

OUR  
FABULOUS  
FEMINISTS

VETERAN FEMINISTS OF AMERICA, INC.

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## Veteran Feminists of America's Fabulous Feminists

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### **MURIEL ARCENEAUX**

I was born in Wainwright, Alabama to Muriel Swanson and Dennis Daniel Dees on February 18, 1926, the eldest of five children. My mother was a community activist and my father a farmer.



Times were good until the great depression of 1929. Our white neighbors were in great stress due to the unreliable market for agricultural products, and our black friends were more or less dependent on my father for their sustenance.

My mother taught women mattress-making, so many of her neighbors slept on beds rather than cornhusk mattresses. She also taught them how to pressure-cook and can home grown vegetables to relieve some of the malnutrition rampant among the children.

Some of my earliest memories were of two "spinster" aunts--one a seamstress, the other a schoolteacher--who were always sought out to solve problems. I remember my mother and aunts discussing issues at meals and gatherings. They were glad to get the vote in 1920, yet they were firmly grounded in what everybody's place was or should be in the family and society.

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In 1931, I was enrolled in grade school, but the following February the school closed because of lack of funding. My mother placed me in the Monroeville Elementary School, and I moved in to live with my aunts.

In the following months, their brother and his family moved in. My father, who had been hospitalized for tuberculosis, moved in so the aunts could care for him. Scenes of the overcrowding, the conflicts, and make-do solutions still flash through my mind. Several months later my father, who had been misdiagnosed, returned home and the brother and family moved out.

In fifth grade, I returned to my family in Wainwright, and with my two sisters rode the unheated school bus twenty-five miles each way to elementary school.

In my senior year in high school, I experienced grand mal epileptic seizures. Still, I gave my senior piano recital and graduated with honors, earned a music scholarship to the Alabama College for Women at Montevallo. The seizures escalated and it seemed best for me to focus on studies requiring less strenuous preparation. In 1944, I attended Union Theological Seminary in New York City where my outlook was greatly influenced, and my father was apprehensive that I would become a socialist or, God-forbid, a communist.

In 1947, I earned a degree in sociology and psychology, took education certification courses from Florence State Teacher's College, and received my Master's Degree in Education from Nicholls State University in 1972. I then completed postgraduate work in the humanities and special education for the gifted.

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My father, who'd thought my education a waste of money as I would just get married, said toward the end of his life that it had been the best investment he'd ever made.

After college, I was a caseworker with the Alabama Welfare Department and quickly added to my father's misgivings by marrying a law student. Three years and two children later, I returned to work as a social worker and later, because the school schedule lent itself better to raising children, I became a schoolteacher.

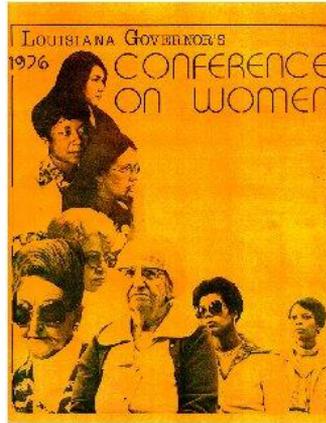
The marriage was troubled. Subject to emotional and physical abuse I warned my husband to not sleep with both eyes closed if he ever hit me again. Three-and-a-half years later I divorced and moved four hundred miles away. I did not ask for alimony but requested child support. It was never forthcoming, but I didn't have the time or money to fight for it. In those pre-feminist days, redress for injuries to a woman's emotional and physical wellbeing was unheard of and besides, no woman wanted to air her marital problems!

Despite these stresses I traveled around the county demonstrating self-exams for breast cancer prevention, helped organize and was president of a women's study group and, as most of the young married women of my set did then, I played a lot of bridge.

As I looked for more professional opportunities I saw that women were at a distinct disadvantage. I was refused a job as an editor for the U. S. Government even though my test scores were at the top of the list.

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In 1959, I got a job with the Federal Government in Tyler, Texas and was later transferred me to Houma, Louisiana, a Cajun town on the Gulf of Mexico. There I married Louis Arceneaux and we had a daughter. For ten years I worked, reared my children and directed a church choir, while my husband held and lost ten jobs. I developed a



severe anxiety neurosis and took residential treatment for six months, coming home only on weekends. By now I realized I had to take control of my life, so I decided to get a divorce. But Louisiana's Head and Master laws, which gave a husband final say on all decisions about jointly owned property without his wife's knowledge or consent, were hardly congenial.

This time I pressed for child support. Fighting anxiety on every front I learned how to drive again, to answer the phone and sit through a meeting. I bought a small house, and now was "head and master." I got a job as a substitute teacher and took courses to upgrade my Master's Degree to increase my salary. Then my son was assigned to Vietnam, my elder daughter enrolled at LSU and I was alone with my ten-year-old daughter who was hurting over the family disintegration and frightened to be alone with a mother who was not always on an even keel.

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In the late 1960's women were meeting to discuss the new women's movement, and I had to get involved. It seemed best to go through respected organizations in Houma rather than join the radical NOW, so I became involved with the Terrebonne Business and Professional Women's Organization.

The BPW women had very little information about the laws that governed their second-class citizenship, so I published a newsletter to make the members aware of what was going on in Louisiana and in the movement countrywide. I invited Baton Rouge activists Karlene Tierney and the late Marcella Matthews to talk to about ERA United, and Roberta Madden of the Women's Political Caucus to conduct a political action workshop.

With a few BPW and other local women I organized a branch of ERA United, serving as a board member for the state ERA United and as the first president of Terrebonne ERA Coalition.

Members of these organizations formed writing groups, made lobbying trips to Baton Rouge, attended meetings of women around the country, and raised money for representatives to go to wherever demonstrations were taking place. I participated in the 1980 Chicago parade to ratify ERA, organized and served as moderator of forums in Terrebonne Parish during elections and addressed groups to promote the advancement of women.

In attempting to get women in other organizations involved in the Equal Rights movement I encountered outright opposition among many to the idea of women's

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equal rights. A great deal was made about going braless and other such nonsense.



Pictured: 1977 Houston Conference

I served on the Louisiana conference-planning committee and the Houston Conference for International Women's Year as a Louisiana representative. From 1973 to 1985, serving in various capacities at the local and state level of BPW, I published a bulletin to inform women of political and other issues, pressured Congress for federal laws to remedy injustices toward women and assisted in drawing up a proposed legislative platform to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment.

I organized workshops to teach women how to work through government processes, to lobby, to assess the effects of legislation, and contributed articles to the media and made speeches on issues affecting women.

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I was a board member of the YWCA for eight years, during which the Y developed a counseling program for battered women and trained the police in handling domestic disputes. A women's shelter was established, but after ten years lack of funding and internal dissention closed all the Y programs, some of which were taken over by other groups. A major contribution was developing a workshop dealing with parenting. The Junior Auxiliary was attracted to this idea and paid for a consultant to establish and run a parenting center.

There were many bright moments during these extremely active years. I met Bella Abzug and other feminist icons at the Houston Conference. I have a special memory of an evening spent with Gloria Steinem and others in a black church, where she gave an inspirational talk. There wasn't a question she didn't answer brilliantly.

Elected to the Louisiana Democratic State Central Committee, for four years I assisted in the election of Louisiana women, among them Senator Mary Landrieu and Governor Kathleen Blanco.

As a member of the library board I founded Friends of the Library and may have been the only board member who actually read. Always called down for my "radical" statements, I eventually was kicked off by a man on the board. In Louisiana I was always in trouble for my "radical" views.

I was a docent of the Terrebonne Historical and Cultural Society for many years and served on the Arts and Humanities Board of Directors and on the Parish

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Literacy Council. All this after a full day's work and fulfilling my responsibilities to my home and children.

After the last vote in the Louisiana legislature on an Equal Rights bill, the work seemed to be at an end. In 1990, I retired after 40 years in social work and teaching and moved to Vicksburg, Mississippi, to be near my daughter Denise. In 2000 I donated my papers to the Newcomb Archives at the Center for Research on Women at Tulane in New Orleans.

After years of activism there is joy in reading about what is happening and not running around making it happen. I am proud of my children. My son is an Appellate court judge in Tennessee, my elder daughter a lawyer in Jackson, MS. My younger daughter has an M.S. in statistics and is manager of the computer division of a Canadian Bank.

People comment that the South has changed since the Civil Rights Movement, but I say it hasn't changed enough! This goes for every state in our great union. There is still much to do. My message to young feminists: It is now up to you.

### *Recognition*

Muriel has received many awards, among them the Veteran Feminists of America's MEDAL OF HONOR in 2002 at Newcomb College in New Orleans.

\*Karline Tierney, and Robbi Madden are well known feminist activists and members of VFA.

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### **BONNIE ATWOOD**

I was born Bonnie Atwood and grew up just about five miles from Washington, D.C., in Arlington, Virginia. It was 1947, in the suburbs—the new place for families. Our little community had lots of children my age. We had bikes, and roller skates, and a movie theater, and a big wooded area where we could play Davy Crockett as long as we wanted.



Fathers went off to Washington to do government work. Most mothers stayed home and baked and sewed. My father was a cabinetmaker. My mother was one of the only ones who went to Washington every day and worked at a government job, first as a stenographer, and then as a customs clerk. It was fairly low level, but she seemed to like it.

She had grown up in a very poor family, and all the women and men always had jobs. I think we needed the money, but I also know that it was important to her to have her own paycheck, and not go to my father for money. My mother was very proud and independent, and she instilled that in me.

The very unfortunate dark side of this was that for most of my tender years, I had to spend every day in demoralizing childcare situations. I liked playing with the other children, but the adults (with some exceptions)

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around me were cold toward me. My mother would wake me very early in the morning, and then take me to the sitter.

One of my sitters made me just sit on the couch while her children slept late in the mornings. I always sensed that she didn't want me there at all. The babysitters didn't mean to do this, but they always made me aware that I wasn't one of their own golden babies. They would say to other friends they met, "These are my children, but this one's not mine; she's the little girl that I keep."

I've always been good at making friends, but in this sense, I always felt like the outsider. And it was never a secret that they kept me because they received money for my care, and that they sometimes asked my mother for pay raises. I never discussed this with my parents, whom I loved, and I doubt anybody ever thought about it, but the concept felt hurtful to me. I may have been unusually sensitive to this, but I have heard a few people speak of it. I had no words for it at the time, but I felt that my very survival required figuring out what my paid sitters wanted me to do, and quietly walking on eggshells so as not to be more burdensome to them.

My mother was never the room mother, or the carpool driver (she never even drove a car), and she never made a cake, ever, and I didn't care about any of that. But when I got out of school in the afternoon, I just ached to go home to her.

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My mother was never the room mother, or the carpool driver (she never even drove a car), and she never made a cake, ever, and I didn't care about any of that. But when I got out of school in the afternoon, I just ached to go home to her. (Pictured Right: Bonnie and Mother 1947)

It changed who I was. I think in the long run, it gave me strength, and laid the groundwork for my strong advocacy for housewives (this is my preferred term), for welfare mothers, for military wives, and displaced homemakers of all kinds—women who commit themselves to family and who want to spend their days with their children, and be respected for it. I am always looking for ways that they can be validated, both financially and emotionally.



I also have a special empathy for women who have been marginalized, and even abused, by their religions. It distresses me that often feminism has been perceived as neglecting family caregivers in favor of career women.

I became involved and committed to the feminist movement when I was a Psychology student at George Mason University (then George Mason College) in Northern Virginia in late 1960s. I remember vividly my first encounter with the Women's Movement. I was already deeply involved with the Peace Movement and

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Civil Rights issues. I read an announcement in an alternative newspaper of a meeting for the first class for what was then called "Women's Liberation" to be held at the Institute for Policy Studies, a kind of New Left think-tank, off of Dupont Circle in nearby Washington, D.C. IPS is still going strong. The short ad said something about the women in the Peace Movement getting fed up with how men were treating them as second-class. I spoke with my two closet friends, both women, and we all said, "Yes! We've got to be there!"

We met on the second floor of the old IPS townhouse building. I will never forget the wonderful feeling and the beautiful women who attended. I even remember the first night, and our entrance to the room. We were struck by how they referred to us as "women," not "girls." We asked them about that. They said, "we would never call someone a 'girl' if she were over age 12 or so." We sat around a table. The women sat with their legs every which way, not caring about the old rules about being "ladylike." We found articulation of thoughts that had been trying to get out of us for a long time. It was a life-changing moment. My life was never the same after that.

The group continued meeting there very often, and developed a large and solid, if informal, following. When the class was over, we still met as "Washington Women's Liberation." Then there were spin-off groups: Off Our Backs, The Furies, The Witches, etc. We met, we talked, we read, we demonstrated, we made movies, we wrote articles. We had consciousness-raising groups. We had health information sessions. We formed classes to teach ourselves car repair, labor history, the history of

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the Suffrage Movement, women's fiction--just everything. It was exhilarating. We designed a whole new world.

Feminism quickly became the most important voice of my life. It still is. I dropped out of college for a while, and lived in Washington, where I was very active. We lived in communes, so we didn't require much money. We had one little stereo record player. Our entertainment was free concerts in the park. The last thing we cared about was climbing a corporate ladder. I worked part-time at a couple of bookstores, taught ice skating lessons, worked as a payroll clerk, and as a "hatcheck" girl at some very fancy D.C. restaurants.



Eventually, I went back to school, uniting there with students and professors who were just starting important activities there, later to evolve into formal Women's Studies programs. I went on to graduate from GMU. (Pictured Left: Receiving law diploma, 1996)

My degree was in Psychology, but my interest was in journalism. I got a job on the staff of a daily newspaper in Northern Virginia. I loved that experience, and I worked there for four years, with much happiness and success. At that point, I married, and had a baby. I dropped out of the labor force for a while, but later I did freelance writing from home, while my baby slept.

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Our little family moved to my current home in Richmond, Va. I was very focused on home and family, with writing on the side, when, to my surprise, my divorce occurred, after ten years of marriage. It was devastating.

I cannot even describe how I felt, and I really didn't have time to feel. I had to suddenly find a higher paying job, get after-school care for my child, and get my life in order in a way that I had never anticipated. I felt like I was scotch-taping a broken life back together. I worked as a rehabilitation counselor for the next few years, but I knew I would have to find something more substantial.

I became magazine writer, too, using my writing to discuss feminism as much as I possibly could. Life since my divorce has been a struggle. Marriage, motherhood, divorce, and eldercare drove home what I and many other feminists have found: that autonomy is a myth.

In my forties, somehow, with the support of friends, and a couple of years of trying, and lots of financial aid, I went to law school at the T.C. Williams School of Law at the University of Richmond. It was a tough three years, but I loved it. I graduated, but I am not a practicing lawyer. I got interested in professional lobbying, advocating for groups instead of individuals.

I am currently active in an international initiative to recognize caregiving work. The group plans to launch a petition to support two Congressional bills (H.R. 4379 and H.R. 3573, which would make changes in the current welfare laws. Look for more information to come this fall. I write about feminism as much as I can.

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I believe my most significant contribution to the Women's Movement has been my opposition to the Catholic annulment system. Most church officials will deny it, but my experience is that thousands of former spouses, most of them women, have been severely hurt by the annulment process. I am not, nor was ever a Catholic, but am interested because many non-Catholics are also affected by this outrageous "law". As much as I respect the Church in many other ways, I am alarmed at what I have seen it do to divorced wives and husbands and their extended families, mostly in the United States and Canada. The strange, lengthy process is carried out in private, and it breaks down families in irreparable ways. I network with women who have experienced this and feel as I do. I see my work in this area as my most important feminist activity.

I work now as a professional lobbyist, representing such groups as the Virginia Retired Teachers Association, and the Virginia Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. I started my own writing business, Tall Poppies Freelance Writing LLC, in 2008.

I am currently active in an international initiative to recognize caregiving work. The group plans to launch a petition to support two Congressional bills (H.R. 4379 and H.R. 3573), which would make changes in the current welfare laws. Look for more information to come this fall.

I'm very proud to call myself a veteran feminist.

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### **NANCY AZARA**

When I was born in 1939 in St. Bernadette's Parish in Brooklyn, I was supposed to be a boy and my name was to be Nicholas. My mother had had two miscarriages which she said were boys. Though the family hid their disappointment, I still knew. It wasn't hard to figure out. I was called Annunziata or Nancy after my mother, her mother and grandmother and many other women centuries back in time.



Expectations for me were limited since girls were brought up to be mother's helpers and to live either next door or in the same building. In the Italian American culture children essentially brought themselves up within the strict confines of their designated roles in terms of gender. They played mostly with their cousins and all relationships centered around the family.

We had a lovely garden with roses and peonies, and apple, peach and fig trees. Every year the fig trees were cut down to the trunk and tarred at the cut edges. The beautiful branches and leaves fell to the ground and my father would explain that it was "for their own good," because they wouldn't survive the winter. I was always upset to see this.

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In the 35 years of my teaching art, I have found that anyone can make art. I didn't always feel that way. When I was a child I loved to make things, but never thought of myself as an artist. Even though I knew somehow that art was natural to everyone, I couldn't make the leap. I didn't think I had ability because representational art was what everybody in my family liked. Michelangelo and commercial art out of magazines were admired. My desire to pursue art was great, but my ability to do it was held back by other people's definitions of what I should be able to put on the page. I eagerly painted by numbers, made leather craft wallets and assembled crepe-paper flowers, but to create from an empty space, a blank canvas or a bare wood stump, I didn't even consider.

When I think about the things that have formed my sense of self as an artist, I always return to those lessons from my grandfather's garden, which delighted me and heightened my sense of observation, awakened my curiosity and made me comfortable with solitude. It opened my eyes to an appreciation of colors and shapes, and brought wonder at its different cycles. Because there were no children my age in the neighborhood, I was often left alone there. Still vivid in my mind is the explosion of colors in the spring, the change of colors in the fall, the brilliance of the sun, the softness of the moon, the shadows cast by the trees, the rhythm and patterns of spacing and thinning, shaping and pruning, of watching things change, of seeing birds and plants mature and die. I remember observing this garden, its everyday activities and the activities of the adults who worked in it. My grandfather and his gardener used such love and caring. As I watched their passion I

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learned how to bring the same kind of attention that I now bring to my art.

I would lie on the grass under the flowers, pressing my body into the damp earth, watching the daily comings and goings of garden life. There were fragrant lilies of the valley lining the side of the garage. An abandoned doghouse with its musty smell brought to life the image of lost dogs and children. There was a garden with lettuce (lattuga my father would say), zucchini and string beans. A neighbor's garden was behind a vine-covered fence where I could watch huge summer squashes with their exotic southern Italian names. A neat row of proud wild cherry trees separated the properties. My first experience of creativity was making crepe paper flowers in after-school and summer programs. I began with tracing the petals, then cutting and shaping them. It was like magic to see them come to life as beautiful bouquets of pink and yellow and red.

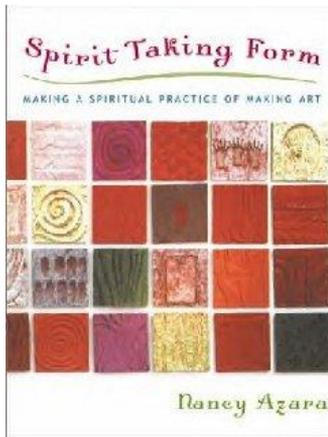
Twelve years later I learned it was possible for me to become an artist when I was interviewed for a class in fashion design by a teacher at Finch College. She told me emphatically that if I could write my own name, I could learn how to draw. "News to me," I thought, "but I'll try it." So I timidly signed up for her class. During the semester I found that my hand could develop a memory for information about vision just as it had learned to make letters. I have never turned back since.

After graduating from Finch, I became a costume designer for the theater. Although I loved what I was doing and had fun with it, I began to look for something that was more of an artistic challenge. Gradually, I

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began to think that maybe art was what I was looking for. I experimented with canvas and paints. My first work was of the light of the lamppost across the street from where I lived. I made a big almost life-sized painting of the black metal lamppost head and then tried to paint the light that radiated from it. But no one liked it. It seemed

odd, not pleasant to look at.



I wasn't looking for a pretty picture--I was looking for a way to describe radiance and put it into paint, a way to make a relationship between this radiance and the spiritual aspect of making art. Obsessed with painting those rays from that streetlight, I spent

hours on them. The result was not that interesting, but it was a start. How odd it is to look back at that first painting from where I am now -- an artist who has used so much gold leaf in my sculpture. It is curious that even when I was 20 years old, I was trying to do with paints what I now do. Now I can see a common thread in all my artwork, a thread of a desire to express the radiance.

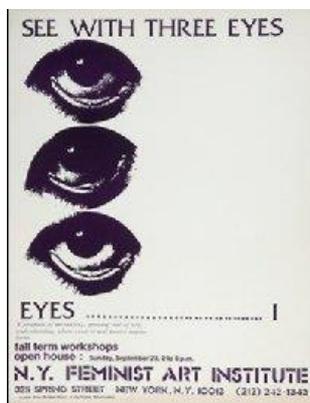
That first painting inspired me and I signed up for classes at the Art Students League in New York City. As I would make a head, a body or figure, I would realize that over and over a particular form would surface.

But art school convention was that these were unskilled and unformed vestiges from a place not to be honored.

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Teachers told me to erase them. I learned to tell myself: "That's not right. I have to change the shape." I would erase this form and cover it over with something that was more acceptable to the teacher and the convention I was learning.

The 1970's were very exciting for me. As a working artist, I was discovering empowerment inside myself. I was so grateful to be alive because I could be involved in feminism, which for me meant exploring everything. Nothing was excepted.



The impact of feminism on many women artists inspired a women's cultural movement. As part of a consciousness-raising group, I discussed, discovered, examined everything from the very essence of my birth to my life as a woman, to the forms, colors and shapes I put in my art. I asked myself what was male, what was female. Did the Divine have a gender that could be female? Were there unique female images? What did they look like? How were they relevant? Some of us examined women's traditional ways of working (quilting, braiding rugs, and weaving fabrics) which until then was considered lesser art. We considered these things as important as paintings and sculptures.

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The impact of ideas such as “the personal is political” was a revelation that I began to put into my life and a whole new way for me. Before then, the personal was belittled, as something only women were engaged in and therefore not important. My everyday experience developed a relevance that I no longer ignored or diminished but included in relation to my artwork.

I began to draw during these consciousness-raising sessions, trying to record visually what was being said, but I found it could not be translated. However, by doing these original primitive drawings, forms belonging only to me would surface. In fact, I noticed that the same forms, similar to the kinds of images I had been taught to erase in art school, kept returning again and again--and even then I found myself erasing them. But eventually I came to treasure them, realizing they had emotional import, an expression in shapes and colors of the emotional dialogue that was happening those evenings.

A whole new presence beyond words kept emerging through these forms. When finally I allowed them to come through completely, my work began to flower. Eventually, I accepted this process as natural and normal, and began to think of ways to share it with others--not only so they could put it into their process, but also because I was interested in whether it would be as natural for them as it was for me.

In 1979 I co-founded The New York Feminist Art Institute (NYFAI). Our intent was to examine many of the issues relating to gender, self and identity. For my first workshop, I devised a way to share my experience of

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recording images in a class called "Consciousness-Raising, Visual Diaries, Art-Making."

That first year, as we met in a classroom, we chose a topic. While others spoke, each woman drawing in a blank book, made a visual record of what was said. It was a fairly standard process, the same one I had been using in my women's group. The drawings that came out of the workshop confirmed what I myself had found

One of the rules of the class was that each participant was to treat her drawings not for publication or display, but her own very personal diary of her inner life. As the women became startled with the freshness and newness of their visual pieces, I reminded them that these images hadn't come from another world, but were part of their interior landscape which they lived with all the time and had not, or just barely, noticed--or had erased, as I had done.

It was thrilling to be a part of their discovery. I could literally watch women change their process, many returning to art after years of being stuck, others shifting gears and making images which came more truly from themselves. We drew and made collages, built up pages in our books and made substantial and powerful diaries. We showed sections of them, tying off the other pages with ribbon or clipping them together, to keep private what they were not ready to reveal. In those books were new visions, ideas, ways of seeing shadows from the past.

After about 10 years NYFAI closed due to many circumstances, especially the political climate and the

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shortage of funds. We were "too political" for arts funding and too "involved in the arts" for political foundations.

The institute changed my artwork and brought me closer to my inner vision. My sculpture became larger, returning to some work I had done in the early 70's. Since then I have created "Passages" (1999), a carved wood book made with poet Judith Barrington; "Heart Wall" (2000), a 22-foot long six-foot high sculpture incorporating symbols of love and compassion, shown in 2000 and again in 2008 in a lobby at 344 Madison Avenue in New York City. I have had four artist residencies, three in Italy and one in Kerala, in Southwestern India. I began the "Changes" works—12 x 12" panels—while in Florence in 1999, continued them in India and began a series of rubbing woodcuts on paper and mylar from these woodcuts.

I have made several commissions including "Hand Garden/Doctors" Wall for the Robert Wood Johnson Hospital in Hamilton, NJ, a carved gold leaf 28-foot wall commissioned to honor the doctors' hands. "Hand Garden" was hung in a much-used corridor and has become an integral part of the hospital community.

In March 2010 I exhibited new large sculptures at the Andre Zarre Gallery in Chelsea, NY. My colors are now white on aluminum leaf so that a light shimmers through the surface. I have been using less and less color over the years, and am looking more and more at the interaction between my life and its passing as time goes on. I showed the ten-foot "Dawn/Light," the memorial to my mother, the six-foot "Leaf Altar to Nunzia 1913-2004," as well as smaller works and collages.

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The large work continues. I just finished "Third Moon," a 6' x 8' x 1' wall sculpture, also luminous and white, which has sections of branches and leaves, giving new life to a fallen tree. I am also making many rubbings, some quite large, which have the same theme: tree, woman, person, leaf.

Making art seriously, as a woman, as a professional, is a radical endeavor for women. After all, it has been only 40 years that we have demanded the right to have our humanity acknowledged and our voices heard. Even now there are only a select few who get recognition. Some women artists feel this is because men and women in the art world have to get accustomed to seeing what we are making, much of which hasn't been described before and may make men especially uncomfortable. Whatever the reason, there is still 80 percent men to 20 percent women shown in galleries and museums, so most of what we look at is a male interpretation, perceptions and world visions.

I encourage VFA members and other women to support women artists, to look at our work and hang it in your homes. That is the kind of support we need and a very special affirmation of who we are

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### **BILL BAIRD**

Called by some media the father of the abortion-rights movement, Bill Baird's crusade began when he was thirty-one years old. In 1963 he was Clinical Director for



EMKO, a birth control company, and was doing research at a NYC hospital. While there he heard screaming in the corridor and saw an African American single mother of nine covered in blood from the waist down with an eight-inch piece of wire coat hanger protruding from her uterus. She died in his arms.

That year, he distributed birth control foam to women at New York area drug stores and malls, and in 1964 established the nation's first nonprofit birth control/abortion facility in Hempstead, NY, staffed by doctors providing free reproductive health care.

He also got in touch with Cindy Cisler, then head of NOW's Abortion Rights Committee, and for the next few years he and Cindy headed many abortion rights demonstrations on the East Coast.

In 1971, two firebombs struck the Jewish Community Center in New Bedford, MA, just minutes before Bill was scheduled to speak. With his clinic under constant threat, he wrote and distributed the nation's first clinic self-defense manual to combat terrorism (1978).

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In 1979, Bill's clinic, with 50 people inside, was firebombed; in 1980 he sued the FBI, claiming it had failed to investigate anti-abortion terrorists. Later in 1985 he pioneered a 50-foot demilitarized zone and a 500-foot quiet zone to protect clinics.

Despite appeals for an end to violence, Bill's clinic was forced to close temporarily due to chemical bombs in 1992. In 1993, it was closed again because of flooding with fire hoses.

Believing that there was a clear connection between inflammatory rhetoric and violence, Bill and his co-director of the Pro Choice League, Joni Scott, worked with Father Frank Pavone, co-founder and director of Priests for Life, to create a document calling for an end to anti-abortion hate speech and violence. In 2002, the agreement between pro-choice and anti-abortion sides was signed, and copies sent by Fr. Pavone to hundreds of diocese and anti-abortion groups nationally.

Bill has also worked through the courts to secure women's right to choose. He is the first and only non-lawyer in American history with three Supreme Court victories. In 1972, ***Baird v. Eisenstadt*** legalized birth control for individuals – the 1965 *Griswold* ruling was for married couples only. And in the 1976 and 1979 decisions *Baird v. Bellotti I and II*, minors were empowered to obtain abortions without parental veto.

Bill was central to three U.S. Supreme Court cases that helped legalize birth control and abortion. In spite of all he has done he has not been embraced by some major groups fighting for the same cause. It may be that he



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### **LOIS BANNER**

I was born in Los Angeles County General Hospital on July 26, 1939, and raised by Christian fundamentalist parents (Missouri Synod Lutheran Church), in Inglewood, a working-class suburb of Los Angeles. My family came from German farm backgrounds in Milwaukee and Spokane. In good German fashion (my parents spoke German before learning English), they managed to buy a large house and to bring all the aging relatives to live with them: grandmothers and grandfathers; even my maternal great grandmother, who lived to be ninety-five.



Large houses were cheap in Los Angeles during the Depression of the 1930s. In our house there were plenty of people to clean, cook, and care for my two brothers and sister and me. But in the 1950s ageism was rampant, and my relatives internalized society's scorn of the elderly and blamed themselves for it. Seriously depressed, they complained about their health. At one point there were twelve people living in our house and my mother's brother, a beautiful, dashing musician, moved in and out between marriages. My great-grandmother had no affection for the younger generation, but she told me stories about Indians and adventurers she had encountered in the late nineteenth

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century, which perhaps inspired me to become a historian.



How did a 1970s radical feminist like me emerge out of such a family? My parents were racist and anti-Semitic, but even as a child I found those attitudes wrong. Jesus Christ taught us to love all humanity and to be charitable and non-materialistic—that's the message I picked up from Lutheranism. God the father was a terrifying being who would send us

to hell if we didn't believe, and I was frightened of him. God the Holy Ghost, the third part of the triune god, made no sense to me, until I learned as an adult that the "ghost" was probably female, the "mother" written out of the historical record. My maternal grandparents were Franklin Roosevelt Democrats. My grandmother constantly talked about the Depression and how Roosevelt got the nation out of it. (Pictured Left: Lois's mother, great grandmother, sister and Lois)

My mother had a B.A. from the University of Southern California and was a virtuoso pianist. I grew up admiring women who worked, and was taught that I needed an education to support my family if my husband was out of work. My maternal grandparents were good caregivers, and we had special times with my mother. I was a singer then, and had my mother lived (she died when I was

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thirteen), I would probably have been a musician. I adored my mother; and I was proud of her working. My father, a Victorian sort, worked in advertising agencies. He was devoted to the church and should have been a minister.

Are we born with characters already formed? I am so different from my two brothers that I sometimes think I was sneaked into the hospital where I was born. They are conventional homebodies (although my brothers have had brilliant careers, one as a scientist; the other as a businessman.) But I was rebellious, always wanting to be different, determined to achieve the Ph.D. my mother failed to attain. I was also very shy; I never spoke in any of my classes at UCLA, but somehow I knew I would be a professor.

At that point in my life, I didn't notice that there weren't any women professors at UCLA and had no understanding of discrimination against women. I was regularly denied fellowships, scholarships, and jobs with the statement: "Why does a pretty girl like you want to do anything but get married?" I internalized my failures and told no one about them. Luckily, my three best friends in my sorority were all bent on achievement, and we bonded together to get ahead. I worked hard, got good grades, and dated a lot, although my major boyfriend, a philosophy major, was a sometime hippie who took me to rent parties in Venice. I also dated fraternity boys and dreamed of being "pinned" -- wearing a fraternity pin on my sweater close to my heart. Thank goodness that fantasy was never fulfilled.

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In the end my sense of adventure won out I moved to New York City to fulfill the fantasies I had constructed from movies and books. Los Angeles was very provincial in the 1950s, and I dreamed of the special cultural delights that New York had to offer. I was accepted for graduate school in the history department at Columbia, though I later learned they were accepting almost anyone with good enough grades, because they needed money.

New York didn't disappoint me. I studied hard, although I didn't understand much of what I was being taught.. At least I was good at parroting what they said. I managed to stay afloat, and spent Saturdays visiting museums and shopping on Fifth Avenue.

I had three offers of marriage within three months of arriving at Columbia. (Columbia had a male-female ratio of five to one, and most everyone in the 1950s before feminism happened was married by age twenty-one.) But I couldn't compete with students from the Ivy League schools; it turned out I hadn't learned much at UCLA. In 1962 I married the best student in my class and got a job as a teacher at Rosemary Hall in Greenwich, Connecticut, an elite private girls high school. In the context of teaching, married to a man who had been to Yale before Columbia, I made up my deficiencies and was admitted back to Columbia for a Ph.D. , now with the smarts to hold my own.

I never expected to actually become a professor. High school or junior college teaching was my goal. My husband got a job at Princeton; I got a part-time job at Douglass College (then the women's college of

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Rutgers), teaching sections of the required Western Civilization course. Feminism was aborning, and Douglass turned out to be one of the first academic centers. My introduction to the movement came through Elaine Showalter, then also married to a Princeton professor. We lived a block away from one another and commuted to Douglass together. She told me about the movement, inspiring the "click" that went off in my head, as I realized the oppression that had always been visited against me. I was physically beautiful, but that was hardly an asset, and though I did well academically in high school I was often called a "dumb blonde."

It was the 1960s and I was teaching and getting my Ph.D. I had my first child, Olivia, in 1968, and finished my dissertation on the Protestant ministry in early America. (Don't scratch your head at such a topic; I found a cache of minister's sermons in the eighteenth century at the Princeton Theological Seminary.) I began teaching women's history in 1969 because the students at Douglass were demanding it and none of the senior professors in the history department wanted to teach it.

We women at Douglass and some of the faculty wives at Princeton were rebels of sorts; we started a women's studies program and pressured Princeton into setting up a daycare center on the campus. I was more a follower than a leader; my endemic shyness kept taking over, but I found my forte as a writer, and I began the career of teaching and publication that has sustained me to this day. I wrote a history of women in modern America, a biography of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and a history of physical appearance in the United States, while teaching and having my second child, Gideon. I was raised by

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child tenders, and had no issues with putting my children in day care.

Predictably, the men in history at Rutgers (who controlled the Douglass department) refused me tenure, largely because I didn't publish my dissertation on Protestant ministers as a book. The truth is that after I published four scholarly articles from that topic, I was bored with it. Women's history was more interesting. When I was turned down for tenure gossip was that I was terrible teacher and scholar; I was little more than the wife of a Princeton professor; that, because of my "good looks", I could never be successful in a university setting. I wasn't tough and assertive until I was thirty – five, when I became less shy and a lot smarter.

So I began what I jokingly call my *hegira*, as I taught at seven separate universities, always taking my children with me, always publishing—sometimes articles, sometimes books. The universities and colleges where I taught ranged from private to state institutions and included Princeton; the University of Maryland, Baltimore County; George Washington University; the University of Scranton; Stanford; and UCLA. Individuals I knew in the history profession were kind to me. They watched for openings and recommended me as a visiting professor. It was difficult at the time, but it was the making of me, and, by the end, no one knew more about the academic world than I.

Throughout my career I was enmeshed in feminist politics, usually through the academy. My Douglass colleague, Mary Hartman, and I, became involved in founding the field of women's history. We created the

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first Berkshire Conference in Women's History in 1972, now the major national gathering in the field. I organized panels at history conventions, became involved in the American Studies Association, and was the first woman president. When I published *American Beauty* in 1983 with Alfred Knopf, I had reached the top. The University of Southern California extended me an offer at full professor level, where I would remain for thirty years.

My husband and I divorced when I and my children moved to Los Angeles in 1983. I joined colleagues in women's studies at USC: Carol Jacklin, Barrie Thorne, Judith Stiehm, Gloria Orenstein, Harry Brod, and many more. We shook up the university. I chaired departments and programs, served on university committees; won prizes for teaching, service, and scholarship. Between 1983 and 2003 I published many articles and three books: *In Full Flower: Aging Women, Power, and Sexuality* (Knopf: 1989); *Finding Fran: History and Memory in the Lives of Two Women* (Columbia University, 1989); and *Intertwined Lives: Margaret Mead, Ruth Benedict, and Their Circle* (Knopf: 2003).

During those years at USC I refined my feminism. Gloria Orenstein, an art critic involved in goddess worship, introduced me to the subject. I was intrigued by its premise that god had been a woman and now realized how that tyrannical Lutheran god of my childhood had scarred me, and felt empowered. I also realized that many feminists have a strong spiritual bent, and need to have it nurtured in order to engage in the rough and tumble of political action. I wrote about goddess worship in my book *In Full Flower*, a celebration of the potential of aging woman over time and space.

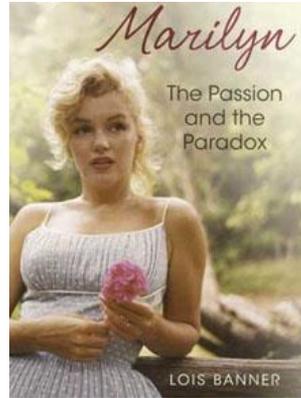
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*Finding Fran* included my own biography and that of my best friend from high school, Fran. Fran had participated in founding one of the major communes in the 1960s in Taos, New Mexico: The Lama Foundation, a spiritual commune, grounded in an ecumenical sect, called the Sufi Order in the West. From Sufi ecumenicism, Fran's faith had evolved into a more traditional set of Muslim beliefs, although she still followed the mystical path. Soon after, she converted to Islam and wore traditional Islamic garb, completely covering her body. Through that dress, she told me, she found freedom. I had difficulties with the argument, but I could see that rejecting the West, its materialism, and its objectification of women and devoting her life to the Sufi path had liberated her. When she converted to Islam she changed her name to Noura. She does the traditional prayer ritual five times a day, bowing her head to the ground in honor of Allah; she eats traditional Middle Eastern food and observes Ramadan. A talented artist, she now does only calligraphy—and illustrates children's books. She supports equal rights for women, and contends that in the original Arabic Allah is a being beyond gender.

Once again a book I was writing took over my life. To understand what Fran had done I followed her path. I spent time at the Lama Foundation, joined a Sufi group in Los Angeles and came close to converting to Islam, in the end I couldn't cede all power to Allah, even rhetorically, and that is the basis of even leftist Sufi sects. But it became apparent to me at this point that my writing was taking over my life. I integrated every book I was writing into the courses I was teaching, which proved to be a very effective teaching technique. My students loved being part of a book in progress.

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In 2003 I took on the most daunting topic: a biography of Marilyn Monroe. After writing about Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Margaret Mead, and Ruth Benedict, I wanted to write about an individual from the world of entertainment, and an icon like Monroe seemed perfect. I live in Los Angeles, the historic center of the movie industry; I teach at USC, which has the best film school in the nation. I joined the Marilyn Monroe fan club and began on a journey that took me across the nation and to Europe, as I interviewed about one hundred people who had known Marilyn, gained access to about four hundred interviews that previous biographers had done, and scoured archives and artifacts at collections throughout the nation.



I soon realized that writing about Marilyn was going to be challenging. Aside from what Gloria Steinem wrote about Marilyn, I trusted none of the biographies of her. For example, none of the previous biographers had read Arthur Miller's autobiography, *Timebends*, which documents Marilyn's influence on him. These biographers (mostly male) assumed that the "great intellectual" had been her mentor. But that was only part of the story of their relationship.

It took me ten years to write the book, and sometimes my research had a cloak-and-dagger element to it. I interviewed Mafia figures: I had a four hour interview

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with Phyllis Maguire, Sam Giancana's girlfriend, in Las Vegas. I interviewed a private detective who had been at Marilyn's house the night she died. I spent five months going through Marilyn's private file cabinets. I gained access to that hidden source as the result of an unexpected telephone call to me from their owner. I was on the periphery of most of the many lawsuits filed about the rights to Marilyn's image. Thank goodness, no one ever sued me. I had to sort through the many liars who approached me, thinking my university status might promote their case.

My publisher, Bloomsbury Books, wanted a definitive biography, and that's what I gave them. I figured out Marilyn's eleven foster families and when she was with each of them. I documented three episodes of childhood abuse, and tracked down the full dimensions of her career. I determined the inaccuracy of shibboleths about her—such as that she had no women friends and that she never had an orgasm. I proved that she was bisexual, and I documented her affair with her first drama coach, Natasha Lytess.

Above all, I discussed her life as a feminist, pointing out that there wasn't much feminism in Los Angeles in the 1950s and thus she had no framework from which to view her obvious oppression as a woman in the masculinized Hollywood film industry, one of the most patriarchal institutions in the history of the United States. I concluded that she gained power through self-objectification, making herself into a sex goddess for men, and argued that in the end it was that stance that destroyed her.

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I'm now over seventy years of age. I've been in the classroom for fifty years. I've had a rich and satisfying career, and am proud of the generations of students I've taught and converted to feminism. I teach courses in gay and lesbian studies, and eased the "coming out" transition for many students, as they learn to take pride in their heritage and saw that even a heterosexual woman like me supports them and their cause. Last year I realized that I'm not happy if I'm not writing a book in my head, and so I'm turning my freelance career into a full time occupation. I've been married for nearly twenty years to another academic devoted to writing and studying, and that works best for me.

I'm very proud of my children. My son, a successful actor, stars in the Blue Man Group in New York and sometimes acts on Broadway. My daughter, with a Ph.D. from UCLA and five years as managing editor of *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, is a lecturer in literature, film, and science studies at Rice University in Houston. The University of Michigan Press is publishing her first book. After years of resisting it, she follows in my footsteps, although she doesn't like me to say that.

Feminism has given me a rich and fulfilling life. I'm proud to have been part of one of the major movements of our times, one that changed the opportunities for and status of women in the United States and throughout the world.

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### **KATHLEEN BARRY**

I never set out to be single (you don't "get single" like you "get married") and growing up in the 1950s it was Elvis not Susan B. Anthony who captured my imagination. The oldest of three children, I was born in Syracuse, New York to James and Dorval Barry who had just survived the Great Depression. Dad was a laborer in road construction in the summer when he barely made enough for us to get by and was laid off of work every winter when he occasionally got snow-plowing jobs to supplement unemployment. Although we needed the money, he considered it his patriarchal (his word) duty to support his family so that his wife could stay home with her children. As she did not like her children, that left me during summer vacations from school spending most of my day babysitting my younger brothers on our front porch, laying the foundation for my later choice to not be a mother.



Through my teenage years, I yearned to get out of that house. All I wanted was to be independent. I did not think beyond that. My parents' dream for me to graduate high school, get a job as a clerical worker in an office where I would find among the professional men someone to marry, raising my standard of living and possibly, hopefully theirs. The school counselor's set me on that path by tracking me in a "business" meaning secretarial curriculum in high school. Typing, shorthand, sewing, cooking was to round out my preparation for

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womanhood.

To be honest, at the time, going to college never entered my mind. I knew I was not one of those college-bound kids who rarely associated with us working class kids headed for dead end jobs. And I saw them as "those people" as my Dad referred with resentment to the middle classes who always had more, knew more than us and knew it. Then as if out of the blue, just a few months before high school graduation, my typing teacher asked me one day after school if I "ever thought of going to college." I went blank. "No." But she did not let it go. Before I fully grasped what going to college it would mean for my life, I knew this could be my ticket to independence. Even though I did not have the required courses, excitedly I applied to and was accepted at Oswego State Teachers College (SUNY). Angered, parents saw their plan for my upward mobility falling apart. They assured me that I would receive no support from them.

By my sophomore year, I faced the stark reality that, already deeply in debt with loans, I could not financially afford to continue my college education. I quit and assumed I was doomed for the clerical pool again. There was a serious shortage of school teachers at the time and I landed a teaching position, 4th grade. That was the first time that I ever did something I truly loved - teaching - so I knew I would eventually find my way back to college.

Meanwhile the civil rights movement hit Syracuse, then a completely segregated city, with all blacks of every class living in one city ward, a ghetto. From my earliest

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remembering, riding with my family to church every Sunday through the ghetto, I was repelled by the way whites talked about black people. That repulsion grew into anger and by the time I was 20 in 1961, I joined the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE). The virulent resistance of Syracusans to desegregation crushed my naïve belief that changing attitudes with facts could change racist behavior. These were the years, although I did not know it then, in which I laid the groundwork for becoming a sociologist, giving me a stronger base for my activism.

I put my love of teaching children together with my growing social consciousness of poverty and discrimination and volunteered to teach in a school for migrant children in Texas for a year. I was in my early twenties and under tremendous pressure to marry, not only from my family, but with the disappearance of my longtime girlfriends into their marriages and babies. So, while I was in Texas, I met this guy, Ken, who then seemed to me to be a kind of intellectual. After months of dating we became engaged. There was no magic, either with him or in doing the accepted thing. Ironically, it was Catholicism that saved me. Divorce was prohibited by the Church, and I was not about to be sentenced to lifelong misery, the kind I just escaped. I realized that I neither loved him enough to marry nor did I want to marry, just yet. I was approaching my mid-twenties with the escalation of pressure to marry. And then I dropped religion and its patriarchal control of women from my life.

In 1965 when it was time to leave Texas, I moved to Detroit with my teacher-roommate in Texas where I

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taught in the first years of Head Start and joined CORE there. At the same time, I was taking college courses wherever I lived until I finally received my BA from Wayne State University in Detroit in 1978, nine years after I graduated from high school. By then, ready to move on from teaching children, I earned a Masters from Wayne State and worked in the school district's anti-poverty programs.

# The WOMEN'S Liberation MOVEMENT

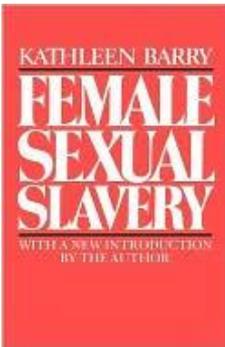


In 1967, at the age of 26, I sat down with 5 or 6 other women for the beginnings of one of those small Consciousness Raising groups that were spontaneously erupting all over the country into the Women's Liberation Movement. We took women's need for equality for granted but knew we had to get to deeper, yet unspoken issues - abortion rights, welfare rights, rape, wife abuse. Although I was in a relationship with George, marriage slipped from my mind and then I discovered that sex no longer need be confined to marriage, and intimacy need not be only with men. Whew! We feminists spoke our anger and pain to each other and turned it into activism. We testified in speak

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outs and took our guerilla theater to the streets. While it would be a decade before I would begin to think of myself as a writer, the prediction of my 7th grade aptitude test, feminist issues filled me with subject matter and an urge to write. The first article I wrote appeared in the first issue of *Women: A Journal of Liberation*. After Miss McCarthy my high school typing teacher who coaxed me into college, nothing else shaped my life more significantly than radical feminism as I was there with all those women shaping it - the Women's Liberation Movement. In 1972 I became the Women's Advocate and Sacramento State University in California.

My first book, *Female Sexual Slavery* (1979), translated in several language and still in print in English since its first publication, launched me into global activism against sexual exploitation and trafficking in women two decades



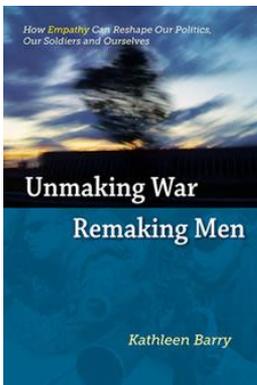
before that issue came of age in the United States. I earned a dual doctorate in Sociology and Education at University of California, Berkeley. My dissertation on the social origins of nineteenth century American feminism, a background preparation for my next book, *Susan B. Anthony: A Biography of a Singular Feminist*. By the late 1980s, having been a feminist activist for

two decades, having seen how Anthony was dismissed by contemporary feminist historians, I saw her life as a model of feminist activism. My teaching shifted to university students. I joined the faculty of the Sociology

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Department at Brandeis University in 1981 to teach Feminist Theory. In 1988 moved on to Penn State University as sociologist in the multi-disciplinary department of Human Development and Family Studies.

Through the 1980s, I unintentionally become a one-woman movement against and global expert on trafficking in women and children. One impact of *Female Sexual Slavery* was that the United Nations took up the issue of trafficking once again. But it would take many more years before American feminism would take up that issue. At the time, the radical feminist movement contested pornography but it had not yet connected the exploitation of women in porn to prostitution and trafficking. At the 1988 radical feminist conference on sexual liberals and the attack on feminism, I announced that as a one-woman movement is a contradiction in terms, "I give this to you." With Dorchen Leidholdt, I cofounded the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women, a UN-NGO, with Category II, human rights status.



While teaching full-time, writing the Anthony biography, I travelled the world for many years speaking and organizing against trafficking and to end prostitution.

Through a collaboration with UNESCO and with support of feminist activists from different world regions, I developed a model for a new international law, The Convention Against Sexual Exploitation, which would make prostitution,

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pornography and sexual trafficking a violation of human rights in international law. Although not yet adopted by the U.N., I was undaunted. Sweden became the first of many countries adopt criminalize the customers who buy sex. Vietnam, when it began to shift to a market economy was on the brink of being invaded by massive sex industries. I organized a feminist seminar there 1993, Vietnam too criminalized customers in state law. A few years later my edited volume Vietnam's Women in Transition (1996), a collection of essays from American and Vietnamese feminists, was published.

With the normalization of sexual exploitation of prostitution as sex work and the massive explosion of pornography's sexual objectification and violence through the Internet, I turned to my next book, Prostitution of Sexuality: Global Exploitation of Women which was published in 1995 and includes the model law for criminalizing customers of the sex trade.

By the age of sixty, the pace and pain of my work that kept me in the center of controversy and constantly under attack from the sex industries caught up with me and my health. I took an early retirement and moved back to the California. Fortunate for me personally, feminists and human rights organizations globally were beginning to seriously take up the issue of trafficking while women who survived prostitution were creating programs to help women get out of it.

I needed to rest. My doctors told me I should try "working out of the other side of your brain." I did not have a clue of how to do that until I found myself painting first with pastels and then with oils and surprise to me, being an

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artist for the first time in my life became my passion. I truly love dragging my easel and paints out for three hours of painting to some lovely landscape, seascape or cityscape scene which are easily within reach here in Sonoma County of Northern California. Or I pick up my camera and head to the ocean. Painting and photography shows of my work are on my horizon.

