply appropriate vocabulary used between social studies and the arts and humanities.

I. Identify, explain and analyze philosophical beliefs as they relate to works in the arts.

##### ► 9.4.5 Aesthetic Response

A. Identify uses of expressive symbols that show philosophical meanings in works in the arts and humanities.

D. Explain choices made regarding media, technique, form, subject matter and themes that communicate the artist's philosophy within a work in the arts and humanities.

#### *Interdisciplinary Connections:*

1. History

2. Language Arts

#### *Lesson Objectives:*

► Students will demonstrate their understanding of why we are exploring *The Dinner Party* through participation in small group discussions and in a language arts activity.

1. Students will demonstrate their understanding of women's great contributions being undervalued, ignored and erased through participation in both small and large group discussions about *The Dinner Party*.

2. Students will demonstrate their understanding of how art can educate people about the past and motivate them to make a difference for the future through participation in group discussions, language arts activity, and art criticism/aesthetic activity about *The Dinner Party*.

3. Students will demonstrate their understanding that artists make choices regarding media, technique, form and subject matter in order to communicate their ideas through an art criticism/aesthetic activity and group discussions about *The Dinner Party*.

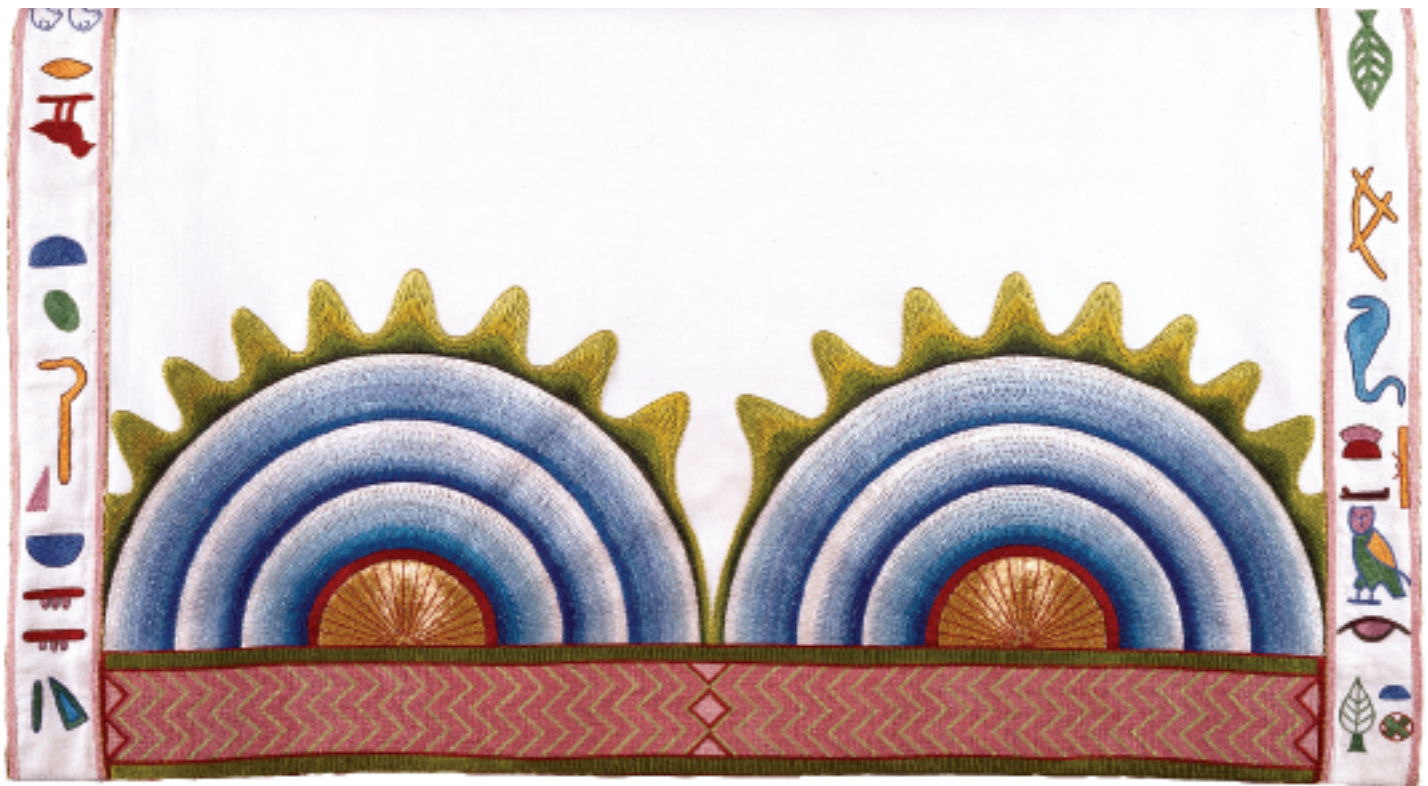
#### *Assessment:*

► The students will know that they have a strong understanding of *The Dinner Party* by using key words/concepts learned in the group discussions, and by constructing meaning in the entry banner and place setting activities.

1. The teacher will observe the efforts and successes of students in their discussions.

2. The teacher will also monitor students' success during their participation in the entry banner and place setting activities.

- ▶ The students will know that they have a better understanding of women's great contributions through participation in small and large group discussions where specific examples about The Dinner Party are discussed.
  1. The teacher will observe the efforts and successes of students in their group discussions.
- ▶ The students will know that they have a better understanding of art educating people about the past and motivating them to make a difference for the future through their participation in group discussions, and in language arts and art criticism/aesthetic activities about The Dinner Party.
  1. The teacher will observe the efforts and successes of students in their discussions.
