

Oscar-nominated film kicks off Women's History Month



Photo: Submitted / Jennifer Girard
Jan Lisa Huttner

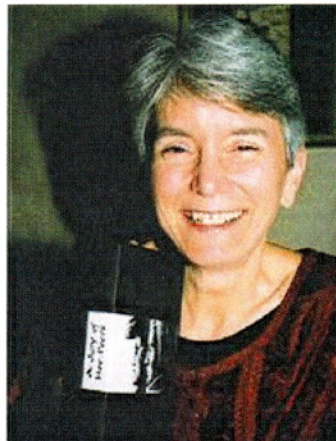


Photo: Submitted / Suzanne Hanney
Sally Heckel

The Moline Public Library will kick off March -- Women's History Month -- on Saturday with discussion of a 1980 film based on a 1917 novella that touches on the importance of giving women a voice in the world.

Author Jan Lisa Huttner will present the program at 9:30 a.m. Saturday at the library, 3210 41st St., showing Sally Heckel's 30-minute, Oscar-nominated film, "A Jury of Her Peers."

The movie was based on a novella by Susan Glaspell, a Davenport native who was a reporter, author, playwright and Pulitzer Prize winner.

The novella and film tell the story of two women who uncover clues to a murder -- clues overlooked by the men responsible for investigating the case. The novella was based on a murder case Ms. Glaspell covered in 1900 while working as a reporter for the Des Moines Daily News, which eventually became the Des Moines Register.

Discussions spurred by previous screenings of the film led to the creation of WITASWAN, or Women in the Audience Supporting Women Artists Now, an informal alliance of women who have pledged to help women filmmakers break through the celluloid ceiling. The group is a project of the American Association of University Women; the Rock Island/Moline branch of AAUW is sponsoring Saturday's presentation. Ms. Huttner has done more than two dozen WITASWAN presentations on college campuses and for AAUW branches.

"When you see 'Jury,' you see a story not just about women, but told in the voice of women and showing the way in which women communicate with each other, solve problems, come to understanding," Ms. Huttner writes on her Web site, www.films42.com. "What I'm trying to do in all these presentations is to get people to understand: When you have a world with no woman's voice out there, you're losing half of human experience."

Saturday's program will be open to the public. Refreshments will be served.