By 2006 with good medical treatment, my energy began to return. I had been watching with anger as George W. Bush manipulated the U.S. into committing war crimes with its invasion and occupation of Iraq. In that summer, something stirred my consciousness when I began to hear reports of "the loss of innocent lives" in the Israeli-Lebanon War. "When," I thought, "we set aside one group of human beings who are to be protected (even though today's militaries ignored that law) from harm in war zones, we construct another group, men in combat, who are killable." Soon I found myself back to writing for the first time in more than a decade. My latest book *Unmaking War, Remaking Men: How Empathy Can Reshape Our Politics, Our Soldiers and Ourselves* was published in 2011. Returning to feminist political activism, teaching workshops and lecturing, at the age of 70 I am excited to discover that "I'm back!"

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### **ROXANNE BARTON CONLIN**

*One of the One Hundred Most Influential Lawyers in America...*National Law Journal

I was born in Huron, South Dakota on June 30,1944. When I was a little girl, probably inspired by Roy Rogers and Sky King and the other Saturday afternoon movies, I wanted to be a cowboy and a pilot. It was easy for me to see who had the power and what could be done with it. My best friends were boys and I could run as fast and climb as high as they. I wasn't exactly a tomboy though, because I loved pretty things and nice dresses and shiny shoes. I went to Catholic schools so the gender lines were pretty clear. I just ignored them.



By junior high, I had decided to become a movie star. My homeroom teacher, Sister Mary Katrine, was appalled. She was the first to suggest that I become a lawyer so I could use my flair for the dramatic as well as my brain. So I agreed to do that first, and then become a movie star.

I was able to enter college at 16 through a special program based on test scores and grades. All I needed was a recommendation from my high school principal.

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She refused because I was such a rebel and she wanted another year to try to straighten me out. By rebel, I don't mean anything serious, but for example, I refused to button the top button of my uniform blouse and spoke up in class more than was ladylike. My little Irish mom went to see the principal. I don't know the content of the conversation, but afterwards, the principal consented, though she did tell me that I would never make it and she was not sure she would take me back when I flunked out of college. I am forever grateful to her for that. Nothing is more motivating to me than for someone to tell me I can't do something. I sent her my report card from my first semester at Drake University.

I was definitely not flunking out. I then went to law school and finished my last year of college at the same time, graduating with a BA at 19 and from law school at 21.

Law school was horrible. There were only three women in my class and the other two were returning students much older than I. There was open discrimination by the professors who wanted nothing more than to see us fail and did everything within their power to make that happen.

I married James Conlin in March of my junior year (1964) and spent the first semester of my senior year pregnant. That was a first for the law school. No one called on me for fear of upsetting me and causing me to go into labor. More seriously, I was not permitted to interview for jobs in my "condition." I graduated near the top of the class.

In 1963, I read Betty Friedan. I realized I was a feminist

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and always had been. Like so many other women I was relieved that there was a name for my unshakable belief that women were equal and entitled to equal rights. In 1968, I gave my first speech on Women and the Law to a church group. I am lucky I didn't get stoned on the spot. Looking back, almost everything I advocated in that first speech and thousands of others has come to pass.

In 1971, I founded and was the first chair of the Iowa Women's Political Caucus. I wrote the first law protecting the privacy of rape victims and managed its passage in February 1972. I wrote many other laws and corrected code references, tried the first sex discrimination case in Iowa in 1972 and hundreds of others over the years, and moved the law forward in many areas by litigating individual cases on behalf of individual clients.

### **TODAY:**

For several months, party leaders in Iowa asked me to run for the United States Senate against Senator Charles Grassley. Grassley has been in the Senate for 30 years and in public office for 50 -- a popular politician in Iowa with a reputation as an independent and a caretaker of taxpayer dollars. I didn't think I could win. But in August, he came home to Iowa and spoke at Town meetings. During one meeting, he told a questioner that we should be very afraid that the government would decide when to "pull the plug on Grandma" and assured his supporters in a fundraising letter that he would never vote for "Obamacare." In Washington, he was pretending to negotiate in good faith toward a bipartisan bill, but in that he committed the cardinal sin for Iowa leaders: hypocrisy. His favorability ratings plummeted. I began studying his record and saw

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that he voted wrong on nearly everything -- including the Lily Ledbetter Equal Pay bill and the minimum wage bill on 4 separate occasions. So, on November 9, I filed my papers with the FEC and officially became a candidate.

As a veteran feminist, I fought the early wars. I got knocked down hundreds of times and always got up. I was criticized, threatened and even fired from a job because of my outspoken advocacy for reproductive freedom. I wrote the first law in the nation to protect the privacy of rape victims and got it passed by the Iowa legislature and signed by the governor in 1972. Dozens of other pieces of legislation I wrote or had a hand in also passed in that and later years. I brought the first sexual harassment lawsuit and hundreds more over the years. I won the first state Supreme Court decision declaring discrimination based on pregnancy was discrimination based on sex and therefore illegal under Iowa law.

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### NIKKI BEARE

I was born  
Muriel Nikki  
Brink in Detroit,  
Michigan, on  
March 7, 1928.  
My dad,  
Stanley Elbert  
Brink, was a  
well known  
professional  
basketball



player. My mother worked outside the home, so a housekeeper took care of me. When I was two, I got typhoid fever and the housekeeper, deciding I was contagious, put me in a basket and shut me in a closet. I cried and cried, and she ignored me. I never forgot this.

My brother, Stanley, was born when I was four. My Dad, who because of his work was away a lot, told me I had to take care of the baby. I didn't always want to watch over him and once told my dad that. He didn't like me talking back to him and he threatened to lock me in the closet. This fear affected me for most of my childhood years, and influenced my life in the future. Still, I became committed to making sure my brother was ok all the time. We fought every once in a while, but I was devoted to him.

I was very athletic and particularly good at baseball. Sometimes I was a shortstop and a good

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batter, but whatever position I played, I always hit home runs. Once, my dad chastised me for losing a ball game, so I ran away from home. I took the streetcar to Northville, near Detroit, a small town where my friend, Margaret Walborn, had moved with her family. Her parents called my folks to report that I was there, leaving me in fear of what my Dad would do to me.

Once, when my family was at a lake near Detroit, Stanley fell into the water. I pulled him up by his hair and on to the shore. He cried profusely and I told him he had to grow up and stop being such a crybaby. He later told our mother that he'd almost drowned. From then on she put him on a leash and made me hold onto him whenever we were outside. This provoked me to anger and I pouted--until my Dad threatened to put me in the closet.

After I graduated from Noble Grade School I went to Tappan Intermediate. And I loved it. Later I went to Cass Technical High School where I majored in art, and again was active in sports. I took Jewelry, Charcoal Design and Oils, wrote for the school newspaper and joined the swimming team. There were African Americans, Jewish kids and students from all walks of life at the school--and lots of boys! I liked my teachers and loved the school. I really liked being so independent.

I made many friends at Cass. One, Alice Jones, a gifted painter, was African American. Mom said it was ok to have Alice come to dinner so we could finish our art project together. I didn't realize that I had never told Mother that Alice was African American, and mom had never had an African American in her life. When I

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introduced Alice, my mom's jaw dropped. But she managed to say, "Welcome Alice. Muriel has spoken so much about you and your project with her." From then I became a strong advocate for the rights of African Americans.

In 1946 I met Richard A. Beare. We fell in love and married June 15, 1946. We lived first in Detroit, and a few years later moved to Traverse City, Michigan, where we built a summer resort on Spider Lake. Our daughter, Sandra Lee Beare, was born May 30, 1947. Sandra was a child of nature. All animals were drawn to her like magnets.

Those years were precious. We were living on top of a huge hill. We built summer cabins for people to come and enjoy nature and I helped the other owners of summer cottages. I also helped form the Forest Lakes Resort Area. We were a very close family. There were no children nearby so Sandi grew up with wild animals. We started a farm and greenhouse and Dick raised and sold hanging begonia baskets. Then we started an organic garden. This was a new way of life for us.

Pretty soon, the Grand Traverse property appraiser came and when he discovered we were "Organic Gardeners," he told everyone we were "Commie Pinkos," as we didn't support chemical poisonous sprays and fertilizers.

We lived in Michigan for a decade, and in 1956, when our folks retired to the Florida Keys, we moved to Florida. Sandi attended Florida Keys schools and I wrote for the Key West Citizen newspaper. In 1960, when

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Hurricane Donna hit we were visiting family in Michigan. The hurricane destroyed the schools on Key Largo and Upper and Lower Matecumbe Keys, so students from Upper Keys had to be bused back and forth to Marathon, which meant less time for education. So we moved to Miami so Sandi could attend a good school

And that is where I became a feminist activist.

In 1968 I was writing for the Women's Page of the Miami News. One day a woman named Roxcy Bolton came into the News office and shared with me her bag of groceries--telling me that "No one pays any attention to what women want. We are supposed to be concerned with what is in the food and the importance of what we are feeding our families. No one tells us that women's rights are not considered at all, that we are second class citizens and must mind our husbands."

I was astonished! I'd never even considered any of this. Roxcy invited me to cover a meeting in her home in Coral Gables that next evening, where they would found the Dade chapter of the National Organization for Women. Little did I know this was going to change my life.

Several women were already there when I arrived at her home. I soon discovered that these women wanted equal rights with men and were organizing to make that actually happen. From all walks of life, some of the women were single and some were married, many with children in the teens, twenties and on up. A few were senior citizens who remembered when women got the right to vote.

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Next thing I knew we were having election of officers. Another reporter, Martha Ingle, was there, representing the Miami Herald. I was there for the Miami News. Guess what? After all the discussions Martha was elected President of the Miami NOW chapter, and I was elected Vice President. The next morning I received a phone call from Martha. Seems her boss, the managing editor, told her she had to resign immediately or be dismissed as a reporter. Thus I had suddenly become President!

I decided to resign from the Miami News as I passionately wanted to make the world a better place for women. And this truly changed my life. From then on I worked with members to change the classified advertisements in the two daily newspapers, including the Miami News which, along with the Herald, was still separating jobs by Male/Female, which was definitely discriminatory. And of course jobs for females were menial, while all the good, well paying jobs were in the male section.

We set up an appointment with the Miami Herald advertising manager to discuss this with him. When we explained our position, he laughed at us and said, "See that huge computer there," pointing to a large machine about 12-15 feet long. "It will cost us thousands of dollars to make any changes in this computer. Sorry-- that means we will not be able to comply with your demands."

So we decided we would focus instead on the employment agencies which knew the importance of the

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Equal Employment federal legislation and thus would be more willing to comply with our issues.

Several women agreed to apply for jobs designated in the Herald as male only. When each applicant was refused the position we held meetings. Then we wrote letters to the employment agencies telling them we planned to file a sex discrimination case against them. We had about seven letters written to seven employment agencies ready to go.

I knew Dan Paul, the attorney who represented the Herald, and made an appointment with him. I took the numerous complaint letters to the meeting, telling him that we would not send these to the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission if the Herald would reconsider its position in refusing to change the categories from Male, Female and Male & Female. He took the letters to his management and they capitulated immediately.

The very next day, the Miami Herald touted its new classified advertising policy and declared it had changed its categories to Job Categories. We had won! This was deemed meaningful by the Commission on the Status of Women in the State of Florida. In 1994 I received recognition for my efforts and was honored by induction into the Florida Women's Hall of Fame.

I was very active in NOW for several years, and after leaving NOW participated in founding the Dade County, Florida, and Capitol Women's Political caucuses. Over the years I continued to help women become business owners, get appointed and elected to public office, or

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whatever they wished to accomplish. I was a pioneer in helping elect several, including the late Gwendolyn Sawyer Cherry, Dade County's first female black attorney, to the Florida House of Representatives in 1970. She introduced the Equal Rights Amendment there in 1972, chaired the state's committee for International Woman's Year in 1978, and co-authored Portraits in Color.



Nikki Beare, Lobbyist addresses the Senate Commerce Committee - Tallahassee, Florida

Around that time I opened my own public relations business, Nikki Beare & Associates, Inc., still have it today, and I continue to help women in politics and business. For eight years I hosted Florida's first talk show for women. I founded the Women's Almanac

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newspaper, created Florida's first feminist credit union, and was privileged to become well known for my efforts to pass the ERA in Florida.

In 1992, during Hurricane Andrew we lost our house, and thus decided to move to Gadsden County, where there are fewer hurricanes.

My daughter, Sandi Beare, who had been an airline flight attendant, moved to Miami and then joined the National Organization For Women (NOW) and then several years later was selected as Director of the Florida Commission on the Status of Women activities (FCSOW) and served for several years. She coordinated the recognition of many great women who had helped make a difference in many women's lives in Florida.

My husband and I are now in our eighties, and have been married 64 years. Our daughter, Sandra, lives nearby with her husband. Life is quieter now, but we are still active with our farm and I, with my political interests. Gadsden County is the poorest county in Florida, so I work to help make a difference in this small town and continue to do what I can to help women.

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### SUZANNE BENTON

I was born January 21, 1936 in Brooklyn, NY, to Florence and Alex Elkins; brother Joel had been born in March 1933. My mother started my independent life when I was three by teaching me to cross a wide street to the Prospect Park playground across from our apartment building.



When I visited the neighborhood in 2008 with my daughter, we crossed that street to the park, and I felt an echo of the thrill I felt at three, proudly stepping out on my own.

I was no angel--I was a difficult child. But my harsh, unloving mother was also my best advocate. She pushed me into the world with utter equanimity, sending me for dance lessons with Pearl Primus, proponent of African dance. She bought me a piano when money was scarce and made sure I got eight years of lessons. She hadn't finished high school but proudly saw me graduate from Queens College at 20 with a B.A. in Fine Arts.

My mother's father, Samuel Matkoff, emigrated from Russia at 14 and immediately set to work. Still telling stories, he died at 102. Her mother, Bess, was born on the boat from Austria as it landed in New York harbor and became the family's first American citizen. My great-grandmother, Hannah, died in childbirth when Bess was in the third grade. Taken out of

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school, Bess was given care of the new baby, her brothers and sisters. Uterine cancer killed her at 60, the age I was when stricken with the same disease and survived.

My father's concern for social justice influenced me. His parents, born in the United States to Russian and Polish Jewish immigrants, owned a dairy farm in Queens, NY. He was home-schooled by his sister until their parents moved to Brooklyn. Entering public school at ten, he never adjusted to the regimen and left at 15.

As an advertising salesman for a print company he worked with the best ad agencies. But during WWII, he struggled to maintain his contacts and took a night job at a war plant in Farmingdale, NY. My family then moved to Rego Park, Queens, for his easier commute on the Long Island Railroad.

By the time I was six, our apartment building housed many who'd fled the Nazis. They'd tell nightmarish stories around our dining-room table, their faces filled with unimaginable sorrow for lost families and friends. While in Koln, Germany, in 1982-83, I created 27 masks on the theme of the Holocaust in their honor.

Friends visiting from Brooklyn told stories about "the old country," the challenges of immigration and the labor movement. Many were committed socialists, as was my father's sister, Regina Elkins Fruchter, a feminist, who died before I was born. My father proudly spoke of her meeting with President Woodrow Wilson at the White House to convince him to support women's right to vote.

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My best friend in high school was the boy next door, Adam Berkeley. Bright and inquisitive, he knew New York City's cultural life. We rode the subway to Manhattan to art museums and foreign films. When I confessed to wanting to become an artist, he steered me to the Art Students League, and at 15 I studied life drawing there with Ernest Feine. I reconnected with the League in 2009 by giving a lecture and having an exhibit. I now teach a printmaking workshop there each year. One of my monoprints is in the League's art collection and graces its president's office.



(Pictured: Suzanne and daughter)

My teen years were filled with art, piano and dance lessons, dating and working summers as a camp counselor. I loved Forest Hills High School and Queens College and at 20 became aware of the oppressive limits on women's lives, when I was about to graduate and marry medical student Arnold Benton. He'd been taught at Downstate Medical School in Brooklyn that coitus interruptus was a means of birth control. His family's doctor performed my illegal abortion without anesthesia. I considered the illegality of the procedure, but was not ready to

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have a child. I hadn't understood the danger until five years later when another Queens College student bled to death in his office. He was prosecuted and sent to jail.

During the first two years of marriage my husband was finishing medical school and I taught art at a junior high school in Brooklyn. Pregnant women weren't allowed to teach in NYC schools, so I hid my pregnancy with an artist's smock, then left teaching and gave birth to my son, Daniel, in 1958. Daughter Lisa was born in 1960 but tragedy hit when she was eight months old. We hadn't known we each carried the recessive \*Tay-Sachs gene. Lisa had received one from each of us, and was condemned to become blind, never to speak, sit up or walk. This rare genetic disorder progressively destroys nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord. There is no cure. She was to die by age three.

Despite the threat of having another Tay-Sachs baby, I tried again for a healthy child. Lisa died the night before I gave birth to Janet in 1963. Would she live, ever sit up? She was born the year *The Feminist Mystique* was published. Friends and I ardently read it, not yet realizing it signaled deep change in our lives and the world. Janet sat up on November 22, the day John Kennedy was assassinated. We mourned with our country as we rejoiced with our healthy baby. *(photo left: Suzanne and daughter Janet.)*

Still more struggle would set my activism aflame. Janet was two years old when my husband had a vasectomy. He believed himself sterile but the surgery had left a trace of sperm and I became pregnant. Abortion was still illegal in 1965. Was I to face the

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danger of another Tay-Sachs baby? As an exception could be made to save the life of the mother, I told three psychiatrists I would kill myself if forced to proceed with the pregnancy. The injustice and humiliation pierced my every cell. I'd soon become a fierce feminist.

By 1965 my family had moved to Ridgefield, Connecticut. My friend Kate Kelly, trying for a divorce, was facing appalling legal constraints. We both knew we'd been stabbed by the inequities. Thinking to write a book, we began researching the position of women in America. I wrote to the Women's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Labor asking for all their literature. When two large boxes arrived, I read everything, unknowingly readying to give feminist talks when the opportunity came. Asked to meet with a Connecticut Congressional Committee, I brought the list of repressive laws against women in our State and can proudly say they were repealed within a year. Ella Grasso, a congresswoman then, had organized that committee. She later became Connecticut's first woman governor.

In 1966 Betty Friedan and 29 others founded the National Organization for Women. The NY Times magazine featured the history-making story of women joining together for change with photos of Betty, Muriel Fox, and three other founders. I had to be part of this groundbreaking movement! I wrote to Betty via the Times and received a return letter on NOW stationery with names and contact information of eight members of CT NOW.

I contacted them and we met for dinner. None shared my interest in starting a Connecticut chapter of NOW,

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so in 1970 I started Central Connecticut NOW. The following year, I founded and became President of Western Connecticut NOW, a chapter encompassing much of Fairfield Country. From 1973 to '75 I was Chairperson of Women in the Arts National Task Force for NOW, and in 1973 convener for the first Second Wave Women's Art Festival, Women, Metamorphosis.

Consciousness-raising groups were springing up all over the country; my group included artists and writers. Our weekly sessions became the book *Unmasking*, edited by Valerie Harms, published by the Swallow Press of Ohio University. I became a founding member of the CT Women's Caucus for Art and a member of the NYC chapter.

At the 1969 Eastern Regional NOW Conference, Betty Friedan had asked me to join her inner circle. Told it meant having to forego all other activities, I couldn't give up my commitment to art and family, but would remain dedicated as a feminist activist. In her speech, Betty announced the August 26, 1970 Women's Equality Day Strike. Plans were being made all over the country, and in NYC a March down Fifth Avenue was being organized. I'd been exploring drama with my welded masks and actresses, poets and writers at feminist inter-art workshops at the Westbeth Artists Community, and my group marched, wearing my steel and bronze masks. Afterwards we gave a performance at the Village Gate for the excited post-March throng.

When Lillian Morehead ran for Ridgefield's Board of Selectmen I opened my home studio to raise funds for her campaign with the proviso that attendees start a

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Women's Political Caucus. It became an exemplary chapter that filed suit against the Boys Club for not admitting girls. We created quite a stir and won the case. The Boys and Girls Club now receives generous support from townspeople.

When it became illegal to have separate gender want ads I called the Danbury News. The editor told me the law had no teeth. I told the editor "I have teeth," implying I would organize and harass until the paper complied. The News ceased the gender-based ads, and the Ridgefield Press complied immediately. When Title IX passed, I went to Ridgefield middle school and insisted they begin admitting girls to shop classes and boys to home economics. The Principal wondered why I was so insistent, since my daughter hadn't yet reached middle school. I wanted the program to have been tested and working well when she'd arrive. They complied.

Many early feminists had lived in Ridgefield, including Alice Paul, who'd crafted the Equal Rights Amendment in 1923. I wanted to meet her, but she suddenly went into a nursing home and then was transferred to New Jersey, where she died in 1977. Ridgefield's library had many books on women, including a two-volume biography of Susan B. Anthony. In 1974, Jacqui Ceballos, then NOW's Eastern Regional Director, asked me to create a \*papier-mâché sculpture of Anthony to be placed in Times Square. I was too busy at the time, but was inspired to later create a welded steel sculpture of Susan B.

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Before selling the original Susan B statue to art collector and friend David Mishkin, I made a bronze cast, which I loaned to Governor Grasso's office in 1976-77 while I was lecturing around the world. She'd planned for it to go to the D.C. Congressional building, but died in office. The bronze was purchased by \*Vivien Leone, who later donated it to the Susan B. Anthony House in Rochester, NY; Mishkin donated the original to the U.S. Embassy in Paris. I visited there in July 2013 and saw the work I'd created in 1974.



Remy Charlip, founder of Paperbag Players, was teaching Theater Arts at Sarah Lawrence College in Westchester, NY, and author-poet Ruth Krauss advised me to seek his advice. He sent a student, Judith Hannah Weiss, to work with me as her senior thesis. Emboldened, I approached the Museum of the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center to mount a show of my steel and bronze masks. Judith and I developed the mask tale Sarah and Hagar from Genesis and performed it at the opening of my Lincoln Center show in 1971. It was the first outdoor performance there. Asked to perform for the CT Congregational Church ministers wives, I became a solo performer. Bookings at many churches followed.

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On November 22, 1972, I produced an evening on Broadway at the Edison Theater. Four Chosen Women featured memoirist Anais Nin, actress Vinie Burrows, dancer Joan Stone and myself performing Sarah and Hagar. The Village Voice reviewer tagged me "a young Isadora Duncan flapping her way across the stage." The theater of 400 seats was filled to capacity. Future bookings helped me overcome my struggles as my marriage disintegrated. In 1973 I became a single mother and never let go of my vision to bring my feminist mask tales out into the world.

I met Peggy Billings, head of the United Methodists Women's Committee, in 1973 while performing Sarah and Hagar and leading mask/story workshops at the United Methodist Women's Quadrennial Conference in Norman, Oklahoma. David Briddell advised me to speak with her about my plan to take my work around the world. She mentored me for a year, helping with connections and arranging grant support. I learned the networking skills that made the 1976-77 world journey a success and began my life as a traveling artist.

Daniel had graduated from high school in 1976 and began Colgate College, graduating four years later Summa Cum Laude. I took Janet out of school to accompany me on the trip. She carried 27 pounds of schoolbooks, went to school in Seoul, Korea, and was tutored in Athens, Greece. When we returned to the States, she rejoined her class at Ridgefield High and graduated in three years, then on to Oberlin College, graduating in 1984.

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That year of travel I created 27 welded masks and developed Journey Tales, a series on women in Japan, Korea, India, Israel, Greece and Nigeria. I developed a workshop method that elicited the myths, histories and life stories of people throughout the world; some of these became Journey Tales.

Carrying feminism worldwide, I enabled women, men, students and children to give voice to their hidden life stories. (*photo right:*

*The artist wearing **Lady Macbeth** steel, 10 x 8 x 6.5 inches mask).*



Today I continue to perform Journey Tales and 40 other mask tales. Of the over 600 masks I've created, 50 performance and workshop masks remain in my possession; the others are in private and public collections worldwide. From 1982 to 1984, in Koln, Germany, I created 27 masks and eight tales on the theme of the Holocaust.

Around 1990 Jacqui Ceballos interviewed me for the Schlesinger Library's project "The History of NOW and Betty Friedan." Most pioneer feminists were recuperating from the marathon activity that made the Second Wave, and had not seen one another in ten years! This Schlesinger project reunited us, and \*a few others I and joined Jacqui in starting Veteran Feminists of America.

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A 1992 Fulbright Scholarship in Women's Studies brought me to West Bengal, India. I made masks, developed mask tales, performed and gave lectures and workshops to people from all walks of life.

I had begun the welded-sculpture programs at Dhaka University and the art college in Chittagong in 1995, and in 2011 returned to Bangladesh and India, where I led a welding workshop for gifted students in Dhaka. In response to an unfolding tragedy, I created a mask and developed a tale about Hena Ackter, a 14-year-old girl who'd been raped, beaten, murdered, and I performed this mask tale while the events were unfolding. In Delhi, I created art at Sanskriti, an arts colony, and had an exhibition at America House. In Mumbai America House I joined with NGOs to support my workshops with community and school groups, disadvantaged women and children.

My involvement in the Women's Movement and the changes it wrought improved my life beyond measure. It enabled my groundbreaking work and travel in 29 countries. Other defining forces include growing up in New York City, a commitment to being an artist, the death of my second child, and the joyful relief of having Janet, my disease-free third child. Of course there's more: other men in my life, important friendships, and lovely grandchildren. I'm still planning performances and world travel, creating and selling my art, and working on a memoir. With blessings to the Women's Movement for enabling me to live the life I wanted to lead, I continue to be propelled forward by interest and curiosity.

\* Vivien Leone, an early Second Wave feminist with a special interest in women's poetry and art, funded the

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women's poetry magazine, Aphra. As a major collector of my artwork for over 20 years, she's donated sculpture and monoprints (from my women writers, educators and feminists series) to museums and institutions.

\* Mary Jean Tully headed NOW's Legal Defense and Education Fund (today Legal Momentum) and bankrolled The History of NOW and Betty Friedan for the Schlesinger Library.

\* Founders of VFA: With Jacqui Ceballos: Suzanne Benton, Gene Boyer, Noreen Connell, Janice LaRouche, Joan Michel, Irma Newmark, Mary Orován, Barbara Rubin, Barbara Seaman, Dorothy Senerchia Elayne Snyder, Mary Jean Tully, Mary Scott Welch, Dell Williams, Sandy Zwerling.

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### **DR. BARBARA J. BERG**

My life was shaped by the women of my family who struggled against the privations of their sex. As a child I'd heard the stories of my Great Aunt Rose's twelve year old passage across the Atlantic Ocean with her younger sister, (my Grandmother Gertrude), their faces turned away from Odessa and memories of the Easter Pogrom which killed their parents and every last vestige of childhood.



The sisters were taken in by cousins on Bayard Street in New York. Within a week they were working in a factory twelve hours a day, followed by night school to learn English. When classes became more demanding, they asked their foreman if they could leave an hour earlier one evening. He refused, but they left anyway, thinking they could make up the time. The next morning the factory door was shut in their faces.

They immediately began looking for jobs in the neighborhood. Later that afternoon they were swept up by a crowd shoving them towards the intersection of Green and Washington Streets. Thick plumes of smoke were billowing out of the eighth floor window of the Triangle Shirt Waist Company, the floor in the same factory where until that very morning they'd sat at sewing machines. People were yelling to the girls hanging out

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the windows, "Get to the stairs." "Go up on the roof." But all the doors had been locked to prevent the workers from taking breaks. That day when my Great Aunt and Grandma stood in horror as 146 of their friends and co-workers perished hideously formed the master narrative of my family.

Aunt Rose became a factory inspector, focusing on the terrible conditions of female operatives, and later an officer of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. She trained as a social worker and joined the Jewish Board of Guardians helping young women acclimatize themselves to America. Gertrude married a young union rep, a fiery orator, who ran for Alderman on the Socialist Party ticket. His proudest memory was carrying Eugene V. Debs' suitcase. While other children learned Itsy-Bitsy Spider, I learned Union Maid and other songs of my mother's youth. And I understood why to look for the union label and why we needed Solidarity Forever.

My parents met in the library of Columbia University. My mom, a history major at Barnard College, worked nights at Macy's to supplement her scholarship, and my dad was getting his doctorate in psychology at Columbia. Their relationship was forged in the fiery caldron of progressive policies of the 1930s.

From my earliest days, I received the traditional 1950s-white-male-power-kind of education at public schools in Brooklyn, and the untraditional all-inclusive-struggles of the powerless-kind from my own family. Did my grandparents and parents use the term feminist? Probably not, but the injustices against women were an

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ongoing theme of my informal lessons.

Every summer, with twelve other families, we vacationed in Vermont on the shores of Lake Champlain. College professors, school principals, teachers, created an idyllic equalitarian community. Families lived in small cabins with ice-chest- refrigerators, kerosene stoves, no telephones-and shared chores and much of the childcare. During those years I experienced a gender-blind world and saw first hand the artificiality of sex-linked roles.

Then illness upended our summer vacations and all else in our lives. I came home from school one day to dreadful news. My 46 year old father had been diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. "I wish it were me, I wish it were me," my mother kept sobbing.

I didn't understand. Why in the world did she want to be the sick one?"

"Because Daddy would be able to take care of you and Lucy (my older sister)," she explained. "What will I be able to do? I have no job, no income. How will I get him the best treatment? How will I support us?"

Then she looked at me gravely and said, "You must always be able to work? Do you understand what I'm telling you?"

And I did.

My mom became a history teacher, then school librarian, taking care of my sister and me and getting my father

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into the first clinical trials in the country for L-Dopa, the then new miracle drug which kept him mobile until his death at age 73.

Like my mother, I studied history in college and worked. I found a job as a waitress; most of my co-workers were older than I and their stories dramatized the cultural noose ghettoizing women into the low-level positions. I knew then that my future would be dedicated to trying to improve women's lives in any and every way that I could.

Before I'd graduated from the University of Rochester, I decided to go on for a doctorate in history, but I needed to save money first. Married to my college boyfriend, who was in dental school, I taught for two years at a junior high school in Brooklyn while doing my first 30 credits part time. What sad lives my students had! Not having enough food to eat on a routine basis, girls 15 years old and younger were taking care of 3 or 4 siblings and frequent "catting out " (riding the New York City subways all night). I set up small mentoring groups to help them and met my students during free periods several times a week.

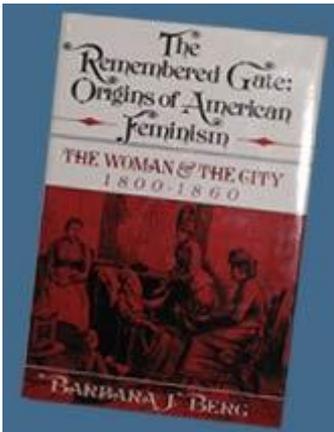
When the girls told me that riding the subways was a way to avoid physical and sexual abuse at home I sprang into action, notifying the school administration, the Board of Education, social services. The only way I could protect some of my students from abuse was to have them sleep on the pull-out in my living room for weeks at a time. Domestic violence wasn't acknowledged as a problem then, and only later, when I became involved in the Women's Movement, did I learn that there were others who had also set up shelters for

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the abused women.

I started graduate school at the City University of New York in 1971. The Vietnam War was raging and I joined the CUNY anti-war group. Working on my doctorate was the fulfillment of a long time dream, but it was a tough time personally. My marriage was unhappy and I experienced a hefty dose of gender discrimination at school. My contributions weren't taken as seriously in seminars and I had to put up with comments from male colleagues who'd say things like: "What's a girl like you doing in a place like this?" It was the same attitude in the Anti-War Movement; no matter how much women contributed, no matter what risks women endured, we were still "chicks and babes."

In 1970 a woman I'd worked with asked me to join a Consciousness Raising Group, Supported by other women, I finally had the courage to leave my husband



and although it meant taking on more teaching assignments, I had greater emotional energy to devote to my studies.

Researching and writing my doctoral dissertation in those heady first years of the Women's Movement joyfully directed my attention to the lives of nineteenth century

women. My dissertation and first book, *The Remembered Gate: Origins of American Feminism*

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established a nascent, but vibrant feminism in the earliest years of the New Republic among urban women who banded together to help the downtrodden of their sex. Signing their letters, "Thine in the Bonds of Sisterhood," they advocated for female prisoners and prostitutes at a time when these women were considered barely human. . My book documented a feminist consciousness in America years before it was thought to have originated, among groups of women who didn't yet have any connection to abolitionism. It stirred controversy, but became a standard text of women's history courses.

In 1971, I married Arnold Schlanger, an attorney and a wonderful man, who shared my passion for social justice and women's rights, and had a delightful 3 year old daughter. I started teaching women's history at Sarah Lawrence College with Gerda Lerner, a pioneer in the field. Sarah Lawrence was the first school to offer an MA in Women's History. Our days were filled with teaching, conferences, mentoring students, working on policy papers. I threw myself headlong into the Women's Movement, joining just about every women's organization I could find.

Then a personal loss.

Before I'd started at SLC I'd suffered a miscarriage (a baby girl) in my fifth month of pregnancy. I became pregnant again, but learned in the seventh month I'd have to stay in bed until I delivered. The school bused my students to my house twice a week until the end of the year. My husband carried me from the bed to the sofa (I felt like a nineteenth century invalid); the

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experience bonded me even closer with my students who made the baby a patchwork quilt of women's history.

Then, without warning I went into labor at the end of my eighth month and delivered a baby girl, stillborn. I was devastated and disturbed by the callous treatment of the male-medical establishment. As for the hospitals, they were in the Dark Ages in dealing with women who lost babies. I took a leave from SLC and began to research medical textbooks to see if I could understand what had gone wrong, but also to get a sense of what doctors were learning. And I got it, all right. The books contained egregious sexist language and sentiment, mortifying and dismissive to women about what went on in our own bodies.

Now I had two projects: Having a family and trying to change the medical culture. My approach to the latter was through writing, speaking and teaching: My second book *Nothing to Cry About*, (the title taken from the insensitive comment my doctor made when I burst into tears during my miscarriage at the news it was a girl and she was perfectly normal) was an indictment of the medical profession's treatment of women. I was invited to talk about the subject on television talk shows, radio, and at perinatal bereavement conferences. We adopted an infant girl when I was pregnant again (seven months in bed, the last three in a hospital this time), and with the birth of a healthy baby boy we now had two children less than seven months apart!

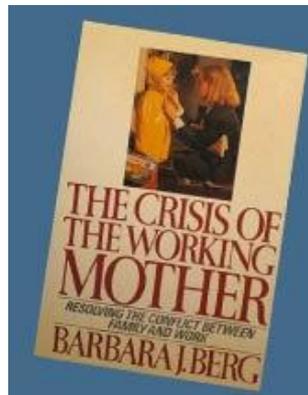
When my children were babies I wrote about health, women's in particular, for *The New York Times*'

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Magazine; M.; Parents, and many other publications. I started the course Medicine and Literature at Mount Sinai Hospital to teach medical students to become more sensitive to their patients. A large part of the curriculum focused on women. I ultimately taught the course at Physicians and Surgeons of Columbia University, Yale Medical School and The Academy of Medicine. One of my most enduring connections-going on now for thirty years- was to become a member of the Mount Sinai Community Board whose mission is to bring quality health care to the East Harlem community. We've held conferences on domestic violence and parenting skills, sponsored women's health days, and raised awareness about breast cancer, diabetes, hypertension and obesity.

As a working mother with two young children at home, I was experiencing some of the difficulties confronting other women: lack of affordable quality childcare, bosses (in my case editors and department chairs) who made no allowance for sick children, workplace harassment and lower pay than my male colleagues.

Still I was one of the fortunate ones. What about women across the nation? What were their difficulties and struggles? I sent out a questionnaire, received nearly 1,000 responses, then interviewed several hundred more women. The results formed the basis of my book,



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The Crisis of the Working Mother. I traveled across the country speaking and holding workshops on the difficulties women, especially mothers, faced in the workplace and how to tackle them, and I began to push for reformed government and corporate policies. I used my writing as a platform for my views, my articles appearing in magazines like Working Mother, Working Woman and Savvy-in one piece (1986) I called for an end to the "Mommy Wars."

In the late 80s, my husband lost his position as General Counsel to a corporation, and, like many Americans then was having difficulty getting a new one. I took a fulltime job at The Horace Mann School in Riverdale New York, in 1991 and started a women's history program. The school had been coed for twenty years but in many ways it retained the feel of an all boys' school. My second year there I became a dean of students in addition to my teaching. The first thing I did was have male language "as we men go forth etc..." in the school Alma Mater changed, then I took on sexual harassment which had been going on unchecked for years. Convincing the rest of the administration that we needed a policy was no easy matter; but finally I prevailed as long as I was willing to write it. I did and served as a point person for eight years, successfully overseeing several complicated cases.

At many high schools, young women suffer from lack of self-esteem, eating disorders, risky behaviors, and subtle forms of discrimination. Horace Mann was no different. I started a Women's Issues Club where we could address these issues and founded periodical Folio 51 (which has won several national awards) to remedy

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the male bias of the school newspaper. Every year the Women's Issue Club sponsored a Christmas Party for Sanctuary for Families' domestic violence shelter.

My revelations of discrimination at HM led to my appointment as Director of Co-Education K - 12 for three years. I looked at everything from the kindergarten play area to elementary school readers to the songs at commencement to the number of times girls were called on in classrooms compared to boys; my report was used as a model by other high schools. During that time I was the recipient of numerous grants to make high school curricula more gender neutral and wrote *The Women's Movement and Young Women Today* to remedy the lack of books on this topic for middle schoolers. In 1995 I received The Distinguished Teacher Award (one of 50 nationwide) from President Bill Clinton.

I left HM , with regret, to spend more time with my mom who was becoming physically frail and to dedicate myself to writing, but I was asked by the school to devise Leader Training Seminars for young women, so I had an opportunity to continue some of my work with the female students.

In 2009 I wrote *Sexism in America: Alive, Well and Ruining Our Future* to debunk the myth that we are a post-feminist society. Starting with an account of the second wave women's movement, the book draws on medical research, legislation, movies, television shows, advertisements, and hundreds of interviews to reveal the extent to which misogyny is the new Come-Back-Kid, even considered cool and camp in many quarters. It tells the stories of women who faced discrimination in school

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and at work, thinking they were the only ones. The success of a few women seduce us into thinking that all the battles have been won. In reality, sexism insidiously, but pervasively has short-circuited the legacy of the women's movement in every aspect of our lives. My book also provides a blueprint of what we can do to secure our rights.

In addition to my work at Mount Sinai as co-chair of the program committee, I'm a vice president of the New York Correctional Association, the oldest prisoner-rights organization in the nation and one of two with a mission of prison-oversight. My work is largely around issues concerning incarcerated women, visiting them, holding focus groups to ascertain their needs and advocating for policy change. For example, when it became apparent that the healthcare books in the prison libraries were woefully out of date, we organized a book drive and added to the collections of all seven female correctional institutions in New York. I am also on the board of the National Women's History Project which is responsible, not only for Women's History Month, but for keeping women's history a vital part of the curriculum at schools across the nation.

I wrote *Sexism in America* as a wake up call. We all can envision a more equitable world for our daughters and sons than the one we are living in. Now we have to make it happen!

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### Dr. BARBARA BERGMANN

Barbara Bergmann, a pioneer in the study of gender in the economy who herself overcame barriers to women in the world of academic economics, died on April 5, 2015 at her home in Bethesda, Md. She was 87



I was born Barbara Berman in Bronx, NY in 1927. My father was a union typesetter and earned a good wage all through the Depression of the 1930s, so we were not in want. However, the terrible state of the populace was obvious, even to a child in elementary school .

My grandparents had come to the United States from Eastern Europe in 1914, fleeing anti-Semitism. Neither of my parents finished high school, because their families needed whatever they could earn. But my generation was expected to succeed financially. The hope for a boy was that he would become a lawyer or a doctor, and for a girl, that she would marry a lawyer or a doctor.

I became an atheist at age four, when I failed to receive a favor I had prayed for and believed I deserved. **I became a feminist at age five**, when it became obvious to me that you needed your own money to be an independent person, which was what I wanted to be when I grew up.

My Depression childhood left me a strong believer in having government provide help when people face problems beyond their power to control. There was a brief period, at age 17, when I hated the idea that the

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riches I felt sure to earn during my glorious future career might be taxed away and transferred to those less talented and hardworking than I. It soon passed and I have been left of center in my politics ever since.

However, I never became an advocate of getting rid of capitalism. That I probably owe to the a sixth grade teacher, who was a fanatical admirer of Stalin's Russia and on the slightest pretext dragged Russia into our lessons on all subjects.

Our class was taken to the New York World's Fair in 1940. The most popular exhibit was put on by General Motors, showing the marvelous capitalist world of the future, an auto-dominated landscape, all in miniature, through which one rode, seated on a moving sofa.

The Russians also had a huge exhibit, and our teacher saw to it that our class spent much of our time there. In one corner of each room of the Russian exhibit building was a mammoth piece of agricultural equipment.

Most of the rest of the space was devoted to the iconography of Stalin. He was depicted in paintings, in bas reliefs, in busts and in full-length statues. There were plates and cups with Stalin's picture, spoons with his picture on the bowl, and others with his picture on the handle. Spending a school year in the class of that teacher inoculated me for life against admiring any such regime, and taught me to beware of fanatics.

I applied to MIT, but was rejected, probably because my ambition to become an engineer was thought ridiculous. I won a scholarship to Cornell University and majored in mathematics. While in college, I read Gunnar Myrdal's book *An American Dilemma*, which presented the racial regime that prevailed in the southern part of the United States. The book sparked a lasting interest in racial

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discrimination, which later extended to an interest in sex discrimination.

I graduated from Cornell with a BA in 1948, and went back to living with my mother in New York. She was quite angry at me for not having "caught" a husband, and told me so frequently. My mother didn't like the fact that it was a man's world, but she felt that for a successful life one had to conform. "**You're nothing without a man,**" she said to me, which further strengthened my feminist propensities.

It was the midst of the first post-World War II recession, jobs were scarce, and there was discrimination against Jews. And, the Help Wanted ads were segregated by sex. All of those for women were for maids, salesladies, and clerical workers. I looked for a job in the male category, but never got a nibble. In desperation, I took a job typing names and addresses, but couldn't endure the boredom for more than two days. Luckily, I had applied for a job with the federal government, and that finally came through. I was taken in on the lowest professional rung at the **New York office of the Bureau of Labor Statistics**, where I was part of the unit that answered inquiries from the public.

After a year I was the head of the inquiries unit. At BLS I found that racial discrimination was not confined to the South. There was just one black employee there, Harvey Purdy, who ran the mimeograph machine and distributed the mail. Our unit had a vacancy, and I got him appointed to it. But it was decreed that he couldn't sit with the rest of us, where the public could see him. He had to sit next door in the stock room and take inquirers' phone calls. It was soon decided that somebody else was to have that job, and so he was sent back to the mimeograph machine. My attempts to get him a job visiting employers and collecting wage data were unsuccessful. **I was told that BLS couldn't send a**

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**Negro around to employers;** that employers would not cooperate with such a person.

In 1962 I was working in Washington. The Civil Rights movement had been in progress for a decade. I visited the wage survey branch in the central office of BLS and told everyone Harvey's story, expecting to hear that those things were no longer tolerated. To my surprise, these very nice people told me, with no sign of guilt that they still "needed" to follow the same practice.

The experience of working for the Bureau of Labor Statistics left me with an otherwise good impression of government employees and operations, and of the capabilities of government agencies. Years later, in the early 1980s, while teaching at the University of Maryland, I was writing a monthly column for the New York Times Sunday business section and wrote in one of them that many government workers were capable, hard-working people. The young Times editor who checked my columns said I should omit that. His impression was that government employees were stupid and loafed all the time, an anti-government attitude that was becoming widespread. Based on my own experience with BLS and other government agencies, I believe it is in many cases based on false impressions. Unfortunately, it feeds the reluctance to use government as a means of providing needed services.

While I was working for the BLS office in New York a visiting economist asked me whether my job left time for "doing my own work." I hadn't the vaguest idea what he meant, and he explained that he was talking about the economic research he assumed I would be wanting to do. He said I ought to apply to graduate school, and after thinking it over, I did. My BLS boss wrote a letter of recommendation saying I was "a young lady of culture and refinement." I don't know whether that helped my chances, but probably thanks to my math degree I was

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admitted to Harvard.

At Harvard I wasn't allowed to be a teaching fellow at first, but after a few years they relented. Although I was a star pupil, I didn't get any offers of academic positions. However, my attitude has always been that anger is bad for the career.

My future work at Harvard was influenced by Guy Orcutt, who introduced economists to computer simulation. Later, when teaching at the University of Maryland, I coauthored a book *A Microsimulated Transactions Model of the United States Economy*, in which simulated individuals, businesses, governments, and banks make trades of commodities and capital instruments for money.

The lesson of skepticism I learned from my professors enabled me to apply to Economist Gary Becker's theory that race and sex discrimination in employment could not long persist. Becker claimed that any employer who discriminated would be driven out of business by competitors who didn't and who would be able to hire labor cheaper, and produce the product at a lower price. Becker's theory gained wide acceptance, and continues to be quoted with approval today. Most economists are not capable of seeing that wage setting and other employment practices were and are affected by societal systems of status differences, whether in the harsh regime of the pre-civil rights South, or in the subtler regimes of race and sex favoritism that are still in force everywhere today.

At age 38, I married my husband, a microbiologist, whom I'd met on a blind date. We had a daughter and a son, both feminists, of course. Pushing for women's equality is not a big thing in my husband's life, but he is a very fair person. He has always done half of the housework and child care, and with his support and aid I

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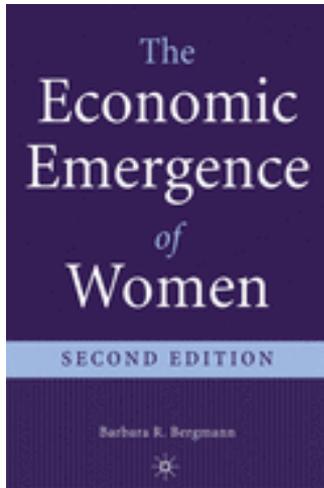
was able to produce books on issues of social policy mostly concerning race and gender. We are still married after 44 years.

I've been a member of the NAACP since 1945 and very much regret not having taken part in activism for civil rights. And I've been a member of NOW from early on. I went only once to a local chapter meeting. In recent years, I have tried to interest NOW in getting local chapters to lobby for more money for government child care programs, by emphasizing the existence of waiting lists. However, I have not made any progress with it.

My book, *The Economic Emergence of Women* explains why sex roles have changed so greatly in the last century, and what policies are needed to accommodate that revolution. *In Defense of Affirmative Action* explains why discrimination and exclusion by race and sex won't go away without quotas. *Saving Our Children from Poverty: What The United States Can Learn from France* shows what a country that is determined to give every child a decent upbringing and education can do, and what the budgetary cost of doing it in the United States would be. I teamed up with an artist to put together *Is Social Security Broke? A Cartoon Guide to the Issues*. The answer to the question, contrary to what the politicians of both parties have been saying, is that Social Security is not broke, and does not now need fixing. The most recent book I have published, *America's Child Care Problem: The Way Out* labels subsidized child care as one of the country's chief needs, and proposes a \$50 billion a year program of government subsidies and quality regulations.

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I would like to write one more book -- on the decline of the institution of marriage, which has meant the decline of male support in money and services for the raising of children. (Every year in the last three decades, the proportion of the married population drops. Gay marriage, believe it or not, is really not the most important marriage issue we face.) The solution is not abstinence education, but turning the country into Sweden -- lots more public spending on health care, childcare, education, housing.



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### **DEBORAH BIELE**

I was born in New York City at the French Hospital in 1939. My parents were both children of Jewish immigrants fleeing from oppression against Jews in Russia and Hungary.

By my grandparents' standards the life they made for themselves here was a god-sent gift; despite the fact that they worked till they dropped. I did not know my paternal grandparents and on my mother's side only my grandmother remained. For me she was the great refuge I needed during my pre teen years. She died when I was twenty-one.



After WWII, my father and my mother's sister started a small manufacturing business making private label bras contracted for by the Peter Pan Company and perhaps one or two other well known manufacturers. My grandmother and aunt worked as the Foreladies of the business and my father was the treasurer/accountant of this dismal pursuit. Mother was working for Fadiman Associates (Clifton and Edwin Fadiman) in mid town New York. Every day she took a bus into the City from Bayonne, NJ where we were all living in only a 2 bedroom apartment. I slept in a small bed in the same room with my grandmother and aunt who shared a double bed. My grandmother used to store her home

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made raisin wine and her homemade dill pickles in huge glass jars that were stored under my bed. On wash days, my grandmother and my aunt Ann would pull a clothes line across the room above the middle of the bed and hang their corsets on the line along with other large, ugly ladies bloomers. Despite the cramped apartment and corsets and bloomers hanging out to dry over my grandmother's bed, it was a place of love and security for me. It was short lived.

After my father came back home and moved into the 2<sup>nd</sup> bedroom with my mother every one shifted their focus to him. My parents argued and my mother argued with my grandmother and I felt lost in the cracks that were separating all of us.

The legacy of those years is that I learned to fend for myself. I was an angry and distrustful little girl who found ways to escape through art and imagination. I was sullen and lonely with no girl or anyone my age to play with except two little boys who always tried to draw me into games of sexual exploitation that I successfully resisted with my fists.

My mother and father finally moved out of Bayonne to the Bronx, NY when I was nine years old. Space, my god, I finally had space, my own room, my own closet and chest of drawers. My first couple of years there were wonderfully happy. I had friends who lived in the same apartment building and at school, which was just across the street from my house.

The cracks in the relationship between my mother and father widened and my relationship with my father

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completely collapsed. By the time I was a junior in high school I could not wait to get out of my parental home.

Therapy, a lot of therapy carried me through my early twenties and I started to put my life into some kind of reasonable order. By 1969 the news of the feminist activists was reaching my ears. At this time, I was working with my partner, Maria in an art studio business we began a year earlier and it was doing well.

Though later in life my sexuality evolved into a bi-sexual orientation, at the time I considered myself a lesbian. I was in a relationship with Maria and most of the women I met in the movement just seemed to accept us without questioning us about our sexuality. Maria and I joined NOW, New York and began going to meetings.

In 1970 Betty Friedan was planning a national Strike for Equality on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment and NYNOW's committee led by Jacqui Ceballos, was planning many of actions for that day in the city. Three weeks before the 26<sup>th</sup> a press conference was held to announce Strike events. Bella Abzug, then running for Congress, and the very popular Gloria Steinem, who had made it clear she was a feminist, were invited in order to impress the press, which at that time, was all male and mostly anti-feminist. But Betty didn't show... later we learned that the Long Island Railroad was, as usual, late... so Jacqui Ceballos took charge and told the press several things women would do on the 26<sup>th</sup>...including writing and circulating a newspaper written as though women ran the world.