  2. The teacher will also monitor students' success during their participation in both the language arts and art criticism/aesthetic activities.
- ▶ The students will know that they have a better understanding that artists make choices regarding media, technique, form and subject matter in order to communicate their ideas through their participation in an art criticism/aesthetic activity and group discussion about various aspects of The Dinner Party.
  1. The teacher will observe the efforts and successes of students in their discussions.
  2. The teacher will also monitor students' success during their participation in the art criticism/aesthetic activities.



### Sequence of Action:

#### ▶ ENGAGE

1. Prior to the commencement of this lesson, a short review will take place to keep students on track. All documentation from Lesson One will be displayed for student reference including the “big idea” of the unit: *Across cultures and throughout history women have made great contributions in improving our world.*
2. This lesson will then begin with the Power Point presentation about *The Dinner Party*. Each student table will have a postcard of the installation overview of *The Dinner Party*. The exhibition poster of *The Dinner Party* will also be displayed.





slide one



slide two



slide three



slide four



slide five



slide six

### Slide One:

"Judy Chicago's *The Dinner Party*." Ask, "Why would I refer to Judy Chicago's *The Dinner Party* as a 'feast of great contributions'?"

### Slide Two:

The concept of "tikkun olam", meaning "to heal or repair the world." Ask, "How might *The Dinner Party* help to heal or repair the world?"

### Slide Three:

Background about the artist. Explain that students will also be conducting research and teaching women's history through art. Ask, "Have you ever taught something through a work of art that you created?"

### Slide Four:

Image of *The Dinner Party*.

### Slide Five:

Information about the creation of the artwork. Explain that students will also be collaborating and sharing their ideas and talents with classmates through the creation of a work of art. Ask, "What is the importance of collaboration?" "How can collaborative efforts help you and others?"

### ► DEVELOP

1. Focus on the entry banners

### Slide Six:

Reference to the banners and how they refer to a longer poem by the artist.

Each student will receive a copy of Judy Chicago's poem. (See below.) Read the poem to students as they follow along. Parts of the poem should be assigned to each student group to investigate meaning. Handouts are provided (see below) for Group 1: Lines 1 – 3; Group 2: Lines 4 – 5; Group 3: Lines 6 – 7; Group 4: Lines 8 – 9; Group 5: Lines 10 – 11; Group 6: Lines 12 – 14.