The press picked up on it, and we had to make it happen. I volunteered to produce the newspaper and

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several NOW members, including the president, Ivy Bottini, eagerly became the Editorial Committee, and we turned the fabulous **NOW YORK TIMES** ... now a collector's item. I was editor, Articles were written tongue in cheek by Dolores Alexander, Lee Walker, Betty Berry, Pat McQuillan, and other New York NOW members. On the 26<sup>th</sup> we handed the newspaper out to all the writers at the New York Times building and later plastered it all over the city.

I became the first chair of a new Women in the Media committee and the group of women who came to the first meeting at my house became the core group for a research project to demonstrate how women were negatively portrayed in programming and also how biased the media was towards feminist causes. We also were able to prove that women were very underrepresented in jobs in television. We decided to focus our efforts on WABC because we felt that Roger Grimsby, the news anchor at the station demonstrated a particularly egregious attitude towards feminists and feminism generally. We challenged WABC's license with the FCC and we WON! Their license was denied and the station was forced to negotiate with a committee to upgrade their programming and to come into compliance with the hiring of more females in higher positions at the station.

Maria and I separated in September of 1971. I was still in my early 30's and I had a secret desire to go back and finish my college degree. I moved out of the city to Stony Brook, NY to go back to school. I finished my undergrad degree and went straight into the PhD program there. I was in my third year of the PhD

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program when I started interviewing for jobs as a professor. That's when reality hit me, as the kids say, upside the head. I was not prepared to take a vow of poverty to teach sociology. That being the case, I abandoned my pursuit of a doctorate and settled for my master's degree. In 1980, the job market for a woman with an advanced degree was a fertile field and I started a new career as a social scientist. I have never had regrets about leaving the art world. The last years of my research career were spent at the University of the Miami School of Medicine doing really interesting work on diseases that have a dramatic impact on families like Type II diabetes. I am retired now but I have a research idea in the pot and I hope to have a proposal that will interest a publisher who has a track record for putting out work in gender studies.

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### Jane and Dennis Blanchard

Dennis and Jane were born in Connecticut; he in 1947 and she in 1950. Dennis was the first son of Maureen Murray Blanchard, a British veteran war nurse who came to the states to marry "Sergeant Blanchard" after WWII. Maureen was a strong feminist influence for Dennis, teaching him the importance of equality and respect for women.



### Jane's Story

Mine was a parochial upbringing. My neighborhood in Hartford, Connecticut, was working poor, predominately Catholic, and French Canadian. I did not speak English until I started school. A shy child, taught by nuns to be submissive and respectful of the Catholic teachings, I did not start questioning authority and my beliefs until I was ten years old. Because of my inquiring nature, I was called the "inquisitive quackerbox" in high school and considered a nerd. Not wanting to be dependent on anyone, I started working the day I turned 16 years old and paid the last two year's tuition to South Catholic High School.

My mother worked piece work in a factory. Though my parents sheltered me and my younger sister from "adult" burdens and topics; I recall my mother's speaking about pay inequality: she made less money than the men who

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did the same work as she. At the time, I was fourteen years old and did not understand how universal this problem was for women; nor did I care. The extent of my tribe's political discussions centered around the War in Vietnam, Civil Rights, and taxes.

I was the first child in my extended working-class family to attend college. Since I shrugged the traditional female careers of nursing or teaching, my father questioned why I wanted to go to college only to "learn to change diapers." I did not know how to verbalize to him my desire for independence and freedom or my need for fulfillment other than motherhood. Determined and without financial assistance or aid from my family, I worked and studied, graduating three-and-a-half years later from the University of Connecticut with a BA in Spanish and French.

Following graduation, I left for Spain with a hundred dollars and determination to live on the economy and practice Spanish. Two days after my arrival, I was working as a tour guide in Madrid. There I saw first hand the effects of machismo and the confines of living in a culture that did not respect women as equals. My Spanish female coworkers could only work as a tour guide if they were unmarried. I did not realize at the time that the US also had such limitations: until the late 1960s married women were not allowed to be airline stewardess. Additionally, though this was 1971, I was unaware that in the States, women were earning 66% of what men were earning or that women still needed permission from their father or spouse to apply for a charge card or checking account. No one in my circles was talking about this: they perceived the new women's

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movement as militant and felt removed from the cause; but, I was starting to take interest.

I returned home in January 1972. With the first issue of MS Magazine, I found the words I needed to express my angst and a whole new world of possibilities. How could I have been so sheltered during the sixties not to have been exposed to Feminism? Equal rights for women, pay equality, Title IX, class ceiling, sexism, and patriarchy-finally I had the words to express my discontent. With each edition of MS Magazine and each "click" moment, I began to see the world with feminist eyes. It was like taking blinders off. For the first time I was seeing the disparity in the way men and women were treated, injustices to women based solely on sex, and the wrongness of social mores that promoted this inequality. Though my way of viewing the world shifted, I did not see myself as a feminist, nor call myself a "women's libber." I continued to see myself as an independent and determined woman, capable of achieving whatever I wanted, if I tried hard enough.

In 1974, having found my equal and partner, Dennis and I married. In the recession of 1975, we moved to Winchendon, Massachusetts, and lived in a tent while we built a log cabin; we were off the grid for several years. Too consumed with surviving, neither of us was political. Eventually we bought a farm and found work. In 1978, Dennis' parents moved in with us, I joined the National Organization for Women, and my mother-in-law and I marched in Washington, DC, in support of the ratification of the ERA. I started writing letters to Congress, but my involvement with the Feminist Movement was sporadic. I paid my dues and rallied

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when necessary, but left the leadership and activism to others.

In 1982, I filed a suit with the EEOC against my employer (Kollsman, Inc. in Merrimack NH) for its failure to promote women to leadership positions. At that time, women could only aspire to supervisory levels (and only over women). In 1983, because of the stress from continuing to work in a now unfriendly environment, I went into premature labor and dropped the suit. The company was not fined, but it did eventually change its policy toward promotions for women.

With our first child, Tom, born at 29-weeks gestation and weighing only three pounds, nine ounces, my energies shifted to caring for our tiny, but healthy, son. The following year our daughter, Áine arrived. Dennis and I were the quintessential models of feminist parents - sharing equally in parental and household tasks. We raised our children to be independent thinkers and to treat others as equals. During their formative years, Dennis and I continued to work full time, started an Amateur Radio business, and were coaches for various youth academic and athletic programs. I was on the leadership PTA team. I introduced Project Respect into the elementary schools to promote respect and equality. Since my time was limited, my political involvement was restricted to letter writing, though, in 1989, my mother-in-law and I again returned to Washington, DC, to March for Women's Lives. In 1995, my daughter and I rallied for funding for the Violence Against Women Act. In 1996, I was honored with the New Hampshire Excellence in Education Volunteer of the Year Award.

In 2003, I moved to Sarasota Florida and Dennis joined

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me after retiring in 2004. That year, we both Marched for Women's Lives in Washington, DC. Free from owning a business and childrearing, we become involved in "doing our part" for women. I started to see myself as a "feminist," not merely a vocal independent woman who cared about the plight of women. We both joined the local NOW chapter and took on leadership positions at both the local and state levels. I become vocal, speaking at rallies, marching, lobbying, and writing letters to the editor. I was one of the founding officers of the Florida NOW Education Fund and was instrumental in developing its website, which I maintained until 2010. I published a weekly feminist calendar, NOW Happenings, and blogged about matters that concern women. As a commissioner on the Sarasota Commission on the Status for Women, I co-started the Human Trafficking Awareness Coalition in Sarasota County and maintained the HTAC website. From 2007 to 2010, I hosted a weekly radio program, Women Matters on the WSLR 96.5 FM in Sarasota, FL.

In September and October 2011, Dennis and I walked five hundred miles on the Camino de Santiago, a pilgrimage route across northern Spain. As I walked, I talked with female pilgrims from countries around the world. Subsequently, I wrote the book *Women of the Way: Embracing the Camino*. In it, I describe my adventures and the conversations I had with these women. It is a story of sisterhood, camaraderie, and lessons learned.

Now in our sixth generation, Dennis and I continue to be vigilant and not tolerate injustice towards women, to work towards improving the status of women, and to

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teach younger people about social justice and equality for all. Our feminist point of view is ingrained. We will continue to take steps that lead to equality, to do our share in this fight for women. These two feminists keep marching on.

### **Dennis' Story**

My feminist roots are genetic. My mother raised three boys to be aware of our good fortune, being born as boys. I don't know if the message really sunk in with my brothers, but it did with me. My mother was the strength in our home, the nurturer, provider and guide that made me who I am. Mom had a fiery Irish temper and never backed down from a fight. From her arrival in the United States, she set herself apart as a feminist, even though the term was not yet popular.

My father suffered from maladies incurred as a paratrooper with the 82nd Airborne Division during World War II. He was employed full time, but missed work often due to health problems. My mother was a registered nurse and worked to provide sufficient income to maintain our household.

I was born extremely premature. In 1947, the American medical procedure was to put preemies in a very high-oxygen content atmosphere, which caused blindness. In Europe, they had already found that they could achieve better survival rates and avoid blindness with lower oxygen rates. My mother, having trained as a nurse in Ireland, was aware of the risk of using too much oxygen. Since she could not convince the doctor who delivered me nor the hospital staff not to put me in a high-oxygen

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content incubator, she put on her clothes, grabbed me and took me home. I survived, and my vision is normal. I grew up with this lesson that I could see because of my mother's fighting the system. It was apparent to me early on that a woman could make things happen, but she usually had to fight to make it happen.

Over the years I've been involved in many causes to further advance the rights of women. I've never been as flamboyant about it as my mother, but I think I've been able to make a difference in some small ways.

I've always watched for subtle inequities in the work place. As a successful electrical engineer who designed communications products, such as telephone modems, I worked with other engineers and technicians. Female electrical engineers in the 80's were uncommon and I felt fortunate to work for a progressive company that actively sought to hire them.

On one occasion, my manager asked me to take on a calculus-intensive project. I loved the challenge but realized that a recently hire Cornell graduate would do a much better job than I. I convinced the manager that, as much as I relished the work, she was a better candidate for the job. That judgment was correct: she took on the work and did a much better job than I would have. This ultimately benefited the company, and her career. It may have been one small victory for women, but I'm convinced that is how the battle is won.

Since retiring to Florida, I have been involved in the National Organization For Women (NOW) as a local chapter officer and web master and at the statewide

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level as State Secretary. Of course, that meant taking part in protests, activist gatherings and other grass-root activities. I feel that perhaps my most effective campaigns have been writing campaigns. Letters-to-the-Editor and blogging seem to be where the power is these days.

When I reveal that I am a feminist the response is either amazement or puzzlement. How can a man be a feminist? I then explain that feminism isn't about being a female but believing that men and women are equals. I think the best gauge to determine equality is the pay gap.

A few years ago I was a guest on Jane's radio show, along with a few other male "feminists." We all agree that without men participating as feminists the movement will never succeed. Men, as allies, are a necessary component to achieving equality for all. This should be obvious, but I think it is sometimes overlooked.

I'm always looking for ways to promote the feminist movement. I recently published a book about my hike of the Appalachian Trail (and surviving a six-artery heart bypass in the middle of it!) and I managed to get a few plugs in there for feminism as well. I'm convinced, when it comes to activities such as long-distance hiking, women are far more capable than men. They control their weight loss better, they carry more weight for their body size, and they're tough. I make those points in the book. I also mention the feminists I meet along the way.

I firmly believe that small acts, such as a letter to the editor, a mention in a book, or comments on a talk-radio

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show are what will ultimately achieve equality. Big victories are rare and often don't last.

As I progress in my years, I'm hopeful that a new generation of feminists will take up the gauntlet and finally achieve gender equity. I think when both men and women are paid equally we will know have reached that point.

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### **JUNE BLUM**

I was born June Druett in 1929 in Maspeth, New York, a town with trolley tracks running through its main cobblestone street. Life passed by my house as I watched them from our bedroom window and our enclosed porch. But after my grandfather died, my two sisters and I moved with my mother and father into my grandmother's house.



I recall my mother receiving a washing machine (I had never thought about how the clothes got cleaned). My dad purchased a television, which became my connection to the outside world. A dance show on TV excited my long-time love of dance and dancing. In 1985 this love helped me out of a deep low after my husband, Maurice, died.

We were five women in a house after my father died in 1941. The war had broken out three days before and my mother worked for the war effort. Although still young and beautiful, she never showed any desire to marry again.

From early on I was interested in dancing, but had none in dating. As a teenager I was allowed to go to an afternoon dance at the Ascension church where I never refused a request to dance and never sat down for the whole two hours. Beyond that I had little contact with the opposite sex.

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In general I gravitated toward female adults--my teachers at school were mostly female--as they had vast experiences and knowledge. I was too young and immature for male relationships, and besides, had a very strict mother who kept her children together and always in her sight.

Schooling in those days was sewing, cooking (which I hated), copperplate and handbag making, and art. I played the clarinet, was in the school orchestra, and in a school play, "The Student Prince." My mother put together a group of area musicians my age and we played for other kids in the neighborhood who liked to dance. My younger sister and I played the clarinet and my older sister played the saxophone. As I watched the kids dancing, I realized this was not for me, as I wanted to be the one dancing.

In 1956 I met Maurice Blum through friends, and we were soon married. Maurice was a businessman and photographer. He attended all the demonstrations and meetings and photographed the activities-- at least those where men were allowed--and was a constant support of everything I was doing.

I studied at Brooklyn College, Pratt Graphic Art Center, The New School for Social Research, Art Students League, The Crafts Students League, and The Brooklyn Museum Art School. In the 1960's I was invited to join the National Association of Women Artists, was chairperson and exhibited art exhibitions nationally and internationally.

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In 1968-9 I wrote, directed and produced "The Female President." It was an idea whose time had come, particularly after Betty Friedan's "The Feminist Mystique" and all the publicity about her and feminism. Although publicity was scant for my play, the attendance was great.

In 1971 I was appointed Curator of Contemporary Art of the Suffolk Museum at the Museums of Stony Brook, New York. After trying to find female artists for a figure exhibition, my first experience proved to me that there was discrimination against women artists in the art world. I then curated an all-woman artists exhibition ok'd by the female director, Jane des Grange, with her blessing. Titled "Unmanly Art," this showing of 56 women artists was the first in-house museum-curated exhibition of women artists in the United States.

Subsequent meetings, demonstrations and events fortified my underlying feeling that women were kept out of mainstream art, galleries and funding. I had alliances with women who put together panels and speakouts. Asked to talk at the Brooklyn Museum I met many women artists, critics and writers who felt the same about the lack of opportunity to exhibit their work. I met Pat Mainardi and Irene Peslikis at editorial meetings for the publication "Women and Art" at Cindy Nemser's house in Brooklyn and wrote articles for Cindy's Feminist Art Journal. In my series of painting women artists I did paintings of Pat and Cindy.

With the new feminist group, I supported demonstrations at the Whitney Museum and galleries protesting the lack of work by women artists. I was assigned to the OK

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Harris Gallery in Soho. After group meetings with the directors at the Brooklyn Museum in 1971, I came up with the idea for an original selection concept, and in 1975 coordinated the first all-women drawing exhibit there. Titled "Works on Paper/Women Artists," it gave entry to a New York City museum to 141 women artists.

Invited to do a painting for "The Sister Chapel" project, a proposed moveable installation where 13 women artists were asked to choose a woman of heroic quality, I chose Betty Friedan and titled my work "Betty Friedan as the Prophet."

After many calls and finally getting acceptance, I met Ms. Friedan at her apartment across from Lincoln Center, an unforgettable experience. Not only was I impressed by the enormity of the challenge to paint this great woman, but meeting this monumental personality was like being run over by a steamroller, and it was a challenge. Also it wasn't easy, as she was constantly moving about, answering phone calls or talking with her assistant.

Over a period of six sittings I produced seven studies, some drawings and many photographs of her. After the sessions were over, I created the 9' x 5' painting in my Brooklyn studio and then did another painting, now in the collection of Muriel Fox. I also did several drawings and took numerous photographs. When Ms. Friedan had to go out of town she loaned me the dress she had posed in, which I put on to get the correct hanging of the fabric in order to continue doing conceptual documentations.

Maurice took photos of me which I used to create my

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artist's books titled "Transformations"; "June Blum as Betty Friedan"; "The Metamorphosis of June Blum"; and "On Painting Betty Friedan." In 1977 Nelleke Nix, director of the NN Gallery in Seattle, WA, exhibited my small portraits of Betty and the June Blum Documentations. I could have gone on painting Betty's most interesting face and personality forever, but other projects took over.

I was founder, director and organizer of the Brooklyn Women Artists and Women Artists Living in Brooklyn, exhibiting groups that gave exposure to women artists' work. At that time--it was during the 70's--I was the only one doing this. Long Island University's Brooklyn campuses gave shows to professional artists, including my groups. The Brooklyn Museum had a fine art school and agreed to a national women's drawing exhibition. These events kick-started the women's art movement in New York City and around the country.



The first showing of my work had been in 1964 at Brooklyn's Hicks Street Gallery. In 1980 we moved to Cocoa Beach, FL, where I started the East Central Florida chapter Women's Caucus for Art. I was on the Brevard's Commission on Women and did a visual documentation on Cocoa Beach's history for its seventy-fifth anniversary. One of its features was my visualization of Capt. Irene Wirtschafter, a Navy pilot and the first woman to land on an aircraft carrier during World War II.

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Because of this, I received a letter from the National Museum of Women in the Arts acknowledging my contributions to art. In addition to my curatorial work at the Suffolk Museum, I curated exhibits around the country, creating women artists' exhibitions and continuing my support of women artists.

One day, as I was walking in to an opening at the Whitney I overheard the staff saying "There's June Blum!" which befuddled me, as Salvador Dali was there. Later I was told by Alice Neel that the painting she had done of me had been loaned to the Whitney.

Later, as I was going over Maurice's photos of that opening I noticed he had captured Salvador Dali and his companion. Maurice never hesitated to photograph anyone and I had no objections, particularly to his photos of the women's movement. I encouraged him in his photography and he encouraged me in my career. Some of his works included Kate Millett's art, Senator Robert Kennedy leaving after a luncheon talk, many events and demonstrations, and always my art. I'm proud of the work I've done, and proudest of the Veteran Feminists of America medal I was awarded in 2003.

A most recent painting of mine was influenced by the dress Betty Friedan had loaned me. Although abstracted in black and white with red, "The Red Dress" still stimulates my creativity, as Betty's spirit continues to inspire, and will inspire generations of women in the future.

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### HEATHER BOOTH

*If we organize, we can change the world!  
And organizing is the only sure way that we can change  
the world for the better.*

I was born in 1945 in Brookhaven, Mississippi, while my father was in the army in WWII. I sometimes say, never stereotype anyone or any place. I was born into a very loving



family with really wonderful "family values." We believed in treating people with decency, and living the values we cared about - and in building a better world. Being surrounded by such love, I thought all people should be treated this way. I was also brought up Jewish and learned the values of struggling for freedom from the history, the culture, the holidays-and the texts: "Justice, justice thou shalt pursue." Twice saying justice, because it was that important.

My mother, Hazel Victoria Weisbard Tobis, was a wonderful person-filled with song, warmth, humor, energy and love. She was her high school valedictorian, but her father denied her the right to go to college on scholarship because he didn't believe women should get an education. She returned to school after we, her kids,

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were in high school. She became a special ed teacher and a beloved part of schools where she taught. She shared with her kids the values of treating people equally. She was the first person who showed me Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (when I was in high school) and encouraged me to read it. She died in 2004 from Alzheimer's and I still miss her in my life. One of the nicest things a person can say to me is that I remind them of my mother.

My father, Jerome Sanford Tobis, is also a remarkable and wonderful person. He is beloved by almost all who know him-personally as a fabulous friend, professionally as a skilled and insightful physician and teacher, and is always reaching out, engaged, connecting people and acting on his beliefs. He is a specialist in physical medicine and rehabilitation (PM&R) and has specialized in treatment of brain damage, of the elderly, and as a medical ethicist. With emeritus status at his University Hospital, he still works four days a week and has nearly endless interest, groups he is part of (complementary medicine, ethics, book club, a mens' group he has been in for 40 years, and the list goes on).

For all the loving, I think I was very insecure - perhaps this is a plight of most women. Would I be good enough, know enough was always a question. In the ways that weaknesses can become strengths (and strengths weaknesses) I used this to engage others, to learn, to break down how to do things in small understandable parts and became a real teacher, because I was trying to learn. I still acted for change, but in spite of this insecurity (not because I was confident - just committed to doing justice).

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Heather playing the guitar for Fannie Lou Hamer, a great hero of the civil rights movement (photo: Wally Roberts)

In high school, I quit a sorority I was recruited into, when I realized they did not include any kids who were "outsiders"-- outside of traditional notions of beauty (though I thought I was not attractive), who were black in an overwhelmingly white school, who were overweight, or idiosyncratic. I decided to join the "outsiders." For the same reason I quit the cheerleading team. And sought out those working for a better society. I connected through the American Friends Service Committee with anti-death penalty work and then with CORE and support for the sit-ins against Woolworth's. From there, I connected with SNCC.

Entering the University of Chicago, my life opened up as I found others who shared my beliefs and wanted to turn

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them into action. I became very active in the civil rights movement, head of campus Friends of SNCC, student government, our progressive campus political party and the student organization that became SDS, and many other activities. In response to one of the guys telling me to "shut up" when I was talking...I formed the first campus women's organization in the country (in 1965): Women's Radical Action Program or WRAP. We did an analysis of "significant responses" to women and men in class - and found men received 4 times more significant responses from the faculty when they spoke (whether positive or negative). We designed ways to highlight how women were kept "in their place" and ways to support women (students and faculty and in subjects, getting student initiated classes).

In 1964, I went to Mississippi, as part of the Freedom Summer Project, and returned to campus with even deeper commitment to the "movement" for justice. Because we organized we helped to win legal changes and end the lynching that was more common in prior years and expanded political representation. I went to an SDS conference in 1965, where "the woman question" was being discussed and returned to set up many consciousness raising groups around Chicago. A friend was raped at knife point. We went with her to get a gynecological exam. Student Health said gynecological exams were not covered and she was given a lecture on her promiscuity. We sat with her. Over time, women now can receive gynecological exams from student health. Organizing works.

In 1965, a friend told me his sister was pregnant and needed an abortion. I had not thought about this issue

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before. I thought I would try to help (as you should do if you believe in the "golden rule."). I found a doctor through the Medical Committee for Human Rights (TRM Howard, who it turns out was an amazing civil rights activist.) The treatment was successful; word spread and others came to see me for this. Over time, this became JANE or The Service, which performed 11,000 abortions (which the women who ran it learned to perform themselves) until Roe became the law in 1973.

In 1966, I was a leader of a sit-in against the war in Vietnam. We were the first campus in the country where the students took over the administration building over the war. Paul Booth was the National Secretary of SDS, based in Chicago, which was (at that time) the largest student organization in the country. He came to my campus (both as a leader of the anti-war movement and he says he was looking for me). We sat next to each other for several days. After three days he asked me to marry him. After 5 days, I said I would, though said we should wait a year, till I graduated. We have been married for 43 years. There has been a lot we have learned together - about how to be mindful of a relationship and the benefits of struggle as well as love and support. And we look forward to growing old together, supporting each other. We love our two grown sons and their wives (filled with creativity, warmth, wonderful values) and now four grandchildren. Truly a joy in life.

In 1967, I helped to found the Chicago Women's Liberation Union-and set up work groups: Action Committee for Decent Childcare (won \$1 million for childcare, revision of childcare center licensing, and

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parents and providers on a childcare review board), Women's Liberation School, and many other groups. In 1970, with the Women's Strike ("don't iron while the strike is hot!" was the slogan), I realized NOW was the leading edge of this movement and joined with them. I was going to graduate school and teaching school - and raising two kids. After I was fired for union organizing (defending the rights of clericals where I worked who were terribly abused), I won a back pay suit at the NLRB. With that money, I started a training center for organizers: Midwest Academy - still providing extraordinary strategic training for the next generation of organizers.

We helped to start and support the working women's movement and move direct action campaigns. I trained a good portion of the early leadership/chapters/regional conferences of NOW and other parts of the women's movement. We helped to design a campaign against Sears Roebuck, which discriminated against women as employees (held in low paying jobs) and customers (wives could not get credit in their own name). The campaign was cut short, in part, by Sears influence and by a division in the organization from an election in NOW. Had there been this campaign that might have united women from working class areas (Sears customers and employees). I think the history of the women's movement might have been an even stronger one.

I helped to start many national organizations and local ones. In 1980 when Reagan was elected, I decided to learn about elections and train others in how to approach this work in their organizations. I helped many

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organizations find ways to combine their efforts with politics in a time when few issue groups made this link. I became very active in Chicago and became the deputy field director for the Mayor Washington campaign.

My husband got a job in Washington (where I had been commuting as the co-director of Citizen Action-an organization working on consumer issues, with nearly 3 million members at its height). We moved to DC, and though I hated it (it wasn't Chicago) initially, I've come to love it, filled with friends and good work and quite a wonderful area. I directed the state outreach for the first mobilization for women's lives (pro-choice rallies-with 250,000 in DC and 250,000 more around the country).

In 1992, I ran Carol Moseley Braun's field operation when she successfully ran for Senate. In 1993, I went to work for the Democratic Party and became their training director, helping to create a model of modern campaign training. And I was the founding director of NAACP National Voter Fund, which helped to increase the African American vote by nearly 2 million voters in 2000.

I've led, organized or advised many efforts for change in this country and this world--immigration reform (consulting for the creation of the Campaign for Comprehensive Immigration Reform), health care reform (directing the AFL-CIO health care reform campaign), was the first DC representative for MoveOn, and worked with many other groups. In 2000, I directed the campaign to pass the first Obama budget. Then I became the director of Americans for Financial Reform, which led the fight to rein in Wall Street--winning far more than any expected at the start (though we still have

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a long way to go).

I am now senior advisor to One Nation Working Together: Putting America Back to Work and Pulling America Back Together. It is a mobilization to re-engage and re-inspire people to act to change this world for the better.

It is a great life. Demanding, challenging, rewarding. Filled with wonderful friends and family. And great joys. We can change the world, IF we organize! And we have changed the world, because we organized!

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### **IVY BOTTINI**

I was born Ivy Gaffney on August 15, 1926 in Lynbrook, Long Island, NY, the only child of Archie and Ivy Gaffney. I remember my mother as an unhappy housewife. My father drove a cab. I attended Malvern schools. I was an avid athlete who participated in many sports and was very interested in art. My early school years were spent illustrating book reports, creating maps for geography class, designing posters for school activities and painting for my own enjoyment. Life was good until age 18 when my father was killed in a tragic accident while driving his cab. Our income was severely limited after his death and it seemed my plans for continuing Art School were gone. But thankfully the Pratt Institute of Art and Design gave me a full scholarship to continue my studies in advertising, graphic design and illustration.



After graduation I worked in several art and advertising agencies in New York City. In 1952 I married the young man who lived across the street, Eddie Bottini. We had two daughters, Laura and Lisa. In 1966 my life changed again.

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I was working as Art Director and illustrator at Newsday, the major Long Island newspaper. One day Dolores Alexander, a reporter at Newsday, told me about an interview she'd had with this amazing woman, Betty Friedan, whose book *The Feminine Mystique* was all the rage. Dolores insisted I go with her to a meeting, and soon I was helping to found the first chapter of the National Organization for Women (NOW) which was located in New York City. I was also with national NOW, where I served on the board for three years.

In 1968 I accepted that I was a Lesbian and as I accepted this, my life changed considerably. I was elected president of the New York chapter of NOW and was president for two terms. In 1969 I introduced the struggle for lesbian rights into the women's movement through a panel entitled, "Is Lesbianism A Feminist Issue?" and created feminist consciousness raising within the chapter. It was later used by NOW chapters throughout the country. In 1969 I also designed the national NOW logo at the request of Aileen Hernandez, the President of the National Organization for Women.

I was president during the 1970 Strike for Equality, and, along with Debra Biele, Betty Berry and others I helped produce the now classic NOW YORK TIMES, with "All the news that would give The Times fits." Our STRIKE COMMITTEE helped organize radical feminists and NOW members to plan demonstrations around the city. On August 10, 1970, my New York Chapter took over the Statue of Liberty. A committee, led by Pat Lawrence, with help from NYNOW and about 100 NOW and radical feminists, raided Liberty Island, took over

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the Ms Liberty and hung a 40 ft banner, WOMEN OF THE WORLD UNITE on its top balcony. The photo of the takeover went around the world.

On August 26, 1970, I led my New York Chapter in the first Women's Equality March down Fifth Avenue. Many of us who were organizing for the March did not know how many would turn out. When I rounded the corner on Fifth Avenue I was stunned by the multitude that stretched as far as I could see. The reported number of marchers was over fifty thousand.

In 1971, after my second term as president, I left NOW and decided to spend my time and energy on my other loves -- acting, comedy and the growing gay rights movement. I moved to Los Angeles, studied acting at the Lee Strasberg Institute and later toured the country for several years performing my lesbian feminist one-woman show, "The Many Faces of Woman." In 1972 my husband and I divorced.

In March, 1974 I took part in a series of NOW feminist theater presentations called Women for Women, at Town Hall in Manhattan. In 1976, I was hired as the Women's Program Director at the Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Community Services Center. Also, with long-time activist Morris Kight, I founded and organized the Coalition for Human Rights, joined by other Lesbian/Gay community leaders. It's purpose was to organize southern California to fight the onslaught of California State Senator John Briggs attack on lesbian and gay teachers in California. The attack was fueled by an Anita Bryant-led campaign against gay men in Florida. An Initiative, which would have banned gays and lesbians

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and their supporters from being employed in California's public schools, became known as the "Briggs Initiative/No on Proposition 6". It was on the ballot for November 1978. I took a leave of absence from the LA Center and served as the Southern California Deputy Director in the No on 6 Initiative campaign, which we overwhelmingly defeated in November 1978.

Following the Briggs Initiative victory, Governor Jerry Brown appointed me Commissioner for the "California Commission on Aging". I was the first "out" lesbian or gay person to be appointed to a California board or commission.

I was co-founder of the Los Angeles Lesbian/Gay Police Advisory Board in the early 1980s. In 1983 I founded the first AIDS organization, AIDS Network LA, in Los Angeles, which served as a clearing house for collecting and disseminating information in the early days of the epidemic. In 1984 I was one of the founders of AIDS Project LA which served those who had been diagnosed with AIDS and provided information to the community on prevention.

In 1986, I co-chaired the grassroots effort to fight another vicious Initiative, "No on LaRouche /Proposition 64." Lyndon LaRouche from Virginia proposed that AIDS be added to California's List of Communicable Diseases. The Proposition advocated quarantining men all gay men in concentration camps. Sponsored by his "Prevent AIDS Now Initiative Committee" (PANIC), the proposition qualified for the California ballot. We defeated it. Throughout the 1980s I organized numerous gay-rights marches, protests and "die-ins" and fought to get funding

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and services for the sick and dying during the AIDS epidemic.

In the 1990's I received the Drama-Logue "Best Performance" award for my role in the play, "Against the Rising Sea". I have served on the Lesbian and Gay Advisory Board for the city of West Hollywood from 1999 to Present day. I co-chaired the board for the first ten years. I spearheaded work on bringing attention to partner abuse in the LGBT community, increased focus on "Crystal Meth" addiction, and supported the annual Dyke March.

I conceived the idea of providing affordable housing for Gay & Lesbian Seniors, the first of its kind in the Country. Many years of hard work culminated in the founding of the non-profit Gay & Lesbian Elder Housing, Inc. in 2005. I'd laid the groundwork by organizing the community and provided the leadership that resulted in obtaining a grant from the State to move forward with the housing project. This first project, Triangle Square, contains 104 units in the first assistive living, affordable income apartment complex in the country which addresses the needs of LGBT elders 62 and over, located in Hollywood, CA, and open for occupancy in 2007.

During all this time I continued painting, drawing and interpreting the human form. Many of my early works are included in collections on the east coast, where I began my art career. On the west coast I had one-woman shows and participated in group shows in Pasadena, West Hollywood and Hollywood. I've always wanted to paint realistic portraits, so when I discovered

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the Los Angeles Academy of Figurative Art, in San Fernando Valley, I studied portraiture and figure painting over a period of years. I gravitated to creating political statement paintings and large-bodied, nude women celebrating the joy of life. As fate would have it, after having macular degeneration for nearly 20 years, my central vision is almost gone and I can no longer see to paint facial detail. So I began to explore other ways to bring life to my Creativity

My current work with the city of West Hollywood, Ca to create The Lesbian Center has been successful. We now have a building and the



center will open in a year or so. On a more personal note, northern California Playwright, Alan Schnupp, and his collaborator, Ellyn Lerner, are writing a play about my life as a lesbian activist. The play is due to open in 2014 in Los Angeles. I will soon have my own TV show on Public Access entitled **Conversation: Raw**, which will deal with issues pertinent to women in all their diversity. I'm also working on two projects; establishing an LGBT Museum and Cultural Center, The Lavender Effect, in Los Angeles and I have just begun preparation for my new one woman show. I'm also working on my autobiography.

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### **SARAH BRABANT**

I was born in LaGrange Georgia (November 18, 1932) into a deeply bereaved family. In 1929 my mother's beloved aunt died during surgery following a car accident and her father died from suicide two weeks later. In 1931 my sister died from cancer of the liver the day before her second birthday.



I was born the next year.

Death and grief were central to my life. As a child I spent a lot of time visiting the cemetery with my mother. She made certain that holidays were festive occasions. I have few other memories of her. For the most part I was raised by caring African American women who were strong women and became my role models. I also spent a lot of time riding with my father (Enoch Callaway, a pioneer oncologist) as he made house calls to his cancer patients. When I was in my early teens I started working with him at his cancer clinic. My childhood was quite different than that of my friends, but it afforded me experiences for which I will always be grateful.

As a child I questioned many things that my friends took for granted. My father taught me to question racial inequality. I learned about gender inequality on my own in church. I wanted to carry the cross, not just sing, but was told by my priest that it was too heavy for me. I

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practiced on my own and one day showed him that I could do quite well. It was then that I learned there was another reason; I was a girl. I never seemed to fit in.

I thought my marriage in 1953 would be the answer. I would be a wife and mother; life would be simple. By 1962, however, it was obvious that my husband, a bipolar, could not support me and my three children. To gain earning power, I entered Memphis State University in Tennessee. Four years later I completed the bachelor's degree program that I had abandoned when I got married. I wanted to continue to work on a master's degree in social work but a woman with three children was persona non grata at that time. I scored well on the Graduate Record Exam, however, and a new graduate program in sociology at Memphis State was happy to have me even if I was a "non traditional" student. Upon graduation I was offered an instructorship.

The highs and lows of living with a manic depressive husband and the accompanying physical and emotional abuse continued. After years of hoping he would change or someone would rescue me, I decided to get a divorce. I thought my married life was hell; I was to enter a new hell-the legal system.



Space does not allow me to tell all my story. It is sufficient to say that my father was dead, my husband was from a prominent family, his cousin was a senior

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partner in the most prestigious law firm in the city, and my lawyer had been selected by them. Yes, I was that naïve. After a brutal legal battle, I finally received a divorce at the cost of accepting the minimum child support possible. I was far from free, however. My former husband tried to get me fired, stalked me, at one time attempted to car-jack me, and set fire to my house.

My department head urged me to continue my education and I applied and received a National Defense Education Act Fellowship from the University of Georgia, one of the first women to do so. My ex-husband's lawyers took me to court to prevent me from moving. Their argument was that I already made more than a secretary. Why would I want to take my children away from their "loving" father"?

How I managed to get permission to leave is a story in itself. Suffice it to say that I played the role of the helpless woman longing to be nearer her mother. My ex-husband's failure to pay even the minimal child support was never mentioned at the hearing. My attorney did not want to bring it up since it "might complicate things."

At Georgia I became acquainted with the feminist movement through a fellow student,, Shirlee Owens, and joined NOW. I believe it was Robin Morgan who said that feminism was another name for a scream. I had needed to scream for a long time. At last I had permission to do so. I received my doctorate in 1973. To this day I say that I owe my Ph.D. to my first husband who called me "stupid" and "pea brain" one time too often.

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Affirmative action resulted in my receiving quite a few job offers but the University of Louisiana at Lafayette (then the University of Southwestern Louisiana) was the only one that wanted me because of my credentials not my gender. It was a great place for me. First, it offered Wilmer MacNair, one of my former professors and soon-to-be husband, and me the opportunity to be employed at the same university in the same department. This was almost unheard of at that time. Secondly, I was able to engage in my three loves: teaching, research, and community activism.

Finally, the feminist movement was alive and well in the area. Louisiana was a pivotal state in the fight for the Equal Rights Amendment. I was privileged to meet courageous activists for women's rights, e.g., such women as Ollie Osborne, Fran Bussie, Pat Evans, and Sylvia Roberts. There was even a local chapter of NOW. I went to a few meetings, but found that the members wanted a place to scream. I was glad they had the opportunity but I was done screaming. I wanted to do something.

My course assignments included Marriage and the Family and Social Problems as well as Introductory Sociology, areas I found fascinating. My research at that time focused on gender studies. My articles appear in several issues of Sex Roles, as well as the American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, Sociology and Social Research, Sociological Spectrum, Wisconsin Sociologists, Free Inquiry, and the Journal of College Student Personnel. It was interesting research, but the opportunity to work with a colleague on oil and gas impact grants paid and enabled me to put my three

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children through college. Articles in the Journal of Applied Sociology, Sociological Perspectives, and Impact Assessment not only added to my resume but were far more valued by my university than "women's journals. I was determined to climb the academic ladder to the top.

Even more important, however, was my goal to reach out to women who were going through what I had been through. I found other women who shared this goal: Jessie Taylor, Isabel Gant, Doris Bentley and Margaret Gimbrede. Taylor and Gant worked for the city, Bentley was a colleague at the university, and Gimbrede was active in both the Association of University Women and the League of Women Voters.

Two of us were African American; three were white. Together we proved to be a formidable force. We founded the Mayor's Commission on the Needs of Women and designed and developed both the first battered women's shelter and the first rape crisis center in the area. The oil boom had turned to a bust and I was privileged to serve as president of the Board of Faith House, a shelter for homeless women.

I taught about sexism (and racism) in my classroom. I was asked to present workshops on gender issues in the community. The prevailing literature on why women remained in battering situations or got raped (masochism and sadism) infuriated me for it revictimized the victim.

My search for a better model led me to the emerging death, dying and bereavement literature and the models

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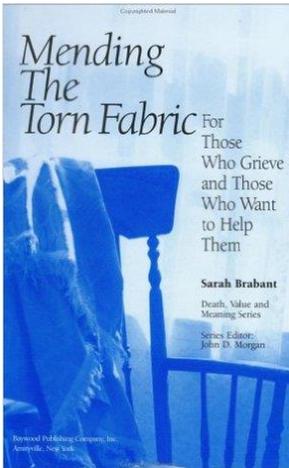
of loss. My mother's death in 1980 prompted me to offer a one-time seminar in Death and Dying. Three years later I was asked by students to repeat the seminar and in 1985, again at student request, the course became part of the regular curriculum. I had come full circle. I taught this course as part of my course load each semester until I retired as Professor Emeritus in 2001. I continued to teach it as an adjunct until 2006.

As a result of this course my community involvement shifted from programs for raped, battered, and homeless women to death and grief related programs. I have served as a support person for Compassionate Friends, Acadiana Chapter since 1983, counseled Persons Living with AIDS through Acadiana CARES since 1988 and was appointed to the faculty of the Delta Region AIDS Education and Training Center in 1990. I was one of the founders and also served on the Board of Directors of The Grief Center of Southwest Louisiana (now Healing House), a local program for bereaved children and their care givers.

My research interests changed as well. My publications on death and grief related issues appear in Omega, The Hospice Journal, Association of Death, Education, and Counseling Forum, Illness, Crisis & Loss, Teaching Sociology, International Journal of Addictions, Death Studies, Clinical Sociology Review, AIDS Patient Care, and Journal of Gerontological Social Work as well as a number of chapters in edited books. In 1996

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I wrote *Mending the Torn Fabric: For Those Who Grieve and Those Who Want to Help Them* and have presented numerous papers, workshops, and lectures on death and bereavement related issues at the local, state, and



national level. At 78, I am still engaged in research and community activism, e.g., developing programs for low-income women.

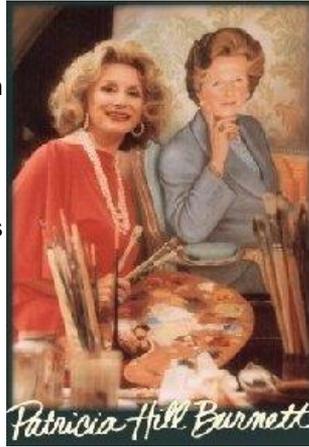
My husband of thirty-seven years has long been a member of NOW; my son and daughter-in-law are both pro women's rights. All three have supported my activism. At

some level my two daughters have resented my social activism. I regret that I was not the stay-at-home mother they seem to have wanted me to be. I did not have that choice. Regardless, I would not change my life, neither the bad times, nor the good ones. I am who I am today because of all my experiences. I still don't "fit in," but I like being who I am.

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## **PATRICIA HILL BURNETT**

In 1969 Patricia Hill Burnett, an accomplished portrait painter, was asked by the man she was painting to please sign her initials to his portrait rather than her name, so no one would know a woman was the artist! Patricia said she glared at him and scrawled in huge letters at bottom of the painting PATRICIA HILL BURNETT. Then she picked up the phone and called Betty Friedan, whose book, *The Feminine Mystique*, had moved her greatly.



She told her story to Betty, who congratulated her and immediately named her chair of the non-existent Michigan NOW. Patricia went on to organize Detroit NOW and was president from 1969 to 1972.

A member of NOW's national board, she chaired International NOW, convening affiliates from 21 countries. In 1972, she was appointed to the Michigan Women's Commission and served four terms, two as its chair. She also chaired the National Association of Commissions for Women, and is the cofounder of the International Women's Forum in Michigan. She additionally served as co-convenor of the Michigan Republican Women's Task Force.

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Patricia's colorful background includes the title of Miss Michigan and runner-up to Miss America 1942, where she earned the title



“Miss Congeniality,” which she most certainly deserves, as her feminist cohorts all agree. Noted for her art, her work appears in galleries in the United States and London, Paris, and Rome. She has painted not only her mentor, Betty Friedan, but Indira Gandhi, Joyce Carol

Oates, Martha Griffiths, Valentina Tarashkova, Betty Ford, Margaret Thatcher, Corazon Aquino, and Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Her 20-painting series of living women of achievement is exhibited at the Women's Hall of Fame in Seneca Falls.

Patricia was chosen to occupy a studio in the Scarab Club in Detroit, the first woman to be recognized by that all-male artists' club. She then served on its board of directors for two terms. She is a lecturer for the U.S. State Department and also serves on the board of the Detroit International Institute. She has been honored by many organizations. Northwood University recognized her in 1977 as one of the world's Ten Distinguished Women. She was presented the Silver Salute Award for outstanding achievement in community leadership by Michigan State University in 1976; NOW Women chose her as Feminist of the Year in 1974.

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Patricia Hill was born in Brooklyn, New York, in 1920. Her parents separated when she was a baby, and until a teenager she grew up without many luxuries in a single-parent home in Toledo, Ohio. Later, a rich grandparent made their lives easier. When her mother married a well-to-do physician on the staff of Henry Ford Hospital, they moved to Detroit.

At the age of fourteen, she launched her artistic career by selling portraits for \$25 in her home town. She graduated with a degree in Fine Arts from Baltimore's Goucher College and continued her graduate study at the Instituto d' Allende in Mexico and Detroit's Wayne State University.

After a brief unsatisfactory marriage to a surgeon, she wed businessman Harry Burnett. "Everyone thought I was blissfully happy. I had a nice husband, beautiful house, four children," she said. "A perfect Stepford wife, and then one day I realized how angry I was with the way society treated women." While her husband indulged her, he treated her in many respects like a child. She decided she'd had enough.

She read *The Feminine Mystique*, and the rest is herstory.

Still full of life and enthusiasm today, Patricia is active in the community and busy painting portraits.

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### VIRGINIA CARTER

I first heard of the modern Feminist Movement reading about it in Time Magazine around 1972. I had been a feminist since birth, so the article rang every bell. I picked up the phone and, feeling slightly embarrassed, asked the operator if there was any listing that might put me in touch with this



Movement in the Los Angeles area. I was given a number that connected to an answering machine in a clothes closet in the home of Toni Carabillo. I called and heard there would be a meeting of this fledgling group at the Original BBQ restaurant somewhere in downtown Los Angeles. My partner, Judith Osmer, and I attended.

My heart was pounding as we went inside the restaurant. Dear god, upon entering we found a group of 30 or 40 people gathered at a few tables. Toni Carabillo was up front talking about what this group was about. I jumped right in with all the energy and enthusiasm I could muster. Within a year I was elected President of L.A. NOW. What an adventure! I learned more about people, group dynamics and life in the following two years than in any comparable span of time before or since. I am now 76 and break into a grin every time I think about those years. ??

I was born and raised in Arvida, a small town in Northern Quebec— situated on a high plateau a long

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way from anywhere and above the Saguenay River, a deep, fast, 100-mile long river with Greenland sharks in it and Baluga whales at its mouth . In the depth of winter the wind howled and the snow blew in fine grains low to the ground. We loved ice cream but had to eat it indoors as outdoors it was just too hard to melt with a slurp of the tongue. The weather gave new meaning to the word "cold". My parents said we did not have to go to school when the temperature dropped to 40 degrees F or below as bare flesh would stick to metal at those temperatures. But if we didn't go to school who cared? We prayed for cold.

By January the snow rose to the second story windows and the workers at my Dad's plant kept the path to one door of our house shoveled open. Of course we could always ski out the second story windows if the workers were late in keeping our path open. One day the water heater, located in the back door vestibule, sprang a leak. The water turned to ice and we were trapped in our house without our skies until Dad chiseled our way out.

Growing up in the North in the 1940s was quite a trip. The icicles which formed on roof eaves were dangerous and had been known to kill people when they fell unexpectedly. Those icicles would go straight through the skull, perhaps even pierce the heart, we whispered to each other as we stared balefully up at them?

My sister Jean- Ellen, 2.5 years older and a world away from me in temperament and taste, knits and quilts and watches American Idol on TV. I would rather set my hair on fire than do any of that. She was abandoned by her creep of a husband while in the hospital recovering from

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the birth of her second child. My parents helped, and after a few years dispatched her and the kids to me in Los Angeles where they thought she had a better chance of making a life. What luck! As it turned out it was the dawn of the computer age and Jean-Ellen, now calling herself Joan, had a real knack for that. She took classes at UCLA in the new field of computing and instantly got a job at Computer Sciences Corporation. It was a tiny company which grew into a giant, taking over Social Security and IRS records during her 30 some years there. She made a good life in her own home just 10 minutes from mine. It was at the right time, she was the right age and had the right gifts to be able to jump right in. Joan and I are together often. I love her dearly.

My brother Tom (known to all as Bud) was born 8 years after me. A beautiful blend of our Mom & Dad, he too, is very dear to me. Now retired, he made his living as an engineer and lives about 10 minutes from my home. He might have joined the family sooner but Dad, at the age of 32, was sent to Southern India in late 1939 by the Aluminum Company of Canada -- a direct result of Mom's boredom living the traditional wife's role in a small town in Quebec. She had circled the globe twice by age 17, traveling with her parents as they came back to North America on sabbatical from Japan. Life in a small town did not go well with her. She urged Dad to find work some place interesting, and Alcan was happy to send him to India to build the first Aluminum Plant in support of the war effort. I have often told the story of the day my Mother got so dejected in that tiny environment that she went to their bedroom, lay down, and did not join us for two days. Then she arose and went back to the life she had committed to. She was a

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wonderful Mom and my best friend. The hole she left in my life when she died is impossible to fill. I use that story when talking to groups in distant places about how to create a pro-social soap opera. The point is that just about every family has drama all around them and good soap operas come from honest stuff.

Dad went to India to prepare the way for us. Mother arranged to have clothing made for us suitable for the Indian climate. We got immunization shots and were set to go, but the visa process dragged on. The problem was that Mother had been born in Japan, a country with which we were at war. Before those visas were issued Japan bombed Pearl Harbor and all travel across the Pacific was closed. We couldn't go any other way because the Atlantic was closed, too, as war raged in Europe. Mother was pissed. She eventually arranged visa's for us to travel to the United States to visit her brother in Los Angeles, hoping to wait for Dad to come home via the Pacific, when and if.

We left in November, a really bad weather month in Quebec. In Los Angeles the sun shone and for the first time I saw Royal Palm Trees, the Ocean, and adults eating coffee cake for breakfast – and there was no rationing in L.A. Mother kept us on oatmeal and rationed brown sugar knowing we would have to go home sooner or later. If we had a nickel (a week's allowance) we could buy a Coke at the local gas station.

In L.A. I discovered Heaven without having to die. I was in the first grade and could hardly believe it when the teacher dismissed us and sent us home because it had begun to rain. The comparison to life in Quebec was so

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amazing that Los Angeles was thereafter my ultimate destination of choice.. That explains why I did my graduate work at the University of Southern California and have made a home here. I'm no fool.

Dad worked for Alcan as a senior electrical engineer. Making aluminum is about having enough electricity to do so. Water power was cheap and plentiful in Quebec. Still is. He had graduated from Queens University in Kingston Ontario in 1932. Times were very hard at the height of the Great Depression. Dad was the first in his family to go to college, thanks to his mom. She was determined that Dad get an education and be able to raise his family out of subsistence farming when he married.

My Father was the quintessential engineer. He could build or fix anything. We hit it off big time when I was in my last year of High School. I had taken the Latin curriculum but switched to the science track in the hope that it would open career choices when I got to college and into the work world. Dad taught me the 3 years of High School science I was missing in one weekend. He made it all so clear I could not miss.

Dad's ancestors had been United Empire Loyalists, which means that they had fled to Canada and been given land grants during the American Revolution. Those damn Yankees had been disloyal to King George III, but by god no one in Dad's family had ever rebelled against their sovereign. My whole family still holds the British Royal Family in high regard and every Christmas we listen to Queen Elizabeth give her annual speech. In our view she is the living symbol of her Commonwealth,

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representing the flag and with no more power than a flag, which in certain circumstances is quite considerable. Dad's parents did what they could to cover some of his college expenses, giving up tea among other things, to squirrel away money to pay his tuition. He was a stern kind of fellow who took work and duty seriously, but he also loved to laugh and boasted about his family endlessly. He thought we were the greatest. In his later years his eyes would get misty, and he'd say "Look Jean, look what we have done!" He was raised by his parents in Canfield, Ontario - the tiniest of towns. His parents ran the Post Office there and farmed a small plot of rented land.