Provide each student with the appropriate handout to help guide the groups toward finding meaning in the poem.

Note that Groups 1, 3, 4, and 6 will have a more challenging task. The teacher should spend time with each group individually to keep it on track. Tell students that they will be sharing their exploration with the rest of the class.

Have each group, beginning with Group 1, share what they learned about the part of the poem they discussed. Document ideas on large chart paper.

After all groups have shared their findings, have students summarize the entire poem. Ask, "What is this poem about?" "How does this poem relate to what we've been learning about?" "What is Judy Chicago's hope for the world?" "Do you think Judy Chicago is satisfied with the way the world is today?" Document ideas on large chart paper.

### Slide Seven:

Information about making the banners. Again, remind students that most of the people who helped create *The Dinner Party* were volunteers. Ask, "Have you ever volunteered your time for someone or something?"

### Slide Eight:

Information about Renaissance prohibitions. Ask, "Have you ever been told you couldn't participate in something because you were a girl or a boy?"



slide seven



slide eight



slide nine



slide ten



slide eleven



slide twelve

### Slide Nine:

**Banner phrases.** Help students reconnect to their ideas about Judy Chicago's poem. "Where are the similarities between the entry banners and the poem?" "Where are the differences between the entry banners and the poem?" "What is the message behind the entry banners?" "Do you find the entry banners message to be similar to the message in the poem?" Document ideas on large chart paper.

2. Revisit the slides containing images of the entry banners (slides 6, 7, 8, and 9). "What does each banner have in common in the way of color?" "Do you notice similar shapes, lines and symbols in each banner?" Students will be made aware that they will see similar colors (red, black, and gold tones) and forms (triangular, floral, and abstracted butterfly forms) in the installation of *The Dinner Party* itself.

3. Present the first three minutes and 19 seconds of *The Dinner Party: A Tour of the Exhibition* to students. Each student will receive handout "Questions to Investigate" to follow along. (See below).

4. Return to the Power Point presentation to reiterate information about *The Dinner Party*.

### Slide Ten:

**Installation view and information.**

### Slide Eleven:

**Additional information about scale and design.** Have a measuring tape available for students to measure and then appreciate the scale of the work.

### Slide Twelve:

**Information about the place settings.** Ask, "Who are the "guests of honor" at the table?" "Why do you think Judy Chicago chose to use the butterfly symbol on the majority of the plates?" See Encounter 9, *On the Wings of a Butterfly*, for handouts about butterflies: *The Butterfly: Scientific and Cultural-Historical Perspectives* and *The Butterfly: Judy Chicago's Perspective*, to promote a better understanding of the butterfly symbols. Ask students, "Do you know someone who does a form of needlework or maybe china painting?" "Have you heard of this type of art before?"

5. Continue showing *The Dinner Party: A Tour of the Exhibition* from three minutes 19 seconds through 13 minutes 20 seconds. Provide students with a set of questions to assist in understanding. The set of questions will be the topic of a group discussion at the end of the video clip. Document ideas on large chart paper.

6. Focus on the place settings. Explain that students are going to take a closer look at some of the place settings and the women they represent. Provide each group (three to five students) with a set of images (one per person) of the same place setting, a separate image of the plate by itself, and a passage taken from *The Dinner Party: From Creation to Preservation* that has been adapted to meet the literary needs of fifth-grade students and a set of questions on a handout.

### ► Place-setting Activity One:

"Guests of Honor" at The Dinner Party (see handout).

Students will first read the questions silently before reading the passage to themselves. (Modifications will be made for those who need it.) Note that the passages on Anne Hutchinson and Susan B. Anthony are longer and might provide more of a challenge.



slide thirteen



slide fourteen

Students will answer the set of questions as a group. Each group will need to choose a presenter. The groups, beginning with those learning about Hatshepsut, will be given an opportunity to share their findings. Document this process on large chart paper in the form of a time-line. Project images of the appropriate place setting for all students to see.