My Mother's story is very different. She was born and raised in Japan by missionary parents, fervent Presbyterians who rose from the breakfast table every day and trooped into the living room with servants in tow, where they sank to their knees with their heads buried in the seats of the chairs and prayed for 20 minutes before starting their day. Mother was raised by servants who taught her to speak Japanese several years before she learned English. One day a servant mentioned in passing that my Mother had said something funny. Her parents had no idea she could talk and were astounded to find that she was fluent in Japanese. Soon she began to translate for them.

Everyone in Mother's family went to college, including men **and** women back two generations. Always to Queens University in Kingston, Ontario. Everyone that is but me. I chose McGill University in Montreal where I majored in Math and Physics, not subjects of my deepest interest, but they were what I did easily. It was

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a good choice because of the demanding mental training. After my freshman year I was often the only woman in the class. At McGill professors came from all over the world to deliver lectures in their specialties. I could audit any class, so I dropped into lots of them. I remember one advanced literature course where the Professor translated Milton's *Areopagitica* from English to Greek to Latin pointing to the shifts in subtle shades of meaning resulting in each change of language. At the opposite end of my intellectual wandering I slipped into a Med School dissection lab where the class was working on real bodies. The smell almost knocked me down, but I hung in until I was absolutely certain I did not want to go to Med school --despite my Mother's fondest wishes. I did not suffer discrimination at McGill. Our test papers and final exams were submitted without our names on them. We were graded by number and the results posted that way.

While at McGill I enlisted in the University Reserve Training Program. Think ROTC. It was a profound experience because it trained me to be an officer in the Royal Canadian Air Force. As an officer in the British Forces one is respected for one's rank. Any failure to salute or show deference was unimaginable. Our shoes were shined for us, we ate at the Officers' Mess and were served at tables with white linen and silverware. We were taught to command in our work space and on the parade square shouting orders. That may sound elitist, but truth is for a woman it was a deeply empowering experience and one that has served me well in the world of work.

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I loved sports and played everything available. In Canada basketball, volleyball, badminton, and track drew me in during my high school days. At McGill I was center forward on the McGill intercollegiate basketball team and played volley ball, squash and badminton.

When I graduated from McGill and went job hunting in 1958 life hit me in face. The guys from my classes all got wonderful job offers. The best offer I got was to be a clerk at the Bell Telephone Company. I fled to the United States - to Los Angeles of course, remembering our sojourn there when I was a kid. I applied for a job and when asked how much money I wanted I named a figure and was told "We don't pay that little here." I took the job and 5 years later applied for citizenship. In a way it was hard to give up my Canadian citizenship. In my heart I am Canadian. I thought about it and decided if the country was offering me a better life then I should be part of it, and that meant voting. So, I became a naturalized US citizen. During the oral test required for citizenship I was asked what a jury was. I replied that it was a group of one's peers that sat in judgment during a trial. I was told with reproof that in the United States there was no peerage. I apologized and stood corrected.

I hold a BSc degree from McGill University in Math and Physics, an MSc degree in Physics from the University of Southern California and an Honorary Doctorate in Science from McGill. My career consists of 12 years at the Aerospace Corporation (a think tank for the US Government) where I did experimental physics. **That was the time of my awakening to the problem of discrimination against women.** I am the first woman to fly a satellite experiment. It measured in-track air density

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as a function of altitude, longitude, latitude and solar activity. My results were important and were reported by the head of my laboratory (Space Physics Laboratory, at The Aerospace Corporation in El Segundo, CA) without ever mentioning my name. How about that! In a way that didn't surprise me because I was becoming acutely aware of the persistent discrimination against women as they struggled against what appeared to be failure in their chosen fields.

I joined the National Organization for Women sometime around then and became president of the Los Angeles chapter within a year. That experience was a huge learning process. It was a volunteer organization. I could not command. I had to learn to bring people along in my direction....or not. I met some truly fantastic people - from judges to prostitutes. I found that my life had been very sheltered. Time to grow up.

Looking back I see that life at Aerospace was my first encounter with failure. I had excelled in High School winning a math prize, and playing on every sports team, captaining many of them. At McGill things went much the same way. I was named a University Scholar, given a financial scholarship and won a jersey as a University athlete. After seeing my research results reported without any mention of **me** - I was so pissed that when I found the Feminist Movement I jumped right in and discovered I was not alone.

It was the most incredible relief to be among Feminists. That year, 1972, my life changed completely. Not only did I find the Movement but I met a woman there named Frances Lear. She introduced me to her husband

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Norman, a TV producer who had just put "All In the Family" on the air. He was the cover story in Time Magazine that week.

Norman and I had absolutely nothing in common. He knew no physics whatsoever, and you could put in a thimble what I knew about Show Business. In that meeting, absent any ability to discuss our specialties, we fell back to basics and talked about human feelings, life and death, love, the quest for success and so on. We liked each other. I went home thinking I could enjoy the memory of that meeting for years. He called me the following week and asked if I would meet with him again.

I thought that was a bit much, I was a busy physicist -- but his wife was a friend and I did not want to offend her. As I drove to his office on Avenue of the Stars (for



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goodness sakes even the street name was an embarrassment) I began to wonder why he wanted to see me again. Surely he would not offer me a job, and if he did, what could I say? If he should be so nutty as to say come work with him I would ask for an impossible salary.

But when he did say "come work with me" and I asked for a huge salary (almost double what I was making at Aerospace) and he said "No problem". I called my parents and said "I have decided to quit my job and work with Norman Lear in Hollywood" My Mom said "OH VIRGINIA! I wasn't sure if she was happy or appalled. Turned out she was happy and had been unimpressed with me spending my life in physics. Mom had an honors degree in Biology and Psychology and loved the world of Ideas. She felt I could do better in work less likely to be turned to the war effort. She was right, some of my work in studies of the high atmosphere might well have been useful in improving missile targeting.

I took a one year leave from Aerospace in case this was some crazy dream and went to work in Hollywood. I was given a huge office right next to Norman's and asked to sit in on all his meetings. I read every script and gave notes (my reactions, suggestions for change and so on), at first just on *All in the Family* (AIF), but soon he had *Maude*, *The Jeffersons*, *One Day at a Time* and *Facts Of Life* broadcasting weekly. The work load was considerable. One of the memories that makes me chortle -- we were given Turkey tickets, which meant that we could go to a grocery store and get up to 20 lbs in free turkey. When I joined Norman the holiday meant

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bonuses, in the first year I was given \$5,000. Ten years later it was a whole lot more than that!?

I began to supervise some of the shows, at first in small steps and then ever greater ones. I had to learn fast. One of my learning curves had to do with the fact that I had served in the Canadian Air Force University Reserve Training Program. Put in US terms it was like the ROTC. In the Canadian Air Force, officers (even those in training) give orders, they don't ask for collaboration or agreement. That's fine for the armed forces but it doesn't work in Show Business. The Producers, Directors and Casts have to be brought along gently. I learned...fast! I never went back to Aerospace.

My deepest interest in the Norman's shows was to find ways to introduce positive values. There was never any doubt that the shows had to be extremely entertaining, but once we had an audience we could put information into them that would be helpful to all. I had had breast cancer the year before, so we gave Edith on AITF a breast cancer scare (she found a lump in her breast) and we had the chance to let the audience learn about breast self-examination. We gave Archie on AITF high blood pressure and were able to measure how many citizens used publicly available BP testers as a result. And so on.

I had a running battle with the producers over using the word "Broad" as a synonym for woman. They said "What's wrong with it, my wife doesn't mind?" Yah sure. I won most of the time, partly because of my powers of persuasion and partly because of that office next to Norman's. ??

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When Norman left show business to retire I left too. It was too painful to stay in this most powerful media where no one seemed to care about anything but ratings. I came home to my partner Judith Osmer (47 years and counting) who had her own rapidly growing business. A solid state chemist, she had figured out how to grow ruby in the lab in much the same way as Nature does. Ruby was coming out of her furnaces so much like the Natural thing that the Gem Institute of America asked her to do something to make it distinguishable from the rubies that grew in the earth. She kept her rubies off the market until she could figure out how. Her ruby is now on sale all over the world under the name Ramaura™ Cultured Ruby. Ramaura comes from Rama (a god or king) and aura.

I joined Judith at her J.O. Crystal Co. operating out of a building we owned in Long Beach, California. She ran the laboratory and I ran the office. We closed the lab when I turned 66 because I whined that it was time to play. It did give us some time to travel the world. Truth is we are running out of new places to go -- but not completely. In April we went to the Adriatic for a few weeks.

Now at this wonderful age of 76 I serve on the executive boards of the Population Media Center (PMC) and the Population Institute (PI). The focus of these groups is largely on elevating the status of women. It is understood that **if** the status of women is raised the desired family size falls and things get better for everyone. PI does it by working with government entities. PMC does it by accepting invitations to travel to countries which are struggling with rapid population

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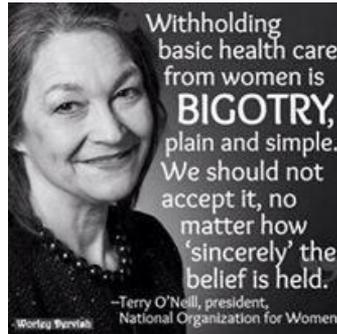
growth. It is easy to see that if a population grows too fast the infrastructure can't keep up, kids go hungry, there aren't enough schools, hospitals, decent roads and on and on. I and others travel overseas and teach our hosts to design and shoot soap operas that model pro social values, eg small family size, access to medical care and education for women, preservation of habitat and so on. I love this work. My next trip for this cause is shaping up now and it looks like I will be to Baku, Azerbaijan. Back home I fill my time reading, writing and plotting next steps. I get away to Alaska to fish now and then. My life is a joy importantly because my partner of 47 years is a joy. I have been spoiled by life and I know it. Onward!

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### INEZ CASIANO

I was born in November 1926 in Brooklyn, New York. My parents were from Puerto Rico and both spoke, read, and wrote Spanish and English when they arrived. They met and married in Brooklyn in 1925. I was the first of their four children. .



My father died when I was 7. My mother raised us on the allocation from the AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children). Education was a "given." From age 17 I supported the family, working 48 hours a week at the Brooklyn Navy Yard and at other clerical jobs, while attending Night College with 100% college tuition scholarship. I had to pay for registration, books, etc., but had no money for warm - or dress clothes and shoes. School was very far and I had to travel on buses late at night. I was a member of District 65 of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union 1948-1975.

I married in 1948. A year later, my first and only child (a daughter) was born. My husband was abusive and even though he eventually made money in the music business, he never supported us. I divorced him and married again, this time to a man who expected me to support him while he went to school. After eight years I divorced him and continued working full time and going

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to school while raising my daughter. In 1960 I received my BBA from the CCNY's Baruch School of Business Administration, one of the few women to receive a BBA at the time, had several entry-level professional jobs and took courses toward an MBA.

In 1965 I took my teenage daughter to Caracas where I was Managing Director of a market and opinion research company in six countries. Six months later my daughter contracted Hepatitis A and I resigned and returned to New York.

By now I knew I wanted to do something to help people, so I took a job in the Puerto Rican Community Development Project. At a National Council of Churches conference I met Dr. Anna Arnold Hedgeman, the famed civil rights advocate who had been the executive director of the National Council for A Permanent Fair Employment Practices Commission. She became my life-long friend and mentor. In October of 1966 she took me to the organizing meeting of the National Organization for Women (NOW), and thus I became a founding member of NOW. I was also a member of the first NOW Board of Directors. Soon afterward, I was recruited to a policy position in the U.S. EEOC and had to give up my NOW Board position.

In August 1968 I became Social Science adviser to the U.S. Secretary of Labor as a GS-15 where I remained until my retirement in 1990. At one time, I was the highest level Puerto Rican woman in the U.S. Civil Service. I am a graduate of Class XIII of the Federal Executive Institute – the first Hispanic and the only woman in a class of 57. The program was usually limited

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to "supergrades" (GS-16 to GS-18), but there were very few women in those grades at that time.

In 1980 I became Chief, Division of Program Development & Enrollee Support in Job Corps. In that position, I supervised a staff of 14 professional and 3 clerical employees; developed, justified and managed \$100,000,000 annual Federal budget for purchase of contract services and materials and directed the monitoring of contractors performance at over 100 Job Corps and related facilities that provided residence and employment training for 44,000 youths, and directed the development of program guidelines, educational standards and materials.

My last three years in the DOL were on an IPA in the Arizona government: first, in the Department of Economic Security where I served in the mentoring program, and then in the Governor's Office of Women's Services where, with a committee, I developed and produced "Arizona Women's Guide," a comprehensive guide to resources – the first in any state.

My volunteer activities and job responsibilities have centered on improving the opportunities for women and minorities, while recognizing that stereotyping diminishes everyone regardless of gender, race or ethnicity. In pursuit of these objectives, I have testified before the U.S. Congress, participated in Project Transition at the DOD, and recruited panel members for the 1970 White House Conference on Children and Youth.

In 1969 I organized and assembled Puerto Rican leaders from across the US to prepare testimony and an

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amendment to include all Hispanics in proposed legislation which would establish an Interagency Committee on Mexican-American Affairs. I submitted written testimony to the Senate Committee on Government Operations, Subcommittee on Government Reorganization. The change was adopted. I also testified before Senate subcommittees on two other occasions.

In 1979 Mayor Marion Barry appointed me to a four-year term on the Board of Trustees of the University of

the District of Columbia where I served as Vice Chair. I was on the Board of Directors of NOWLDEF (1979-1987); D.C. Mayor's Advisory committee on Narcotics Addiction (1972-1973); Honorary Member "Federacion de las Mujeres Profesionistas y de Negocias de Mexico (1989-1992).



Michele Ceballos, Inéz Casiano, her husband Bob Hardy, Jacqui Ceballos, Phoenix 2009

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In 1975 I married Robert Warren Hardy 1975. We will soon celebrate our 35th anniversary. We have lived in the Phoenix , Arizona area where I belong to the Scottsdale/Phoenix chapter of NOW, and VFA, which I joined in 1993. We have a busy life in Phoenix, attending lectures and seeing friends. I've attended VFA reunions and spoken about feminism with Jacqui Ceballos at the University of Arizona.

Bob and I have traveled to Europe, Asia, and the Middle East, and everywhere met people and observed how they deal with the common needs of everyday life. We took our two grandsons to Australia, China, Singapore, Thailand, and Japan to make sure they have a broad world view. This, and education, is our legacy to them.

**NOTE:** Languages such as Italian use certain gender-specific words, but English doesn't, and bilingual people may occasionally run into translation roadblocks (i.e. "al femminile"). Serena's created her own way of expressing her thoughts, sometimes taking liberties with grammar (i.e. "Women is beautiful"). She likes the original way she uses words, some of which have even drifted into the general parlance.

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### **SERENA LUCE CASTALDI**

The youngest of four children, I was born in 1943 in the North Italian countryside, where my family had escaped the city bombing and lack of food during the war. Soon after, we had to move back to Milano, where my father Enrico was an electrical engineer, and my mother Matilde attended to the many family needs.



I remember my family as quite unhappy--people who didn't get along were stuck together, and strife and resentments ran deep. Everybody tried to escape, and my mother found a more rewarding work environment teaching French in middle school. When I was about 10 my parents separated; my father and two brothers moved out and I remained with my mother and sister. While more peaceful, our family life was not my idea of fun, and I spent as much time as possible outside of it, with friends and schoolmates.

The school discipline of sitting still for hours did not suit my vivacious nature, and besides the social aspect of it, in class I was mostly bored. Yet I still had to follow my father's decision that humanistic education was best, and attended a classical high school steeped in Latin and ancient Greek.

From childhood through high school my best friends were twins, Giovanna and Giulietta. Our trio coalition provided my growing years with female solidarity and

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unwavering support, emotional intimacy, fun, strength and a good deal of freedom of movement. Together we discussed our family lives, relations, how being female proved to be a social disadvantage, how to best protect ourselves from unwanted attention and be able to take part in the many stimulating things city life had to offer: movies, concerts, debates, museum visits.

Very early I became aware of the disrespect that often followed the start of sexual contact with boys. Also I did not like being a sexual prey, exposed to inappropriate touching on the bus, men exposing themselves in the streets, or following me with lurid comments when I walked. Reflecting on all this, I concluded that I could be considered either a female or a person. I chose to be a person, rejected most sexual advances, and cultivated friendships with both boys and girls.

Around 1964, following my family's intellectual tradition, I enrolled in the State University of Milan, where I eventually graduated with a degree in philosophy. Around that time my father, the authority that had determined much of what I was allowed to do, died, leaving me an economic independence that gave me a new freedom of choice. I quickly put it to use to start fulfilling my desire to travel, a part of my life that is still important to me.

While on vacation in France I met Agathe, who invited me to visit her in Paris, where she lived with her sister. We developed a close friendship; each winter I visited her and in the summer she joined me at my family apartment in the Italian Riviera. We became fluent in each other's language, and by mixing the two created

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our own secret dialect. Living with her in the Quartier Latin, I had a chance to experience a lifestyle quite different from the more conservative Milano. After Paris, the swinging London of the Mary Quant era offered me another opportunity to plunge into another culture, with unconventional and colorful images of femininity.

In 1967 the student movement came to my university. For the first time I got involved in politics, participated in meetings and occupation of the university, and by 1968 I was fully engaged in a Marxist-Leninist branch of the student movement.

Another central woman in my life was Anna, my beloved sister-in-law and best friend until her death in 1977. It was with her that I went to New York in 1970, where I was introduced to the women's movement. While living there I met Anselma Dell'Olio and Diana Alstad and had the opportunity to speak with them in Italian about the developing women's movement. This allowed us a much more fluid and deep communication and the connection with Diana proved very significant, as it inspired me to look more closely into the Movement's philosophy and goals. As I considered writing my doctoral thesis on this subject, I visited groups and collected documents that I brought back to Milan.

Back home, needing to create a social environment consistent with my new feminist inclinations, I started a women's consciousness-raising group, L'Anabasi (Ascent). It was the first group in Milano open only to women, which at the time proved to be a revolutionary and scary proposition. In September 1970 while I was in Rome, accidentally through a magazine interview, I

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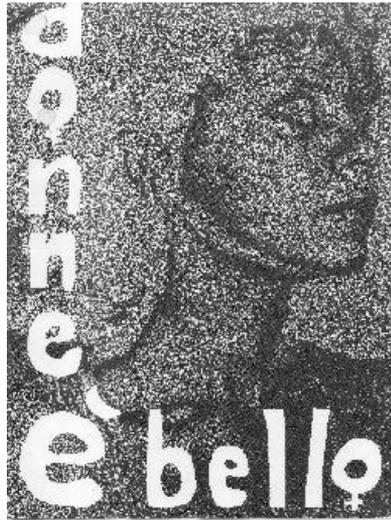
learned Anselma was in Rome and contacted her. Diana also happened to be there with two feminist friends; she also saw that interview and called Anselma. We all reunited, and activated by this amazing synchronicity, we engaged in a campaign to spread the word about the women's movement. We talked to women, met with members of the new group Rivolta Femminile (Feminine Revolt), and did interviews for various media to give the issue maximum visibility.

Then Diana and I went to Paris where we met the first French feminists.

To keep spreading the Liberation vision, I translated many of the documents I had collected and in 1972 L'Anabasi published them independently under the title "Donne e' Bello," which translates as "Women is Beautiful."

The grammar is not correct, but sometimes when I write I stretch the language to precisely express the meaning I want to convey, and in the process create new expressions.

That same year L' Anabasi published a small collection of our own material: "Al Femminile," Femminile (feminine) is a word to indicated gender; here this gender connotation is used to indicate that one's perspective is marked by gender. This idea was so



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successfully communicated that the expression *al femminile* was promptly adopted by the media, has since been used in all cultural fields, and has become part of common language.

L'Anabasi lasted five years during which--besides regular consciousness raising meetings--it instituted Soccorso Femminista to listen to and counsel women in distress; organized feminist vacations; out-of-town gatherings with women from all over the country; and contributed to shaping the collective debate in the growing Italian Women's Movement.

In 1974 a publisher invited me to write a book on Women's History in Modern Times, to introduce this new topic in high schools. I accepted and with a woman in my group, Liliana Caruso, wrote "L'altra Faccia della Storia, Quella Femminile" ("The Other Side of History, Herstory;" 1975). This book was also a "first" and inspired further historical research on women. It was fascinating to reflect on how to define women's history and what to include in its account. The idea of looking at "the other side of history" has caught on and the expression has been adopted by many others to present their particular point of view on certain events.

I made my most theoretical contribution in the thesis I wrote for my philosophy doctorate, which was published in 1978 as "Femminile Paternale" (Paternal Femininity). Paternale means generated by the father (pater), like materiale (material) is related to the root word mother (mater). In this philosophical and anthropological essay, among other things I discuss the fallacy of the idea of the existence of a matriarchal stage in the evolution of

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society, and the origin of the values associated with femininity, which, I assert, have been generated by a male culture that has attributed to itself the exclusive power to define reality.

I then affirm the necessity of moving to a "different mode of history." In it, the universality of the male culture is abandoned, replaced by the recognition that males and females both have essential roles and experiences providing them with different points of view needed and valuable, and females are encouraged to discover, embrace and shape their own identity. It seems to me that the value of the fundamental role of women in reproducing and maintaining the species (a prerequisite to the existence of any culture and society) is still largely relegated to the society's unconscious, invisible and taken for granted, as the Earth itself has mostly been.

In 1975 I retired from L'Anabasi, and to find new tools for deepening the exploration of who we women are, I hosted two new small groups. In Gruppo del Carattere we used various structures to broaden our perception of who we are and shake our self-images. For example, in turns one of us was silent, while the others would talk about her as if she weren't there, letting her hear what was previously unspoken. The other group was dedicated to Danze Interiori (Interior Dances), and was conducted in collaboration with another feminist, artist Nilde Carabba. Here the center of attention moved to the body and its expression through spontaneous movements that let the unconscious emerge. One or at times two women lay down in the center with eyes closed; then from a place of deep relaxation she let the movements spontaneously come, while the group was

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witnessing and making sure she remained safe. This was followed by a time for comments and a potluck.

In 1976 I accepted the invitation of Diana Alstad and her partner Joel Kramer to visit them in Bolinas, the village where they live on the California coast, and in 1979 I ended up moving here. As leaving Italy meant I largely lost the possibility to communicate in my native language, in Bolinas my focus shifted toward the exploration of the mind-body relations, yoga, the healing arts, creativity through dance and the performing arts. Eventually more confident in my English, I returned to writing, contributing articles to the local papers and also experimenting with performance--poetry, theatre and more personal texts, a choice of which I collected in a sort of autobiographical testimony to my first 50 years: "Seeds of Wholeness" 1995), which I self-published.

Over the years I progressively stopped using my patronymic, Castaldi, in favor of a variant of my first name, Serena Luce (Serene Light).

After much thinking, studying, talking and reflecting with and about women, I am firmly convinced that the essence and deepest meaning of the contemporary international Women's Liberation Movement is the individuation of the female spirit, she coming into her own and finding her voice and means of expression.

More than ever our specie's survival is in danger. No solution to the current planetary challenges will be possible unless the 'other' half of humanity, the human female, becomes a fully empowered participant in society, and her contributions are respected and valued.

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As Carla Lonzi, a major art critic and one of the founders of the feminist movement in Italy, said : Il destino imprevisto del mondo è nel ripercorrerlo con la donna come soggetto." The future of the world rests on women becoming fully individuated and empowered. When, from being objects of definitions by the male discourse, women become subjects who define their experience of themselves and the world around them, culture goes from being a male dominated monologue to a dialogue between the two genders, each able to contribute their different point of views and values in the process of creating a new, more wholesome society.

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## JACQUELINE (JACQUI) MICHOT CEBALLOS

I was born September 8, 1925, three days after my parents, Louis Michot and Adele Domas, moved from Lafayette to Mamou, a Cajun town in Louisiana where my father would teach agriculture at the local school.

My mother had taught school before marriage. A devout Catholic, she had seven children in nine years. I was the fourth and only brunette, which was fodder for my siblings. I was an orphan, they'd tell me. And I often felt that I was.

Both my parent's spoke "real French" as their ancestors were from France, (not Acadians from Canada), which my mother never let us forget. However, they spoke to us only in English so we never learned this beautiful language.

My father was the only boy among nine sisters and his father died when he was ten. He left school at 16, joined the Marines, served in WWI, and later got a degree from Louisiana State University. While we lived in Mamou he was a family man and a strict disciplinarian, but his wife had to stay at home. Any time she did anything in public (which she often did later on), he was furious. Having been the only boy among nine women probably



Recent Portrait by  
Linda Stein

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influenced this attitude, but it made me aware early on of the inequality of the sexes, especially in marriage.

When I was eight we moved to Lafayette, a college town, where he began a new job with the Veteran's Administration. He spent his free time at the American Legion hall, so was seldom home and the house resounded with intense sibling rivalry. When he was home you could hear a pin drop.

The 1930s were the Depression years. Signs of poverty were all around--unpainted houses, hobos at our door, a scarcity of birds and small animals (killed for food). Government employees were paid, so we were ok. In fact my father was able to buy a repossessed four-bedroom house on a half-acre for \$6,000.



There aren't many great memories of my grade school years, but here's one I'll never forget: At age eight a teacher, putting on a "little operetta," gave me a lead role as Robin Redbreast. (photo right: Jacqui at 18 years old)

At the time my mother was ill and we children were on our own. No one seemed to care about my comings and goings (or my grades). I attended rehearsals, but otherwise I was clueless about many things, and somehow I thought the performance was to start at 8 p.m.

The big night I arrived to find the auditorium filled, the

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children on stage and "I Am Robin Redbreast"--my song!--being played on the piano. In a panic I ran down the aisle, my paper mache costume flapping, and up the steps to the stage to finish the song. The audience must have howled. After the program Miss Whitfield severely reprimanded me, and for the next 30 years every time she bumped into me she would announce loudly, "This is the girl who ruined my operetta."

Maybe this influenced my being a loner in my early years. I read a lot, and was aware of what was going on about me. Why were "negroes" so poor and badly treated? Thinking I was helping, I sometimes got them into trouble. Once I urged a black woman to sit in the front of the bus with me. She murmured fearfully, "Please Missis, NO," so I sat in back with her, a decision almost as bad. We were lucky the bus driver only made a menacing remark.

The position of women also scared me. It seemed women could be clerks or teachers but ultimately had to marry. I'll never forget the one small paragraph about the great suffrage movement in my sixth grade history book. Or a radio program about the suffragists and my father saying "Turn that thing off!" At 16 I rebelled against the Catholic Church when the priest said, "If it is between the mother and the child, the mother must go." All this awakened my awareness of the extreme inequality of women. I think I was born a feminist.

My mother believed that women were as smart as men, but she maintained that their greatest calling was as wives and mothers. I'd say "If men can do it (meaning sex before marriage) so can women!" She thought I'd

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end up a whore. It took her a while to accept the feminist movement, but in 1971 she got her chapter of the Catholic Daughters to sponsor the Equal Rights Amendment!

The Depression continued, but a greater horror was Hitler slaughtering Jews, conquering nations and killing thousands, and the Japanese doing the same in Asia. In 1941 Pearl Harbor was attacked and we were at war. Men and boys were joining the services, including my two brothers, Louis and James. James wasn't old enough, but he plagued our parents until they gave their approval. Every day we heard of the death of a local boy or man. One day it was James, killed in the South Pacific.

My early years were plagued by my older sister Beverly. She was pretty and very smart, but in those days a girl's looks were more important than her brains. We were constantly compared and some thought I was better looking. I was known for my singing, and she'd tell me that my voice "was only so-so"; that I was dumb, that the only beauty to my hair (which I wore in braids then) was its length, and on and on . After she graduated and left home I blossomed.

Now in the local college, I majored in music and was in one concert after another, playing viola in the orchestra, singing solo or with a choral group. Teachers like Dr. Ben Kaplan inspired me. A professor of Sociology, he talked publicly about equality for Negroes. I became one of his protégés. He'd feed me books that would strengthen my resolve to leave Lafayette and do something with my life.

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Meanwhile Beverly, in New Orleans translating mail to and from South America for the war department (she'd minored in Spanish), married a fellow translator from the U.S Army. The war now over, she moved to New York City where her husband's Jewish family lived. Her brother-in-law, a lyricist from Hollywood, was in New York with friends to produce plays on Broadway. They were all very liberal, and now proud of me, she encouraged me to move to New York after graduation. So in 1945, after working the summer at the telephone company for seed money, I moved to the Big Apple to pursue a career as a singer.



From L to R, Jenny Rowland, Alma McKell, Jacqui Ceballos in YWCA Studio Club NYC 1949

I loved New York immediately. It was home and is to this day, no matter where I live. I lived in residences "for girls studying the arts" and met interesting young women from all over. For the first time I had Jewish friends. And

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I met Jenny Rowlands and Alma McKell, black teachers from St. Louis working on their Master's at Columbia. They became my lifelong friends.

Things were freer than in the South, but New York society was definitely white, with blacks as lowly workers living far from Manhattan. When my friends and I were out together we were stared at, sometimes with hostility - which especially upset Jenny. One Sunday she invited us to Harlem, off limits for most whites, to attend their church service. I went and was graciously greeted by the minister and congregation.

At age 21 I had my first romance and was introduced to the constant of single women working on careers and fearful of pregnancy. Several of my friends became pregnant and were forced to abandon their dreams and marry.

I always had a boring job, which gave no time for auditions, so I'd take "sick leave", and then get fired. I auditioned now and then, but I wasn't good (or smart) enough to land roles. It seemed that in most cases "girls" were expected to "give out" if they were to receive roles. Two friends advised that this was the only way to get a part on Broadway. Both married important producers and became top Broadway stars.

Postwar society was increasingly all about marriage and a home in the suburbs, and my friends were succumbing. At age 25 it seemed that if I didn't marry I'd be an "old maid" like the pathetic-looking women who summered in the city. My boyfriend was now a lawyer in

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DC doing his internship and talking about marriage, which scared me. It seemed like there was no escape!

One evening my friend Lillian and I were babysitting for my sister. As our lives had become humdrum, I said "Nothing happens to us, Lillian, because we wait for things to happen. Let's call someone." I opened my address book. "Oh, here's Alvaro Ceballos, Maria's Colombian friend living in Mexico." Maria from Mexico had shared an apartment with me and two others. Her friend would be in NYC, and she'd given him our addresses. We'd all moved on since, so he couldn't reach us. But I had his phone number.

I called the Park Avenue hotel where he was staying. "Señor Ceballos is in the suite of John Robert Powers (the famed model agent) at a party," I was told, and my call was transferred there. Soon Lillian and I were on the phone with Alvaro, acting silly, like schoolgirls. "Come over," he said. "We can't, we're babysitting. You come here." But he was in a party with Powers' models, so we knew he wouldn't leave it. My sister and her husband returned and we were relating our experience with Sr. Ceballos-- the doorbell rang. And there he was.



Age 22, a rare modeling job

For the next two hours he kept us in stitches, telling fascinating stories. I felt a twinge of disappointment

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when he mentioned he had three small daughters, but otherwise he was just an interesting friend of Maria's. He invited me to lunch the next day. I'd quit my job to have more time to audition, so I couldn't refuse a good meal.

This was the beginning of my accompanying Señor Ceballos all over the city, dining in nice restaurants, seeing Broadway shows at the cost of merely listening to his problems. He'd divorced his wife and left her almost everything, and her brothers, powerful politicians, were trying to destroy him. (In those days divorce was a disgrace, and there was no remarriage for women in Mexico.) He wasn't allowed to see his daughters, and had lost his business and his friends. The story began to bore me, but it was pleasant being with him. And unlike dates in those days, he never touched me.

One night at a Latin café in the Village we bumped into a woman from Lafayette out with Mexicans Alvaro knew. (Small world!). From then on we experienced New York as a group, often ending up in Señor Ceballos's suite. Lillian sometimes joined us. One evening I was trying to leave the after-dinner party because I had an audition the next day, but Alvaro kept begging me to stay. Suddenly Lillian burst out: "Can't you see he's in love with you!?"

This released something in me that had been dormant. I cared for him, too! I later made the move that changed our relationship--and my life! Years later an astrologer, doing my marriage chart for a class, pointed to a group of planets and said, "Here she says, if I'm going to marry, it will be different."

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Well it was different! The first years were a roller coaster ride. We had three children and lived in the suburbs, but there was constant harassment from his ex-family trying to get him to return to his "real wife." More seriously, the U.S. Immigration Department was trying to deport him. During WWII, living in New York City working with the Voice of America for the war effort he had signed a document saying that since he would not serve in the war, he was relinquishing citizenship rights. He had a work visa, which he could renew yearly, but after the war he'd gone to Mexico to start a coffee business and hadn't updated it.

Thousands of foreign men had married American women during the war and now wanted citizenship, so this was a test case. After several years he lost and was deported, which meant that our children and I were also deported.

He had to leave immediately. He returned to his native Bogota, Colombia where he would go into business with his brother. I sold our house, packed and moved to Bogota. I was reluctant to leave my beloved New York, but those years in Bogota were one of the most pleasant eras of my life. My husband continued his import/export business but also opened a boiler factory, which satisfied his creative nature.

Bogota had only one million people then (today it is about 11 million). I became involved in the American theater, taught school, was active in the American

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Women's Club - which I was advised was the only way I'd survive in that macho country. I had a second daughter and did what I could to help women in poverty.

There were ups and downs, as my husband was doing business with the States and the peso and the dollar were usually at odds, but in general we had a good life. Friends I made there are friends for life.

At an audition I heard beautiful voices, met the singers and an incredible Italian voice teacher. With such voices Bogota should have an opera company, I thought. So I started the Teatro Experimental de la Opera. At first it was scary to get the courage to call prominent people for help-but soon we had an impressive board of directors. My husband had always been proud of my singing, but the opera was another thing. Perhaps, someone suggested, he thinks you're having affairs with the tenors. Yet he knew my passion was the opera and I had no interest or time to play around. For whatever reason, two weeks before the opening at the Teatro Colon, he left home.

Somehow I managed to survive the opening of the opera, even singing the role of Azucena in "Il Trovatore." But afterwards I collapsed. All Bogota knew what was going on, and whereas before I was admired, now El Tiempo reported that "La opera destruyo un



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matrimonio." (The opera destroyed a marriage.)

Everyone was telling me to "get him back. ...he was a good man, a good husband, a good father." Some even felt he was right! I was miserable. A friend returned from a stateside visit, and hearing my story, handed me "The Feminine Mystique." I read it that night, and knew immediately -- it wasn't him, it wasn't me, it was society. And society had to change!

I later heard that NOW had been formed, and I began plotting my way back to New York City intent on joining NOW and devoting the rest of my life to working for feminism.

My husband returned home as though nothing had happened, but I was different, and so was our marriage. Finally he helped me start an export-import clothing business so I could travel back and forth to New York. What a joy to be there again. I knew I'd never return to Bogota.

In 1966 I got an apartment, he sent the children, and thus started the most important chapter of my life. My sons were in private schools for awhile, and later returned to Bogota to be with their father. My daughters got scholarships in a wonderful school of art, music and dance and were happily busy from 8 to 8, so I was free.

The Vietnam War was raging, Malcolm X had been murdered, and the Civil Rights movement was simmering. I finally found the NOW office (in Betty Friedan's apartment) and joined for \$5

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. In November 1967 I attended the first actual NOW meeting at the Riverside Church on the Upper West Side. The room was filled with elegant women and a few men. The two speakers, Malcolm X cohorts fidgeted through the reading of minutes, then sprang up and, using sexually offensive language, expressed their disgust at their treatment. Stunned, I jumped up and said something like, "I've just come from a bastion of male supremacy thinking there would be unity between blacks and women in the USA and now I hear this!" That ended the meeting and everyone got up and left. Never again would I see a NOW meeting like that one!



DC capitol steps circa 1968 for ERA

Future NOW meetings were different. Run in the traditional way, some of the members kept things at high pitch. Led by Kate Millett, with Anselma dell Olio, Barbara Love, myself and others we were ever planning demonstrations and plotting how to tear down sexist walls. I'll leave the details for my book, if I ever get to it. This bio is to explain what led me to NOW.

In a few years I'd attended umpteen conferences, served on the national and NY boards, organized demonstrations and taken part in many, including the Miss America and Ladies Home Journal actions. My

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daughters Michele and Janine sometimes joined in the demonstrations, and apparently quoted me often in their classrooms, as I was soon meeting mothers whose daughters had repeated their comments - like asking the teacher "Why is it that women have to take their husband's names on marriage?"

Those early years I formed the first PR and Speakers committees, took a group of NOW members to Sweden, then the beacon for us in backward USA, cofounded the first feminist theater, and appeared often on radio and TV, including the infamous David Susskind show, "Four Angry Women" with Kate, Anselma and Roz Baxendahl, where I urged women to join NOW.

That show brought thousands of letters and telegrams and NOW's mailing service couldn't handle it, so cancelled our contract. I'd pick up the mail from a new mailbox and answered every letter. "Four Angry Women" was shown in a different state each week, and calls, telegrams and letters poured in. I'd contact someone from each state and help them to organize a NOW chapter. I formed a speaker's bureau and sent speakers all over the country.

In 1970 I helped Betty Friedan organize the Strike for Equality. My NY NOW strike committee took over the Statue of Liberty and unfurled a 40-foot banner, WOMEN OF THE WORLD UNITE on the top balcony, and MARCH AUGUST 26, 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF SUFFRAGE on the lower. I conceived of "**The NOW York Times**" with "All the news that would give **The Times** fits," as though women were running the world.

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Several brilliant NY NOW members produced this classic in only two weeks. On August 26 we handed our "Times" around NYC and to everyone at the NYTimes.

From early morning on that great day I was involved in actions. Besides delivering our NOW YORK TIMES, I held a Mass for "the Repose of the Soul of Male Supremacy" with Constance Comer in Times Square where we vowed to place a statue of Sojourner Truth, demonstrated at the Marriage Bureau, visited advertising agencies, giving them our Barefoot and Pregnant award for their sexist advertising and joined a media group of women's liberationists in protesting the dearth of women journalists.

At five p.m. I rushed up West 59th Street to Fifth Avenue afraid I'd see but a small group of women. What I saw was a crowd so huge you couldn't see the end. Thus began the great March which ended in Bryant Park. What a fabulous day that was! As Kate Millett declared as she spoke at the after March rally, "We are a Movement now."

In 1971, as president of New York NOW, I was in a Town Hall debate, "A Dialogue on Women's Liberation," with Norman Mailer, Germaine Greer, Diana Trilling, and Jill Johnston and made the case that women had the right and duty "to have a voice in running the world." A classic, the debate was recorded and released as D. A. Pennebaker's 1979 documentary "Town Bloody Hall."

I was NOW's Eastern Regional Director in 1971 and its representative to the 1972 Democratic National Convention. Later I served as NOW's representative to

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the United Nations International Women's Conference.

My name isn't listed as a founder, but I cofounded the National Women's Political Caucus in 1971 and the Women's Forum in 1973 and was its first Executive Director. I left both organizations once they were fait accompli.

In 1975 I opened a public relations firm and began the New Feminist Talent speaker's bureau. My firm introduced the first Women's Studies course at the Plaza Hotel designed by the Dun-Donnelley Publishing Corporation, which planted the seed for future Women's Studies courses. Later I conceived of the story of women's history through their undergarments (and dance) for Hanes Hosiery, which Marjorie DeFazio and Patricia Horan wrote and produced. It debuted at the Hotel Pierre with Colleen Dewhurst as moderator.

As NOW's representative to the International Women's Year Conference in Mexico in 1975, I helped Betty Friedan organize women around the world.

It is impossible to include everything I and others did during these crucial years. We were around-the-clock busy, some focusing on special interests, and mine was always organizing and inspiring women to act. My feminism actually brought me closer to my mother, younger sister, Mary Lois, and several nieces who had become feminists.

By 1977 I was worn out, my children were into their lives and my cradle was empty. I returned to Louisiana to collapse. In 1982 the ERA failed to receive the requisite

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number of ratifications before the deadline. Men, including my darling brother, Louis, were constantly being honored for their good works - yet feminists who had changed things radically for the good of women and life in general were never honored - in fact, we were called "feminazis!" Something had to be done about this!

Fate spoke once more. Suddenly my income, which my husband had been providing, was stopped. He was Alzheimic and his young mistress had taken control of everything. Again, this is a long story, but I'm convinced my mission in this life was to work in the Feminist Movement, and everything I experienced led to this.

I moved to Florida and renewed friendships with feminists and snowbirds like Mary Jean Tully and NOW cofounder, Gene Boyer. Mary Jean wanted me to interview NOW leaders for her Schlesinger Library History of NOW project so back to NYC I went and began interviewing, not only NOW activists, but radical feminists as well. We activists hadn't been together in over 10 years, and all, with special pressure from Dorothy Senerchia, urged me to organize a reunion

. This grew into an organization which in 1993 became Veteran Feminists of America--to preserve the history of Second Wave feminism, to honor all who pioneered the Movement, and to pass the torch. In the 20 years of our existence VFA has honored thousands of pioneer feminists around the country: writers, artists, Women's Studies founders, lawyers and individuals like Catherine East, Betty Friedan, Gloria Steinem, Flo Kennedy, Bella Abzug, Martha Griffiths.

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Thanks to help from the start of Joan Michel, Sheila Tobias, Amy Hackett and Muriel Fox - VFA is one of the most important feminist organizations today, and our webpage, managed by Jan Cleary, is considered one of the best sources of feminist history and news.

In the extraordinary way fate sometimes works, today I, my children and my husband's Mexican daughters, who met after 17 years, are very close. My daughter, Michele, granddaughter, Natalia and step granddaughter, Adriana Lozon are all involved in VFA!

We pioneer feminists had set out to make equality of women and men happen, and though there is much yet to be done, we've accomplished a lot. Today we are up against Conservatives who want to take away the gains we've won and sadly, often led by women who once fought us, now use the power we've earned for them to support the patriarchal system. Still, I have faith that today's young feminists will pick up the banner and keep us on our march for complete equality worldwide, with liberty and justice for all.

***AWOMEN!***

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### SHERRI CHESSEN

There I stand, Emmy Award in each hand surrounded by Hollywood actors including Peter Falk and the Walter Cronkite of Phoenix, Ray Thompson. The headline that accompanies the picture predicts: "Sherri's Fame Rising Steadily."



Little did anyone know that within my body already lay the seed that would make that prophecy a truth, but not for my television work. Newly pregnant with my fifth child, I was about to take the teratogenic drug known as thalidomide!

We were dysfunctional, poor and Jewish, not an easy route in Midwestern America in the 1940's. Luckily for me, I was completely unaware of what should have been roadblocks and plunged boldly forward wherever I cared to go.

But an activist? How, with no prestigious parents who taught at Yale or Harvard, or no Seven Sisters education? But I do know one thing....I came out of the womb directing traffic! It was July 21st, 1932.

My first act of 'activism' (and indicative of what was to come,) took place at Jackson Elementary in Duluth, Minnesota when I was 5 years old. I loved being cast in the Christmas pageant as Jewish kids were made to feel

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left out of this glorious holiday until 'society' made Hannukah/Chanaka/Channuka/Hanaka the 'Jewish Christmas.'

We were on stage, audience in place, when fourteen 5 year olds each got to hold up a big cardboard letter in the words MERRY CHRISTMAS. I had the first M and as I looked to my left I saw that the boy that was holding the A had it upside down. I turned (and probably gave a huge sigh) and marched in front of all those kids and turned the letter around. The audience clapped, I curtsied, and a 'career path' was born.

As the eldest of 5 children (three brothers and one sister) of Mary and Norman Chessen, I was blessed with an angel for a mom. She was an anomaly in the 30's, a college graduate, in chemistry yet, but 'throwing it all away' to marry a 'rogue' of a man with an 8th grade education who embodied all the 'con' in the world.' Daddy was a fight promoter wheeler/dealer and we kids knew the meaning of the word 'gate' long before we went to school. Our prosperity thrived or fell on that word.

My Dad set up (and probably 'fixed') boxing matches. I had an instant repulsion for the 'game' and the people who thought that punching each other senseless was 'sport.'

As he was away a lot, Mother Mary did her best with all the kids, staving off the milkman for non-payment of the bill, or the laundry man whom we couldn't afford, but then, daddy liked pressed sheets and those strange wooden stretchers in all his shoes. He was really the

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consummate Damon Runyon character.

As the eldest, I was left to do pretty much whatever I wished and I quickly became someone who was her own thinker meshed in a very independent soul. (Pictured below: Mother Mary (left) and Kate Chessen, paternal

grandmother (right)



I don't remember feeling the 'pangs of inequality' as a young girl. I've been trying to remember the one event that led me to believe that girls were getting the short straw in life. It probably was in 8th

grade where the boys took Shop and made wooden step stools, or Auto Mechanics and worked on cars, while the girls were required to take Home Economics and make full body aprons with rickrack trim and our names embroidered across our bosoms. As the kitchen was never my favorite room, I rebelled...to no avail. That rick-racked apron became a symbol of what I would soon know were inequities against women and an activist was born, I was 11 years old.

After graduation from Duluth Central High School and being active in enough organizations to earn a diamond studded pin from the National Honor Society, I saw it taken away from me as several of us girls decided to support our basketball team when we won the State Championship in Minneapolis (140 miles away) and we

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managed to party with the team after our 10p.m. curfew. (It was worth it as my boyfriend was on the team, and is still my friend and much more memorable than the status and pin I was forced to forfeit.)

Then, my Dad's youngest brother made me an offer I couldn't refuse. He offered to pay for any college I wanted to go to, except The Pasadena Playhouse, Of course it was the Pasadena Playhouse where I wanted to go, but I chose the University of Wisconsin where Uncle Jim graduated from Medical School. (Why couldn't Mom have married him?)

Sororities gave me my first run-in with prejudice as I wanted to pledge Kappa Alpha Theta, but when they called Duluth and talked with my mom, she said they had a great conversation and the sorority seemed very pleased with my plethora of accomplishments in High School until the question came up of where I went to church. The answer that we were Jewish ended the conversation as Theta had met their quota. (1951, remember) by pledging Lenny Epstein (yes, I still remember her name) to become a sister.

I felt that my hands were tied, but was in the mood for a good 'fight.' So, three girlfriends and I turned our attention to the football field where only the 'guys' from the tumbling team were allowed to be cheerleaders. We jumped through a lot of hoops, figuratively speaking, and 4 of us became Wisconsin's first girl cheerleaders!

We were, however banned from the field house because of the day I was returning the megaphones and ran almost smack into a stark naked left tackle (and yes, I

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remember his name, too:) (remember it was 1951.) The football team also gave me the man who would become my husband and the father of my six children....Bob Finkbine!

After graduation we decided to move to Indiana, his hometown, but 3 kids later we opted for more 'neutral ground' and eternal summer in Phoenix, Arizona. Bob became a High School history teacher and coach, and I auditioned for and won the 'role of teacher' on a TV show called Romper Room on the NBC affiliate, KVAR-TV.

Being on the air an hour a day, plus personal appearances, etc. and babies set me on a treadmill that really never ended. Life was blissful and I even managed to have a 4th child during this time.

Two years later and baby #5 had only just begun when we're back at the picture that heads this article.

Bob had been in Europe escorting high school kids, when a big fracas erupted concerning former teachers and students on a similar trip. When they got to London, he went to the Dr. seeking a tranquilizer and received a prescription for Distoval, the generic name for thalidomide. He used a few, and brought the remaining pills home in his cameral case.

I can still see him putting that nasty little bottle way up high above the kitchen sink where little hands couldn't reach. Unfortunately, my hands sought it out when I began having morning sickness....no surprise and definitely not confined to the morning.

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As I wanted to continue doing Romper Room as long as possible (we needed the \$70.00 a week) I thought, "Aha, I'll use those tranquilizers that Bob brought home from England." So up I climbed onto the counter and into the cupboard for a small bottle of pills that would not only change my life but would change the world.

My story has been documented ad nauseum and perhaps one day I'll even capture all the innuendoes and incredible journey myself. HBO did a movie called "A Private Matter" which depicted some of the drama, but as it was written by a male and a Catholic at that, I felt that my feelings and actions were somewhat 'watered down.' Sissy Spacek played me and yes, I loved being that thin.

My quest for the termination (I never used the word abortion) led to the opening of a dialogue on the subject that persists to this day. (50 years and one day later as I write this.)

Sarah Weddington would say to me, "you made my job much easier." Her job, being of course arguing Roe v Wade successfully before the Supreme Court! (Yea, Justice Blackmun)

It's ironic that someone as child oriented as I am would become known as an abortion advocate, or precipitate what would become the divisive Pro Life/Pro Choice movement. Perhaps it helps to quell the idiotic suggestions that only women who hate children or men, want to end pregnancies.

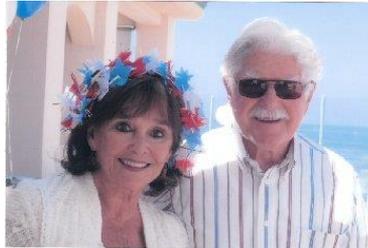
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After the abortion which took place in compassionate, comforting Sweden, we had 3 more pregnancies, resulting in 2 children and one miscarriage.

Bob and I divorced when our youngest was 3, and I basically became not only a single mom to 6, but mother and father, too, as his financial help was negligible. So, with \$750.00 and 6 kids, I moved to La Jolla, CA, not exactly the low rent district, but on the ocean where we all thrived.

18 years later I would marry David Pent, an OBGYN who knew more about my case than I knew myself as he was on the hospital staff that decided not to let me be operated on in Phoenix. The marriage lasted 11 years and 3 days until I found him one morning dead of an apparent heart attack /stroke on the floor in his study.

I've always preferred working with children in the 'fourth trimester' (yes, it's a joke) and being in a stable marriage allowed me the comfort to begin writing children's books.



Sherri and husband Bob Tauber

The books are very didactic and issue-oriented which has had me immersed in guns (yes, I'm against them) bullying and sexual abuse. I'd love some help as I'm a lousy marketer, so anyone reading this far, come to

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[www.thegorp.com](http://www.thegorp.com) and see where the passion is these days in my professional life....still with the kids!

Personally, I believe that the 3rd time is the charm and I am privileged to be spending my 3rd act with a remarkable man named Bob Tauber. Here we are on July 4th of this year (2012) where he was honored for being a purple heart recipient.....hence the red, white and blue stars around my head and the peace and love in my eyes.

Thanks to all the readers who have managed to get this far. Thanks for your activism, and your many accomplishments. I really believe the old adage that "None of us is as strong as all of us."

I have no idea who said it first, but I like it.

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### PENNY COLMAN

In about twenty years I have written “a pile of books” (my partner’s phrase) about women and their lives, including *Rosie the Riveter: Women Working on the Home Front in World War II* and *Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony: A Friendship*



*That Changed the World.* Why? Personally I was undoubtedly making up for years of deprivation, but when I realized that the deprivation was widespread I became mission-driven to fill the void.

I was born Penelope Granger Morgan in 1944 in Denver, Colorado, and grew up in North Warren, Pennsylvania, in a time when women’s history was an unheard-of concept, especially in my male-centered family, what with my three brothers, Freudian psychiatrist father, and immigrant mother, an artist who took on the trappings of a post-war homemaker. And, women’s history remained an unheard-of-concept throughout my college and graduate school years in the 1960s, despite the fact that I earned a bachelor’s degree in history and a master of arts in teaching social studies.

So, it’s no wonder that for many years, I believed that men’s words, needs, and deeds were what mattered most. After all, men are featured in history books.

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Statues of men dominate our public spaces. In everyday life, men are the majority of politicians, preachers, doctors, lawyers, plumbers, mechanics, and the experts on everything from money to child rearing. Men make the laws and enforce them. Their stories dominate the movie screen. Their voices monopolize the radio waves. Men's pictures and activities appear most frequently on television and in magazines and newspapers—even on the obituary page. Men's feats are the focus of public holidays and celebrations. So, no wonder I believed that men's words, needs, and deeds were what mattered most in life.

That belief was upended by the Second Wave of the women's movement, although not immediately because in the mid-1960's I was preoccupied with coping with the unexpected death of my beloved brother Jon and my father's diagnosis of terminal cancer, which had prompted him to pressure me to accept a marriage proposal in order to provide a family for my soon-to-be-widowed mother and fatherless sister (Cam was born in 1962, the year I graduated from high school). Dutifully in 1966 I married a Presbyterian minister, and had three children: Jonathan in 1969, (the year my father died), and David and Stephen in 1970.

Given my minimally religious upbringing and skeptical mindset, I wasn't prepared, or even suited, for life as a minister's wife, but like my mother I took on the trappings of the role and threw myself into it.

We spent five years in Buffalo, New York, where some of the older members of the congregation dubbed me a "women's libber," although I never quite understood why

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since all I remember is changing diapers, diapers, and more diapers. The next church was in Oklahoma City and we arrived there in 1973, a year after Oklahoma became the first state to defeat the Equal Rights Amendment.



"Penny Colman off to take aerial photographs of a historical site."

In the summer of 1975, we spent a week at Ghost Ranch, a retreat and educational center run by the United Presbyterian Church, where I heard Letty Russell, a feminist theologian, talk about liberation theology. Inspired, I returned home and wrote *Knowing Me and You*, a multi-week course on understanding gender role socialization that I taught in various adult education venues. I also formed The New Image Players, an all-women drama group, which gave many performances of a one-act play I wrote, *Dare To Seek*, which focused on Jesus' interactions with women.

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The play opened with two actors who alternated between calling out the names of Biblical women and reciting religious strictures against women. Rose, an African American woman, typically played Jesus, and K.C., who was pregnant, played Mary. The cast included a musician, medical student, retired teacher, and two mothers and their teenage daughters. Mostly we were well received, although at a performance in Stillwater, women wearing aprons showed up to launch a protest, which included harassing my sons who were passing out programs.

In 1978, we moved back to the East Coast where I held a series of jobs, including one as a program manager of a national project to deal with racism and sexism in the United Presbyterian Church and another as the executive director of an anti-poverty agency. Then in 1987, as my sons were graduating from high school and leaving for college, I embarked on a career as a full-time freelance writer. I wrote personal essays and research-based articles on a variety of subjects for popular magazines. (Having noticed that women experts were rarely cited or quoted in articles, I made sure I used only women experts.)

In 1990, I started my first biography of a woman, *Breaking the Chains: The Crusade of Dorothea Lynde Dix*. Dix, the 19th century social reformer who led a forty-year crusade for humane treatment of people with mental illness, had come to my attention during my earlier stint as a history teacher in an all-boys Roman Catholic high school when a number of my students chose Dix for their paper on a 19th century social reformer. The fact that I later found out that her

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popularity was due to the existence of a paper written by one of their older brothers, didn't dissuade me from selecting her because I was curious about her and her crusade, having growing up on the grounds of a mental hospital where my father worked.

That same year was the premier of Ken Burns's five-part television series, "The Civil War." Since Dix had served as the Superintendent of the Female Nurses of the Army during the Civil War, I decided to watch it.

I was outraged; Burns's presentation made it seem as if all the women in America had been relocated to a far-off island for the duration, and his brief mention of Dix was misogynistic. Coincidentally, I happened to know a woman who had worked on the series with Burns, so I asked her, "Did anyone ask Ken about including women in the film?"

"Yes," she replied. "But he said 'Women didn't do anything during the war.'"

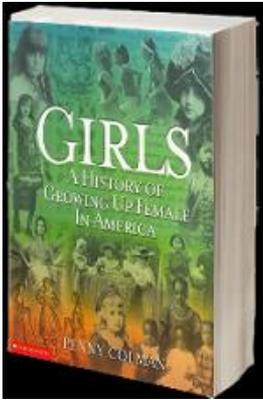
That prompted me to write my next book, *Spies: Women in the Civil War*.

At the same time, I was writing fiction and nonfiction for children's magazines, which was really fun. In 1993, I wrote a cover story "Girls and Sports" for Sports Illustrated for Kids. Shortly before publication, the executive editor, who was worried about alienating male readers by featuring girls on the cover, proposed replacing the cover photograph of two young female athletes with a male football player. Outrageous, I told

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him; my sons would be insulted by his assumption, plus, I pointed out, Title IX was passed in 1972—get a grip! I not only won that argument, but also I won the Miller Lite Women's Sports Journalism Award for the cover story.

Immersing myself in women's words, needs, and deeds inspired me to adopt the practice of evoking a woman's name to identify a contemporary situation or behavior. For example, if I labeled something as "a Fannie Lou Hamer," that meant standing up for what was right despite the danger; "doing a Frances Perkins" referred to being strategic; "a Mother Jones," signified resilience; Madam C. J. Walker, was a prompt for financial solvency and generosity, and the Rosies evoked a can-do anything attitude. I gleaned life lessons and inspiration, which I've incorporated into my multimedia presentation, "Celebrating Women" that features photographs I've



taken during twenty years of road trips in search of landmarks to women, including statues, street signs, gravestones, and historic sites.

I decided to write *Girls: A History of Growing Up Female in America* when those words suddenly popped up in my brain. I had just given a presentation about *Rosie the*

*Riveter: Women Working on the Home Front in World War II* to students at Nontraditional Employment for Women, an agency in New York City that trains women to do hard hat jobs. Standing at the corner of Broadway and Twentieth Street, I was thinking about the young

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woman who had vociferously interrupted me. "So," she said waving her arm toward the screen with images of women workers, "you're saying women have done these jobs before, right?"

"Right," I replied.

"Then why do we keep having to prove ourselves on the job?" interjected another woman.

"That's her point," replied the first woman with a nod of her head in my direction. "We don't! Women already have. It's here in this book." In retrospect, I think, that incident precipitated the phrase—girls, a history of growing up female in America-- because it underscored the crucial connection between women's history and activism. Women's history is an antidote against taking hard won gains for granted and against being duped into thinking that we have to keep proving ourselves.

With the exception of *Fannie Lou Hamer and the Fight for the Vote*, I've done the picture research and taken photographs for my books, which are replete with images, including many of girls and women. *Where the Action Was: Women War Correspondents in World War II* is particularly stunning with photographs by legendary photo-journalists such as Lee Miller, Margaret Bourke-White, and Dickey Chapelle. Recently I narrated a documentary, "Pioneering Women War Correspondents," based on my book and produced by Milena Jovanovitch for the Newswomen's Club of New York.

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During these years, my sons completed college and graduate school and got married and I got divorced. I am now happily living with my partner Linda Hickson.

My first grandchild—Sophie—was born in 2003 and it was to her that I dedicated *Adventurous Women: Eight True Stories About Women Who Made a Difference*, which she proudly calls “her” book. She was three years old when I started my forthcoming book, *Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony: A Friendship That Changed the World* and six-years old when I finished. Together we crafted the dedication:

***To everyone who has fought and who is fighting and who will fight for the rights of women everywhere.***

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### JANET CULBERTSON

I was born in the small town of Greensburg, in Western Pennsylvania. My fascination with the world of art began when I was four and watched a teacher draw a perfect arc, Mickey Mouse ears, on paper with a pencil. I spent my childhood coloring, drawing on my blackboard, and modeling in clay. Small town life was closely involved with nature, climbing trees, hiking fern filled woods, raising dogs, canoeing and visiting a relative's farm. Here I churned butter, milked cows, and on rainy days read through a series of Mark Twain's works. My mother channeled her energy into raising three children. My father, an engineer, was a gun collector and hunter. Every fall he brought home dead, bloody animals from the kill. I failed to come to terms with the ubiquitous hunting mentality of small town life, and from this experience came to feel that nature and her creatures were sacred. I became a pantheist without knowing it.



My parents respected my passion for art and sent me to an art class taught by Dorothy Riester a sculptor, feminist and graduate of Carnegie Tech. She introduced me to a greater awareness of the world, instilled in me that art was a way of life, that women had a right to a career, and I should go to Carnegie Tech to study art. During high school I continued art classes, entered poster contests (where I often won an award), and

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became the yearbook artist. I was delighted to be accepted at Carnegie Tech as a painting and drawing student in 1949. From that moment, my commitment to art having been validated, was total and has remained so to this day.

At Carnegie, one of my teachers was Balcomb Greene. I became exhilarated by the unconventional ideas and free life style described by his wife Gertrude. We all lived in a run down mansion on Pittsburgh's Fifth Avenue in rented rooms. I was a serious student, grappling with all manner of technical disciplines and expressionistic ideas. During my first year there, were influential painters Philip Pearlstein and Andy Warhol as graduates. It was a good but tough four years.

After college I came to New York City because we were told it was the "Art center of the World". For the next several years I struggled to paint, while working at jobs such as stringing beads, parking cars, and doing display sculpture. I socialized at the White Horse Tavern, married and divorced a Czechoslovakian refugee and finally fell into a real job that swallowed years, textile design. My art reflected my life at this time; erratic and experimental with wildly expressionistic images of screaming figures.

To stay involved with art, I took classes at the Art Students League with Vaclav Vytlacil and Harry Sternberg, and with Howard Conant at NYU. These were generous and encouraging teachers. The textile field was devouring, although I was promoted as a stylist and managed a small design department. (I could never get the message that "only what sold was good"). That work

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paid for my Master of Arts degree, which I earned during my vacations and four years of night classes. I received my degree from NYU and found a job at Pace College teaching painting and art history. This was a high point for me; I was getting my life together, had a sense of accomplishment, and had time to paint intensively.

In 1964 I met and married Douglas Kaften, a textile manager, photographer, and divorced father of three.

(We subsequently supported and put his children

through college, together pooling our resources.) My work at this time consisted of painted and textured collage papers that I assembled into images of oil slicked animals. These works were shown in NYC at the 20th Century West Gallery in my first exhibit (1967) called "Elegy to Nature".



Islip Show 2010

In 1968 Douglas' job took us to California, where I felt wrenched away from my roots and dealt with this by doing a series of silverpoint drawings of home-town life inspired by the faded, mysterious photographs in our family album. I completed a series of 25 works, walked into the Molly Barnes Gallery in Los Angeles and to my amazement was instantly offered an exhibition. This series sold well and was reviewed. (Ten of these are

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now in the collection of the Telfair Museum of Art in Savannah, Georgia with more promised by three of my collectors).

During the following two years I painted and explored the West, taking trips to the desert, redwoods, canyons and Mexico. When Doug's job took us back to New York City, I resumed teaching at Pace College, as well as several drawing courses at Pratt Art Institute. I went to the Lerner-Heller Gallery, with more silverpoint drawings and was offered an exhibition within two months.<sup>3</sup>

These works were exhibited again in Atlanta, Georgia, at the Midtown Gallery. In retrospect I feel they were my most pleasing works, deeply felt, but not my best. I needed to return to nature. I was fascinated by the slivers of islands on Eastern Long Island and painted these from a small boat using a minimal style that reflected their pared down shimmering, mirage-like simplicity. This series was also well received and was exhibited at the Lerner-Heller gallery in 1973 as well other venues on the East End.

Nature painting in the 70's "wasn't in" especially in New York City. To rethink my philosophy and perhaps to reinforce or strengthen my beliefs, I began a quest, reading Joseph Campbell's *Hero with a Thousand Faces* and other similar writings. <sup>4</sup> I became involved in the women's movement and began to create a personal myth with the woman as protagonist and heroine, not passive observer. I developed a series of drawings composed of an imploded ink surface, I found a way to break apart India ink, which paralleled what I felt was happening to the landscape. I drew upon them with

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charcoal depicting my version of the Monomyth. It was a search for a personal truth, climaxing in a merging with the Redwood tree, symbol of nature in its ancient, most powerful form. I still believe Nature and her creatures are sacred. To Lerner these ideas weren't "saleable." In spite of this, I felt a conviction about my subject. Later this series of 20 drawings was collected by the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington DC. In 2005 they gave me an exhibition of my Mythmaker series, shown in sequence for the first time. I was gratified to have this work reach a larger group of viewers with its idea about the effectiveness of the expanding role of women as protectors of the earth.

My search led me to the Galapagos Islands, to experience this primordial place, and to paint it. I was inspired by Melville's and Darwin's haunting accounts. I joined a group of environmentalists called Friends of the Earth, and spent three weeks there in February, 1975. We camped, sailed, and hiked, while I painted and took photographs. I was entranced by the grand, barren beauty of these now endangered islands. I was jolted into doing larger work, a series of mural-sized drawings of the monumental tortoises, iguanas, and trees as well as paintings of the lava-formed islands. (These drawings utilized the ink technique I developed in the myth series). I felt a synthesis of my work coming together. These paintings and drawings were exhibited in the Lerner-Heller Gallery in 1977 and in other museum shows and alternative spaces.

My wilderness experiences fueled my sense of awe and concern for the earth. I saved every penny I could for these trips. In 1979, I was happy to receive a C.A.P.S.

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graphics award for my large drawings, (tortoise etc.) which I used for rafting trips in the Grand Canyon. I developed a Canyon series, collages of ink textured papers with flat shapes and carved beveled white edges. I worked on creating a spaceless anxiety, a loss of the eternal as I saw the Grand Canyon threatened by a dam project. I did more large drawings such as "Tanker in the grand Canyon" and animals of that area. Each of these works came from a personal encounter or in some cases from a dream, a nightmare or newspaper account. I felt convinced that women could have a stronger role in saving the world from ecological disaster and proposed with Lucy Lippard and several other women an idea for a Heresies magazine issue linking feminism and ecology. My article on ECOTAGE appears in issue #13, published in 1981. The word Eco-Feminism was created.

A personal apocalypse occurred for me In December, 1980. The Lerner Gallery dropped me, a dear friend died and I was seriously injured in a car accident. The accident was shattering physically (a broken pelvis and ribs, a collapsed lung, concussion and contusions, etc. six weeks in the hospital) but it was the combination of losses that affected me deeply. I had another exhibit scheduled that February at the Nardin Gallery in New York City of my Canyon series. Although I was immobilized, and unable to attend my opening, my husband framed and delivered the work.(reviewed by *The New York Times*.)

My recuperation from the accident came slowly from several encounters with nature. I began digging in the earth planting bulbs, watching them grow and attract hummingbirds. Fortuitously, I was granted a residency at

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the Ossabaw Island Art Foundation in Georgia, a wild, magnificent, semi-tropical environment with alligators, magnolias and painted buntings where I was lured into taking ever longer walks and even losing my cane. Also we adopted a dog from ARF who became another healing link in my life and whose portrait is in the dog museum in St. Louis, Missouri.

I think the combination of these events and the confrontation with my mortality deepened my awareness and darkened my vision toward the future world. I recall driving along Route One in New Jersey, past miles of smoking, stinking refineries and feeling a sense of despair. The degradation of the environment seemed real, inevitable, and perhaps on some level paralleled my physical destruction. An image of the Statue of Liberty partly obscured by pollution floated in the distance and became the inspiration for a future series of works, the Billboards, 1987-94. I infused my art with an ecological message, developing many works on paper and on canvas. I have shown them in non-commercial places, such as Wave Hill in the Bronx, Guild Hall in East Hampton, the Hillwood Art Museum, as well as many others. In the early 90ties I had solo shows: Carnegie-Mellon Univ. in Pittsburgh, The Harrisburg State Museum, Pa., and Rutgers University Women Artists Series in New Brunswick, NJ. etc.

During the last twenty years I feel I have done my best and possibly my more difficult works: the Industrial Park Series, Overview, a group of 20 dimensional textured panels and my Billboard series. I am using iridescent pigments, with collage and oil paint to simulate images of the destruction of our world. I have been encouraged

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by some awards such as: the Pollock- Krasner grant, (2008) a Puffin grant, a Vogelstein grant,(2004) etc. and some solo exhibitions such as: the Islip Museum of Art, NY, (Future Tense), 2010, in Costa Rica at The National Museum, (Los Museo de Los Ninos) in San Jose (2008), at Seton Hill Univ. in Greensburg, Pa., 2006, and the Stone Quarry Hill Art Park, NY, The National Academy of Sciences in Washington DC. The museums assisted with catalogues of the exhibits. My work was included in a number of environmental exhibits such as the Nabi Gallery, NYC, 2010, the Puffin Foundation's traveling "Toxic Landscapes" (Havana, Cuba), Savannah College's, "In Response to 9/11 and many others.

I feel that artists can play an effective role in reminding the world about pending disasters and still create a work of beauty. The process of creating the work, probing the core, is one of our ultimate joys as artists. Most importantly, I am doing what is true for me.

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### CAROLE DE SARAM

I was born Feb. 27, 1939 and grew up in Queens, NY. My mother, my two sisters and I would go to the public library and fill my red wagon with books. In fact, home was filled not only with books but also music records, which my sisters and I would play. My favorite piece was *Bolero*.



I remember reading about famous people who, in spite of personal hardships, managed to change the world. I assume this was the way things were and therefore the turmoil in my life was normal. My mother had to work full time so I was pretty much on my own. I believe that my independent way of thinking had a lot to do with my not having a father at home, which in those days especially was not considered the perfect home life. And so I once stood up at school on an issue that got the class cheering, but resulted in a failing grade for me. But that only reinforced my belief that you had to stand up for what was right and you could be what you wanted.

In a high school music class I was given a French horn, but I had no music training and could play only by ear. I later went to Grover Cleveland High School in Ridgewood, Queens, where I was informed that I was now in the orchestra and we were having a concert that weekend. I was terrified. I went home and tried to remember the notes and what they meant. Nonetheless, I decided I was going to play at Carnegie Hall the next year, having no idea how unlikely this would be. A visiting school music teacher told me if I came in early every morning he would teach me how to read music

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and horn-playing techniques. The following year I auditioned for the All City Orchestra, made second horn and played the solo French horn part of *Bolero* at Carnegie Hall before the Mayor and other important people. The concert made the newspapers, with a center picture of the orchestra.

My first moment standing up for women's rights was in 1964 when I wrote a letter to Procter and Gamble Company protesting their TV ad showing a woman using Tide soap powder and acting as if she didn't have a brain. I received a full-page answer saying *"You'll be pleased to note that the ad has been replaced with a new advertising theme.* They had received numerous complaints from the public.

Working as a single mother with no childcare or support made me realize where you stand in society. Childcare was viewed as a communist program and was vetoed by President Nixon for that reason. I read of abused and raped women receiving no support from the police and court system. The thought was "she deserved it." The only jobs available to women were clerical and listings were segregated in the newspapers by gender. A woman could not be seated in top restaurants, obtain credit, or rent an apartment by herself, and certain jobs specified "no women." We were thought of as a sub-species useful for producing babies and treated as such. In fact, some male scientists published papers to this notion.

I was lucky to work in the computer field, which was new at that time and businesses needed us. However, I had to stay on top and fight for the raises men received. One outstanding example was when a recruiting firm called me with a job offer implementing an arbitrage system that only a few people on Wall Street were available to accept. The company had the paper work for me to sign

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without an interview. They called the recruiter and were embarrassed to tell him the manager didn't want women in his department. This went all the way up to the president of the firm who called me at home to apologize. Still no offer. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission was new and looking for cases. This would have been a slamdunk, but I would never be able to work on Wall Street again if I protested.

1970

In 1970 a woman at the American Stock Exchange where I worked showed me a front page Wall Street Journal article, "Women Strike for Equality," mentioning a meeting being held that night. I felt this incredible revelation. I could now fight for what was right and off I went into the night to attend the meeting, vowing never to return to the injustices dealt to myself and other women.

My life changed radically the night after my first NOW NY meeting in the basement of a church on Central Park West, where women discussed the upcoming "Women's Strike for Equality" march and how Mayor Lindsay had reduced the parade permit to one lane and left the city. The women yelled "We are marching!" I joined Pat Lawrence and Marion Gannet, who lived in Queens near my home and met them on the morning of August 26. They had with them the now famous "Women of the World Unite" banner they hung off the Statue of Liberty on August 10. Later that day we visited several businesses and distributed feminist flyers to make them aware of their sexist behavior. The businesses had no idea what we were talking about.

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### THE 1970 MARCH FOR EQUALITY

As we gathered on one side of Fifth Avenue and 59<sup>th</sup> Street on August 26, thousands of women were appearing from all over. I still get chills remembering it. There was a bus of nurses from Connecticut wearing their nursing caps, women with baby carriages, all ages and types of women converging on Fifth Avenue, and entering into the park. We lined up behind the Socialist Workers Party women who had helped plan the march and had experience with anti-Vietnam War marches. We concealed our "Women of the World Unite" banner, since we were concerned the police would seize it.

Traffic on Fifth Avenue was chaotic, with cars honking horns and unable to move. A member of the press on a platform cracked, "As usual, women are always late." The Socialist Workers Party women shouted "Start marching and don't stop!" Surging forward behind them, we marched with the banner on to Fifth Avenue with Jacqui Ceballos marching in front of the banner, hollering at us "Move to the left and right with the banner!" and "Don't stop!" The police tried to stop us, but we shouted and chanted "Move on over or we'll move on over you!" until we took over Fifth Avenue with the banner.

The crowds cheered and we marched on. It was exhilarating to see the thousands of people on the avenue. It was at that moment I vowed I would never again let myself and other women tolerate being controlled by government and men. As we neared 41<sup>st</sup> Street to turn into Bryant Park for speeches, a line of police on horses blocked Fifth Avenue; they had visors pulled down over their faces and held riot sticks they used against anti-war protesters. I asked myself at that moment if I would march through the line for the cause. I thought of the movie *Doctor Zhivago*, when the peasants

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marched on the Winter Palace. Thank God I didn't have to make that decision.

We climbed the wall of the Fifth Avenue Library on 41<sup>st</sup> Street and held up the banner. We were told later the marchers were unhappy when they saw the police blocking Fifth Avenue, but as they turned on to 41<sup>st</sup> Street and saw us, they thrust their fists in the air and cheered.

1971

In August 1971 I went to the NOW office in Manhattan and asked Jacqui Ceballos what I could do. She said there was an employment meeting going on in the other room and to just go in. They were discussing what they could do at the next march coming up that month to show how women were discriminated against in employment.



I told them of my fantasies of shutting down Wall Street to bring attention to discrimination through the media. I had worked for the Stock Exchange and a bank and knew how the system worked. They said "Great!" We then developed what became known as "Zap Actions." But it is one thing to dream up these ideas and another to make them work and not get arrested. We met at \*Grace Jackson's apartment and painted the now famous "Women Power" banner. Each letter matched the size of the balcony windows at the American Stock

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Exchange, which I had measured the week before. So we could get into the Stock Exchange, I signed us up the week before as a garden club, since Wall Street was cautious of the anti-war demonstrators.

On August 26 we met at Broadway and Wall Streets and marched over to the American Stock Exchange. I ran across the balcony with the banner I had concealed under my coat to gain admission and we pushed each letter against the glass, chanting, "We can't bear any more bull!" The ticker stopped ticking, since the brokers were busy booing us--and then cheering us--and thus stopped trading, as I knew they would. We had a van cruising earlier around Wall Street calling out "Women have taken over Wall Street!" We then marched and took over the Treasury steps. Thousands filled Wall and Broad Streets to see the "radical women."

We then proceeded to liberate the "men only" Tom Brown's Bar," singing "Roll out the Banner" as we entered carrying the banner to the shock of the male patrons. On Sunday we had nailed to the bar door the newly passed City Law prohibiting discrimination by public businesses. Later we marched down Fifth Avenue with our "Women Power" banner. That day I earned the title "General" from the protesters. We kept the press busy that day. 1972



The following year, also on August 26<sup>th</sup>, we hung the "Women Power" Banner on the Statue of Liberty and

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then proceeded uptown to demonstrate at the Park Avenue Citibank, where we had opened savings accounts with two dollars weeks before. I entered and ask for a female Vice President, knowing they didn't have any. I then waved my bank account book--which I still have--and yelled "Citibank has no female Vice Presidents!" Feminists posing as customers on lines turned to each other and loudly exclaimed, "Did you hear that? I am closing my account." The bank officers went crazy, locking the doors to keep people out, calling the police, and trying to figure out what was happening. We proceeded to the teller windows to close our accounts; one teller asked, "would you like dollars or coins?" Outside, we held up our signs and banner and chanted "Give credit where credit is due!" Later I was told that a Hollywood movie with Charlton Heston used the scene. That year I was chair of Wall Street Women Unite, a group I created. In 1975 I conceived the idea for a Women's Bank and was a member of the Advisory Board of Directors and worked with a group of women to form a Feminist Credit Union.

Doris Rush (feminist attorney and NOW member) and Nancy Borman (editor of *Majority Report*) and I put together an FBI (Feminist Bureau of Investigation) poster with pictures of ten corporate men sought for crimes against women. I had gotten their pictures and private phone numbers from an inside feminist source and we put them under their photos like mug-shot numbers. The text said to proceed with caution as they were known to discriminate against women and hide out in private clubs.

At midnight, before the 1972 August 26 march we arrived at Wall Street in a car whose license plate was covered in mud to conceal the number. We wore wigs, carried pails of paste, and posted the walls in the Wall Street area and other parts of Manhattan. People arrived

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at work the next morning and we were told that some thought the posters were real. (The Washington DC NOW chapter later did the same.) This resulted in a FBI file on me that the FBI denied having when I filed a FOI request. Several years later, however, a newspaper reporter showed me an FBI report they found on me in a FOI request they had filed on the women's movement. The FBI report said that a congressman from Georgia wanted me arrested for sedition. The Justice Department said they didn't think it was a good idea because "it would lead to more actions and publicity." Good thing I put an asterisk at the bottom of the poster "\*Feminist Bureau of Investigation." Those were heady days.

1974

In 1971 *Glamour* magazine had written an editorial on credit discrimination, and asked readers to send their stories to me at NOW. It resulted in a huge outpouring of letters. In 1974 I testified before the Congressional Banking Commission—opposite then Federal Reserve Chair Arthur Burns, who denied the existence of discrimination in credit against women. Yet HUD at that time—unimaginable now—required of couples with two incomes applying for mortgages proof of the woman's sterilization on grounds that a woman might become pregnant by a male other than her husband. I testified "*Banks are stepping into the bedrooms of America.*" (In 1975 federal legislation would officially ban such discrimination.) For this work, I would be honored in 2005, along with four other women, by *Glamour* in its 800<sup>th</sup> issue as one "who has significantly enhanced the freedoms of American women."

In 1974 I became President of NOW NY for two terms and served on the National Board, where I headed the National Women's Equality Action Day and Credit

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Discrimination Committees. The NOW Chapter held several demonstrations and workshops covering multiple issues, such as abortion, rape, employment, and sexuality. Practically every night the chapter had a committee or planning session going on. The women I worked with in the chapter—Elaine Synder, Denise Fuge, Noreen Connell, Ann Jarwin, Anita Murray, Midge Kovak, Judith Kaplan, Dell Williams, Yolanda Banko, Joyce Synder, Mary Vasiliades, Barbara Rockman, and many others—were incredibly dedicated and were responsible for the changes young women now take for granted.

I called for a hearing against the State Human Rights Commission for not giving unemployment benefits to pregnant women who were fired and had their unemployment books stamped with a P; the ultimate result was that the practice was eliminated. Later I served on the NYS Human Rights Commission Advisory Council. I participated with the National Council of Churches in 1974 on Stockholder actions against corporations calling for equal employment of women and minorities. We were successful with the Chicago NOW Chapter when they brought to the floor resolutions calling for change and the Celanese Corporation when Joann Hull, an employee and NOW NY member, Betty Harragan, and I stood up and read resolutions. Both chairmen behaved so badly toward us that they had to later publicly apologize in the press.

In 1975 the United Nations held an International Women's Conference in Mexico City. I was there and disrupted the U.S./Mexico City Embassy's presentation of U.S. Women Representatives to demonstrate that U.S. government's choice of official representatives to the conference reflected the male mentality on women's issues. The photographer, Bettye Lane was present with me and took pictures of the Marines moving toward us

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and the startled U.S. representatives. I was quoted in the Sunday *New York Times* front page, world news media, and several publications: "*The true issues, the problems of women are being forgotten here. Instead this conference is concentrating on political issues that represent the male mentality. The direction here is not coming from women, its coming from men.*" Jacqui Ceballos, Betty Friedan,

I, and other American women were caught in the anti-American tone at this International Women's Year event. The political intent was to keep women from uniting. I put together an "East Meets West" speak-out with Jacqui, Betty, a Chinese reporter, and myself on the dais. At first there were negative words aimed at us, but then the women realized we all had the same problems and they began to share with us their experiences. When we returned to New York we held a press conference and the *New York Times* devoted a full page to the event and quoted me: "Women did unite." Several years later our picture along with an account of the proceedings in Mexico appeared in a China magazine. Betty Friedan's book *It Changed my Life* has a chapter ("Scary doings in Mexico City") that describes the dangerous situation we were in. I was happy to get back home alive.

I had worked for Smith Barney and the American Stock Exchange as a Computer Systems Analyst and earned my B.A. in Political Science and Economics at Columbia University while working full-time. I rose to Assistant Vice President at Chemical Bank in the seventies while involved in pioneering computer projects with IBM. I left the bank in 1981 to serve as Commissioner of the Treasury of New York City under Mayor Ed Koch and later left for a career in real estate sales.

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I became active in community affairs in Tribeca when I moved there in 1974. Later I became chair of Community #1, which covers Wall Street and Tribeca. My women's movement experiences allowed me to take on developers in the 1980s. This led to forming The Tribeca Community Association, of which I became Chair, which spearheaded the campaign to make Tribeca an Historic District and brought about the rediscovery and restoration of the Canal Street Park.

On December 7, 2001, the Redstockings launched the book *New Women's Liberation Offensive* at my Tribeca loft. It was exhilarating to see Carol Gaudina, Kathy Sarachild, and others still going strong with new young women joining our ranks. We marched together in the anti Iraq-war march in Manhattan. Later Dell Williams had a book signing event at my loft resulting in the "Women Power" banner being included in the *Passion and Power* film by Wendy Slick and Emiko Omori. The banner was later displayed by us on stage at the movie's premier at the Walter Reed Theatre at Lincoln Center.

In 2010 I spoke before the Women's Leadership Initiative at Yale's Pierson College on my participation in the fight for women's rights and cautioned them not to be complacent about gender equality. Later at a faculty dinner the audience became engaged when they realized how far women had come and how outrageous the injustices toward women were in the past.

In 1978 I had met my musician-scholar husband Raymond Erickson, formerly Dean of the Arts and Humanities at Queens College; he has supported me in all my activities, spoken out publicly on the ERA, and attends NOW functions. We are currently restoring the exterior and remodeling the interior of a historic Hudson

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Valley village church, now our home; the building is on the National Registry of Historic Buildings. My daughter Lisa and son Douglas were supportive of my involvement in the women's movement. I now have five granddaughters who are quite outspoken and actively work to make things better in our world. I feel happy they are ready to stand up for injustice and for the values I believe in.

I want to thank the dynamic, true, feminist women I have met over the years through the women's movement. They profoundly changed my life, enabling me to direct my energy at combating injustices and toward positive avenues for change. Now, working with the Veteran Feminists of America and especially Jacqui Ceballos, Muriel Fox, Barbara Love and others, has given me the energy to keep working for what is right for women. To them I say thank you from the bottom of my heart. You are all wonderful.

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### **MERRILLEE A. DOLAN**

I was born in Durango, Colorado, to Cheryl Berry and Robert (Bud) Minton on October 11, 1941. Soon thereafter, my parents moved to Los Angeles, where my father began attacking my mother and me.



My mother started assembling bombers at Douglas Aircraft, leaving me with Memaw, my father's mother. I contracted polio but recovered. Before I was old enough to walk, Memaw took me to live with my father's sister and her husband in Grand Junction, Colorado. Both my aunt and uncle worked, and Memaw often left me with a teenage boy who molested me. Subconscious memories of these acts resulted in shame, self-loathing, and suicidal thoughts that lasted into my thirties.

Grandmother and grandfather Berry, who lived in Durango, returned me to my mother in Los Angeles, but my father became even more violent. One night my mother had a powerful dream: Take Merrilee and leave! and we fled home to Durango in my grandparents' car. Nightmares of a man chasing me lasted for decades.

My mother filed for divorce and started working at the First National Bank. She and grandmother transformed our yard into a showcase in Durango, and my mother hosted a Saturday morning garden show on the radio. On Saturday afternoons, she would take my friend Linda and me hiking up the trail on Reservoir Hill and teach us about the spiders, lizards, and flowers we saw. Her love

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of horticulture rubbed off on me, and I minored in botany in college.

My grandmother was a magnificent woman. As district supervisor of a Works Project Administration program for southern Colorado counties, she established the first child-care centers. She sewed for me, read to me, and helped with school projects. With just a high school education, she knew Latin, algebra, and geometry.

My mother was happy while single, but in June 1952, she married John Dolan, a Durango High School acquaintance home on military leave. John's opinion of females opened my eyes to the ugly reality of misogyny. John was an alcoholic and an abuser.

Military families move often. In six years we would move six times and live in three states. I would attend five different schools. John was stationed in Fort Benning, Georgia, and we spent most of that first year in Columbus, Georgia, in a shabby white house across from railroad tracks. The temperature rose to 100 degrees, and the humidity hovered at 99 percent. We lacked even a fan.

I started the sixth grade at Tillingheast School and made friends quickly. Although I had plodded along in Durango, a demanding teacher motivated me to do better than I'd ever realized possible. In the spring of 1953, we moved into a tidy brick apartment in a well-manicured military complex at Fort Benning. During this time, my mother began turning against me, isolating me. A typical abuser, John caused dissention.

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I finished my sixth grade in the desegregated school at Fort Benning and completed the seventh and most of the eighth grades there. We military kids spent summers swimming, attending matinees, and exploring the dense woods. It was fun, but at home life was miserable. I was unwelcome in the TV room with John and my mother.

When I was 13, John adopted me, and I thought he might like me better but he didn't. When not a sloppy drunk, John was mean and would stride through the house proclaiming, "I wear the pants around here!" One day, he gave my little dog, Flippers, away and I broke down crying at school. I had never felt so alone.

A tightwad, John gave me no spending money. What I had, I earned by babysitting. My grandmother became my lifeline, sending me school clothes and a portable sewing machine.

When I learned that my mother was pregnant, I felt sick. Now we were locked into this madhouse. The baby, a boy, struggled to survive, but he triumphed, and I bonded with him. I felt helpless because I couldn't protect him from John's constant rages.

John was transferred to Greenville, South Carolina, when I was in the eighth grade. I spent the last two school months at Greenville Junior High, but we moved again to a different neighborhood during that summer. After ninth grade, in early June, a friend and I got jobs downtown working twelve-hour days in a discount department store. I was in heaven, having fun and making 55 cents an hour.

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My mother had another baby, a girl. Meanwhile, John kept drinking and lecturing that some wives deserved to be "disciplined" by their husbands.

We moved to Waco, Texas, the summer before I entered the eleventh grade, our fifth move in six years-my last with this family. Hillcrest Hospital was hiring nurses aids, and John had said he wouldn't give me school bus money, so I earned it myself. I worked a 20-hour week from 4 to 8 p.m. after school and then walked twelve blocks home. I no longer ate at home and was there only to study.

When John got a transfer to Denmark, I moved to Durango to live with my grandmother and attend Fort Lewis junior college. John later had a heart attack and the family retired to northern California. My mother ordered me to quit college and move near them. But with grandmother's backing, I refused and got the education my mother didn't value, attending the University of New Mexico, the Universidad de las Américas near Mexico City, and the University of Nevada.

I'd been seething over things I'd experienced because of my sex: job discrimination, limited career choices, a date rape, and pressure to get married. I'd gone to Juárez for an abortion, illegal in the United States. I'd been scolded by a Catholic doctor when I asked for birth control pills, and I'd sat through a lecture by sexist lawyer F. Lee Bailey mocking rape victims. So in 1967, while in grad school at the University of Nevada in Reno, I joined NOW.

I'd learned about NOW from an article in the Christian

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Science Monitor, which said that NOW was formed to bring women into full participation in society, to end job discrimination, and to change abortion laws. Although no address was given, founders were named: Katherine Clarenbach was a professor at the University of Wisconsin. I ran to the library to get her school's address and shot a letter off to her. After a couple of months, a return letter arrived with NOW applications. My boyfriend and I paid our dues.

I had read *The Feminine Mystique* and knew about pay inequities because I had spent the past summer in a New Mexico government internship where I read the 1965 Handbook of Women Workers, which showed huge disparity in male-female wages in every job category. When I'd searched for other books on the status of women, all I found was *Modern Woman, The Lost Sex* (1942), which argued that feminists needed to have babies to overcome the neuroses of having no penis and wanting equality.

I returned to Albuquerque and by the summer of 1968, finished course work for an MA in political science, campaigned for Eugene McCarthy, and learned there was a NOW chapter in Albuquerque. I'd been elected a delegate to the state Democratic convention in June. New Mexico's McCarthy supporters, up against party machinery, had the largest voting block of any non-primary state, and yet when it came to selecting delegates to the national convention, women were passed over. I was disgusted with the entire party.

I attended a NOW meeting at which Tom Robles, director of the new EEOC area office, spoke about Title

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VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. I'd just experienced horrific sex discrimination by an employment agency that advertised a city planner job in the paper under "Jobs Either Sex." Yet when I applied at the agency, I had to enter through a separate door for Females, and I got a "females only" application specific to clerical skills. I was pushed into a filing job.

After I told my story, Mr. Robles said, "Merrilee, I want you to file a charge." He invited me to apply for a state investigator job that his federal agency was funding to establish affirmative action programs with New Mexico employers. I started my state job in October 1968.

The affirmative action project manager and I traveled around New Mexico to persuade the 25 largest employers to advertise job openings (instead of hiring friends) so minorities and females could apply. You'd have thought we were asking them to perform unspeakable acts, the way they stonewalled and clenched their jaws.

Now I had the money to fly to Atlanta for NOW's national conference, where I met Jacqui Ceballos (we served together on the national board for several years). What a thrill to meet Betty Friedan! I joined Betty, Jacqui, Dolores Alexander, Karen DeCrow, Muriel Fox, Lana Clarke Phalen, and other fantastic women for breakfast. They (and a few brothers) set in motion the changes that are today happening across the globe.

My first demonstration was "Rights, Not Roses for Mother" on Mother's Day, May 12, 1969, in Albuquerque, part of a nationwide action.

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One day 18-year-old Yvonne Maestas, who was groped by her boss at a clothing store, came to my office for help. I rounded up NOW members and women's liberation members who demonstrated with Yvonne in front of the business. Manuel the Molester was FIRED! Using "Little Stinker Perfume," we tried to stink out a violent "art" movie that portrayed a woman being raped and murdered, and we organized a protest at a Bridal Fair. Four women were arrested, giving NOW a lot of publicity. We picketed the jail every night and all charges against us were dropped.

We managed to get a liberal abortion law in New Mexico thanks to Los Alamos State Senator Sterling Black, who wrote and introduced a bill allowing abortions based on mental or physical health. Women fought for a state Equal Rights Amendment and got it.

After Betty appointed me to head the Women in Poverty task force, I began publishing the newsletter "Sisters in Poverty." NOW chapters in various states worked with low-income women on issues that affected them. We supported striking Farah garment workers with pamphlets and articles. The AFL-CIO later supported us in our national fight for the ERA.

NOW President Aileen Hernandez asked me to write a critique of Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan's booklet, *The Negro Family: A Case for National Action*. It reeked of sexism; according to Moynihan, women caused the problems of the "Negro Family" by having jobs. I wrote a rebuttal titled *Moynihan, Poverty Programs, and Women: A Female Viewpoint*.

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In Albuquerque we formed coalitions with Welfare Rights and with the Black Berets, a Chicano civil rights group. We walked hand-in-hand with them opposing police brutality.

In the early 1970s, we had meetings, press conferences, and actions every evening and on weekends. We labored hours at mimeograph machines, printing materials typed on IBM typewriters. Women's groups got an ERA passed by the state legislature and two years later fought off an attempt to repeal it. When State Senator Eddie Barboa, who had introduced the bill to repeal, announced during a packed session at the legislature, "My wife wants to be liberated, and my mistress wants to be domesticated," Equal rights supporters and opponents alike were stunned into silence, and then hisses rose from the chambers.

A caravan of cars drove back to Albuquerque that afternoon in a near white-out blizzard. Everyone-- professors, businesswomen, NOW members and League of Women Voters--was happy. The only unhappy ones were Barboa (later sent to prison) and the church women who had been bussed in to testify that Eve came from under Adam's armpit, and, therefore, we didn't need an ERA. (UNM economics professor David Hamilton labeled it the "Right Guard Theory of Creation.")

Women lobbied and got a Commission on the Status of Women, which was funded until the (female) Republican governor defunded it in 2011.

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At a February 1972 national NOW board meeting in Albuquerque, low-income women attended a speakout during which they described the frustrations of coping with welfare, making a living in a male-dominated society, and getting help for developmentally disabled children.

I visited feminists groups in Denver, Salt Lake City, Norman (Oklahoma), Durango, and college towns in New Mexico. I addressed church groups, men's clubs and antiwar rallies where I spoke of war and the masculine mystique, thanks to Lucy Komisar's dynamite article titled "Violence and the Masculine Mystique."

By NOW's fifth conference held in Los Angeles, excitement filled the air--we were unstoppable. Lynn Tabb of Riverside, California, and I got several resolutions for women in poverty passed. By the time of the Houston Conference in 1977, I had decided to make a big change in my life if I could but get a resolution to establish a national office to address the issues of women in poverty. Tish Sommers let me attach an amendment to her older women resolution; it passed, and I came home tired but happy. After that, I backed off from my activism, hoping others would pick up the torch.

We accomplished a great deal during my activist years. Today, all over the world, the worm is turning for the benefit of women.

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### **CARMEN DELGADO VOTAW**

An only child, I was not born a feminist on September 29, 1935, although as I look at my 76-year-old life I keep wondering where I got the instincts to become the lifelong feminist I have become. It came through exposure to injustice and contact with outstanding women like Gloria Steinem, Bella Abzug, Millie Jeffries.



I was born in the beautiful island of Puerto Rico in a small town on the southeastern coast, Yabucoa, among sugar cane fields, lovely rivers and streams, gentle mountains and a seductive sea. Hurricanes, which accost the island often, traditionally hit land along that coast and my parents used to say that my volatile, frisky personality derives from the influences of those hurricanes.

After I graduated from elementary school with high honors in a school system where my mother, Candida Paz, was my third and fifth grade teacher and my father, Luis Oscar Delgado, was about to become my seventh grade teacher, I went to junior and high school in San Juan, our capital city, old in history and charm and modern in its cultural manifestations and splendor. There I acquired leadership skills through the Girl Scouts, the

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Juvenile Red Cross and continued to excel educationally, writing poetry and essays and developing my English reading skills through comic books and Mickey Spillane detective stories.

Two years at the University of Puerto Rico in 1952-54 launched my working career at the Government Development Bank of Puerto Rico in 1955, then the hub of the rapid industrialization effort to lift up the island by its own bootstraps. In 1960 I married a "mainlander," Gregory Votaw, who worked for the Economic Development Administration; shortly thereafter we embarked on a life of international dimensions by going to live in Tehran, Iran for two years. While Greg worked on the development plan for Iran, I learned about Muslim culture, visited orphanages, organized women to have play days at their homes for the orphans in their homes and petitioned the Government and the Mullahs for authorization of adoptions of Iranian kids by foreign persons.

That was my initial "advocacy" effort that launched my second career in lobbying for worthy causes as a professional and volunteer advocate. Returning to the United States in 1962, my husband was employed by the World Bank and I started my half a century checkered journey into advocacy for causes related to civil and human rights and continued my engagement and fascination with the international affairs field. The Martin Luther King March on Washington in 1963 sealed my commitment to justice issues.

By 1972 I was heavily involved with the League of Women Voters Overseas Education Fund under whose

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banner we helped organize and strengthen women's organizations in Latin America. As its Vice President, I traveled wide and far in the hemisphere to help women organize to protect their rights and institute practices similar to those the League promoted in the U.S. I was a member of the first committee, under the aegis of the League, who organized and oversaw the first presidential debates in the United States.

So naturally, in 1972 I also joined and soon led the National Conference of Puerto Rican Women to advance Latina women's rights. Pretty soon thereafter President Jimmy Carter appointed me a member of the International Women's Year Commission (IWY) and then later as Co-Chair (with Bella Abzug) of the National Advisory Committee for Women. His Administration also appointed me to represent the United States in the Inter-American Commission of Women of the Organization of American States and eventually I was elected unanimously by the countries of the hemisphere as President of that Commission for 1978-80, exactly 50 years after it had been initially presided by another U.S. citizen, Doris Stevens.

Needless to say, this heady and fruitful engagement with women's rights allowed me to play key roles during the Decade for Women, starting in 1975 with the first United Nations World Conference on Women in Mexico City and all the ensuing U.N. Conferences (1980 Copenhagen, Denmark; 1985 Nairobi, Kenya; 1990 Beijing, China). Always straddling the "official" and NGO (non-governmental) Forums, I was entranced with the progress women united had been able to forge. Also our U.S. Commission was instrumental in organizing the

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1977 Houston, Texas national conference and the energizing state conferences that had preceded it.

My concern with women's rights also led me to gravitate toward action on human rights, serving for more than a decade on the Board of the Inter American Institute of Human Rights located in Costa Rica.

Professionally, I became the first Hispanic female Chief of Staff for a Member of Congress, Representative Jaime Fuster, serving the Resident Commissioner of Puerto Rico for seven years and being his staffer for international affairs in the House Foreign Affairs Committee. During these years I attended The American University, getting a B.A. in International Studies. My career in

government relations culminated with service as director of government relations for the Girl Scouts of the USA (after serving 9 years on its national board of directors, as Chair of the Western Hemisphere Organization and chairing the triennial conference of the World Organization of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts in Kenya, United Way of America, and the Alliance for Children and Families. My retirement at the end of 2006 kicked



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me back to my never-abandoned field of citizen advocacy which keeps me busy doing political, gender and religious advocacy for the same causes that have engaged my attention for five decades: women's rights, civil and human rights, and all issues of inequity .

The between years found me listed in the leadership or the ranks of the National Women's Political Caucus, the National Coalition for Women and Girls in Education, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute, the Independent Sector Government Relations Committee, the Human Services Forum, the Maryland Women's Heritage Center, the Pan American Liaison of Women's Organizations (PALCO), the National Urban Institute. As a long-time member of the Veteran Feminists of America, I was honored with the VFA Medal of Honor on May 6, 1999 at a Sewall Belmont House celebratory event.

Currently I preside the Public Members Association of the Foreign Service (PMA). I have also helped, as George Santayana advised, to recapture "herstory" by writing a bilingual book in English and Spanish, "Puerto Rican Women" (now in its third edition), with biographies of women we should all emulate, and by writing chapters in books such as Notable American Women, To Ourselves Be True, and other publications.

My personal life has been full with two outstanding sons, Stephen and Michael, and an equally outstanding daughter, Lisa, as well as six grandchildren. The four girls, Alexandra, Anna, Taylor and Abby, have benefitted from my advocacy on Title IX of the Education Amendments (the Equity Act) with their excellent

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academic records and sports achievements in soccer, basketball and softball; the two males, Daniel and Michael Todd, are doing exceptionally well in science. Michael, the younger one, on lacrosse and Daniel, the eldest, on soccer and softball.

Oh, the memories my life as a mother, professional and feminist has given me.

Carmen Delgado Votaw has received many awards and recognition for her work, including the Hispanic Heritage Award for Education, Las Primeras Awards from the Mexican American Women's National Association, (MANA). She was inducted into Maryland Women's Hall of Fame and received an Honorary Doctorate in the Humanities from Hood College in Maryland.

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### **RIANE EISLER**

I was born in Vienna in 1931 and lived there the first seven years of my life. When Austria was annexed by Germany, I began seeing abuse and violence. Then on November 9, 1938 came Kristallnacht (Crystal Night), so called because of all the glass shattered in Jewish homes, synagogues, and businesses on that first night of official terrorism against



Jews. A Gestapo gang broke into our home and I watched in horror as they dragged my father off. But I also saw my mother display great courage when she recognized one of the Nazis as a young man who had worked as an errand boy for the family business, and furiously upbraided him for so treating a man who had been kind to him. She could have been killed that night, but by a miracle she was not. By another miracle she later obtained my father's release, and a short time after that we fled Vienna in the middle of the night, taking with us only what we could carry.

With what money they had left, my parents purchased a visa to Cuba, the only place other than Shanghai open to Jewish refugees. I spent the next seven years in the industrial slums of Havana. Even after my parents again prospered, they did not move from the slums; for them Cuba was a temporary anteroom while they waited for entry into the Promised Land. From the beginning, they scraped together enough money to send me to good schools; as they became more affluent, I ended up attending one of Havana's best schools.

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I commuted by streetcar, experiencing a kind of daily culture shock because of the difference between that part of the city and the dirty tenements where I lived.