#### ► Place setting Activity Two:

Taking a closer look at the place settings (see handout). Groups will focus on the same place setting they explored earlier. Students will answer the set of questions as a group.

Each group will need to choose a different presenter. The groups, again beginning with Hatshepsut, will be given an opportunity to share their observations. Document this process near the text/documentation from Activity One, "Guests of Honor" at *The Dinner Party*. Project images of the appropriate place setting for all students to see.

As a class, ask students to share their thoughts on the following: "What are the similarities between the place settings we've been studying?" "What are the differences between the place settings we've been studying?" "Why are the chalices, flatware, and embroidered napkins the same at each place setting?" "What is the connection between the entry banners and the place settings?"

7. Focus on the *Heritage Floor*. Show *The Dinner Party: A Tour of the Exhibition* from 20 minutes three seconds through 23 minutes 50 seconds. (This is approximately four minutes in length.)

#### Slide Thirteen:

Image of the Heritage Floor. Ask, "Why were some women honored with a place setting, and others by including their names on the *Heritage Floor*?"

#### ► CLOSURE

1. Continue showing *The Dinner Party: A Tour of the Exhibition* from 23 minutes 50 seconds through 25 minutes 22 seconds; restart at 28 minutes 34 seconds through 31 minutes 26 seconds; restart at 33 minutes through 38 minutes 58 seconds; restart at 39 minutes 18 seconds through the end. (This is approximately 11 minutes 30 seconds in length. Clips were chosen based on age appropriateness.)

#### Slide Fourteen:

Ask, "If Judy Chicago were to visit our school tomorrow, what would you like to know?" "What would you ask her about *The Dinner Party*?" "What would you tell her you learned?" Close with Chicago's question, "What does it mean to have a place at the table?"



#### Preparation:

##### ► Instructional Resources:

1. Large chart paper
2. Power Point presentation about *The Dinner Party*
3. *The Dinner Party: A Tour of the Exhibition* DVD
4. *The Dinner Party: From Creation to Preservation* by Judy Chicago
5. [images.google.com](http://images.google.com)
6. [www.throughtheflower.org](http://www.throughtheflower.org)
7. [www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)



8. Exhibition poster of *The Dinner Party*
9. About 30 copies of a poem by Judy Chicago
10. Poem handouts for student guidance (five of each handout)
11. Butterfly handouts (one for each student) See Encounter 9: *On the Wings of a Butterfly* for handouts about butterflies: *The Butterfly: Scientific and Cultural-Historical Perspectives* and *The Butterfly: Judy Chicago's Perspective*.
12. Handout to accompany DVD (clip one for each student)
13. Adapted passages from *The Dinner Party: From Creation to Preservation* (five copies of Susan B. Anthony passage, Anne Hutchinson passage, Theodora passage, Hatshepsut passage, and Hypatia passage)
14. [www.brooklynmuseum.org](http://www.brooklynmuseum.org)
15. measuring tape
16. six postcards of the installation overview of *The Dinner Party*
17. five postcards of the Susan B. Anthony place setting/images of the plate
18. five postcards of the Anne Hutchinson place setting/images of the plate
19. five postcards of the Theodora place setting/images of the plate
20. five images of the Hatshepsut place setting and plate
21. five images of the Hypatia place setting and plate
22. *What does it mean to have a place at the table?* Handout

► Student Supplies:

1. Sketchbook/journals
2. Pencils



# *The Dinner Party Curriculum Project*

## *Merger Poem*

By Judy Chicago

And then all that has divided us will merge  
And then compassion will be wedded to power  
And then softness will come to a world that is harsh and unkind  
And then both men and women will be gentle  
And then both women and men will be strong  
And then no person will be subject to another's will  
And then all will be rich and free and varied  
And then the greed of some will give way to the needs of many  
And then all will share equally in the Earth's abundance  
And then all will care for the sick and the weak and the old  
And then all will nourish the young  
And then all will cherish life's creatures  
And then all will live in harmony with each other and the Earth  
And then everywhere will be called Eden once again.