We were admitted to the United States in 1946, and after two years in high school I enrolled at the University of California at Los Angeles, majoring in sociology and anthropology, then attended one year at the UCLA School of Law until I got married in 1953. In those years, it was understood that girls went to college to get their Mrs.degree. My parents, for whom my education had been a top priority, also assumed this. So I quit law school and moved to Ann Arbor, Michigan, with my new husband. Except for the birth of two lovely daughters, it was not a successful union. I was expected to be the "little woman" behind the important man, a role I tried to fulfill but could never adjust to.

So in 1963, I again applied to UCLA law school and in 1965 obtained my JD degree and passed the California bar. I was part of the group interviewed by top law firms. Though most rationalized their failure to make me an offer on the grounds that I wanted to work only part time, it was clear the real reason was that I was a woman. Still, I managed to get a part-time job with a Beverly Hills entertainment law firm, and worked there for a couple of years.

Then, within three months I quit my job, my marriage, and smoking. This was in the late 60s, and with thousands of other women I awoke as if from a long drugged sleep to realize that many problems I had thought were just me were actually social problems I

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shared with many other women. I had already been involved in the civil rights movement, but now I threw myself into the women's movement. I incorporated the Los Angeles Women's Center, the first such center on the West Coast, and founded the first center in the United States on Women and the Law.

At that time, the notion was that discrimination against women was "just the way things are." Want ads were segregated by sex. In rape cases, the victim was essentially on trial for prior sexual activity, and even in community property states like California, control over marital property was exclusively the husband's.

The purpose of the Women's Law Center, accredited as an internship program at the University of Southern California School of Law, was to fight against this, as well as to provide free legal services to low-income women. In 1969 we filed a Friend of the Court brief with the Supreme Court in a case involving extreme gender discrimination, proposing the then radical idea that women should be considered persons under the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment - which the Court rejected until a few months later finally it struck down a grossly discriminatory law on that ground.

I was also specializing in family law on my own, drafting egalitarian pre-nuptial agreements. I was by then speaking about women's rights at many platforms, including the California bar. I was invited to offer courses on Women and the Law at UCLA, and later to initiate its Women's Studies program-the latter ending in a disastrous (but unfortunately all too common) attack on me by "sisters" who, disagreed with my mainstreaming

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approach, and took over the program.

This was a difficult time for me. I was exhausted and discouraged. I was still practicing law, lecturing on women's rights, traveling, trying to raise my children, working to make a living. After the sudden death of both my parents, I became very ill. And it was then I began to reflect on what I wanted to do with my life.

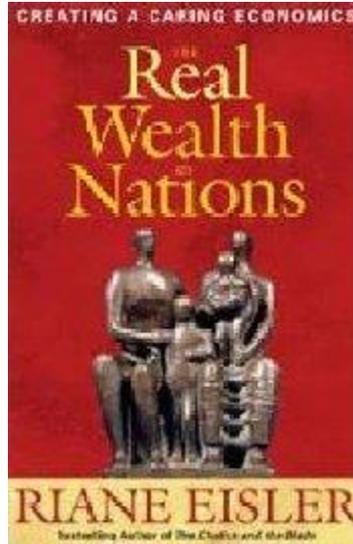
So I gave up my law practice and began writing. My first book was *Dissolution, No-Fault Divorce, and the Future of Women*.\*\* It predicted what later became known as the "feminization of poverty. My second\*\* was the only mass paperback on the proposed *Equal Rights Amendment: The Equal Rights Handbook: What ERA Means for Your Life, Your Rights, and Your Future*. But it came too late to expose the lies about this simple Amendment, and when ERA failed to obtain the needed number of ratifying states, I realized that as important as it is to change laws, we have to change the underlying culture that condones injustice.

Thus began my return to a question that had begun in my childhood: Is insensitivity, injustice, and violence human nature, or are there alternatives, and if so, what are they? It was this question that eventually led to my multidisciplinary cross-cultural study of society.

The first book out of that research was *The Chalice and the Blade: Our History, Our Future*. It introduced two new social categories: the partnership system and the domination system. It showed how conventional categories such as right or left, religious or secular, capitalist or socialist fail to show the importance of how

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society structures gender roles and relations. It also proposed that evidence indicates the status of women was higher in the earliest centers of civilization, which oriented more to the partnership side, until during a period of great disequilibrium there was a shift toward the domination side, a theory since supported by others.



My next book was *Sacred Pleasure: Sex, Myth, and the Politics of the Body*, showing how both sex and religion have been distorted by the misogyny inherent in domination systems. This was followed by *Tomorrow's Children: A Blueprint for Partnership Education in the 21st Century*, laying out a gender-balanced approach to education; *The Power of Partnership: Seven Relationships that Will Change Your Life* which won the Nautilus award as the best self-help book of the year; and *The Real Wealth of Nations: Creating a Caring Economics* proposing a new approach to economics that gives visibility and value to the most essential work: the "women's work" of caring for people, and caring for our natural environment.

I have also written over 300 articles in different publications, spoken at over 600 events, given keynotes to national and international conferences, and lectured at

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universities, corporations, religious institutions, and governmental and nongovernmental agencies. I believe that my most valuable contribution to the empowerment of women has been identifying the underlying social patterns that show that raising the status of women is key to a better future.

This is a recurring theme in my writings as well as my social activism. For example, I introduced a new model for human rights that fully integrates the rights of women - starting in 1987 with the first article in *The Human Rights Quarterly* on what has since become known as "women's rights as human rights." My work to expand the scope of human rights theory and action continues most recently with a chapter for a Cambridge University Press book that urged the inclusion of horrendous, widespread, often legally condoned, discrimination and violence against women and children. I also helped organize international conferences.

I have devoted a great deal of time and energy to the Center for Partnership Studies (CPS), a nonprofit research and education public service organization I co-founded in 1987. CPS has many achievements to its credit; for example, I directed our pioneering statistical study showing that the status of women can be a better predictor of a society's general quality of life than Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

CPS currently focuses on two major programs in which I am deeply involved:

The Spiritual Alliance to Stop Intimate Violence (co-founded with Nobel Peace Laureate Betty Williams) to

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engage leaders in speaking out to end traditions of violence against women and children. SAIV offers practical resources for clergy and lay people, including its acclaimed Caring and Connected Parenting Guide.

The Caring Economics Campaign, designed to help build a more equitable and caring economic system, has three major components:

- 1. ON-LINE LEADERSHIP TRAINING to develop a cadre who show the need for, and benefits of giving real value to the work of caring for people and nature;
- 2. Our WEBSITE offers a wealth of materials on caring economics;
- 3. Our PUBLIC POLICY initiative is designed to give more visibility to gender, race, and other social categories, as recommended by the CPS-commissioned Urban Institute Report *The State of Society: Measuring Economic Success and Human Well Being*, released in 2010. These recommendations have been endorsed by leaders representing over 30 million people, and are the basis for the CPS proposal of Social Wealth indicators to the State of USA (the new Congressionally-backed project to develop key national indicators in addition to GDP). If accepted for development, these Social Wealth indicators will have a major impact on changing the unconscionable fact that poverty in our wealthy nation (and worldwide) disproportionately affects women, largely because the "women's work" of care giving is paid very little, or not at all.

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Besides my organizational and educational work as president of CPS, I teach Partnership Studies at the California Institute for Integral Studies graduate program on Transformative Leadership. I also continue my research and writing, as well as speaking nationally and internationally, including recently at the United Nations GENERAL ASSEMBLY in New York.

Yet even with my outspoken feminism, I have received numerous honors from non-feminist organizations, including honorary PhD degrees, membership in global councils that include mainstream figures such as the Dalai Lama, and awards for my work for peace and human rights.



There have been times of setback in my life, but on the whole I consider myself blessed that I have been able to make a contribution to a better future for women, blessed by my daughters and grandchildren, and by my relationship over more than 30 years with my

second husband, Dr. David Loye, (pictured above) a brilliant social scientist and the author of many important books.

David and I have a true partnership, and have shared

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many exciting experiences. When David came with me to the UN Women's Conference in Nairobi in 1985, he spoke on What Men Can Do to Advance Women. And that is just what David has done in supporting and at times joining in my work, and in speaking out for the feminist movement.

I am still sometimes haunted by my early experiences, and by the fact that most of my relatives were murdered by the Nazis. I am haunted by all the unnecessary suffering and misery caused by a system where difference is equated with superiority or inferiority. Yet it is my hope that as more of us connect the dots between "women's issues" and an equitable society, we will resume our movement toward the partnership future.

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### Sally Epstein

On October 31, 1925, I was the first child of Dr. Clarence James Gamble and Sarah Merry Bradley Gamble. My father was a researcher at the University of Pennsylvania; as a child, I remember being intrigued that in studying blood circulation he would hang upside down to see how this unusual position affected the flow of blood through his body.



My father understood that babies are healthier if spaced about 2½ years apart, and so in planning a second child he researched birth control methods. My younger brother Dick was 2½ years younger than I, and Walter 2½ years younger than Dick. Two more siblings, Judy and Bob, were similarly spaced. At least that is what we were told.

My father saw that I was included in everything my brothers did: horseback riding, soccer, ice hockey, science kits, tennis, building castles on the beach with cement and stones, and sailing centerboard boats so we could learn to right them when they capsized. He even allowed me to take flying lessons as a college freshman, although he had nearly been killed in a plane crash while flying with a medical school classmate I a pilot, who was killed.

Believing that a daughter should take advantage of

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every opportunity, he encouraged me to get my driver's license at 14. In Michigan, where we summered every year, farm children often handled motorized farm equipment on the road, and so 14 had been designated as the official age for a license. My father taught me to drive. After I passed the written and driving tests he handed me the keys to the car and said, "I'll see you at home," as he commandeered a taxi. I was not too happy with this push to independence, but it certainly showed me that girls could be as independent as boys.

In the late 1920s, Margaret Sanger, the founder of Planned Parenthood, asked my father to test the shelf life of spermicidal jellies at his Philadelphia laboratory. This began a lifelong friendship and collaboration between them. I was intrigued by this feisty woman (with red hair, like me) who was willing to go to jail for her beliefs.

At home there was much talk about birth control and its politics; I grew up believing that every child was wanted and planned. When I found out this was not true, I decided to help spread the message of family planning, so chose to become a social worker-rather than a doctor as my father wished. During World War II, I became a Nurse's Aide at Boston City Hospital. Because so many of the nurses had departed to join the military, I was given many of the tasks that nurses usually handled. My eyes were opened to the suffering of many women due to illness, poverty, brutality, and a lack of knowledge of their rights and options. I knew then that I was a feminist and would promote family planning-or birth control, as it was then known.

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I graduated from Oberlin in 1948, then went to the Simmons School of Social Work. While there I dated an MIT student who loved jazz and modern art; I had not been exposed to either growing up. He took me to a modern art exhibit—a retrospective of oils and graphics by the Norwegian artist Edvard Munch (1863-1944). I absolutely fell in love with his work, and he became my artist for life.

That year I met Fridel Smola of Austria, a mountain climber, who had trained American troops who would be fighting in the Alps. She was involved with The Experiment in International Living, a group founded by Donald Watt that worked to promote cross-cultural understanding and friendship by arranging student homestays abroad. During the summer of 1949 I lived with the Franz Kofflers, a doctor's family in Vienna (fortunately, I had taken German in high school).

The horrors of war were brought home to me by the sight of bombed-out buildings, stories of near-starvation (including chewing on leather to lessen hunger pains), accounts of suffering at the hands of the Russians, and seeing the Koffler ancestral portraits, slashed by the stabs of Russian bayonets. After the summer program, I went mountain climbing with Fridel and our group leader Curt Geiger and was the first American woman to climb a difficult route up the Wartzman Mountain in Germany. Again I had the sense that women could choose challenges usually reserved for men.

That fall (1949) I met and married Lionel Charles Epstein, a Harvard Law student who had been an Experiment leader to Holland. He'd written a senior

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paper on U.S. sterilization laws after consulting with my father, and was interested in my father's efforts to send women to Third World countries to help start family planning clinics with education programs and services. Lionel incorporated my father's Pathfinder Fund as an NGO in the District of Columbia.

In 1952 Lionel and I went to Holland as leaders of a high school group for an Experiment in International Living summer program. As we were about to sail on a student ship from New York City to Europe I discovered I was pregnant. Concerned, I consulted my father's friend Dr. Abraham Stone, who after examining me said I should simply check in with obstetricians as I traveled. After the summer program, we continued on to India to join my parents and Margaret Sanger for the first Asian International Planned Parenthood conference. We stayed on in India for family planning work; but later, with my mother I returned to Boston, where David was born on February 23, 1953-after his trip around the world.

Soon Lionel and I traveled frequently overseas from our Washington, DC home on behalf of \*The Experiment and \*Pathfinder. Viewing horrible slums, learning how women were subjected to years of childbearing, seeing bodies of women under hospital sheets hemorrhaging after childbirth or abortion attempts, learning how different cultural views impeded a woman's ability to plan and control her family and life renewed my determination to continue working in the contraceptive field.

Pathfinder International promoted the idea that if women were to be educated about the value of planning and spacing children, their advice and information must

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come from members of their own religion and culture.



Pathfinder Clinic in Ethiopia. Sally Epstein meeting with local volunteers who will go house to house educating people on advantages of contraception and family health.

In 1962 we were asked by Sargent Shriver (an Experimenter) to sail on student ships to ascertain whether students would consider spending two years as Peace Corps volunteers. Between sailings, we visited the families of the two Norwegian au pairs we had had for our children, as well as other Norwegian friends. We saw Munch prints and oils in their homes and in museums. \*We soon started collecting, and our Epstein Family Collection grew to more than 300 prints and several oils.

I volunteered with the local Washington area Planned Parenthood organization and for twelve years I assisted the Planned Parenthood worker at Washington City

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Hospital, advising women who had just given birth on the advantages of delaying future pregnancies and explaining different methods of birth control. Often I wore earrings I had made from Lippes Loops (IUDs); I will never forget the woman who, after my explanation, looked at me full of doubt: "Miss, I don't see how them things in your ears can keep you from getting knocked up!" Equally unforgettable was the woman who pointed to the loop inserter, saying, "I don't think that thing could fit inside me."

When I started at the hospital, maternity patients filled four wards; beds were sometimes in the hall and patients were often sent to other hospitals. After family planning was introduced in District of Columbia public health clinics, knowledgeable patients stayed for sterilization and many, with our counseling, went home with birth control pills.

At the end of 12 years, only one ward was filled with maternity patients and the District of Columbia now had the lowest urban birth rate in the country.

Lionel and I divorced in the early 1980s. I continued my interest in family planning and traveled widely to observe progress overseas. As a result, I met Donald Collins, who had spent many years with organizations that funded grants for contraception work. In 1993 he invited me to join a group of family planning experts on a tour to Vietnam. A Vietnamese group had undertaken a clinical trial, using quinacrine (a drug most commonly used for malaria) as a method of sterilization for women.

The quinacrine sterilization (QS) procedure\* was being

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offered at government expense to women thirty years of age with two living children. Eleven to one, these women were choosing QS over surgical sterilization as an inexpensive, nonsurgical outpatient method. (Both methods were offered free by the Vietnamese government.) Unfortunately, political and religious forces in the World Health Organization forced the Vietnamese government to terminate this research, which had helped 50,000 women obtain QS with no reported deaths. The only potentially life-threatening complication was a rare allergic reaction.

Don and I married not long after our return from the Vietnam study tour, and have spent the years since educating doctors about QS at international OB/GYN conferences and attempting to obtain US Food and Drug Administration approval so that we can distribute low-cost QS kits worldwide. We have been severely hampered by religious and political enemies, but we will not give up. We work through Don's NGO, International Services Assistance Fund (ISAF).

When Don went to work in 1965 for a large Pittsburgh philanthropy, he was immediately put on the national board of the Planned Parenthood Federation of American (PPFA). He then was sent overseas to observe their programs in action; the sight of women dying from difficult pregnancies or botched and illegal abortions, or harried by bearing more children than they wished changed his professional life—from banking and then heading a venture capital firm, he directed his energy to starting or funding programs to study women's needs and help women obtain contraception.

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He was a founding member of IPAS (International Pregnancy Advisory Service), FHI (Family Health International), AGI (Alan Guttmacher Institute), Population Dynamics, Women's Health Services, and The Center for Population Options, and also helped with the funding for many similar organizations.

He started his own NGO, ISAF (International Services Assistance Fund), in 1976 and it is through this organization that he and I work to promote knowledge of QS and make plans to introduce it worldwide after its approval by the FDA.

Our website contains extensive information about QS and our work. While working to promote contraception, I learned about the impatience of feminist groups like the National Organization for Women, The Global Fund for Women, NARAL, Pro-Choice America, Emily's List, and Planned Parenthood Federation of America.

I have contributed funds to these and other organizations, worked with their presidents, and participated in several marches. I have also served on the boards of Planned Parenthood of Metropolitan Washington, The Population Institute, Population Services International (PSI), the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR), the Center for Development and Population Activities (CEDPA), and of course Pathfinder International.

\* Since 1957, Pathfinder International has maintained an unwavering belief in the right of women and families to have access to contraception and to quality reproductive health care. Pathfinder's founder Clarence Gamble, a

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pioneer in family planning and maternal health, introduced contraception to more than 60 developing countries, including some where Pathfinder is still engaged today.

\*We've given prints to the National Gallery in Washington; eventually the entire collection, plus about 90 interviews I have taped with Munch family, friends, neighbors, portrait subjects, etc., will go to the National Gallery. From the older Norwegians I learned a great deal about life and customs in Munch's era in the late 19th and early 20th century. Several catalogues with my introduction or essays have been published, and I continue to give tours and lectures when asked.

\* QS has already been used by more than 175,000 women worldwide with no reported deaths and only two cases of anaphylactic shock. We had trained doctors in 40 clinics for a Phase III clinical trial when a faulty rat study was used by the FDA to put a clinical hold on our program. We are now working to resolve this with studies that scientifically prove that quinacrine is not genotoxic in vivo, and that women who had QS before 1993 have no more cancer than a similar group that had IUDs or surgical sterilization.

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### JEAN FAUST

I was born in Tarboro, North Carolina, March 19, 1930, at the height of the Great Depression.

My father, George Dewey Satterthwaite (named after Admiral Dewey), was a tenant farmer who augmented his income by going around the area with his toolbox doing carpentry jobs.



Our family was saved from poverty by the Roosevelt New Deal, specifically the Resettlement Act which leased abandoned farms on long-term mortgages to families who needed a boost.

Eight of nine children born to my mother, Hattie Lee Bradley Satterthwaite, survived to become prosperous citizens. The little boy just before me died of pneumonia when I was an infant.

My father tried several locations in the resettlement program and then settled into a farm on Blue Sky Road near Halifax, NC. The whole family worked very hard. Children who could not do farm work took care of smaller children and helped around the house, brought water, etc.

On Blue Sky Road, we had a cooperative system of working on crops like tobacco that were very labor intensive. One day we would work at one farm, another day we would go to a neighbor. The whole area was like

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a big family; all the boys were like brothers to me.

Farm work was extremely boring and repetitive, but the worst part was that we had to miss weeks of school in the fall to help with the harvesting. We grew corn and peanuts; the peanuts required a lot of handwork.

We went to school for the first six grades in Halifax, NC (historically interesting for the Halifax Resolutions, a precursor of the Declaration of Independence). There were two classes in each room, but the teachers were dedicated and anyone who worked could get a good education. (I found later that I had learned by the fifth grade all the grammar that I would ever need.) For eighth grade through twelve, we went to Weldon, NC, a few miles away.

During my first several school years, in Tarboro, we walked to school; I remember carefully stepping into my older siblings footsteps when there was heavy snow (no colorful boots for children in those days; one wore the same shoes year-round, usually handed down from older children). For Halifax and Weldon schools, there was a bus, but we missed a lot of school because the bus couldn't navigate the country roads when there was snow.

In Halifax, the majority of children were from neighboring farm areas (the town was very small). The highest grade was sixth, so the children hadn't developed the attitudes that I would later experience in high school. Between 10 and 11 years old, I had a growth spurt that changed me from the smallest child in the class to the tallest. During outdoor recess, the girls got angry because I played

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fullout. When we played softball, I knocked the ball out of the play-yard, across a ditch into a field. The girls would complain, refuse to go after the ball, so I would run around the bases, then run to get the ball. When I pitched, the girls couldn't hit the ball. The girls complained to the teachers and they found a solution. They took me over to the boys area and asked the boys to let me play with them. That worked out so well the best boy player and I became unofficial co-captains and planned all the games. Mostly we would each choose a side, which provided for more balanced play; however, sometimes we would play on the same side and the others didn't have a chance. Mostly, we were fair, making sure the poorer players were distributed so that they wouldn't be a drag on either side too often. (There were some boys who should have played with the girls.) I was allowed to play any position I wanted, even to pitch.

I tell this story at length because I believe this early experience in equality started the spark of feminism in me. One who is treated equally with other humans will later chafe at the slightest inequality.

I also extended this fairness (there was no feminism then) into my family. When I was big enough to work in the fields, I did that and then, at the house, because I was the oldest girl at home (the older sisters left as soon as they finished high school), I helped my mother. Many times I would be ironing while my father and the other children relaxed. I simmered in this situation for a while, then one day I announced that I would do all housework during hours when everyone was working; thus, I did washing (with tubs and a scrubbing board and hanging

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clothes on a line outside), ironing, cleaning and any other household tasks while the others worked in the fields.

For seventh grade to twelfth, I transferred to Weldon, a bit larger town. There I ran into prejudice against children who came on the bus; the town children felt very superior and did not associate with us.

There was even a more serious problem; in the fall, farm children were kept out of school for weeks to help bring in the crops, especially the peanuts which had to be handled by hand. It broke my heart not to go to school, but as soon as I could go back I would get all my assignments from the teachers and catch up as soon as possible.

But I was completely surprised one day when a teacher drew me aside and asked if I could manage to get a white dress, that I was number one in the junior class and thus was to be the grand marshal at graduation, leading in the seniors.

I had learned to sew in Home Economics class so I just needed material. I had been carrying eggs to sell to the school cafeteria for my mother (a story in itself: think of the other kids teasing me while I sat on the bus protecting the box of eggs). She let me keep enough money from egg sales to buy material to make a dress. The next year I was valedictorian and had to make a speech, a very painful experience since I was extremely shy and knew the other children didn't want to hear a word from me.

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I had not even thought of going to college, as I knew there was no money. Again, a teacher helped; she gave me a check for \$200 and said some citizens of the town were proud of me and wanted to give me a start for college (I was never to know who they were); she gave me all the materials to apply, as well as applications for scholarships. I had attended Girls State at Woman's College in Greensboro (later University of North Carolina at Greensboro), so I applied and was accepted. I decided I could work at school and summers as a waitress at beach resorts, and make it somehow. Waitressing was the hardest job I've ever done, exhausting, low pay, nasty bosses; but because it was for college I could do it.

Before I went to college, I gathered all my childhood things: papers, valentines, letters, etc. everything that pertained to my childhood, took them out into the yard and burned them. While they were burning, I told myself I was leaving the old life and all its slights and difficulties behind; I forgave all insults, slights and indignities, whether from family or outsiders and consciously began a new life.

College was my element; studying and learning were heaven; I couldn't take enough classes, even had battles with deans and advisors who called me in to say I was taking too many classes. I was a double major in English and Drama with a minor in Education. I also wanted to take Art classes because it would be valuable for some of the work in Drama courses; there were huge objections, only Arts students could take Art classes.

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I spent my graduating summer, 1952, on staff at the Burnsville School of Arts, near Asheville, NC, working on every aspect of play production and helping with the students. The teachers were top grade; for instance, in music, John Cage; dance, Merce Cunningham. But my favorite was the Arts Director, Dr. Gregory Ivy; I used to discuss with him wanting to go for higher degrees but not having money; he told me to skip the degrees and just keep reading, that I could do well on my own as rules for degrees would limit me. (His art class was one that I had had to fight to take, as I wasn't an art major; he had agreed to let me in.)

My drama teacher at Greensboro got a job for me at Kannapolis, NC as English and Drama teacher; he had a theatrical business and had just shipped them a huge amount of equipment, the latest in lights, etc. and he had taught me to operate them. When I got there, no one had touched them; no one knew how to put a backstage area together; the principal borrowed some technicians from town businesses and I showed them how to set up all the equipment and started planning for play production. That part worked out fine; the students were excited and receptive and some of them benefited greatly from the experience.

The classroom was another matter; the students were well behaved but totally uninterested in school, in learning; they did the least they could do to get by. Some of them even turned in papers on plays they hadn't read (I suppose they thought I hadn't read the plays or maybe wouldn't read their papers). The principal was surprised when I didn't renew my contract.

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One of my friends from drama classes in college, a girl from New Jersey who was living in New York trying to get acting jobs, invited me to visit her; I came to NY in October 1953 expecting to stay a few weeks, see some plays and go back home and look for work.

During this period, I went to a Christmas party hosted by an interesting young man named Irvin Faust, who was studying acting at the Neighborhood Playhouse. We began to see each other.

To maintain myself in NY, I took a temporary job at De Pinna, a department store at 52nd Street on Fifth Avenue. After Christmas, I registered with a temporary agency and worked at various businesses; when I worked for a few days at Elizabeth Arden, I was offered a permanent job. As was common for women in those days, I was paid very little and not offered advancement (later found that my immediate boss had not passed on to me promotion offers from the executive staff); later, I went to Mark Cross as Director of the Mail Order Department. They advertised in the Times, "Call our Miss Satterthwaite for all your gift orders". After a couple of years, I was promoted to Buyer. However, the unrelenting long hours (sometimes even on Sunday) of retail work wore me down and in 1962 I retired to have a rest and recover my health.

On August 29, 1959, I had married Irvin Faust. Having housewife duties added to my fulltime job had proved to be a strain as well. He had changed his career to Counseling, earned his Masters and Doctorate and gone from teaching to being Guidance Director at a Long Island High School. His doctoral thesis had been

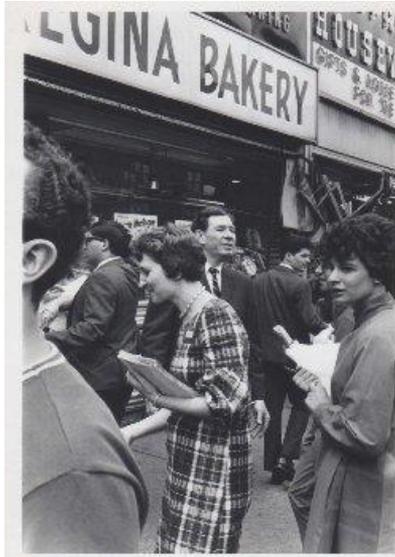
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published by Teachers College and his counselor told him he should write. So at night he worked on short stories. All the work of our life together, maintaining the apartment, paying the bills, taxes, etc. was left to me, as was the typing of his stories. After some of them were published, he began to get calls from publishers asking if he had a book. When it was time to prepare a manuscript of a book of short stories, there was no way I could do that and continue in my demanding job. I thought he was an original and authentic talent, so I resigned and applied myself to helping him with his manuscripts.

Those were days of great political turmoil, especially on the West Side of NYC where we lived; the Reform Democrats were replacing the old clubs. I joined one of the Reform clubs and quickly found that reform had not extended to equal rights for women. All the work of the club, especially mailings, was done by the women while the men stood around talking. Presidents were always men; secretaries were women. I watched these unreformed practices for about a year and then started talking to the women. I set up a committee on women's rights. We elected a woman as president and I was elected treasurer (having refused to run for secretary). Some of the men were furious about my activities, some were amused, a few were understanding, even sympathetic. A few women were active supporters, but many were reluctant, afraid of the men's disapproval.

One day during an election campaign, a man walked into the club and yelled, "We need a pretty girl to hand out literature". I went over and reproved him and suggested he should have said, "We need a person?"

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Jean Faust (plaid dress) handing out flyers for Congressman William F. Ryan

He countered, "No, we want a pretty girl; people are more likely to accept flyers from a pretty girl." I saw I couldn't convince him, but I accepted the assignment so I could see how the campaign was going on the street. That proved to be lucky for me, as after meeting Congressman William F. Ryan. I became an aide to him on Environmental matters, which was quite new then as an area of interest about 1963. The public was not much concerned and even most of his staff thought it was a waste of his time.

I don't know how I was on the list, but I got a postcard for the first meeting of NOW in NYC and couldn't wait to attend. It was a small group and we were asked to stand, give our names and occupations. Probably

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because I worked for the congressman, I was asked after that meeting to form the first chapter in NYC and act as first president.

Our first NOW meeting was February 6, 1967. As organizing president I prepared the Chapter Kit, held Chapter meetings; answered mail, sent mailings to all without benefit of office space, equipment, supplies or secretary. Any available area of our small apartment was the office; our phone was NOW's phone. Equipment and supplies were cadged where members worked; only stationery, stamps and paper were purchased. We had no expense account. Later, as we gained membership, there was limited reimbursement. My husband suffered many inconveniences because of my work with NOW and paid for it, both in money and inconveniences. He also paid for my trips to meetings and conventions.)

Besides chapter meetings, committee meetings, projects and demonstrations, I spoke to women's groups and to schools and wrote articles for local West Side paper.

I handled mailings on NOW proposals for New York State Constitutional Convention (up to 10 pages, 200 packets, no copying equipment, no Xerox machine) to all delegates about six times. I made appearances at hearings, did mailings to women's groups asking support for proposals. (In those early days, little support was forthcoming from women's groups; their causes were peace, anti-nuclear efforts and social issues such as care of children & poverty; they did not comprehend that there were women's issues.)

I met with newspapers, asking them to organize

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classified ads by job category rather than sex; organized demonstrations and work with EEOC and Human Rights Commission to persuade newspapers and led a demonstration against Nat'l Assoc. of Newspapers pub. because they appealed EEOC ruling in our favor.

In fall of 1967 I helped organize an action for Pauline Dziob, stewardess for Moore-McCormack Lines who had been denied job as yeoman because "it's a man's job", she had done all the work while the man was ill.

That November I helped organize the NY chapter push at the National Conference for a strong stand on ERA and abortion rights.

That December I helped organize a demonstration against the EEOC for failing to act on women;s problems and for denying permission to me and Betty Friedan to speak at New York hearings.

In January of 1968 I picketed and attended EEOC hearings every day where I had to listen to claims that they were unable to find qualified women to testify.

All that year we were supporting the women who were suing Colgate-Palmolive, and, led by Barbara Love and Anselma del Olio, we worked all year to organize a touring demonstration with cars and signs, feminist filibusters and street theater, calling for boycott of C-P products.

In September of 1968 I was alerted by Sonia Pressman, who worked at the EEOC that the Senate Finance Committee sneaked an amendment onto a soil

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conservation bill that would allow large companies to treat men and women differently in retirement policies. Thus I made many phone calls and wrote letters to Finance Committee, senators, and congressmen to object to this attack on the rights of working women. (The real purpose was to allow companies to force women to retire earlier with fewer benefits.)

At request of Exec. Committee I led a debate against a change in NOW's by-laws (a small group was calling for participatory democracy, rotating officers, etc.) and, also at request of Exec Comm., resumed presidency when NYNOW's second president, Ti-Grace Atkinson resigned. I then organized a mailing to assure national officers and other chapters that NOW-NY had not split as rumored, that work was continuing. This effort to replace the structure of NOW-NY with an unworkable, though idealistic, system was misguided and unfair; some members didn't seem to understand that holding office was work and responsibility.

By the end of 1967, I was exhausted mentally and physically, from the strain of running an office? Single handedly, writing (and typing - no word processors then) statements and correspondence for two jobs. 1968 was an even bigger strain because of the small but energetic movement for changes in structure. But I was exhilarated to be working on the problems that blocked women from self-realization.

In February of 1960 during National Public Accommodations Week I demonstrated against For Men Only Restaurants and Bars. (What a good feeling that it now seems quite ridiculous that restaurants catering to

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businessmen once barred women.)

Also in February NOW joined the suit of stewardesses against United Airlines; we picketed with them in Chicago in a bitter wind; one girl whose supervisor objected to her small afro fared much better than her windblown sisters.

In March we demonstrated in front of Governor Rockefeller's office to support the Cook bill on abortion. I lectured at Hunter College on The Contemporary Woman and Her Impact on the Contemporary Male. Insisted both sexes would benefit from ending the oppression of women.

May of that year was Freedom for Women Week (Motto: Rights not Roses). We demonstrated at the White House in blistering heat. Why did we always have extreme weather for demonstrations? Some women were terrified at taking this action, particularly lawyers and other professionals, for fear it would affect their career, but most of us were bothered by the men in dark suits carefully taking our pictures. We'd heard the FBI made files on anyone who picketed the White House.

In August I testified in Washington at Dept. of Labor hearings on EEOC Enforcement Act. As a result of NOW's (and other groups) efforts, EEOC decided that Title VII supersedes State's Protective Legislation. (Dept. of Labor issued a similar ruling.) (State 'protective' legislation had been designed to "protect" women from getting many jobs, thus protecting men's rights to keep them. I pointed out that women regularly lifted 20 pounds and more in the form of babies and children and

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asked him if he'd ever lifted a squirming 20-lb baby from a bath.}

Several times in 1969 I was asked to prepare materials for various media people who wanted to do articles or shows on women. All media continued to present feminists negatively. The jokes were contemptuous and threatening at once: Will women use Men's Rooms? Will men become Playboy Bunnies? Women leaders are described as tireless talkers?. A favorite tactic was to use famous women against feminists, usually women whose marriages had conferred position upon them or whose success rested upon approval by men. (For instance when I was speaking on a radio show, Claire Booth Luce called in to ridicule me; I'm sure it had been planned.)

At the end of 1970, WNEW-TV presented a program called "Women are Revolting"; when I wrote to protest the double meaning, I was told the show was intended to provide entertainment, not information.

Working at two jobs and running a household proved to be too much for my health; I had contracted tuberculosis while running congressman Ryan's local office for a few weeks while he was seeking an office manager; I spent two years coughing and running a fever, went to doctors who treated me for sinus problems. No one thought of testing for TB, since it was supposed to have been eliminated. I also have a form of anemia that can't be treated and an underactive thyroid, which doctors were unwilling to treat at that time (I later found one who treated it). Other health problems plagued me and in 1970 I found I had to retire from all outside work.

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For a while, I had no activities except running our household. I had been going to performances of the New York City Ballet since it was formed and ballet had become a passion second only to my devotion to my husband. One night, around 1982, I found a note in the program that asked for volunteers. I called and started working a couple of days a week, doing various tasks, from data entry and filing to working the information tables during performances.

Around 1988, I moved over to the School of American Ballet, where most of the performers were trained, and was assigned many tasks related to data entry and maintaining student files. I loved watching the students' progress; it was pleasant to work while hearing the music from various classes and peeking into doors as I passed along the halls.

I worked there two days a week until 2009, when Irv fell and cracked a disc in his back. I had to stay home and take care of him. He had other falls and other illnesses (strokes and a seizure) and became so weak that I have continued to stay home and care for him.

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### DAISY FIELDS

Daisy Fields, Advocate For Equal Rights for Business Women, Author of *A Woman's Guide to Moving Up in Business and Government*.

Founder/President of a Human Resource Company Specializing in Women's Career issues.



The first dozen years of my life were on a roller coaster. I was born in 1915 in Brooklyn, NY, and by the time I was six we'd moved to Warren, Ohio; then four years later to Goldsboro, N.C., and two years after that back to New York. With the help of family, my parents bought a house in the suburbs of Long Island, our home until I was 21.

Shortly after my thirteenth birthday I was looking forward to high school, but my parents, living on a shoestring, worried about having enough money for my carfare to school. It was 20¢ a day.

One day I had an inspiration. I had a neighbor who worked in the Five and Ten Cent store. I pinned my long hair up in a bun, daintily applied some lipstick borrowed from my mother's dressing table, dressed up in what I believed to be grown-up looking clothes and went to the store to ask for a Saturday job. The manager said he could use some help but I would have to get my working papers. He suggested I get them and come back next week.

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Having no idea what working papers were I asked my cousin, five years my senior, what they were and how to get them. He insisted I tell him why I needed to know. I told. He laughed and said you had to be 16 to get working papers.

Disappointed but not discouraged, I went to the store the following week and explained that too much school work kept me from getting the papers. He shrugged his shoulders and said I could start working right now and to bring the papers next week. He put me on the cosmetics counter, showed me how to work the cash registers and left me on my own.

I never got the working papers. I worked in that store every Saturday until I graduated from high school, earning two dollars a day for a 10-hour day. It was exactly what I needed for transportation to school.

Funds for college tuition were out of the question; my father had had a stroke and was incapacitated for months. So off I went to Macy's in Manhattan to apply for a sales clerk job. After a long wait in the broiling sun on a scorching hot day in June I was among the block-long line of eager high school grads in need of work. After hours of waiting I was hired. Earning \$15 a week enabled me to attend college at night and help feed my family.

Living on Long Island it was an hour's subway trip to my job at Macy's, then another short trip uptown to Hunter College. Classes ended about 9:30 P.M. and it took me another hour to get home. I would do some homework on the way, but I fell asleep for the last half hour, yet

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instinctively awoke when the train stopped at my station. The four block walk to my house got me fully awake.

This was the beginning of my adult life.

About a year or so later my long-time boyfriend graduated from Columbia University with a Master's in Psychology. He applied for a government job, was hired, and took off for DC and urged me to join him. So in 1936 at age 21 I married and moved to Washington. For the next 30 plus years it was a journey through the federal government in progressively more responsible positions for both of us.

In 1942 his job was transferred to Norfolk, VA. I followed, transferring to a job with the Army Air Force (as it was known then) as civilian personnel officer. As WWII raged on my husband applied for a commission in the Navy. Before we realized it he was off to war on a destroyer in the Pacific. I remained in Norfolk until 1945 when the war was winding down in the area my facility serviced. It was time to make another move.

With my husband at sea I decided to try to get a job as close to NY and family as possible. I wound up in Philadelphia in a field office of the Dept of Agriculture as assistant personnel officer.

About a year later the war was over and my husband was discharged from the Navy. He was offered an opportunity to take over management of a mining venture, which meant a move to Nevada. We were intrigued by the project, so off to Nevada we went. In less than a year out there in the desert the mining

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venture failed because of long-term strikes at smelters. So it was back to Washington where my husband reclaimed his government job.

That was 11 years after we married. All our friends were married with children. We decided to join them and in 1947 we welcomed an adorable baby girl. Today that baby girl is a grandmother and for the past 20 years a police detective.

For one whose life had been a whirlwind of activity, being a stay-at-home mom was stressful. My daughter was two years old when I decided to pick up where I left off--back to the pressures of the working world. I loved it. Fortunately my husband was cooperative in tending to our child when my work demanded overtime and travel.

In 1954 I was offered a position as assistant personnel officer with a small federal agency and continued in that position for four years. Then my boss, the personnel director, decided to leave for another job. I was summoned to the agency head's office where I was sure he was going to offer me the director's position. Instead he asked my assistance in recruiting a replacement.

The shocked look on my face prompted him to explain that a division director had to be a man, but it was fine for a woman to be an assistant. He urged me to remain in my present position. I made no promise; I was too surprised and too angry and hurt to respond. I rose from my chair and walked out of his office.

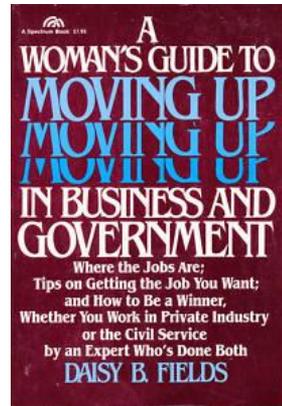
That was my wake-up call. It was 1960 and my initiation into the women's movement.

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I returned to my office and promptly started making phone calls to friends and colleagues in the business, seeking a new job. Shortly thereafter I transferred to NASA, the space agency, and spent the next seven years in the most interesting job of my career.

Believing I could do more for the movement as a free agent, I retired from government and founded my own business, Fields Associates, a human resources company specializing in women's career issues.

In 1968 I became a founding member of Federally Employed Women (FEW). In due time I became national president, executive director and for 16 years edited its eight-page monthly newsletter. In 1983 Prentice Hall published my book, *A Woman's Guide to Moving Up in Business and Government*.



I served on the board of several organizations: Federation of Organizations for Professional Women; National Association of Women Business Owners; National Council of Career Women; National Woman's Party; VP of the Women's Institute and Managing Editor, Women's Institute Press. In the latter capacity I edited and published *Winds of Change: Korean Women in America* by Diana Yu.

All these activities and many others consumed my life for 20 or more years. By age 85, nature made me slow

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down. Today at 95, I am no longer able to drive, need a four-wheel walker to get around and have to rely on my daughter for transportation once in a while. My husband at 97 has dementia, so I am also a caretaker. After 74 years of marriage it seems the natural thing to do.

But what I haven't forgotten is how exciting those years were, and as I look around now and see women in head positions everywhere I rejoice at all the gains we've made. Where once there were no women in the media, today there are many anchor women, and women heading programs; and though we still don't represent half of the country there are many women in Congress and in Senate, and we now have three Justices of the Supreme Court!

There are several women governors and a woman ran for president of the United States, and one day soon, we'll have a female president. Women are everywhere and the challenge of the next generations is to assure that the women who are running our government and representing us are feminists -- as well as the men!

There is still much to do, but we've accomplished so much in such a short time that I can't help but be upbeat about the future.

\* Founded in 1968 FEW, Federally Employed Women is a private, non-profit membership organization.

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### ELEANOR FOA DIENSTAG

The feminist movement transformed my life as a wife, mother, sister, daughter and writer.

In 1970, as a married woman with two children, I moved -unhappily and reluctantly- from New York City to Rochester, New York because of a job opportunity for my husband. I was back in New York for a visit, pushing my baby in a stroller when I came upon the March down Fifth Avenue. I had already committed myself to the Women's Movement and published an article in Ms. Magazine on the subject of being an "uprooted wife." When I saw all my peers assembled for the March I



Annette Satloff

decided I absolutely had to be a part of it, picked up a "Women Unite" shopping bag (now framed and on my wall), and marched. The event galvanized me to further action.

Back in Rochester I joined the local NOW chapter, organized and participated in a series of sit-ins and, most importantly, covered the movement as a free-lance writer, writing essays, news stories and feature stories from a feminist point of view. In 1974, for example, I wrote a long pioneering piece on radical mastectomies, which pointed out how male doctors were not giving women less-radical treatment options, options that were already being offered in Canada.

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In 1974, I walked away from a 17-year marriage with few assets and two children, ages 9 and 5, to support. In 1976, I published a feminist memoir, **Whither Thou Goest: The Story of an Uprooted Wife** (E P Dutton). In it I confronted an issue that had never been written about from a wife's perspective -following a husband because of his career. The book created a furor and became an instant best seller in Rochester. It was widely and favorably reviewed by, among others, the New York Times and Business Week for its insights into marriage and the corporate life. A lecture tour and regional book tour followed publication. The book went into several printings and was picked up by several book clubs.

In 1978, after a 3-year custody battle, I moved back to New York City as a single mother and made a leap from the life of a free-lance writer to the life of a corporate writer. As I used to say, I had to support "the wife and kids." I served as chief speech writer to the CEO of American Express for five years. In 1983, I formed Eleanor Foa Associates, which provides top-tier writing for global and not-for-profit clients, including American Express, Ann Taylor, Chase, Citibank, Columbia Business School, the H.J. Heinz Company, the John A. Hartford Foundation, IBM, K-Mart, Merrill Lynch, Seagram and Sears.

As an award-winning speech writer, I have worked with and written for dozens of Fortune 500 senior executives, including the CEOs of American Express, Seagram, IBM, RJR Nabisco, Merrill Lynch, and K-Mart.

I am the author of a number corporate histories, among them: *Poets and Writers: Celebrating and Serving America's Poets and Writers for Thirty Years*, and *In Good Company: 125 Years at the Heinz Table* (Warner Books).

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I have also continued to pursue my career as a New York-based independent journalist and author. My articles, essays, profiles, columns, book reviews and op-ed pieces have appeared in a range of publications, including the New York Times, Harper's, the New York Observer, the New Republic, McCall's, Travel and Leisure, Frequent Flyer and Working Woman. For three-and-a-half years I contributed a monthly column on "Living Alone," to New Choices, a national magazine for men and women over-50. I am now writing a book for over-50 singles, whose key message is that you can be happy and live a fulfilling life as an over-50 single. I consider it an ongoing product of my feminist perspective.

I am past-president of the American Society of Journalists and Authors (ASJA), and have been awarded literary residencies at Yaddo and the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts (VCCA). I am a graduate of Smith College, where I majored in history, the mother of two boys and grandmother of four.

I think of the 1970s as a golden age for women of my generation- a fabulous time to be a woman. The movement was not only personally empowering. It brought vast social and economic change, especially in the workplace. That, in turn, enabled me - and millions of women after me -to leave our marriages, earn decent wages in formerly male-only jobs (I believe I was the first female speech writer on Wall Street), and support our children, many of whom -like my sons -have turned out to be wonderfully feminist husbands and fathers.

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### LILI FOURNIER

I have lived my life by Goethe's dictum. I thought if I worked hard enough and long enough my dreams would come true. I have not wavered from my mission to realize the dream of Women's Day Live, an unprecedented global gathering of women. The confluence of world events at this time marks a historic milestone for women, giving us a once in a lifetime opportunity to invigorate a global movement to empower women.



Living on the edge is not always a comfortable place to live but it's the only way I know how, though I wouldn't recommend it to most. So how did I get to this place?

I was born in Transylvania, Romania, and grew up under communism for a good part of the 1950s, until we emigrated to Israel. The first memory I have as a child was attending a parade in honor of Stalin's funeral. Growing up I lived three simultaneous identities. On the street I was Hungarian, at school I was Romanian, and at home I was Jewish. The only thing the Hungarians and Romanians hated more than each other was the Jews. So I learned early how to dance on my feet and to get along with and respect different cultures. I also learned about man's inhumanity to man at this time, when I asked why I had no grandparents or family like other kids. Both my parents were survivors of the

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Holocaust, and had lost everyone in Auschwitz and similar unfathomable places. My mother was lucky to have discovered an older sister who survived and managed to find refuge in Canada. She used to send me chocolate, a great luxury, which my mother kept for me, never succumbing to selling it on the black market.

My father was one of the last to keep a private business, before he was forced to work for the state bakery. I'll never forget the day I decided to go visit him there, as it became a defining moment, in retrospect. I mustered up all the courage of a 7 year old to steal a loaf of bread and put it inside my coat and calmly walk out. When I got home I presented this to my mother as a surprise, telling her I had wanted to save her from standing in line for hours. She nearly fainted. She explained that if I had been caught my father would have been sent to prison in Siberia.

When I was seven we left Romania for Israel. I found the freedom of Israel thrilling, never having to look over my shoulder again, and be afraid to speak up. I loved the bonfires, singing and dancing. One of my proudest moments that I remember is that the school principal chose me to welcome Prime Minister Ben Gurion when he came to visit our school. When the papers to leave for Canada arrived, I was nearly ten, and was devastated.

We moved to Toronto. On my first trip to New York on my own, at 17, I fell in love with a soccer player, a Robert Redford type, who was born in the same place. Ours was a tumultuous relationship amidst adventurous romantic New York weekends. He thought we should get

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married and have kids, so why did I need a university education. Just like my Dad. In the end I realized that with the power and control issues between us it would have been akin to marrying my father. So goodbye to the Long Island country club life. Then as now, I believe that everyone regardless of gender, race or whatever has the right to have a dream and pursue that dream in freedom. I cherish my freedom of choice above all else.

I went on to enrol at York University and the following year met my husband-to-be purely by accident. He was visiting his alma mater for lunch, having just returned from a year travelling in Europe. He was striking, witty, talented, and he let me be me. Trouble was I had to do the unthinkable and marry outside my faith, but I knew I'd never meet such a beautiful soul again. He turned out to be the love of my life, my pillar, my strength. Not to mention the best father in the world. A few weeks after our wedding we left for a trip around the world, gloriously rock bottom all the way, that lasted 14 months. We were footloose and great adventurers, going wherever the spirit led us. I fell in love with so many cultures and the women especially, who did so much with so little. We ended the trip in Japan when the first oil crisis hit, which we sadly called "The Day the Music Died", because it was the first real act of international terrorism, and marked the end of this carefree style of travel.

I graduated in town planning but got a job at a Television network, and soon left after my training to work on numerous TV series and major Hollywood movies. In those days on a big crew of 100, five would be women. In the late 70's my daughter was born, which rocked my world. It was the happiest time of my life. When she was

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six weeks old I took her on location to film a Christmas special, and hired a nanny there. Nobody had heard of this before. In the early 80's I became a lifestyle columnist for one of the newspapers and a lifestyle expert guest on TV and radio shows, started the best gourmet shop in town, and got into investment real estate. I was offered the Associate Director position on Pygmalion, a major multiple camera drama for Twentieth Century Fox starring Peter O'Toole. I couldn't turn it down. So at one month of age my newborn son accompanied me on location to Ireland, which almost got me fired.

We were planning to film a pilot show in India and were scheduled to go as guests of the Indian Tourist office. They over-booked; we were knocked off the flight because we were journalists travelling for free. This deep disappointment soon turned into a miracle from our point of view - the plane was blown up over the Irish Sea by terrorists! This was a huge turning point in my life. In gratitude for being alive to raise our children, I vowed that I would find a way to create television with substance, television that mattered. So I quit being a cog in the wheel, an exceptionally well paid one.

In 1992 I produced the By My Spirit concert celebrating the Quinticennario (1492-1992) with Zubin Mehta and Placido Domingo in the presence of Queen Sofia of Spain, with thousands of people and world dignitaries on the hilltop fortress in Toledo. At the same time I managed to also shoot a documentary, filmed on three continents, called "Expulsion and Memory," which featured the historic reconciliation, marking the 500th anniversary of the expulsion of the Jews from Spain,

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represented by the King of Spain and the President of Israel. The Concert and Universal Spiritual Gathering were broadcast internationally, a tribute to peace and co-existence. Everything I care about. I had risked everything to make this happen.

I hosted and produced a two hour special on Women in the Media, featuring stars like Sharon Stone, and Oscar winning Hollywood Producers intercut with a live panel for the Toronto Film Festival and Women in Film, which aired on Cable TV. I was not surprised to discover that women still only made up less than 10% of directors, given my challenges as the first female assistant director in Canada. At this time I launched the highly successful mentorship program for Women in Film, while I spent two years trying to raise broadcast support for The Quest. I was consistently turned down, so I decided that I was not taking one more rejection. At that moment of commitment and conviction, everyone I needed showed up, all the biggest names in the human potential movement. I mortgaged my house, and took another leap of faith, the first of many. Quest: Discovering Your Human Potential aired on PBS and was critically acclaimed for pioneering spirituality on the airwaves, the mind/body concept being revolutionary at the time.