© Judy Chicago 1979



# The Dinner Party Curriculum Project

Group Members: \_\_\_\_\_

## Poem by Judy Chicago: Finding Meaning in Her Words

Group 1: Lines 1–3

By Andrea Horn

Use the following questions to help you understand the meaning of Lines 1 – 3. You will then share your ideas with the rest of the class.

*Line 1:*

Whom is Judy referring to as “us”? What is the difference between “divide” and “merge”? What is Judy saying to us?

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*Line 2:*

What does it mean to show compassion? Does Judy really want “compassion” to marry “power”? What is Judy saying to us?

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*Line 3:*

What does Judy mean by “softness”? Why does she refer to the world as “harsh” and “unkind”? What is Judy saying to us?

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# The Dinner Party Curriculum Project

Group Members: \_\_\_\_\_

## Poem by Judy Chicago: Finding Meaning in Her Words

Group 2: Lines 4–5

By Andrea Horn

Use the following questions to help you understand the meaning of Lines 4 – 5. You will then share your ideas with the rest of the class.

*Line 4:*

What does it mean to be a “gentle person”? What is Judy saying to us?

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*Line 5:*

Do you have a lot of muscles to be considered “strong”? What kind of “strong” is Judy referring to? What is Judy saying to us?

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# The Dinner Party Curriculum Project

Group Members: \_\_\_\_\_

## Poem by Judy Chicago: Finding Meaning in Her Words

### Group 3: Lines 6–7

By Andrea Horn

Use the following questions to help you understand the meaning of Lines 6 – 7. You will then share your ideas with the rest of the class.

#### Line 6:

(First, read and answer the questions about Line 7. This will help you find meaning in Line 6). What do you think happens when someone is the “subject” to another person’s “will”? What is Judy saying to us?

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#### Line 7:

Is being rich only about money? What does it mean to be “free”? How could the people in your group be considered “varied”? Do you think being “varied” is a good thing? What is Judy saying to us?

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# The Dinner Party Curriculum Project

Group Members: \_\_\_\_\_

## Poem by Judy Chicago: Finding Meaning in Her Words

Group 4: Lines 8–9

By Andrea Horn

Use the following questions to help you understand the meaning of Lines 8 – 9. You will then share your ideas with the rest of the class.

*Line 8:*

What do you think is meant by “greed”? What does Judy hope “greed” will turn into? What is Judy saying to us?

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*Line 9:*

What do you think is meant by “abundance”? What is Judy saying to us?

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# The Dinner Party Curriculum Project

Group Members: \_\_\_\_\_

## Poem by Judy Chicago: Finding Meaning in Her Words

Group 5: Lines 10–11

By Andrea Horn

Use the following questions to help you understand the meaning of Lines 10 – 11. You will then share your ideas with the rest of the class.

*Line 10:*

Whose responsibility is it in caring for those who are sick, weak and old? What is Judy saying to us?

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*Line 11:*

What do you think it means to “nourish”? Whose responsibility is it to “nourish the young”? Who would be considered “the young”? What is Judy saying to us?

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# The Dinner Party Curriculum Project

Group Members: \_\_\_\_\_

## Poem by Judy Chicago: Finding Meaning in Her Words

Group 6: Lines 12–14

By Andrea Horn

Use the following questions to help you understand the meaning of Lines 12 – 14. You will then share your ideas with the rest of the class.

### Line 12:

What do you think it means to “cherish” someone or something? Who or what is she referring to as “life’s creatures”? What is Judy saying to us?

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### Line 13:

What do you think “harmony” means? What does “harmony” look like? What is Judy saying to us?

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### Line 14:

Have you heard of a place called Eden before? What kind of place do you think it is? What is Judy saying to us?

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# The Dinner Party Curriculum Project

Group Members: \_\_\_\_\_

## Place Setting Activity One: Guests of Honor at The Dinner Party

By Andrea Horn

Guest of Honor's Name

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Please answer the following questions after reading the passage. Be prepared to discuss your "guest of honor" with the rest of the class.