The trajectory of my life changed once again when I produced, hosted and directed a 2 part special called Women of Wisdom and Power which aired on PBS. In the making of it, I discovered that it was the severe subjugation of women in many parts of the world that kept poverty in place. I had lived with these women in villages all over the world. Why had I not realized this core issue before? At the time the Taliban were stoning

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women. The world did not speak up. The world was outraged when some Buddha statues they didn't even know existed were blown up. Where was the outrage about stoning women? I couldn't sleep or eat for months, and felt enormous guilt that this was going on, and I was not doing anything about it. It was like the question I asked as a child, how could the world stand by and let the Holocaust happen?

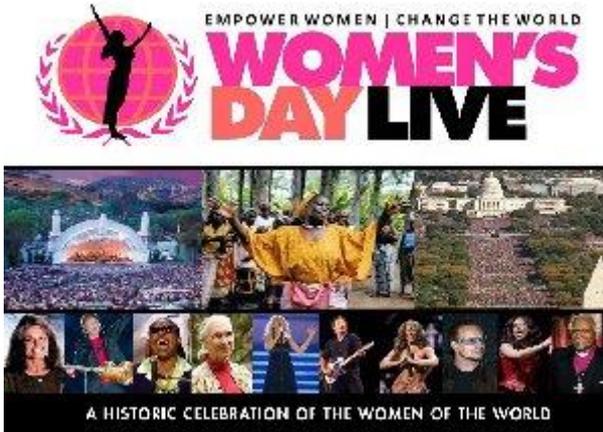
At this time I was shocked to discover that my shows had received half the broadcast carriage that my other shows had, which had successfully raised millions for PBS's fundraising efforts. I soon discovered why. One of the programmers told me that she had scheduled my new shows, as she always did, but her boss said "who is going to watch a show all about women", so I got pulled from the schedule. At this time I learned that in 2000, the "World March of Women" marched in over 150 countries around the world on International Women's Day and it barely made the news. I thought how could this be? A sucker for punishment, I decided I would make another hour, called the Power Within, featuring some of today's most fascinating women, from Jane Goodall, to Alanis Morissette, Erica Jong, Gloria Steinem, to Shirley MacLaine and I would put this World March of Women, and International Women's Day on the Map. So I called every PBS programmer city by city, to ensure that I was going to have a prime time broadcast for Women's History Month.

The effort had paid off. At this time I also did a live 2 hour pledge special out of WLIW in New York celebrating women's leadership, featuring Erica Jong, Lynne Twist, and myself in studio, giving us a five hour

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broadcast in New York City. The trilogy aired prime across the country in most of the major markets in March 2005. We received a sensational response from women across the U.S. saying how profoundly the shows had effected and changed their lives. So I thought that's the answer, the media.

Now the "World March of Women" planned to march again in 2005, in 159 countries. I offered to help reach out to all the networks. Despite the promises, it did not make the news. It's as if it never happened. Why? I made a vow, a decision right then and there to commit to producing Live AID for the Women of the World, a global benefit concert to broadcast worldwide. I shared this



mission with Anita Roddick, the founder of the Body Shop, and she thought it a splendid idea and sent out letters on my behalf. I loved her gutsiness. A true woman of vision and action, one who walked her talk. She died all too soon. She had a great line about people asking what difference can one person make, and she'd say

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"then you've never been to bed with a mosquito". I remain grateful for her mentorship, and all the great women who have helped along the way, most especially Marilyn Tedeschi.

It's taken every ounce of courage, life energy and all my resources to honor my fierce determination to use the power of media to accelerate the advancement of women's equality and human rights and to keep going - bringing reality every day one step at a time to meet my vision.

I realized that I needed a powerful ally if I had any hope of producing Women's Day Live (WDL). I got a phone call from a committee chair to attend a fundraising dinner for Hillary Clinton at Ron Burkle's house in L.A. I called the airlines and there was one seat, leaving in two hours, if I was going to make it. I asked Gerard if he could drive me to the airport. He asked "when?" I said "now". He said "let's go". That's my man. I don't think anyone else could have survived me all these decades. I walked into the tent in L.A. as dessert was being served. It was like a candy store with every major star and producer in attendance. My focus was in meeting President Clinton. I mustered up all my courage and went up to share my vision. He invited me to make WDL a Clinton Global Initiative commitment. I then spent ten minutes alone with Hillary Clinton as she was changing outside the tent for the concert right after, and she said "Absolutely brilliant, let me know how I can help."

That September of 2006, I attended CGI, and was not able to rouse any funding, but had started building strategic alliances. Chris Grumm, head of the Women's

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Funding Network was the first to come on board, followed by the Global Fund for Women, Women for Women International, et al. Helene Gayle, CEO of CARE, lent her support as Honorary Co-Chair, as did Musimbi Kanyoro who was then head of the World YWCA, and is now the newly appointed head of the Global Fund for Women. Nyaradzai Gumbonzvanda, the General Secretary of the World YWCA, joined us as Honorary Co-Chair last year.

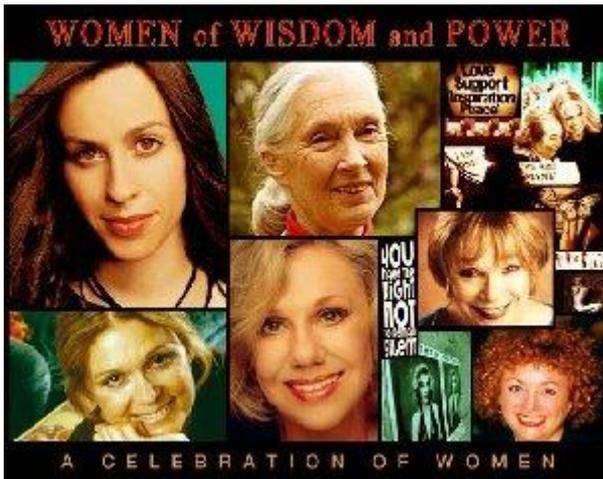
I realized that I was becoming an obsessive about this mission, yet the idea, though gaining support, was not moving. So having let my business go, I went back to making another PBS special, Quest for Success, which featured some of the world's foremost spiritual and business visionaries from His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Sir Richard Branson, Russell Simmons to Stephen Covey, on what it takes to achieve a life of authentic success. They truly ignite your spirit and passion for what is possible. I believe we each have to find the courage to take what mythologist, Joseph Campbell, referred to as the Hero's Journey. So this is what my philosophy of life is. This is not a dress rehearsal of the movie called 'Your Life' where you sit back and wait to see how it turns out. This is it. You are the star, the director and the writer, so make it epic. Make it count. What you do matters.

I've lived a rather tumultuous life, seemingly always on a mission, passionately committed to helping people realize their potential, and to stand up to injustice. I've been called many things, from infamous, to who does she think she is, to she is not one of us, to a spiritual revolutionary. I have taken enormous risks all my life,

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always taking a stand for what I believed in, because it was the right thing to do, and never more so than now when so much is at stake. Some things are worth fighting for.

We must not fail to open the heart of humanity to the plight of women now, no matter what the sacrifice.



As I look back over my life, I can see the major turning points that led to my current leap of faith to take on this big bold and ambitious mission to gather the women in every city and town around the world to celebrate the women of the world and over 100 years of progress on International Women's Day, March 8th, 2012. The benefit concert will capture the worldwide media to galvanize a global movement to alleviate poverty by empowering women with education, technology and economic opportunity, the key to meeting the millennium development goals.

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At its most ambitious trajectory, Women's Day Live will have multi-venue concerts from Washington Mall, Washington D.C., to Mumbai, Rio, London and Kigali, and maybe even China. International Women's Day is a national holiday in 30 countries, including China, Russia, Rwanda. The past year there were 1000 self-created events in over 100 countries.

Imagine the excitement! The biggest multi-media digital hook of women in history, which will result in a global communications Network for the Women of the World.

Think Live AID. Global Impact. Lasting Legacy.

Last year Michael Olmstead and I presented to the Global Partnership Initiative of the State Department, who expressed interest in partnering with us. Despite all the efforts in reaching out to global brands, and all the interest, funding did not come through. I decided to sell my luxury office condo to keep going. I thought I would be devastated, but a few days later my son was hit by taxi. Living in eternal gratitude that he recovered, after that I never gave it a thought.

This year marks the 100th Anniversary of International Women's Day. World Nations have come together this year to create a new powerhouse called UN Women, and have pledged their commitment to champion the cause of women's advancement worldwide. This is the cause of our times. We can't just be paying lip service anymore. Women are key to many of the critical issues facing humanity, from ending poverty to spreading democracy around the world. The Inaugural Women's Day Live Celebration will put International Women's Day

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on the map in 2012, and every year thereafter. In 2015 we can be ready for the next World Congress of Women, to be held in Mumbai, given we successfully lobby the UN. Most important is to put women front row center in global consciousness.

This past January my team said it was time to give it up. Given that the world is experiencing famine and the worst humanitarian crisis in modern history, my conscience wouldn't let me quit. I thought one more try. I would fly to the historic launch of UN Women at the UN Assembly and share this with Michelle Bachelet, the Undersecretary General of the UN. She said, "I got it", and agreed to a partnership in principle with UN Women, given that I got her team's approval. I filmed the event and made a short trailer, which you can see below. My patron, Archbishop Desmond Tutu filmed an intro for me in South Africa, his last recording, God bless his heart, before retiring. I flew back to N.Y. the next month, with my team, to present to a meeting convening women leaders and the UN Women team. Their concern is the risk, and they are right; there is no guarantee of how much money we would raise. However, I think the greatest risk right now is not to take one.

We have sourced a stellar team who can deliver an epic event, including a powerful advocacy and global media team who recently did the Tck Tck Tck, Copenhagen Climate Campaign aggregating 17 million sign ups. The major portals expressed interest in launching the "heart in action" humanitarian campaign. They reach more people worldwide than all the networks combined. The "Heart in Action" campaign would allow every Charity to promote their brand and engage their community in

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taking action. We have encountered two global brands interested in spreading financial literacy and literacy to women, so we believe the potential funding is there.

What we need is an enlightening lightning rod, and the funding to be able to engage the team and have all systems go now. The men did it. They pulled off Live AID in six weeks, because they had the will. We have 7 months and Washington Mall, Washington, D.C. on hold.

Imagine this iconic moment in history as hundreds of thousands of American women come together on Washington Mall to celebrate women's global leadership, kicking off the International women's day celebrations in capitals around the world!

Streamlined if need be, we could do it as a Google-You Tube concert, linking up digitally with women's events around the world.

The Women's Day Live platform offers incredible convening power to bring together visionary world leaders, celebrities, governments, corporations, NGO's and multi-media platforms in a unifying moment for humanity - to champion the cause of women's advancement planet wide, the key to global economic growth.

I met with the head of UN Partnership, the President of the UN Assembly, who all said WDL clearly fits everyone's mission, including that of the Secretary General Ban Ki-moon who is passionately committed to the success of UN Women. Chef de Cabinet,

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Ambassador Armin Ritz, said they could engage world leaders at the UN Assembly to support this global celebration of women and humanitarian campaign in their countries given Michelle Bachelet's initiative.

It simply ignites the imagination! On this coming International Women's Day, women's vital voices will ring out around the world. I have to believe that something extraordinary is possible.

We need each other to energize each other. We cannot do it alone.

We invite all the powerful women in media, and visionary women and men everywhere to join us in a dynamic partnership to realize this bold vision. Just like our brave and dedicated sisters did a hundred years ago in challenging the status quo, forcing the world to see women and their worth in a totally new and daring light, so we must stand up for women and girls the world over.

We stand poised at a pivotal moment in history. It is up to us now.

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### MURIEL FOX

Muriel Fox was born February 3, 1928 in Newark, New Jersey, one of two children of Morris Fox and Anne Rubenstein. Her father was a grocer, her mother a housewife. She stated at a Mother's Day rally for the ERA in 1980 that her mother's unhappiness as a housewife was a major inspiration for her activism in the feminist



movement. Her brother, Gerald became a lawyer and served as VP of NOW's NY chapter and was the attorney who met with the New York Times to persuade them to desexigrate their Help Wanted ads. Jerry died in 1988 at age 55.

Always an A student, Muriel worked after school in her family's grocery store and twirled in her high school's twirling brigade at football games. "I was terrible," she remembers.

Because of Jerry's rheumatic fever the family moved to Miami Beach. This led Muriel to become a scholarship student at Rollins College in Winter Park, Florida. There she became a string correspondent for United Press, covering events like the 1946 Conference on the Atomic Bomb and World Government. She transferred to Barnard College in New York City, in 1946, majored in American Studies and graduated Phi Beta Kappa and summa cum laude in 1948.

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After college she was an advertising copywriter for Sears Roebuck in New York, then a publicist for Tom Jefferson & Associates in Miami, Florida, where she headed the Dade County re-election campaign of U.S. Senator Claude Pepper and helped elect Miami Mayor William Wolfarth.

Applying for a job at Carl Byoir & Associates, the world's largest public relations agency in 1950, she was rejected by an officer who said, "We don't hire women writers." But she persisted and later that year another Byoir executive hired her as a publicist in its Radio-TV Department. In 1952 she was head of that department, and in 1956 became Byoir's youngest vice president, and "progressed as far as she could go," she was told, "because corporate CEOs can't relate to women." There she remained until the 1970's when, with her help, NOW had changed the laws and the business climate for all women. Muriel became Executive Vice President of Byoir, the same title as the man who had turned her down in 1950.

In 1955 she married Dr. Shepard G. Aronson, a prominent internist. Their children, Eric and Lisa, now Dr. Eric Aronson and Dr. Lisa Aronson Fontes were born in 1960 and 1961. Muriel continued working until the night she gave birth and returned to work soon after. Shep, who was a feminist and very supportive of her work was elected Chair of the board of NYNOW. When someone asked him what he was doing in the feminist movement Shep replied, "I want my wife to make more money." Shep died in 2003.



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In 1963 Muriel, as an officer of American Women in Radio and Television arranged for Betty Friedan, author of *The Feminine Mystique* to be their luncheon speaker. After Betty's talk Muriel sent a thank-you note to Betty saying.. "When you're ready to start an organization to fight for women's rights please call me to help."

Betty did call. And Muriel was at the National Organization for Women's founding conference October 29, 1966. In the next two years, as NOW's public relations director she orchestrated the nationwide publicity effort. An interesting aside... Shep and their two children were with her in DC and while Muriel was busy at the founding meeting in Washington, DC, Shep babysat.

From the next few years Muriel was NOW's vice president, then chair of the board, then chaired the National Advisory Committee. She was also Betty Friedan's main lieutenant and director of operations. She installed Friedan's NOW secretary at a small desk near her own at the Byoir offices and wrote numerous letters sent by NOW under Friedan's signature to government officials demanding faster action to reduce sex discrimination - including the letter that helped persuade President Lyndon Johnson to sign Executive Order 11246 in October 1967, the order that added sex to Affirmative Action and thus opened up America's corporate pipeline for millions of women.

She also wrote NOW's November, 1968 letter to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission explaining the need to prohibit sex-segregated Help Wanted ads.

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Her testimony to Congress included proposed laws to equalize company pension contributions for women and men. Muriel also had to strike a balance between the interests of Byoir's clients and those of the women's movement. She rescued herself from NOW deliberations whenever they considered suing Byoir clients. In 1975 she organized a meeting between NOW officers and Byoir client "Sesame Street," which headed off a planned NOW boycott while also obtaining a commitment for increased participation of female characters on the influential TV show.

In 1967 Muriel helped found New York NOW, the first chapter of the national organization. Carl Byoir promoted Muriel to group vice president in 1974 and to executive vice president in 1979, the first and only female executive vice president the company had. At the same time she served as president of Byoir subsidiaries ByMedia (communications training) and ByMart (smaller accounts). Business Week Magazine's list of 100 Top Corporate Women in June 1976 described her as the "top-ranking woman in public relations." She retired from Byoir in 1985, and served on the board of directors of Harleysville Mutual Insurance Company from 1976 to 2000, chairing its Audit Committee, and on the board of Rorer Pharmaceuticals from 1979 to 1993, chairing its Nominating Committee.

Muriel retired as NOW's PR VP in 1969, but remained very active in the NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund (now Legal Momentum), which she co founded. In 1979 she created NOWLDEF's annual Equal Opportunity Awards Dinner, and she chaired it for 22 years with co-chairs including a roster of corporate

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America's foremost CEOs. She worked with Elinor Guggenheimer founding in 1974 the Women's Forum, an organization of pre-eminent women from diverse fields, and was its second president in 1976-78. In a CBS-TV interview she credited the Forum with "transforming the word network into a verb."

For VFA she has organized and co-chaired many conferences, including the Salute To Feminist Authors and Salute To Feminist Artists. She is Senior Editor of "Feminists Who Changed America," with the biographies of 2,200 pioneers of the Second Wave. She chaired the November 15, 2006 all-day VFA conference at Columbia University and Barnard College that celebrated the book's publication by University of Illinois Press.



On Mother's Day in 1980, VFA Vice President Muriel Fox participated in a march for the Equal Rights Amendment in Chicago, Illinois.

In speeches Muriel urges successful women to abandon their old roles as "Queen Bee" in a man's world, and instead to support organizations that combat sex

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discrimination against all women. To advance this goal she served on the founding steering committees not only of NOW and The Women's Forum but also the National Women's Political Caucus, Child Care Action Campaign, the Women's Economic Round Table, American Women in Radio & Television and Foremost Women In Communications. Her most frequent speech line is a call urging successful women to say, "Yes, I am a feminist."

For NOWLDEF she organized and chaired The National Assembly on the Future of the Family (1979) convening 2,100 civic leaders in the first public forum that highlighted the modern-day transformation of the once-traditional American family; and The Convocation on New Leadership in the Public Interest (1981) to win allies for the women's movement among leaders of business, labor, government and public policy.

In 1965-68 she was co-chair, with Senator Maurine Neuberger, of Vice President Hubert Humphrey's task force on Women's Goals. In 1983-84 she served on the Marketing Committee of President Reagan's Advisory Council on Private Sector Initiative. She served as a director of United Way of Tri-State, American Arbitration Association and the International Rescue Committee.

Muriel was elected president of the Rockland Center for the Arts in 2004, and led the Center for four years in its major campaign for expansion and renovation. She is currently the Center's vice president for administration.

She has appeared on television frequently -- including a two-week debate series against William Buckley on "Firing Line" on the topic "Resolved: Women Have It

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Better Than Men." She has lectured throughout the world on such topics as Communications, Family Trends, the Women's Movement, Networking and "Moving Women Up the Corporate Ladder."

In 1991 the NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund created the Muriel Fox Award for Communications Leadership Toward a Just Society. The first winner of the "Foxy" was Muriel Fox herself. In 1996 the Fund surprised her with an "Our Hero" award "For a Lifetime of Dedication to the Cause of Women's Equality." She was the first recipient of New York State NOW's Eleanor Roosevelt Leadership Award, in 1985; and that same year Barnard College selected her to receive its Distinguished Alumna Award.

She was the first woman to receive the "Business Leader of the Year" Award from Americans for Democratic Action and the first public relations executive to win the Achievement Award of American Women in Radio & Television. She received the Matrix Award from New York Women in Communications and the Woman of Accomplishment Award from the Wings Club. She received the Distinguished Citizen Award from the Rockland County Family Shelter, the Woman to Women Award from New York State NOW, and the Carolyn Lexow Babcock Award from Rockland County NOW. Today, at age 82, Muriel Fox continues as one of the most active and important leaders in the feminist movement.

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## **SONIA PRESSMAN FUENTES**

I was born in Berlin, Germany, of Polish Jewish parents in 1928. In 1933, my brother, Hermann, who was fourteen years my senior, saw the threat Hitler posed to Germany's Jews and urged my parents to leave Germany. My father, who had lived in Germany for over twenty years and was the prosperous owner of a men's clothing store, scoffed at this suggestion. He was sure that Hitler and his Nazi followers would soon blow over.



My brother decided to leave on his own, and, in May 1933, he moved to Antwerp, Belgium. Shortly thereafter, my father changed his mind about leaving Germany, met with a group of Nazis, agreed to give them our business for a fraction of its cost, and they gave us permission to leave.

In July 1933, my parents and I moved to Antwerp. There followed months during which my father and brother tried to find a way to make a living in Antwerp and other

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European cities, but nothing worked out. My brother made countless applications for visas to permit our family to remain in Belgium; all were denied. Then, my father read that ships were departing for the U.S., and my parents decided we would get on one of these ships. Since my parents had been born in Poland, we were able to get visas for the U.S. on our



Polish passports. We left Antwerp on the Red Star Line's S.S. Westernland in April 1933, arriving in New York City on May 1, 1934.

After we had left Antwerp, the police came to our apartment to serve us with deportation papers; they planned to deport us to Poland, where my parents hadn't lived in twenty years. Had our visas to remain in Belgium been granted or had we been deported to Poland, we would, in all likelihood, have been killed during the Holocaust.

On arriving in New York City, my family rented an apartment in the Bronx and my father went into the men's clothing business.

After a summer 1935 vacation in the Catskill Mountains of New York State, my father decided that we would be

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moving to a village in the Catskills, where he planned to go into the resort business, a business in which he had no experience.

In 1936, we moved to the village of Woodridge, New York, where my parents rented and ran a rooming house for five years. In 1941, my parents bought fifty acres of land in the nearby, larger town of Monticello, where they built a twenty-five-bungalow colony.

I graduated from high school in Monticello as valedictorian of my class and went on to Cornell University, from which I graduated, Phi Beta Kappa, in 1950.

By that time, my brother was married and living in Long Beach, New York; my parents had sold the bungalow colony, retired and moved to Long Beach, too; and I moved there to live with my parents.

I thought the world would be beating a path to my door. But no such thing happened. I couldn't get a job until I went to business school and learned shorthand. (I'd already taken typing in high school.) I finished my shorthand studies on a Friday and the following Monday I had a job as a secretary at Fawcett Publications.

By 1954, I felt I was getting nowhere fast, and decided to apply for law school at the University of Miami, FL (since my family and I often spent winters in Miami Beach). My goal was to practice law in a private law firm, something I never thereafter did.

In my final year of law school, recruiters from the U.S.

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Department of Justice came to the school, and I was accepted for their program for Honor Law Graduates.

After graduation from law school, first in my class, I moved to Washington, D.C., intending to stay with the Justice Department for a few months before moving on to my goal: private practice. That was the start of a twenty-three-year career with a number of federal agencies. I subsequently worked for the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), and the Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD).

Through much of my career, I was looking for another job. From the age of ten, I had felt there was a purpose to my life, a mission I had to accomplish, and that I was not free as other girls and women were simply to marry, raise a family, and pursue happiness. This feeling arose from three factors in my life: I had been born only because my mother's favored abortionist was out of Berlin, my immediate family and I had escaped the Holocaust, and I was bright. I concluded that I had been saved to make a contribution to the world. But I had no idea what it was to be.

In 1963, as a volunteer with the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), I testified before the House of Representatives Committee on Education and Labor in favor of the Equal Pay Bill, which was subsequently passed. I assumed that was my first and last effort on behalf of women's rights--but I was wrong.

In October 1965, three months after it had commenced operations, I joined the EEOC as the first woman lawyer

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in its Office of the General Counsel--and found the role I was meant to play. The EEOC was charged with enforcement of a new law, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. At that time (it was later expanded to cover discrimination based on mental or physical disabilities), Title VII prohibited discrimination by covered employers, employment agencies, and labor unions based on race, color, religion, sex, and national origin.

During its first year or so, by and large, the EEOC did not enforce the gender discrimination prohibitions of the Act. Most of the commissioners and staff had come to the agency to fight discrimination against African Americans and did not want the Commission's time and resources devoted to gender discrimination. Furthermore, the gender discrimination provisions raised more difficult questions of interpretation than did the other prohibitions of the Act.

The Commission's failure to implement the gender discrimination prohibitions of the Act caused me a great deal of grief and frustration. When Betty Friedan came to the Office of the General Counsel to interview the General Counsel and his deputy for a book she planned to write, I shared this frustration with her. I told her that what this country needed was an organization to fight for women like the NAACP fought for its constituency.

In June and October 1966, forty-nine men and women, of whom I was one, formed the National Organization for Women (NOW).

Thereafter, I became involved in an underground activity. I took to meeting privately at night in the

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Southwest Washington, D.C., apartment of Mary Eastwood, a Justice Department attorney and a co-founder of NOW, with her and two other government lawyers, Phineas Indritz and Caruthers Berger. At those meetings, I discussed the inaction of the Commission that I had witnessed during that day or week with regard to women's rights, and then we drafted letters from NOW to the Commission demanding that action be taken in those areas. To my amazement, no one at the Commission ever questioned how NOW had become privy to the Commission's deliberations.

As a result of pressure by NOW, the EEOC began to take seriously its mandate to eliminate gender discrimination in employment. It conducted hearings and began to issue interpretations and decisions implementing women's rights. I drafted one of the Commission's earliest Digests of Legal Interpretations, its first Guidelines on Pregnancy and Childbirth, and the EEOC's first decision finding that airlines violated Title VII when they grounded or terminated stewardesses on marriage or reaching the age of thirty-two or thirty-five.

I also became a founder of WEAL (Women's Equity Action League) and FEW (Federally Employed Women) and a charter member of VFA (Veteran Feminists of America).

While I was at the EEOC, when I was forty-two years old, I married, and when I was 43½, I gave birth to my daughter. Subsequently, I divorced and raised my daughter as a single mother.

I left the Commission in 1973 and in the ensuing years

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became the highest-paid woman employee at the headquarters of two leading corporations: GTE Service Corporation in Stamford, Connecticut, and TRW Inc. in Cleveland, Ohio.

In 1990, I learned I had breast cancer. I had a mastectomy and simultaneous silicone breast implant. Thereafter, I went on the board of the American Cancer Society (ACS) for the District of Columbia, traveled to Israel and China to look into the diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer in those countries, and reported on my findings to ACS and in speeches.

In 2005, I discovered that my breast implant had ruptured; I had it removed and replaced with a saline breast implant. Subsequently, I wrote an article on breast implant ruptures and leaks to let the millions of women with implants know that implants have limited life spans.

In 1996, at a ceremony honoring the founders of NOW, Betty Friedan presented me with the VFA Medal of Honor. I was honored by VFA again at a June 2008 program at the Harvard Club in NYC as one of thirty-six feminist lawyers who made significant contributions to women's rights in the 1963-1975 time period.

In 2000, I was inducted into the Maryland Women's Hall of Fame and was included in the National Gallery of Prominent Refugees established by the UN High

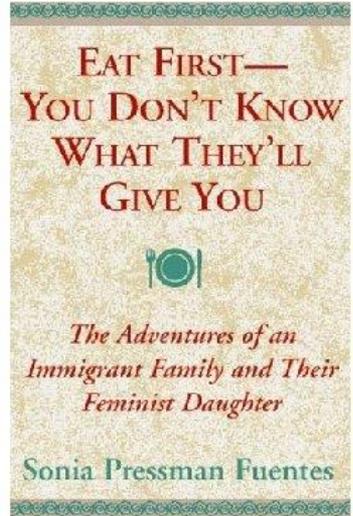
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Commissioner for Refugees. I was also one of seventy-four women included by the Jewish Women's Archive in an online exhibit of Jewish American women who contributed to women's rights. ([jwa.org/feminism](http://jwa.org/feminism)).

I have lectured and written extensively in this country and abroad on women's rights. My testimony was presented to a Select Committee of the House of Lords when England was considering the passage of legislation prohibiting gender discrimination in employment, which legislation was subsequently passed, and I was a consultant to the Women's Department and the Department of Labour for the Province of Ontario when Ontario was considering the passage of such legislation, which legislation was also subsequently passed.

I have traveled as an "American specialist" on women's rights for the then-US Information Agency (USIA) to France, Germany, Spain, Japan, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Indonesia, giving talks and meeting with women and representatives of labor, industry, academia, and the professions.

In 1993, I retired and for over a year I went through a difficult period wondering what to do with the rest of my life. Eventually, I wrote my memoir, *Eat First--You Don't Know What They'll Give You, The Adventures of an Immigrant Family and Their Feminist Daughter*, and



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moved to Sarasota, FL.

I embarked on new careers as a writer, public speaker, and community and feminist activist. Currently, I am co-president of the Sarasota chapter of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, a member of the local chapter of NOW, a member of the program committee of the Congregation for Humanistic Judaism, and the first and only honorary member of the Sarasota chapter of the Florida Association of Women Lawyers.

This June, at its annual national conference in Tampa, FL, NOW will present me with an award for being a co-founder and for my work at the EEOC.

I returned to Germany once since I left in 1933, as a speaker on women's rights for USIA in 1978. I plan to go again for a week this September, at the invitation of the German government.

After that, I plan to spend several days in Antwerp as the guest of the staff of the Red Star Line Museum. That museum, dedicated to the Red Star Line and due to open in the spring of 2013, will have a permanent exhibit about me and my family. This will be my first time back in Antwerp since I left in 1934.

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### **DANIELA GIOSEFFI**

Daniela Gioseffi's feminist awakening began in 1961. As a civil rights intern-journalist in Selma, Alabama at WSLA-TV, she appeared on an all black Gospel television show announcing freedom rides and sit-ins, was arrested, taken to a jailhouse by a deputy sheriff of Montgomery County, and raped. The rapist, a member of the Ku Klux Klan, threatened her with death for her civil rights activism. In 1966, at age 24, she had a second awakening. She almost died in childbirth when her doctor refused to respond to her complaints about a high fever, deciding she had a urinary tract infection. The fever was septicemia, or childbed fever.



Born in 1941 in Orange, New Jersey, Daniela grew up in Newark. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Montclair University, and an MFA on scholarship from The Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, C.U.A., Washington, D.C., then toured as an actress in classical dramas with The National Repertory Company out of Washington. She later moved to New York City with her husband and daughter, where she taught Communication Arts and Creative Writing at various institutions in the metropolitan area and gave readings and talks on her feminist poems during the late 60's and early 70's, often with other feminist poets like Audrey Lorde, Alicia Ostriker, and Marge Piercy.

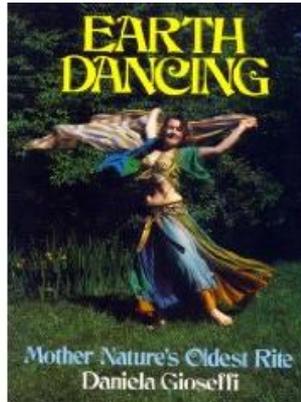
Her writing began appearing in feminist poetry

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anthologies and in the earliest issues of MS. magazine She joined New Feminist Talent (a feminist speakers bureau founded by Jacqui Ceballos, Jane Field and Dell Williams), and lectured and performed on college campuses and in theatres, around the country, giving many readings to women who identified with the themes in her poems.

She presented a one-woman show titled: **The Birth Dance of Earth: A Celebration of Women and the Earth in Poetry, Music, and Dance**, wrote a treatise on The Birth Dance, otherwise known as the belly dance, to explain that the dance of birth and fertility in ancient cultures was

an ancient form of Lamaze exercise for preparation of the body for birthing, as well as a dance of life in celebration of the female's magical ability to bring life forth from her womb. The belly rolls of the ancient Mid-Eastern dance



represented birth contractions. The so called• "belly dance"• had become a form of burlesque women were forced to perform for sexist society. The quintessential female dance of life was originally the female counterpoint to the typical male dance of the hunt and war, but it had been degraded.

In 1980, Daniela's book, **Earth Dancing, Mother Nature's Oldest Rite** was published, illustrated with

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many ancient artifacts to demonstrate how women's rituals had been co-opted by sexist society and turned into burlesque spectacle. Daniela toured the country giving feminist performances in which women would join her in their ancient Dance of Life, which was featured as The New Dance of Liberation in a centerfold of MS. magazine, 1976.

Her book of poetry, **Eggs in the Lake**, which celebrated women's freedom and erotic power, won a grant from the New York State Council for the Arts. Her drama **The Sea Hag in the Cave of Sleep**, an homage to the crone figure of feminine wisdom, was produced at the Cubiculo Theatre in Manhattan and won a multimedia grant award from The New York State Council for the Arts. In 1979, her satiric, feminist novel, **The Great American Belly**, was published by Doubleday in New York and the New English Library in London, as well as in Serbo-Croatian in Zagreb. It told the story of a woman who survives divorce by birth dancing across the country while raising a child alone. Though fiction, it is roughly based on the author's life. In 1979, Daniela toured England speaking on BBC stations from London to Oxford to Brighton on her feminist theories of dance and ancient culture. She later joined a group of feminists in Brooklyn Heights who worship the Goddess principle using dance as ritual.

Published in 1980, **Earth Dancing, Mother Nature's Oldest Rite**, was illustrated with many ancient artifacts to demonstrate how women's rituals had been co-opted by sexist society and turned into burlesque spectacles. She authored **Women on War** in 1988, which became a women's studies antiwar classic and won an American Book Award in 1990. Reissued in 2003 by The Feminist

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Press, it expounds on the devastation of women's lives by war and a militarized economy. It has been translated into German, published in Vienna by a feminist press and been in print for over 25 years.

In 1993, Daniela edited **On Prejudice: A Global Perspective** with an introduction on the dynamics of prejudice from sexism to racism to xenophobia. It won a World Peace Award from the Ploughshares Fund and was presented at the United Nations by The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. "It was translated into Japanese and published in Tokyo."

Recently she was given the \$1,000 John Ciardi Award for Lifetime Achievement in Poetry; a Lifetime Achievement Award from The Association of American Educators, and the a N.Y. State Literary Award. Her recent book of poetry is **Blood Autumn**, and she just completed a biographical novel on the life of Emily Dickinson. Titled **Wild Night, Wild Nights** after Dickinson's poem, it dispels myth that has surrounded the iconic American poet, bringing her to light as a full-bodied woman of strong and rebellious intellect.

In 2002, Gioseffi's verse was chosen to be etched in marble on a wall of Penn Station's 7th Ave. Concourse with that of Walt Whitman. She is currently working on a memoir of her life as a feminist activist.

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### **ERNESTINE GLOSSBRENNER**

VFA has just heard of the passing of Ernestine Glossbrenner, a pioneer feminist of Dallas and longtime State Representative who was honored at our Dallas event in 2010, reminding us just how important it is for every feminist to leave instructions that VFA be advised upon one's death. Ernestine's life story is so inspiring that we're adding it to VFA's fabulous collection of bios. Here are excerpts from her story from the Dallas program planned by VFA board member Bonnie Wheeler, with added information from the Dallas News.



Originally from the East Texas oil field community of Carlisle, Ernestine graduated from Kilgore Junior College in 1952 and earned a bachelor's degree in chemistry from the University of Texas in 1954 and a master's degree in mathematics from Texas A&I. A lifelong advocate for public education, she taught math in Alice for more than 20 years.

She came late to the Women's Movement, she said, because her parents had neglected to tell her that she was limited in her aspirations because she was a girl. Minding her own business at the National Education Association Annual Convention in Atlantic City back in

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1972, she happened upon a notice of a meeting of the Women's Political Caucus.

"I showed up and signed in. What a surprise! I found out that I wasn't included in 'all men are created equal.'"

She wasn't keen on that, so she volunteered to help draft resolutions that needed passing at the Convention, back home, started learning about her own history and what was happening with women's rights in the United States, particularly Texas. Gloria Steinem was coming to San Antonio to speak to the Women's Political Caucus, so Ernestine convinced a fellow teacher to drive the 120 miles to San Antonio after school. The pair listened to Ms. Steinem and immediately volunteered to work for passage of the ERA.

Feminism was taking hold in the Texas State Teachers Association around the same time. In **1973** Ernestine attended the Women's Political Caucus in Houston and agreed to help carry a resolution to the TSTA to help sponsor a workshop called "Boys Over Here, Girls Over There."

The workshop focused on making the Texas school curriculum and textbooks more reflective of the roles of women and minorities, as well as what those roles should be. After the convention, Ernestine received a letter inviting her to a meeting of the executive committee of the Texas Women's Political Caucus. She had never done anything politically—except vote and help carry Jim Wells County for Sissy Farenthold in her race for governor. When she arrived at the TWPC

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meeting, she was taken aback by the women's youth and high level of knowledge. "I would have been embarrassed had they not been so warm and friendly," she recalled.

Ernestine was hooked! She helped organize her county's Women's Political Caucus and ran for State Representative in 1974, enlisting the support of her former math students, fellow teachers and friends. She didn't win that round, but two years later she won the race by 136 votes out of about 28,000 cast. Local citizens kept telling Caucus members about projects "you 'wimin'" could do. All 14 members did accomplish some of those requests. Noticing that the Commissioners' Court districts had been drawn so that, in a county that had a 65 percent Hispanic population, there was only one Hispanic commissioner and she represented 48 percent of the population, the Women's Caucus sued under the one-person, one-vote provision and forced redistricting.

In 1976 she was elected to the Texas Legislature. As one of few women, she saw to it that indigent women and children received better healthcare, all children received more adequate and fair educational opportunities, and women (and men) were freed to vote for their own choice, no matter where they worked.

Discrimination against women in a popular downtown Austin luncheon club was even stopped with some male House members supported Ernestine's group of women legislators—known as The Women's Marching Chowder, Terrorist and Quasi-judicial Society—by letting it be known that they wouldn't go where any other House

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member couldn't go. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, Ernestine chaired both the Elections Committee and the Public Education Committee. At her prodding, the Elections Committee managed to provide for fairer elections and to protect ill and elderly citizens from being abused by campaign workers.

Leading the Public Education Committee, Ernestine made sure that equal opportunities were afforded to girls and all minorities. "One of the most difficult things to include in schools' curriculum was anything that had to do with sexuality," she added. "You'd be surprised at the number of people who believe that making babies should be undertaken only by the ignorant

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### **JULIETTE GORDON**

In 1969 women artists were fighting to be taken seriously by art historians, museums and galleries. They formed WAR - Women Artists in Revolution and conducted their own war against the male dominated art world. They demonstrated, published articles and joined other feminists in actions . They marched with their art in the great Women's March for Equality on August 26, 1970 on Fifth Avenue.

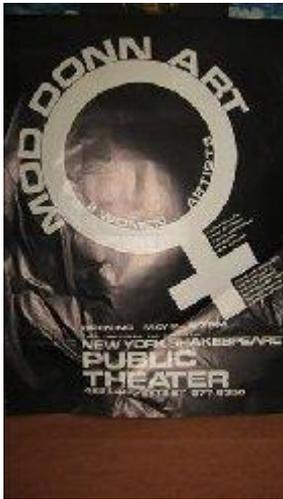


That's when I met Juliette Gordon. She was one of the founders of WAR. Those were exciting times, when thousands of women were rebelling against restrictions of all kinds.

They would join existing organizations, form new ones, meet at demonstrations and meetings and, as soldiers who'd fought bloody wars together, were bonded forever.

But 40 years is a long time to keep track of everyone. The formation of VFA got most of us back together, but some - such as Juliette Gordon -- seem to have disappeared into the stratosphere. So when VFA honored feminist artists in 2004, she wasn't included. I

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couldn't understand how a New York artist wouldn't know that we were honoring feminist artists. I couldn't imagine what had happened to her.

But something is in the air. "Lost" pioneer feminists are finding us! Not only did I hear from Merikay McCleod, and Bunny Sandler about Vincent Macaluso, but I received a call from Sam Weinreb, Juliette's partner and father of her son. Urged by artist Sylvianna

Goldsmith, he'd checked out our 2003 Salute to Feminist Artists on the web, and "Your name rang a bell," he said. He wanted Juliette to receive recognition for all she'd done, so he called and gave me news of her.

"I met Juliette in the Art Workers Union, said Sam. Among protests we participated in was the Artists Against the Vietnam War. At a meeting of the Art Workers our president, Tom Lloyd, wanted a black wing at the Museum of Modern Art. Juliette interrupted, "How about a women's wing? she demanded."

And the art world did begin to open to women. One of the immediate results was the great Women's Art Museum in Washington, DC.

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Juliette was also doing well. She had many one-woman shows at the Star Turtle Gallery, the Alan Stone Gallery and for several years at her own Juliette Gordon Gallery on East 73rd Street in New York. She exhibited at the 17th biannual print exhibit at the Brooklyn Museum in 1971 and took part in many exhibits on the East Coast.

But in 2002 she almost lost her life in a fire in her loft. Her 21 year old son pulled her out of the burning building just in time. After months of recuperation she was left unable to care for herself, and had to go into an assisted living home, where she lives today. Her heart is strong, but sadly her right wrist was damaged and she can't hold a paintbrush. She misses her art and her friends, but hearing that VFA will honor her perked her up.

Sam, an artist himself, sent photos of Juliette's beautiful work. He visits her often and reports that she was delighted to hear that VFA will present her with a certificate and medal of honor. *Jacqui Ceballos*

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### **ELLIE MILLER GREENBERG**

When is one old enough to write a memoir or an autobiography? Is it at age 50, 60, 70, 80, or?? When do we know enough about our own lives to present ourselves to others??



We produce resumes continuously throughout our professional lives and add items as the years roll on. But, a resume is

different from an autobiography. It is less personal and more factual.

Perhaps, now that I am 80 years old, it is time to tell my life's story. I'll use my resume as a guide to remind me of details, but I will attempt, here, to be more personal.

Many of the stories in the FVA archives are stories of hardship, poor economic beginnings, barriers to achievement, lack of parental support, or realizing one's "feminism" in the young adult years. Not so for me.

I was born in Brooklyn, New York in 1932, in the midst of the Great Depression. My parents, as well as my aunt and uncle and my male first cousin, were living with my grandparents in their two story attached home, since independent housing was expensive. The house was on New Jersey Avenue in the New Lots section of Brooklyn,

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a Jewish neighborhood where many of our relatives lived.

My father had grown up poor on the East Side of New York, with a stint in a Hebrew orphanage, along with his brother and sister. His mother became a widow when he was about three, and as a single mom, she had to place her kids in an orphanage so she could go to work. She worked in the garment industry and was a labor leader in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. My memories of my paternal grandmother are of a strong, independent woman. She smoked cigarettes in a cigarette holder and wore slacks. In her photographs, she is often holding a large purse and wearing a hat. My father's parents came from Russia via London in the great wave of immigration in 1903.

My mother's grandparents arrived here with their young children in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century, having walked from Odessa in Ukraine to Turkey, as they fled both the Czar's army and the Turkish army. My maternal great grandmother, bubbe, was the oldest person I ever knew. She was in her nineties, had long white braids, and spoke only Yiddish. She had had a stroke and sat in a rocking chair coloring children's coloring books.

Although my mother was a stay-at-home mom, she had been a rather independent woman before she was married. She "went to business" as a secretary, attended CCNY at night, had a large collection of poetry books, and studied dance with Martha Graham. There are many photographs of her in various costumes; and I have photographs of my parents spending weekends in the country with a group of friends, even before they were

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married. Rather avante garde, I'd say. Maybe even feminist.

We lived in two different apartments in Brooklyn before we moved to a two family house in New Jersey, where my sister was born and I started school. Each time we moved, our economic situation was improved. Throughout my elementary school years, my mother took me into New York on Saturdays to attend Dalcroze School of Music, go shopping and visit museums.

By the time we owned our own home on a beautiful street in Newark, World War II had begun. My recollections of the war years are vivid. I wore a navy blue peacoat, a replica of a WAVE hat, and had a pilot's helmet like the one Amelia Earhart wore. Between 1941 and 1945, when I graduated from elementary school, we sang patriotic songs, saw movies about brave Dutch children escaping the Nazis, smashed tin cans, and bought War Bonds for \$18.75. If it is so that "you are what you were when", and, "when" is age 10, my values were formed during the war years. My early feminism was shaped by the WACS and I often imagined myself in difficult war-related situations and bombings.

One of the childhood experiences that strongly influenced my life was summer camp, which I attended for almost two months beginning when I was only seven years old. Later, at Raquette Lake Girls Camp in the Adirondaks, I excelled in sports, swimming, canoeing and song leading. I became a color war team captain and began to view myself as a leader. I won the camp's most prestigious award, the Character Cup, and was inducted into the very special Magic Circle. There were

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powerful role models at camp: the tennis playing –lawyer head counselor, the equality-focused camp owner, and the brilliant pianist-composer. Those strong and talented women were feminists long before the political movement of the 1960s.

During high school, I became a twirler and then a majorette. I marched in front of the twirling squad in my white uniform and was considered a leader. I was a good student and a popular person. I always had a boyfriend and many girlfriends. I recall being conscious of trying to balance my independence with my group belongingness.

My father, who may not have even graduated from high school, was the most widely-read person I ever knew. He was brilliant at mathematics and self-taught in a myriad of subjects. He did the New York Times crossword puzzles in ink, and read dozens of books each week. After learning the plumbing supply business as an employee, he later became a partner and then went out on his own into a resistant materials business that prospered during the war. He solved complex engineering and construction problems without formal schooling. He believed that I could do anything I chose to do, and he was the most feminist person in my life.

When it came to college, my parents focused my attention on the “seven sisters” and my goal became to get into Mount Holyoke, the first women’s college in the country. We knew one family with a Mount Holyoke daughter and we thought that she was both brilliant and beautiful. I wanted to be just like her. Fortunately, I was accepted and I consider my four years at Mount Holyoke

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College to have been the most transformative experience of my life. It was there that I was taken seriously as a student and surrounded by competent professional female scholars, who were both supportive and challenging. I also took the founder, Mary Lyon, quite seriously and adopted her motto: "Go where no one else will go; do what no one else will do". Those words have become a lifetime guideline for me.

My parents' surprising divorce during my freshman year, became another life-shaping event. Seeing my mother struggle to become independent after eighteen years of marriage convinced me that it was necessary for women to have a significant career and be able to be financially independent. As a result, after I graduated from Mount Holyoke, I went to the University of Wisconsin and got a Masters in Speech Pathology and developed a specialty of working with brain-injured children and adults. My first job was at a new school for children with cerebral palsy in Denver. There was certainly no point in returning to the east, where my father had re-married and had two more children. He now had four daughters and two adopted children from his second wife. Life had become harder for my mother and more complex for everyone.

Soon after I moved to Denver, I met my husband-to-be on a blind date. By the early 1950s, I had become convinced that it would be necessary for women to have a career, as well as to become wives and mothers. That's the goal I set out for myself. I believed that I was capable of those multiple roles, and if I could not do it, no one could. That was the proposition I offered my husband, and he agreed. It was on that premise that we were married. By the time Betty Friedan's *Feminine*

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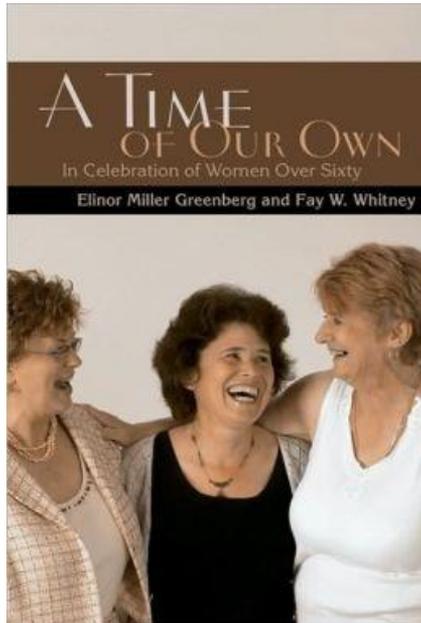
Mystique was published in 1963, I had three children, a career, and an active life in the Civil Rights Movement. I was already living the "have-it-all" life, while my friends had set aside their work to become stay-at-home moms and were beginning to attend consciousness raising groups. While my husband and I worked hard to accommodate my increasing responsibilities outside the home, I watched other marriages founder on the rocks of role differentiation.

By the 1970s, I had changed careers and had the opportunity to develop and administer new programs in higher education. The majority of my students were adult women returning to school to finish the degrees that they had abandoned when they married and had children a decade before. First in University Without Walls, then in US WEST's Pathways to the Future, and later in the Mountain and Plains Partnership (MAPP), I designed individualized programs that allowed and supported women, and some men, to shape their own lives and careers, just as I had the privilege of doing at Mount Holyoke. We brought higher education into the Colorado prisons, the Navajo Reservation, the rural communities in fourteen western states.

As my work became well-known, I was invited to write and edit books and newspaper columns. I completed my own doctorate and did my course work in the law school and the business school. I became a frequent public speaker and consultant and traveled throughout the country and the world. During the 1980s and 1990s, I co-founded many women's organizations and became involved in politics, boards and commissions. I have been recognized with honorary degrees and numerous

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awards and was inducted into the Colorado Women's Hall of Fame in 2010.



My three children are now grown, have achieved in their educations and careers, and I have four terrific grandchildren. I lost my wonderful and supportive husband in 2009 when we were traveling in China and I am learning how to live alone. My daughters and my son are, of course, feminists and have grown up knowing what it is like to have a mother who has “had it all”. ....extensive education, a successful marriage, satisfying careers, and an active community life, along with many friends, children, and grandchildren.

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Way back in the 1940s and 1950s, I somehow knew what women's lives would have to be like in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, and I set out quite purposefully to become that kind of woman. I have been fortunate to have had feminist men in my life who have supported me all the way.

In many ways, I have led a privileged life, for which I feel fortunate and do not apologize. I was brought up to believe that I could and should be a pacesetter in this regard, and I did not disappoint. For me, feminism has never been only a political movement, it has been a way of life. I grew up with supportive parents who believed in me and taught me to believe in myself. I had a totally supportive husband who took pride in my achievements. I have tried to do the same for my children and, in turn, for my grandchildren. For these opportunities, I am forever grateful.

Now, at 80, I can report that it is not only possible, but it is necessary, for women to become wives, mothers, career women, and community activists.....throughout their changing lives. Our complex world requires that of us. That is the nature of things. So it has been, and so it shall ever be.

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### AMY HACKETT

I was born in 1941 in Cincinnati, Ohio, the first child of Dorothy and Loren Hackett. [My mother's family name was Grealish, but she called herself Dorothy Hackett] My parents had both worked for the company that made Windex and other household products—she in marketing, he as a chemist. She made more money than he did, but had to quit her job when they married.



We soon moved to Houston after my father began working for Goodyear as a chemist working on synthetic rubber, a critical wartime priority. Houston was much smaller back then, in part because air conditioning was still rare. We lived in a working/lower-middle-class area until I was 11. I'm grateful that this was a time and place when kids could pretty much run around outside on their own, often barefoot. I was a tomboy, played cowboys and Indians (very politically incorrect), caught tadpoles in ditches, and most of all wanted the horse I never got. Most of the kids on the block were boys, who were my usual playmates. I also spent a lot of time reading and did well in school, though hated it that girls couldn't wear jeans.