1. What great contribution(s) did this woman give to the world?

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2. How did this woman improve conditions for women?

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3. How can this woman's life and/or work provide a model for our future?

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\*These are similar questions to what Judy Chicago used with her team of researchers when deciding which women were going to be included at the table and on the floor of *The Dinner Party*.

# The Dinner Party Curriculum Project

Group Members: \_\_\_\_\_

## Place Setting Activity Two: Taking a Closer Look at the Place Settings

By Andrea Horn

Placesetting: \_\_\_\_\_

Please answer the following questions after reading the passage. Be prepared to discuss your place setting with the rest of the class.

1. What kind of materials did Judy Chicago use at this place setting?

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2. How would you describe the butterfly image on this plate?

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3. What stage does the butterfly appear to be in? Does it appear to be ready to take flight? Does it seem to be confined to the plate? What do you think?

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4. Do you recognize any other symbols in the place setting?

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5. Based on what you learned about this woman and her contributions, does the place setting make sense? Why or why not?

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6. Based on what you've learned, would you have created this woman's place setting differently? Why or why not?

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# The Dinner Party Curriculum Project

## Questions to Investigate in The Dinner Party: A Tour of the Exhibition

By Andrea Horn

1. How were women viewed in the earliest point of civilization?

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2. What is Judy Chicago's dream for the women represented in *The Dinner Party*?

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3. What are some of the materials used in the work?

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4. Why do the later plates become more dimensional?

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5. Is Judy Chicago concerned only with women? What are the other circumstances Judy Chicago addresses that prevent people from being "free"?

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6. What do the *Millennium Runners* represent for the future? Did it occur?

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# The Dinner Party Curriculum Project

## Anne Hutchinson

1591 – 1643; North America

(Lived about 356 years ago)



In 1634, Anne Hutchinson arrived in the Massachusetts Bay Colony with her husband and family. Raised in England and educated at home, she had been trained in religious studies by her Puritan minister father. She soon became actively involved with the religious issues of the day, arguing for the idea that 'faith' was more important than 'actions'. Before long, Hutchinson began to organize religious discussions in her home. At first, only a handful of women attended, sometimes traveling great distances to hear her comments and to voice their own thoughts (women were not allowed to attend the regular after-sermon debates in Church). Soon, her ability as a speaker began to draw men as well, until she was holding twice-weekly meetings with almost one hundred people in attendance.

Hutchinson's arguments disagreed with the Puritan Church. Her followers, encouraged to believe in their own inner powers, grew bold, even walking out of services when ordered by the clergy to "be silent and remember [their] place."

Angered by Hutchinson's growing influence, the clergy tried to convince her to modify her views. Eventually, she was brought to trial, accused of being a "husband rather than a wife, a preacher rather than a hearer, and a magistrate rather than a subject." (In other words, acting like a man rather than a woman.) Although no charges were ever proven against her, she was banished from the Colony.

Hutchinson and her family received permission from the Narragansett Indians to build a home on Aquidneck Island (also called Rhode Island). There, she continued to teach and preach. However, the Massachusetts Bay Colony grew so large that it threatened to take over the area where she and her family lived. After her husband died in 1642, she tried to find safety in a Dutch colony near New York. But the director of that colony had alienated the nearby Indians, and it was not long before Hutchinson and five of her children were killed in a native uprising.

Chicago, J. (2007). *The Dinner Party: From Creation to Preservation*. NY: Merrell Publishers Limited.  
[www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)

# The Dinner Party Curriculum Project

## Christine de Pisan

1364 – 1431; France

(Lived about 577 years ago)



Christine de Pisan was born in Venice and educated by her father, an Italian doctor who served as personal physician to Charles V of France. At fifteen she was happily married to a man who, like her father, was sympathetic to female education. By the time she was twenty-five, both her father and her husband had died. Christine turned to writing to support her three children, her mother, and herself, becoming the first professional female author in France. She first became well known when she attacked a popular book in French literature. The work outraged Christine because of its vicious attack on women. As one of the few females accepted in the world of writing, her support of equality for women carried a lot of weight, and her response started what has been called the beginning of modern feminism.

Pisan then wrote *The Book of the City of Ladies* (1405), a heartfelt book about women, which was followed by a sequel providing a detailed description of famous, important and historical women. She believed that degrading women in writing was a bad influence on people's minds, and offered her own books, which listed the contributions of hundreds of women, both as an alternative and as a tribute to the women of her times.

Chicago, J. (2007). *The Dinner Party: From Creation to Preservation*. NY: Merrell Publishers Limited.  
[www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)

# The Dinner Party Curriculum Project

## Hatshepsut

1512 – 1482 BC; Ancient Egypt

(Lived about 3,500 years ago)



Four women are known to have ruled as pharaohs in ancient Egypt, although little is known of any except Hatshepsut.

Hatshepsut was the 5th ruler of the 18th Dynasty of Ancient Egypt. She is regarded as one of the most successful Pharaohs of Ancient Egypt. Her reign lasted for twenty-two years.

She led many military missions to strengthen Egypt's defenses. She started numerous construction projects, including the building and renovating of temples. She created peace and wealth during her reign by strengthening Egypt's trade system. She demonstrated that women were as equally capable as men in ruling since she successfully presided over a prosperous Egypt for more than two decades. After her death, her successor Thutmose III attempted to have all of her

shrines, statues and reliefs destroyed, as well as the erasure of her name from any monument she had built. Since most of the images of her were actually males, it was convenient to simply put Thutmose III's name in Hatshepsut's place. The efforts to erase Hatshepsut's name, whatever the reason, almost caused her to disappear from Egypt's archaeological and written records.

Chicago, J. (2007). *The Dinner Party: From Creation to Preservation*. NY. Merrell Publishers Limited.

[www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)



# The Dinner Party Curriculum Project

## Hypatia

370 – 415; Roman Empire

(Lived about 1,600 years ago)



Hypatia was a child genius living in the Roman Empire. She was tutored by the greatest intellectuals of her day, and quickly mastered mathematics, astronomy, and the natural sciences. She became the first woman to make important contributions to the development of mathematics. She was an outstanding philosopher, and was chosen head of the University of Alexandria. Because of her importance, government officials would seek advice from her about the widespread turmoil in Rome.

Through her powerful teachings, Hypatia attracted both uneducated and educated people to her ideas. A couple of her accomplishments include the invention of the hydrometer, a tool used to determine the relative density of liquids as well as the charting of celestial bodies. A couple of statements attributed to her

are - “Reserve your right to think, for even to think wrongly is better than not to think at all” and “To teach superstitions as truth is a most terrible thing”.

Her position in Alexandrian society had come to symbolize learning and science. Some people felt threatened by her and felt women should be silent and obedient.

Hypatia was later killed and burned by a religious gang who attacked her on the way to her weekly lecture at the university. Years later, when the great library of Alexandria was destroyed, so were Hypatia’s writings.

Chicago, J. (2007). *The Dinner Party: From Creation to Preservation*. NY. Merrell Publishers Limited.

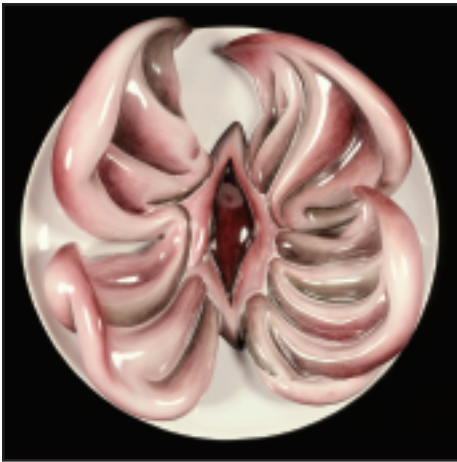
[www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)

# The Dinner Party Curriculum Project

## Susan B. Anthony

1820 – 1906; United States

(Lived about 102 years ago)



Susan B. Anthony was brought up in a Quaker family with a long activist tradition. After teaching for fifteen years, she became involved in a movement that developed in response to the widespread abuse of women and children by alcoholic husbands. When Anthony realized that she would not be allowed to speak at rallies, she turned her attention to the women's rights movement that had formally begun in 1848 at the landmark convention in Seneca Falls, New York.

Headed in part by Elizabeth Cady Stanton- who was to become the leading philosopher of the first wave of American feminism – the Seneca Falls Convention adopted a list of eighteen demands including women's right to vote; to be educated; to enter any occupation they chose; to have control over their own bodies; to sign legal papers; to manage their own earnings; and to govern

their own property. In 1851, a few years after this historic gathering, Anthony and Stanton met, and the two women embarked on a lifelong collaboration that evolved into one of the most productive working partnerships in American history.

In 1868, they founded *The Revolution*, a newspaper with a goal of "justice for all". The paper also advocated many changes, including an eight-hour work day and equal pay for equal work. In the 1870s, Anthony campaigned vigorously for women's suffrage while Stanton, who had significant family responsibilities, stayed at home to write. Together, these two women revolutionized the political and social conditions of women in the United States and helped to spark an international feminist movement.

Anthony's dedication and clarity of purpose was an inspiration to all who met her. In 1893, she attended the Chicago Columbian Exposition, where partly through her efforts a Women's Building had been created that featured the work of women from all over the world. When she appeared at the opening, tens of thousands of people cheered and gave a standing ovation to this courageous woman who had stood firm for decades in the faces of opposition, abuse, slander and ridicule. Although the vote had not yet been achieved by the time she died, when the 19th Amendment granting suffrage to women was finally passed in 1920, after many decades of struggle, it was named after her.

Chicago, J. (2007). *The Dinner Party: From Creation to Preservation*. NY: Merrell Publishers Limited.

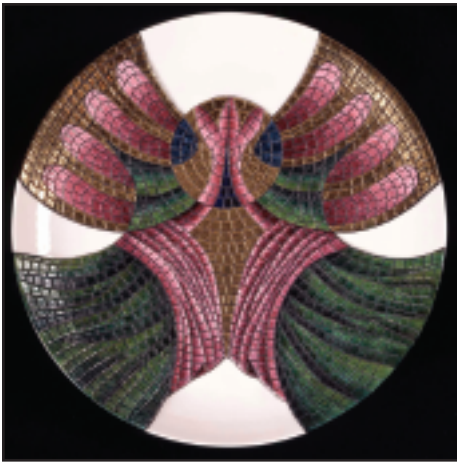
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# The Dinner Party Curriculum Project

## Theodora

Circa 500 – 548; Byzantium

(Lived about 1,500 years ago)



Theodora was an empress of the Byzantine Empire (Greek-speaking Roman Empire of the Middle Ages). She was said to have first lived a poor life as an actress. This profession was looked down upon in Byzantine society. At some point, she became religious, establishing a simple life in Constantinople and supporting herself by spinning. She eventually married a man named Justinian who later became emperor. Justinian treated Theodora as a partner and, from the beginning of what would be their joint reign, she was deeply concerned about the position of women. She never forgot the suffering and humiliation she had seen women endure when she was in the theater. Actresses were often forced to sign lifelong contracts against their will.

Theodora passed laws canceling theater contracts restricting actresses' freedom and broke down the barriers that kept them in a socially inferior role. Some of her contributions to the women of her time include – helping to raise the low status of women in marriage, establishing legislation protecting women from mistreatment by their husbands and making sure women could inherit property. Theodora's insistence that all these legal changes be enforced created a legacy that benefited the lives of Byzantine women for many centuries.

Chicago, J. (2007). *The Dinner Party: From Creation to Preservation*. NY. Merrell Publishers Limited.  
[www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)