We moved to a close-in suburb of Houston just before I started junior high. By then I had a much younger brother, whose birth in 1950 ended my existence as an

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only child when I was 9. My father had gotten a better job, and Bellaire—though within the Houston school system—had better schools than my old neighborhood. After junior high, I moved into a brand new high school, which was first-class academically. Debate and speech were my main extracurricular activities; as perks there were trips to tournaments around Texas, Oklahoma and Louisiana. The debaters were a political lot, and I was part of a liberal Democratic caucus, working to elect candidates like Ralph Yarborough.

My parents were moderate Midwestern Taft/Eisenhower Republicans. (My mother came from St. Louis and my father from a small town in northwest Missouri.) Despite my Texas childhood and youth and having lived in New York City most of my life, I'm in many ways a Midwesterner in temperament. My mother remained a housewife, although she was a frustrated writer. For a while she had a column in a neighborhood newspaper, but most of her writing remained unpublished—including several unpublished children's books, a study of a Korean Methodist bishop and many, many long letters to uncounted people she met along the way. She became far more liberal as she grew older and certainly was sympathetic to feminism, in part I'm sure because of her own life.

I did well enough in high school and SAT scores to aspire to one of the "Seven Sister" colleges, in particular Barnard. Two of the three schools to which I applied accepted me, but offered no student aid and were relatively expensive; moreover, my parents weren't keen on my going so far. A scholarship from Southern Methodist University in Dallas settled the matter. My

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mother hoped that I would become more social there, learn to play bridge (which my parents enjoyed) and join a sorority. One of the less social sororities accepted me, but I never learned bridge and rarely dated.

In 1963, SMU was a pretty conservative place (although regularly targeted for Communist tendencies by the John Birch Society). Female students could be "grounded," i.e., confined to your dorm on a weekend, for getting caught wearing jeans in the Student Center, as once happened to me. Nonetheless, SMU had some inspiring professors and I acquired an interest in history. There was no hint of feminist ferment on campus, but I discovered De Beauvoir's *Second Sex*, wrote a paper for a psychology course on the stupidity of tests that allegedly measured "femininity" and "masculinity," in part based on breadth of knowledge. As a history major with a particular interest in Germany, I was especially offended by a question regarding the date of the Franco-Prussian War. Looking for a woman as a subject in a European history course, I wrote a term paper on Polish/German Socialist Rosa Luxemburg.

After graduation and a year in Hamburg, Germany, on a Fulbright, in 1964 I headed to Columbia for graduate school in history, intending to write a dissertation on 19th century German political history. Along the way, inspired in part by a history of early 19th century England that put the suffrage battle on level with other political movements, such as labor unrest and the Irish rebellion, I decided to find out whether Germany had experienced its own women's movement. (If so, it had been omitted from all of the German histories I'd read.) It turned out that the German women's movement was numerically

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the largest in Europe and quite active in international women's organizations.

In 1967, I set out for a year of dissertation research in Germany, which involved many days in libraries and dusty and uncatalogued archives trying to uncover something about the German women whom historians had so long ignored. Thus I missed the student uprising at Columbia, though I was present for similar events in Germany. In both cases, the dismissive behavior of male students toward women activists furthered an incipient rebirth of feminism.

Back at Columbia in the aftermath of the '68 student uprising, I worked on my dissertation, graded papers, eventually taught as a lecturer, and was active with Columbia Women's Liberation (CWL) as well as with the campus active antiwar movement. This was still a time when the Ivy League undergrad colleges were still all-male and women professors were few and far between. Tellingly, the restrooms were marked: Male, Female and Faculty. The history department contained no female professors; indeed, one elderly historian openly asserted that there would be one only over his dead body. Not surprisingly, affirmative action in faculty hiring was a leading cause. CWL collected statistics, promoted affirmative action procedures, as well as agitated for pay equity between male and female janitorial staffs.

CWL activists included Kate Millett, Sidney Abbott, Ann Sutherland Harris, Barbara Buonchristiano, and Harriet Zellner. In addition to CWL, I was part of a consciousness-raising group, lobbied and demonstrated for abortion rights, and was present at events that

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included the 1970 March for Equality and the notorious Congress to Unite Women. I also attended an early women's studies conference organized by Sheila Tobias at Cornell.

Starting during my graduate school years, and continuing through the years when I taught, I was active in women's organizations and caucuses within the historical profession, working for both affirmative action policies for women historians, the inclusion of women in history and the acceptance of women's history as a legitimate subject. I also gave conference papers and commented and served on program committees for several of the Berkshire Conferences on Women's History. While at Columbia, I taught the first European women's history seminar in the School of General Studies, and thereafter taught a variety of women's history in addition to more traditional courses. While at Columbia, I also assisted Ann

Calderwood, who recognized the need for a feminist academic journal and on her own published *Feminist Studies* until the University of Maryland took over its publication in the late 1970s.

Working on Eugene McCarthy's presidential campaign in 1968 I met the man I married, in 1972, Stoney McMurray, an engineer and another former Texan. In 1973 we set out for St. Louis, where I'd been offered a position at Washington University. What seemed like a good opportunity for both of us turned out to be a disappointment.

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I finished my dissertation but the teaching job ended after a year; and the economic downturn, which hit St. Louis hard, made jobs scarce for him. When he got an offer from his former employer two years later, we moved back east, initially to New Jersey, and then New York. Our first child, Eugene was born in 1977. (Gene—who recently married—is now a partner in a computer consulting company.) Two years later we moved to Brooklyn, where our daughter Louisa was born in 1980. (She's now finishing a master's degree in library science.) We've now been in Brooklyn, in the same house in Flatbush, for over 30 years, the longest by far that I've lived anywhere. My husband has been an active partner in caring for the children. He's also a gourmet cook.



pictured: Amy's Daughter Louisa, Aileen Hernandez,  
Amy Hackett

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After returning east, I taught off and on in short-term assignments. My major advocacy commitment from the early 1980s to the mid-'90s was in public education, for my own children's schools and beyond. I also worked as a freelance editor and translator. The realities of publishing are such that a historian with a background on Germany is likely to end up working on Nazis, World War II and the Holocaust, not women's history.

Thus I was primary editor and one translator of an encyclopedia of the Third Reich and worked with Robert Lifton on his study of Nazi doctors. With a need for more than freelance income and children approaching college age, I turned to nonprofit fundraising. I ended this chapter of my career as director of institutional relations at Legal Momentum (formerly NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund), thus returning to feminist issues.

I first learned about VFA through Jo Freeman, whom I'd known earlier through academic connections. I encountered her again through local Brooklyn politics. I think I attended my first of many VFA events in 1994 and then volunteered to be VFA treasurer in 2001. Aside from keeping track of VFA funds, I work as a freelance editor, primarily in history.

I also belong to a small study group of women historians, mainly in German history and interested in gender issues, who have met regularly for social and intellectual exchanges in New York since the 1970s—very much another expression of the feminist movement.

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### DIANA MARA HENRY

Where did I come from? My mother, Edith Entratter, child of Polish immigrants from the Lower East Side, put her hair up when she was 12 and went to work in the factories. She became a designer of handbags for Dick Koret.



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Her father was a tailor, one of her brothers was a gangster and her mother scrubbed floors to buy chicken for a diabetic sister, but she nabbed a Harvard man, Carl Henry. He was a wealthy dreamer, a Communist, and, after their marriage, a combatant in the European Theater, World War 2. He wrote letters home every day. The \*letters which relate his World War II experience are also a remarkable love story.

Carl Henry was a philosophy major at Harvard, a Phi Beta Kappa graduate and a lover of freedom. In 1934, before graduation, he protested the warship at Boston Harbor that Hitler had sent on a "friendship mission" to the United States. The Communists were watching and enlisted him, and he was a card-carrying member until he met Edith, who said, "You don't believe that stuff, do you?"

After the War, Carl and Edith Henry started Lucky Stride Shoes, manufacturing their own national brand of ladies' flats, in Maysville, Kentucky. Although my mother was

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the designer, whose image was the company logo, and who my father boasted was the highest paid woman executive in the US (\$50,000/year I seem to remember him saying) , she never had a checking account and when she wanted money would hold out her hand to him. With these mixed messages I grew up, cared for until almost age 12 by other women so my mother could work . I only bonded with the governess who taught me French, when I was 2 and ½. Because of my bond with her, I speak French at native level required for teaching, which I did in 1996, as Associate Professor of French at the Defense Language Institute.

Life was emotionally tough for this child of a career woman in the 1940's. Also funny, as when "Mademoiselle" left, my parents enlisted others who never stayed long... then they hired a German governess to teach me another language. After my first day with Fraülein, I ran to them, shouting "Mommy, Daddy, see what Fraülein taught me today!" and showed them the goosetstep...The next morning, Fraülein was gone.

My father was an amateur filmmaker who made films of his European trip when he was 13, films that were shown for months on end back home in Cincinnati...and he indulged my early enthusiasm for the first film I ever saw, North by Northwest, by taking me to see it over and over when I was eleven, in 1959, the year it came out. He'd taken me to see animation festivals at the Cincinnati Museums which also sparked a wonder and a sense of fun that have never left me in my creative contact with photography and now with the computer and website design. He analyzed advertisements with

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me, pointing out how the images and the words conveyed a message and manipulated the consumer...Heady stuff, and surely an influence on my fascination with - and belief in - the power of images to mold opinion.

Finally seeing her child slip away toward adolescence, and lonely to get her groove back with her buddies in NYC, (and after a three-week stint of living in Rome), my mother got my father to sell the business and relocate us to NYC. It was too late for her to be the mother she hadn't been, though. NYC opened doors of freedom to me that no amount of retroactive attempts at mother-daughter bonding could close.

I attended the Lycée Français de NY from the 6th to 12th grade, went to Radcliffe at age 17 after 6 years of Latin and 4 years of Greek, winning all the top prizes for scholarship (well, except for Math and Sciences), being President of my class several years running, playing in little Ionesco productions, and getting a taste of foreign policy and history-in-the-making with the election of Kennedy, Castro coming to Harlem, Khrushchev to the UN, and the assassination of JFK.

So after a first brilliant year at Radcliffe, the Harvard lack of rapport with its undergrads shut me down academically - well, I did win the (2nd) Ferguson History Prize for (2nd) best sophomore essay in History - "The Concept of Time and the Concept of History" - but I was checking out. Luckily, I found the college newspaper, and, "comping" for the Crimson, won both a place on its Photography board and a superannuated grad who hung around to snap up the virgins and teach them photography in exchange...

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Well, where's the feminism in all this? It's coming, it's coming. Anyway, so I am sitting in an "American Intellectual History" lecture with hundreds of students because it is taught by a renowned wit and wonder of the faculty, when he starts ripping into Ruth Benedict for being no more insightful about her anthropology than her menstrual problems would have caused her to be. What Letty Cottin Pogrebin later called a "click" sounded more like a death knell to me, and to my roommate who, thank G-d, was there to confirm to me that we were both as humiliated and unnerved as ever two budding young women could be.

Then there's the put-down by the grad student who turned me down for an independent study in color my last year, after two years of work for the newspaper - "If you don't know color at this point there is nothing we can teach you..." And for the first of many times I wondered: "Would he have said that to me if I had been a man?"

Well, then of course there's the fact that in four years of college I never had ONE, not one, female faculty member! My experience was not the exception, but the rule. (There was however a great female dean who fought tooth and nail to keep me from failing out, even if it meant scheduling exams just for me that I had forgotten to take, or pleading with a prof of "French Culture" to change an E to a D, even though I had eschewed attending his class.)

Okay, now the feminist insights come fast and furious. Because after graduation in 1969, working for NBC News, the prospects are dim for women who want to go beyond researcher in broadcast journalism after 40 years at the company: either sleep with a man or go to

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Vietnam, and you might do something interesting...The women who first made it as anchors were class of '72, we were three years too early. Friend Barbara, a Radcliffe grad and also working for NBC used to meet me in the ladies room and we'd cry during our breaks. (Barbara later became head of a major independent school and then Mayor of an important western city, so society benefited from her talents eventually.)

After the NBC assignment ended, I became a general assignment reporter at the Staten Island Advance, and was assigned to cover the Alice Austen House, which led me back to photography through the work of this genius, an independent woman with a passion for all that was new, exciting, and humane. As I came to know her work, I realized that when I was learning about photography by looking at the work of the greats in the photo sanctum at the Crimson, we had never turned the pages of a book on the work of a woman photographer- and I guessed there must be others than Margaret Bourke White, who was sometimes mentioned in an aside.

I would like to do the book I thought of doing then - for young people on the work of the greats: Margarethe Mather, Alice Austen, Carlotta Copron, Louise Dahl-Wolfe, Tina Modotti, Laura Gilpin ....Eventually I did the photography for the historic structures report, lobbied for a Staten Island ferry to be named in Alice Austen's honor, helped put a gravestone on her unmarked grave, and helped organize the campaign that got the city of NY to invest more than a million dollars in creating

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the Museum in her name at the foot of the Verazzano Narrows as part of the NYC Park system.

I believe it is our noblest enterprise to pay homage and continue the work and name of the great human beings who went before us. The Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America, that holds a collection of both Bettye Lane's and my work rejected my pleas to nominate us for the National Women's Hall of Fame despite the fact that if we had not documented the women's movement, there would be no visual record of it today. The library "explained" that "no nomination can come from the Schlesinger Library itself, or carry its imprimatur. As a matter of policy the library does not engage in this sort of activity, which would require weighing and discriminating among the many women represented in our collections who might be seeking various sorts of nominations or honors."

I'd photographed one-room schools and school teachers, for which I received my first Museum exhibit - at the Brattleboro Museum - and my first grant - from the NY State Council on the Arts. I began to teach - at the International Center of Photography, for which I designed and directed the community Workshop Program in the late 1970's, and at Federal Penitentiary, among many varied locations.

Being the official photographer for the National Commission on the Observance of International Women's Year... that flowed from hearing Bella, on the radio, in 1972, the year I also photographed McGovern, the Democratic National convention in Miami Beach, the Mini-convention in Washington DC, and did the

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photography for Liz Holtzman's successful first bid for Congress.



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Entrance to the convention center for the opening of the First National Women's Conference, November, 1977, by its official photographer, Diana Mara Henry. Left to right: Billie Jean King, Susan B. Anthony, Bella Abzug, Sylvia Ortiz, Peggy Kokernot, Michele Cearcy, Betty Friedan. Carrying the torch that was relayed from Seneca Falls, NY to Houston.

Bella became my mentor, and as she did for all the young people who flocked around her, made me realize that I could - and should - do great things. I did her campaign photography- eventually getting paid for the work during her bids for Senate and Mayor- and then she hired me to do the official photographs for the National Commission on the Observance of International Women's Year, at the First National Women's Conference in Houston and the NY State Women's Meeting that preceded it, in Albany, in 1977.

Though I had more fun assignments- like being flown over in the Concorde to his castle in Normandy to

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photograph Malcolm Forbes' balloon meets – and (again with Bella leading the way) assignments that were as visually and morally interesting as the Women's Pentagon Action, Vietnam Veteran actions and personalities for a decade or more, animal rights demonstrations, picketing the NY Times for the use of the term MS (12 years before the grey lady decided to use it!) , celebrities like Jane Fonda speaking to the Women Office Workers, Judy Chicago's opening at the Sarah Institute with Stewart Mott kissing Alice Neel, Patti Smith entertaining Jeannette Watson, no other assignment was as historic and as vastly challenging and rewarding as those three days in Houston.

For 35 years I have lived with the women of Houston, their faces and gestures seared into my mind, their issues, their energy, their nobility, their dreams as I acknowledged and preserved them have been my almost daily companions. "Politics is my Bag"; "pro-God, pro-family, pro-ERA"; "Keep 'Em in the Closet"; "we didn't burn 'em"; "Pro-Plan"; "Majority"; Puerto-Rico"; "Alcoholism is a Women's Issue".....High Chief Pulu Penueta , Mayor of Pago Pago, American Samoa; Agnes Dill, of the Isleta Laguna tribe; Freddie Groomes; Gracia Molina Pick; baby Era; Frances Gubbins; Peggy Kokernot, Michele Cearcy, Sylvia Ortiz; Leah Novick; Alice Bibeau and Colleen Wong...all as close to me, or closer, than Jean Stapleton, Betty Ford, Jill Ruckelshaus, Liz Carpenter. Where are they now? It is a great joy when I do know.

In 1985 I became an independent scholar of the resistance and the Nazi concentration camp of Natzweiler-Struthof and its 70 kommandos that, like

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most of the concentration camps, enslaved mostly non-Jews and some secret Jews. I now lecture and publish on the brave warriors who, for their actions suffered the Nacht und Nebel decree, and André Joseph Scheinmann, the German Jewish spy who became my my guide to facing the ugly realities of life in order to survive.

I've had the incredible honor of bringing into the world a daughter. I fought a not-very successful battle against abuse, and abuse by the judge, and the psychologists. In California in 1996, there was a fad to have the child spend one year with father, one year with mother. How terrible that would have been!

My opinions, informed by my government major as an undergrad at Harvard, as a person who has lived with those with a mental illness, and as a scholar of fascism, do not conform with those who say all cultures are the same and ignore the torture and "Honor killings" of millions of women, gays, and people and heritage sites of all other faiths in the Moslem world.

My work now resides in the archives of the Du Bois Library of U Mass Amherst as the "Diana Mara Henry; 20th Century Photographer" collection, yet I retain the copyright and rights to publish and license the work for 25 years. I speak to groups and associations and have just published a first book of my work. It includes my official photographs as first published in "The Spirit of Houston: The First National Women's Conference: An official report to the President, the Congress and the People of the United States"

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## MERLE HOFFMAN

I was born on March 6 1946, in a two-room apartment in Philadelphia, the only child of Ruth Dubow , a frustrated actor/dancer and a descendant of Russian musicians, rabbis, and revolutionaries , and Jack Rheins Hoffman, the grandson of a strong Lithuanian grandmother who had left her abusive husband and gone to England to start a new life. The grandson, my grandfather, had emigrated to the U.S. from England and made a fortune in industry before the great Depression.



MERLE HOFFMAN ON  
HER HORSE  
"HOLLYWOULD"

I was named Meryl Holly because my mother thought it a good stage name as she had transmitted all her thwarted ambitions to me and intended to mold me into a star performer. When I was old enough to understand the significance of all this I changed my name to Merle thinking far stronger than Meryl.

I'd always been ambitious, and seeing my first cousin gain international recognition as a violinist, I focused on becoming a great concert artist myself. After months of begging I convinced my mother to allow me to study. She bought me an accordion and then, impressed by my dedication, a piano. My musical talent was immediately recognized, and I soon committed myself to becoming a great concert artist. I now had something that enabled me to stand apart.

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We'd moved to Queens, N.Y., and after taking piano lessons for two years, I was accepted into the Chatham Square Music School, where concert artists trained. Though very serious about my music, I was also entering my teen years and soon became aware that male teachers were looking at other places besides my fingers.

When I was sixteen I went to Indian Hill Music Camp where I studied with a famous pianist who I instantly fell in love with. He spoke to me about his love and desire to be with me while I played Chopin. My body had developed and I was no longer a little girl, but a naïve teenager--and the strength of my emotions frightened me. I told my father about this mutual attraction and, furious, he reported the teacher to the administrator, and the scandal resulted in me being asked to leave the program, which I did, but not before I performed at the final concert of the season.

With the orchestra swelling behind me, I played Mozart's Concerto in D Minor brilliantly, but afterward I entered the first of many depressions I'd have all my life. I convinced my parents to take me to a therapist, who I would visit on and off for years. This doctor, unlike everyone else, did not pathologize my passionate and artistic nature, but enabled me to see it as a challenge and a gift.

Afterward I attended the High School of Music & Art in Manhattan. I was attracted to a young teacher there, and soon we were meeting in his apartment. I was learning how powerful my sexuality could be, but I didn't lose my virginity to him. My first sexual experience was with a Chilean concert pianist whom I met sneaking into the Vladimir Horowitz return concert.

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I had begun to equate sex with power, but fear of pregnancy as well as feeling I was vulnerable to rumors made me feel diminished after having sex, as it made me feel that someone had "had " me. It seemed that "giving yourself" to a man meant losing yourself.

I wanted lovers, but I wanted more than love, I wanted an ally. I felt myself to be just as talented and ambitious as men were, but they had egos that had to be nourished.

In the 1960's, students began protesting, demanding gender and racial desegregation, unrestricted free speech, and withdrawal from the war in Vietnam. They protested materialism and consumerism, challenged conventional lifestyles and institutions and traditions surrounding sex and marriage and urged everyone to explore alternative patterns of relationships, of work and domesticity.

The women's liberation movement was making news, but I didn't see myself as a part of that band of angry young women who called themselves feminists. I was somewhat removed from the collective reality, spending my time practicing and reading.

In 1965, after graduating from Music & Art, my parents gave me a trip to Europe. I went to Britain, then to Scotland, where I visited all the sites associated with Mary, Queen of Scots and Elizabeth 1. I made pilgrimages to sacred music relics: Chopin's piano in Mallorca, Beethoven's piano in Vienna, Liszt's in Budapest.

I met a young woman in a local pub in Cornwall who ran a stable and riding academy. We became instant friends. She invited me to her home and I lived in her cottage for eight months. She taught me to ride and I learned to

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share her passion for fox hunting. We quoted Shakespeare, recited Elizabethan poetry and walked on the bluff where Walter Raleigh had played bowls while the Spanish Armada gathered force. In the years to come, when our lives were so different, that wonderful sense of connection would return whenever we talked. It was the first time I'd felt that with another woman.



MERLE HOFFMAN IN HER OFFICE

I returned to Europe many times. I studied music in Paris, lived in one room and survived on bread and cheese; attended bullfights in Madrid; lived in Cologne for five months with a male German research scientist I'd met in a hotel lobby; learned to play backgammon on Queen Elizabeth II with Prince Alexis Obolensky. All these adventures made me see I could make things happen, create realities from the visions in my head.

I returned to the States when my money ran out. It was now clear to me that I would not be a great concert artist, nor did I want to be, as entering that world would be like entering a nunnery, practicing hours daily and giving up everything else. Also, playing music no longer filled me up emotionally. But where would I find the greatness I sought? None of the traditional female roles interested me. I felt I was drowning in everyday life.

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Thinking of a career in the theater, I took courses at the Herbert Bergdorf Studio of Acting, but that didn't satisfy my creative instinct. I took classes at the Art Students League, but soon realized an art career wasn't for me either. I experimented with religion, trying Judaism, Catholicism, Christian Science--all helped foster my search for transcendence, but none satisfied my quest for meaning

Meanwhile the battles for abortion rights was raging. Abortion was illegal in the U.S. and women were fighting for reproductive freedom and paving the way for my entrance into the conflict with courageous, creative and purposeful women. In my early twenties I knew I had the power to attract what I wanted, and was unafraid to engage it. I had been preparing for battle my whole life. A movement, a history, a war was waiting for me. And I was ready.

Now I spent most of my time at home, reading. My mother insisted I look for a part-time job. I found one working with a lapsed Jesuit priest who had a Human Relations Consulting Firm. One day the priest asked me to unbutton my blouse so he could just look. It excited me to play with the power he'd handed me, so I did. I worked there until the office closed a few months later, and again I was thrown into a holding pattern. Once more my mother began searching for jobs for me. In a local paper she found an ad for a part-time medical assistant. It was close to home and only two nights a week, so I'd have time to pursue other dreams. And thus began my entry into the medical world and my long relationship with a doctor who practiced as an internist.

### ***A NEW CHAPTER***

I began to work with Dr. Martin Gold and would work with him for years. I was impressed by his great ability

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and the way he treated his patients, many of whom were Holocaust survivors.

At the end of each day we'd discuss everything from politics to philosophy. He spoke of the time he was a Navy medical officer in WWII, about his impoverished childhood—and about his experience as a Resident at Bellevue Hospital, where victims of self-abortion were so common that the night shift was called the Midnight Express. Women would start the process at home by inserting foreign devices(wire coat hangers) into their cervixes; when they began to bleed they'd go to the emergency room where physicians would perform a procedure called dilation and curettage, scraping tissue from the uterus—essentially an abortion.

Marty convinced me to apply to college. I ascribed to the Socratic view that an unexamined life was not worth living, and I thought psychology would help me to continue examining mine. My therapist helped me register at NYU for three non-matriculating classes. I got all A's and was accepted as a full-time student. In the next years my relationship with Marty deepened and we became lovers. Years later he divorced his wife and we married and lived together until his death in 1999.

### ***ENTER ABORTION***

At age 24, in 1970 I'd finally moved out of my parents' home, and two weeks later my father died of a heart attack. Now there was no money for NYU, so I transferred to Queens College and took two more part-time jobs in addition to my work with Dr. Gold.

At Queens College I was first exposed to “real activism” in the late 60's and early 70's after attending a reading by writer Anaïs Nin and a lecture by beloved black feminist Florynce Kennedy. Flo spoke about lesbianism

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and abortion and delivered the now-famous adage, "If men could get pregnant, abortion would be a sacrament." I had first heard about abortion when I was ten, when I overheard my parents discussing a Philadelphia physician whose patient had died during an illegal procedure and, to cover for himself, he'd cut her up in pieces and put her remains down the drain.

The New York Times reported in 1970 that "a dramatic liberalization of public attitudes and practices regarding abortions appears to be sweeping the country." The Title X Family Planning program designed to provide women with access to contraceptive services was enacted as part of the Public Health Service Act. In the two-and-a-half years between July 1970, when New York's new abortion law took effect, and January 1973, when the Supreme Court's Roe vs. Wade decision legalized the procedure everywhere, 350,000 women came to New York for an abortion.

Like others, Dr Gold and his colleague Dr Leo Orris saw the change in the NY abortion law as a historic opportunity. They were founding physicians of the Health Insurance Plan of Greater New York, the first not-for-profit HMO founded to provide low-cost comprehensive health groups throughout the city. They approached the HIP board of directors with a proposal for adding abortion services, but some members of the board were morally and religiously uncomfortable with the radical changes wrought by abortion becoming legal.

HIP's solution was to create a separate medical office to deliver abortion services to HIP subscribers. Marty and Leo invested \$12,000 each and formed a partnership. In 1971 they opened Flushing Women's Medical Center, one of the first legal abortion facilities in New York. Marty asked me to help run the Center. I didn't have to think twice. I was 25 years old, abortion had been legal in NY

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State for almost a year; I'd be with Marty on the front lines of an exciting, pioneering new era in medicine. I was ready to throw myself into creating new worlds.

### ***FORTY YEARS OF AROUND-THE-CLOCK ACTIVISM***

After helping found the Flushing Women's Medical center--since renamed Choices--one of America's first ambulatory abortion centers, in 1972 I graduated Phi Beta Kappa and Magna Cum Laude from Queens College and from 1972 to 1975 attended the Social Psychology Doctoral Program at the City University of New York Graduate Center.

In 1974, I initiated and moderated New York City's first Women's Health Forum with speakers Barbara Ehrenreich and Congresswoman Bella Abzug; in 1975 I founded the first outpatient program that allowed women with breast cancer to determine their treatment options with a trained counselor (previously, doctors simply removed the breast of any woman whose biopsy came back positive, while she was still anesthetized and before she had the opportunity to learn about her options or make decisions).

I named this center STOP (Second Treatment Option Program).

In 1976 I co-founded the National Abortion Federation and in 1977 helped convince Congress to pass legislation requiring the accurate labeling of over-the-counter birth control.

Despite President Reagan's war on abortion, feminists were able to influence the media. After years of writing articles I felt the best way to communicate my ideas would be through a publication, so I started writing the

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Choices newsletter and mailed out thirty thousand free copies. Letters and donations poured in. It was suggested that I take advantage of the groundswell and publish a real magazine. Not knowing anything about publishing I jumped in headfirst and learned as I went. In 1983 I started "*On The Issues, The Progressive Womens Quarterly*" a radical intellectual feminist magazine of critical thinking--which has published every leading feminist thinker and activist in the last 25 years and garnered an international reputation. I then wrote, co-produced and directed the film "Abortion: A Different Light," which aired on several cable channels and reached eleven million homes.

in 1985 I founded the New York Pro-Choice Coalition and continue to serve as CEO of Choices, today one of the nation's largest women's medical facilities. Meanwhile the pro-life Operation Rescue had been formed in 1986 and, dedicated to ending legal access to abortion by blockading clinics, was waging a war against us, which kept us busy and in danger of being destroyed for several years. Two doctors and three clinic workers lost their lives to this fundamentalist violence.

When, in 1988 Operation Rescue announced it would shut down abortion services in New York City for a week, the New York Pro-Choice Coalition which I founded responded by rebranding those days as "Reproductive Freedom Week," and organizing a counter protest that drew 1,300 supporters who were sent out to ensure that every clinic or doctor's offices Operation Rescue targeted remained open.

In 1989 I organized the first pro-choice civil disobedience action at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City because of Cardinal John O'Connor's support of

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Operation Rescue. Nine pro-choice protestors among 200 were arrested.

Russian women had been frequenting our facilities (some had had as many as 36 abortions). The Russian system didn't help women to prevent impregnation, but actually preached the safety of multiple abortions and promoted the idea that the pill prevented cancer. Many doctors subsidized their three-dollar-a-month salaries by doing abortions in women's homes, so when I got an invitation to lead a team of physicians and counselors from Choices to Moscow for an educational exchange, I enthusiastically accepted.

In 1994 I worked with Russian hospitals and doctors to develop Choices East, the first feminist outpatient medical center in Russia, and organized Russian feminists to deliver an open letter to Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin on the state of women's health care. Accomplishing this was fraught with difficulties, not the least of which was the antagonism many Russian women received from their spouses. Two of our volunteers at the clinic were murdered by their husbands.

All these years of around-the-clock activism had paid off in many ways, not only protecting and expanding abortion possibilities, but financially as well. My clinic became one of the few refuges in the country for women seeking abortions. Yes, I made money from the clinic, but women who could not afford much or anything were always taken care of free of charge. Money made it possible to run my clinic the way I wanted it run, to create new programs, hire talented staff and donate to worthy causes. In the 90's I spent half a million dollars yearly publishing *On The Issues* and started the 501-C-3 Diana Foundation, so I could donate to groups and

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individuals (usually feminist radicals) who had no access to institutional funds.

During these years my marriage had changed. As Marty had predicted, our age difference would eventually separate us and we now were living apart. On his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday I gave him a huge party and later had dinner with him at our favorite Italian restaurant, where we reflected on how much we had given one another. A few months later he had a heart attack and died.

### ***LIFE GOES ON***

It is impossible to write here of all the experiences of the past 40 or so years, which include horrendous attacks against anything we did to make it possible for women to have safe abortions. What never was brought up, not even by the most brilliant and liberal journalists, is that abortion has existed since the beginning of time; that wealthy women always had the means through their personal physicians; that in some countries women had learned how to prevent pregnancy *and* to abort themselves when necessary. Though my clinic was very successful in spite of all the attacks against it, the long and arduous journey of the past few years was beginning to wear me out.

I'd missed a lot in my personal life during these years, and I would soon be 50. Something inside me was aching. I had helped define the reality that it was necessity that brought women to choose abortion, but everything else became a mediated reality. I wanted to go back to the beginning, when there was just me and my consciousness, not even informed by feminism. I stopped speaking and publishing *On The Issues*. I traveled to Katmandu, Mt. Everest, to South Africa to work with a rape crisis center, to Iran with a friend, where I dressed as a Muslim woman, then to the

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Galapagos. I thought about my life without Marty. At first I had struggled with my aloneness, what I termed my "singularity".. Now I knew a romantic partnership could not fulfill me--I had learned to fulfill myself..

### **AMAZING GRACE**

As the war against abortion continued the pro-choice movement lost ground daily, and clinics were closing. I became even more convinced that the right to abortion should have been articulated under the Thirteenth Amendment, making reproductive freedom a universal human right. Then in 2003 President George W. Bush signed the Partial Birth Abortion Ban Act, the first legislation to criminalize an abortion procedure since *Roe vs Wade*. The law forbade the procedure even if a woman's health was endangered. Outraged by this disrespect for women's rights and well-being I attended a Veteran Feminists of America event honoring Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg and spoke with her about this. Her answer..."I have criticized the Court's decision in *Roe v. Wade* -- not, of course, for the result... I think the notion is that it isn't just some private act, it is a woman's right to control her own life."

The morality of Bush's decision had been defined by the religious class. Even our supporters said that despite abortion being legal it would never really be objectively moral. Women who had had abortions remained victims at best, and murderers at worst. Abortion was ever a tragedy, a necessary evil, something to be kept private and about which to feel ashamed.

The Movement was too quiet. The main pro-choice advocates, NARAL, NOW, the Feminist Majority and Planned Parenthood remained in the front of the firing lines, but they continued to lose legal battles and the hearts and minds of many women.

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Things were tough at Choices. The massive legal fees I had incurred to fight the political and financial attacks against me made the continued subsidy my Mental Health Center impossible.. My beloved pastime, riding and jumping horses, also had to go, as I'd endured several injuries to my hips and was forced to have hip replacement surgery. After recovery from the surgery I went with a friend to Cooperstown. This was the first summer I had embraced since my childhood and I powerfully felt the passage of time, the first time I felt I was aging.

I took a trip to Normandy and walked the beaches with their history of bloody battles. I stopped in Caen where Charlotte Corday(the assassin of Marat) had grown up, went to Rouen where Joan of Arc was tried and burned. and spent hours in a museum devoted to her life. I rested in front of *tableaux vivants* of stages of her career, and saw a young couple with a son of about 5 years of age, pointing to scenes, explaining the history, and thought about how I would I feel to have a little girl next to me and do the same.

I'd had an abortion years ago; but now, at age 58 I wanted a child, I wanted a little girl.After much thought and discussion with a dear friend I decided to go to Russia and begin the adoption process involving two mid-winter- flights to Siberia,a year of non-ending paperwork and social workers, thousands of dollars and a level of psychological courage I never knew I possessed.

I had known many of love's faces but I had never loved unconditionally, the way parental love is described. Perhaps the little girl I would adopt had not experienced limitless love either.

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A year later(2005) I was in Siberia and drove to Hospital 53 where my little girl, Irena, was a ward of the Russian state and saw her for the first time. She was three years old

.How would it feel to be a mother? Would I like her?  
Would I love her? Would she love me?

"Irenitchka go say hello to Mama," the director told her.

She came over and put her little arms around my neck. I held her tightly as she whimpered, "Ma, Ma, Ma, Ma."



MERLE AND HER DAUGHTER SASHARINA WITH THEIR DOG MISHKA ON THE BEACH IN EAST HAMPTON 2014

I had to return to the States without her, as there were still a lot of legal arrangements to make, but I was in touch with her by phone. Meanwhile thoughts of becoming a mother crowded out the worry about liquidating pensions and investments to keep Choices going during what was a very difficult financial bind. In

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2004 everything was finally legally right and I went to Russia to take my little daughter home.

Sasharina had to adjust to a new name, a new life, to speak a new language. But two years from the day she came to New York with me I took her out to dinner with my dear friend, Mahin .We sang Happy Anniversary to the tune of Happy Birthday, and I told her the story of her homecoming. She would want the full story one day— where she came from and why she was here. As I put her to bed that night for the first time she told me, I know who you are. You are my mother.

Yes, I said, and you are my daughter.

One day when visiting the clinic, I shared with Sister Dorothy, the nun who had demonstrated outside of Choices for the last few years, how much I loved being a mother. She smiled. "I am sure you are good mother, but you would be better one if you stopped killing all those little Sashas."

But I am certain all the women who have had abortions over the centuries were not lost souls; *and* that the war to stop me and others from helping women get abortions will not end in my lifetime. So I continue my work my special destiny, With a deep knowledge that I have been given the gift to be part of this great struggle for women's freedom.

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### Florence Howe

In the years before I was ten, my maternal grandparents-immigrants from Kiev (then Russia) and from Safed, Galilee-were as important to my life as my parents.



Baba Sara loved me unconditionally and continued to nurse me through pneumonia when I was three, though the doctors and my mother assumed I would die. A few months later, after my brother's birth, I continued to spend most of my time with Baba Sara who taught me to knit, crochet, embroider, and for fun, play card games. She spoke only Yiddish and I learned her language at the same time I learned English. When she died suddenly in a bizarre accident, I was seven and I can still remember the day of that loss as though it were yesterday.

My grandfather Max came to live with us because, unlike her brothers' wives, my mother kept a kosher house. Max, who had once taught Hebrew to young boys studying for their bar-mitzvahs, decided to teach me to read and write Yiddish-as he had not taught his wife or

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his daughter-and to read Hebrew. To my constant pleas about the meaning of Hebrew words, he said I needed to read more quickly. Three years later, the day after he had announced that he would begin to teach me the meaning of words, he became ill, and five days later he died. At ten I experienced once more the shock of loss, but from these two grandparents I had felt love and gained the pleasure of learning.

My mother had wanted to become a teacher but her father had allowed her only a high school commercial course, since he wanted her to marry one of the young rabbis he brought home to dinner. For five years after her high school graduation, she refused these rabbis, and then, at 21, Frances chose to marry Sam Rosenfeld, a man who had had no Hebrew education at all, nor more than six years of school. He was the son of a Polish immigrant who had entered the U.S. with her brother and year-old baby Sam. She worked at buttonholes, married again and was widowed shortly after she had borne two daughters. Thus, she depended on Sam who began working full-time in a house-furnishings shop before he was 12.

My mother and father planned to make their fortune selling household goods, first from a pushcart, then from their own shop. Unfortunately, I was born in March 1929, nine months and a week after their wedding, which grandfather Max did not attend. Unfortunately also, the pushcart burned down and Sam began to support his family by driving a taxi. The first decade of their marriage and my life coincided with the Great Depression. Frances was not a happy stay-at-home mother, and I-plagued with colic-was not a happy baby. After my

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brother was born when I was three, my mother was fond of saying about her two children, "Isn't it a pity that he has all the looks and she has all the brains."

In January 1939, after my grandfather's death and just before my tenth birthday, my mother announced that she was going to work in an airplane factory and that I would do the housework and look after my brother. Fortunately, our move that year allowed me to attend a junior high school that happened to be a feeder school for the best high schools in the city. Two years later, an English teacher decided that I should be tutored in math so as to pass the test for Hunter College High School, thus setting me upon a path leading to Hunter College. Both institutions in different ways changed my life and career goals, though nothing could change the command my mother had given me when I first entered kindergarten: I was to become the teacher she had wanted to be.

Hunter College High School assigned me to speech clinic, which forced middle-class speech into my mouth and traumatized me into silence at home and in the classroom. I studied full-time after school, even through my mother's radio programs and past normal bedtime, often still typing required history outlines when my taxi-driving father entered at two or three in the morning. Still, I could rarely earn the A's I was accustomed to. One high school teacher told me that I was the perfect B student, organized, diligent, reliable, and with not "a creative bone in my body." I accepted that assessment gratefully; in an alien world, I was pleased to be noticed.

At Hunter College I regained my voice, if not in the classroom, then as a student activist, inspired by the

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college's motto: *Mihi curae futuri*-the care of the future is mine. Perhaps because the high school had been so demanding, at college I earned A grades easily and made friends as well. Our small group formed an inter-racial and inter-religious sorority, probably the first in the nation. In my junior year, when I was president of the Student Self Government Association, the dean of students saw me through the annulment of an unfortunate marriage. In that year also, the college president and another professor thought I should drop student teaching and prepare myself to become a college professor of English. Their letters sent me on to graduate school, overriding my mother's goals for me.

A year later, M.A. from Smith College in hand, I entered the University of Wisconsin as a rare female teaching assistant. Still longing for motherhood, I also married a man working on his M.A. at the University of Chicago. Eventually, he transferred to Wisconsin to continue his graduate studies, but in the spring of what was my third year, he issued an ultimatum. I was to return to New York with him right then, or he would divorce me. I begged to be allowed to complete at least my residence requirements, but I did leave before writing my dissertation.

Three years as a teaching assistant at the University of Wisconsin allowed me to gain an instructor's position at Long Island's Hofstra College in 1954. A year later, I reluctantly ended my second marriage, when it became clear that my husband would, under no conditions, agree to have a family. Two years later, in 1957, still chasing that family and the children I wanted, I married a psychologist on the Hofstra faculty. Surprisingly the

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nepotism rules that usually punished female academics were used against him, and I refused a tenure track, multi-year position.

We moved to Baltimore in 1957, where I could not find a teaching job, and instead decided to write my thesis and have a baby. Even with the aid of artificial insemination, I could not get pregnant or keep the fetus, and in 1960 gratefully accepted a temporary appointment at Goucher College, which turned into a tenured position as an assistant professor. Perhaps the teaching assuaged my desire for a family. Certainly, three years later, when my husband accepted a visiting appointment at Berkeley and wanted me to quit my job and come along with him, I realized that I couldn't do that. Had he been willing to adopt a child, had he been willing to deal with his need for alcohol, all might have been different. But I wouldn't leave the one part of life that satisfied me. So he went to Berkeley in August 1973 and I stayed in Baltimore, though we did not move to divorce until the following year, when I decided I was through with marriage forever.

In the fall of 1963, students at the dinner table in the Goucher dorm where I often ate, asked me to drive them to a demonstration in front of a segregated movie theatre and barber shop near Morgan State College, attended chiefly by black students. After dropping my students, I worried about their safety, parked, and walked over to check on them. Thinking I was coming to join them, the students applauded and chanted, "Howe is coming." When I joined them, I didn't know that I would be ostracized by half the faculty for allegedly "leading students to break the law." The president of the college,

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hearing that I was sympathetic to the students' activism, assigned me to bail out students who were increasingly getting arrested as demonstrations grew larger and bolder all through Baltimore.

In the early months of 1964, I heard about the organizing of Mississippi Freedom Summer, and in June the world learned about the murders of three young men who were attempting to register black voters. I went to Mississippi on a bus filled with people ten years my junior. In Jackson, I was assigned to open a school in the basement of the Blair Street Church, with six college students as staff. Among the 100 young people who turned up on the first day was Alice Jackson, a sixteen-year old who, the next summer, would come back with me to Baltimore as my adopted daughter.

The immersion experience in Mississippi changed my life significantly. Henceforth, I would work actively to expose racism, and I would change my teaching methods. I learned to teach through asking "open" rather than "closed" questions in order to elicit responses from students who were learning to think about their lives and the social and political world around them. One question obsessed me: why could young black teenagers write better poems than my privileged white college students? I was going to change my teaching style in composition classes to elicit better writing. This sounds simple, and seems to have nothing to do with feminism. But, friends, this is how ultimately I became a feminist.

One day, something happened in my Goucher College composition classroom while I was trying to teach young women to see that D. H. Lawrence's point of view in

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Sons and Lovers was never focused on the young women Paul Morel made love to. I asked students to imagine what might happen should Miriam tell her parents she was pregnant. "What would they have said to her?" No one responded. After some minutes of trying different questions, I grew impatient and fairly shouted, "O.K., what would your parents have said? How do your parents treat you, and how do they treat your brother?"

Immediately, I had responses, and as we went around the room, students became more and more insistent that their parents treated them and their brothers equally. But when I asked more detailed questions about mowing lawns, washing dishes, hours, cars, allowances, and other matters, differences became visible, and the students tried to deal with them by claiming they would not want to mow lawns even if there was a payment, that they didn't need money, since their dates paid for them. I knew I was on to something when students groaned as I assigned this as a writing topic. I had found a topic that young women in the mid-sixties could write about, and I began to call my course "Identity and Expression." Only in 1969, when the women's movement hit U.S. campuses, did my composition course become popular. That same year, when students asked why there were no women writers in the eighteenth century course I taught, I had to admit that I knew of none, that I had studied only men. And again, I knew something was wrong.

Other key events pushed me into feminism in 1969 and 1970 and led me to women's studies and the founding of the *Feminist Press*. The newly-founded Chronicle of Higher Education sent a reporter to my composition

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class who then put my picture on its front page, claiming I was "teaching consciousness," even though I insisted I was teaching composition. The Modern Language Association appointed me as the first Chair of its newly-founded Commission on the Status and Education of Women in the Profession, and asked that I prepare a study of the status of women in 5,000 English and Modern Language Departments. My report found that women were 80 percent of those studying English and the modern languages, but they were only 20 percent of those applying to doctoral programs. The study made clear that women with high grades chose not to apply to doctoral programs, leaving the field open to men with weaker grades. How could this be? What discouraged women from even applying? The short answer was, of course, the male curriculum, which, when it included women at all, derided or sexualized them.

Early in 1970, three university presses asked me to write a biography of Doris Lessing. I told them I wanted to begin another project: a series of 100 short biographies about dead women, to be written by living ones, including Doris Lessing. All turned me down, saying "there's no money in it." In July members of *Baltimore Women's Liberation*, who said they had no time to work on a project that might be called the *Feminist Press*, nevertheless, without telling me, announced its existence. When I returned from a month at Cape Cod, I found more than a hundred letters, some with checks and bills, in my street mailbox, addressed to The Feminist Press. The letters indicated that Baltimore Women's Liberation had also announced that the Feminist Press would publish children's books as well as the biographies I had suggested. Fifty people attended

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the first meeting of the Feminist Press in my living room on November 17, 1970.

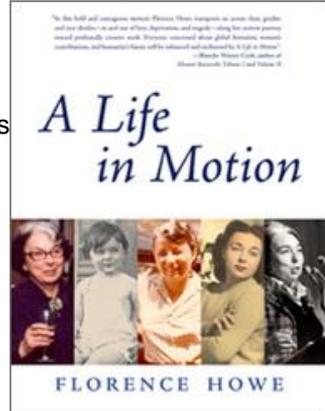
A few months later, Tillie Olsen sent me a copy of *Life in the Iron Mills*, a novella first published anonymously in the Atlantic at the request of its author in 1861. Tillie now knew that its author was a woman and she wanted the *Feminist Press* to publish it. Reading it, I knew that if such a masterpiece had been "lost" for more than a hundred years, then much more must also be lost. So, in addition to biographies of women and feminist children's books, we began to publish "reprints" of important women writers, a series that has continued as a mainstay of the *Feminist Press*.

Some of these women are household names today: Rebecca Harding Davis, Zora Neale Hurston, Paule Marshall, Louise Meriwether, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Frances Harper, Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, Kate Chopin, Agnes Smedley, Mary Austin, Edith Summers Kelley, Tess Slesinger, Myra Page, Helen R. Hull, Fielding Burke, Meridel Le Sueur, Margery Latimer, and others. These books have changed the curriculum in literature and history both at the high school and college levels, and, I am certain, have also been responsible for the fact that the majority of doctoral candidates in English and the foreign languages are now women.

Less than six months after the *Feminist Press* was founded in Baltimore, I moved, as professor of American Studies and Women's Studies, to the College at Old Westbury, a new SUNY campus on Long Island. The *Feminist Press* moved with me, where it was given generous quarters at the College and eventually a small

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two-family house of its own on the fringes of the campus. Surviving a fire in 1983, we moved into a formal association with the City University of New York in 1985, where I was appointed full professor and released from teaching to run the Feminist Press. In 2000 I retired as publisher/director, and in 2005 returned while the Board of Directors searched for a new director. When Gloria Jacobs was appointed in early 2006, she asked me to stay on as publisher for two years. I retired once again in June 2008, when I began to write my memoir full-time. *A Life in Motion* was published in 2011 by the Feminist Press.



The memoir, *A Life in Motion*, contains chapters about my early life, education, and four marriages, as well as my father's and brother's suicides, my mother's decade-long siege of Alzheimer's, and, on happier notes, my friendships, and my life as "another kind of mother." I have two non-biological families, one black, the other white, and they know and care about each other. While all this would have been enough for a single volume, I had another goal: to write a history of the first 38 years of the *Feminist Press*. During those same years, I was also an advocate for women's studies a new multi-cultural, interdisciplinary explosion of the curriculum attempting to uncover the lost history, literature, culture, and lives of women, and through that process re-vision the world that male culture had created. Not surprisingly, I once described the relationship between the Feminist

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Press and women's studies as symbiotic, meaning that women's studies needed the books that Feminist Press was producing, and Feminist Press needed women's studies as a natural market for its books. Thus I spent much of the 1970s and 1980s on the road, a tireless advocate for women's studies, and at the same time, a promoter of the new-found literature by and about women.

Although I had spent three weeks in China (as a "feminist") and three in India (as a women's studies founder) during the mid-1970s, after January 1980, the focus of my work in women's studies and in feminist publishing became increasingly international. Early in 1980, Mariam Chamberlain, a program officer at the Ford Foundation, appointed me her advisor on a three-week tour of women's studies in Europe, an event that marked the beginning of two decades of international work that she, the Feminist Press, and I did for women's studies. Much of this came through United Nations meetings in Copenhagen (1980), Nairobi (1985), and Beijing (1995). In each case, the *Feminist Press* had Ford grants and sometimes UN funds as well to invite scholars to attend the Forums and to report on the development of women's studies in their countries.

Thanks to such financial support, some hundred reports were published and circulated to scholars world-wide through our own *Women's Studies Quarterly*. Mariam and I also attended and often spoke at other international meetings in Canada, Costa Rica, Ireland, Australia, Uganda, and New York. Through the 1980s and the 1990s I continued to speak on the international development of women's studies both at international

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conferences in Korea, Italy, France, Poland, Japan, Germany, India, and Argentina.

In 1983, on a lecture tour in India, I found Susie Tharu, a professor of English literature in Hyderabad, who became one of the editors of *Women Writing in India: 600 B.C. to the Present*, ultimately published in two huge volumes by the Feminist Press in 1991 and 1993. Reviewing these volumes, notable critics have claimed that their contents had markedly changed the history of India. Today many of the 140 writers have volumes of their own, and young Indian female authors know that they have a long history of other women writers behind them. Early in the 1990s, the Indian volumes were seized upon by African scholars in the U.S. who wanted to produce similar volumes for their continent, and fifteen years later, the Feminist Press completed the publishing of *Women Writing Africa* in four regional volumes-South, West/Sahel, East, and North. All of these volumes will shortly also be available in French.

Beginning in 1996, I traveled often to some ten African countries, for multiple meetings with African scholars, writers, translators and editors, gathering and preparing texts for these volumes. In addition, when their volumes were nearing completion, all of us-African and American editors traveled to Bellagio, Italy, to work on team residencies at the Rockefeller Foundation's Villa Serbelloni.

I close the memoir in several ways, hearkening to the oft-cited wisdom that humans, whether female or male, need both love and work, and defining love as emanating from deep friendships. I describe my New

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York "family of choice," all of whom, have become acquainted with my non-biological families, now scattered through the U.S., from California to Mississippi, Kansas, Illinois, Connecticut, and Washington, D.C. And I describe the providence of two personal Bellagio awards from the Rockefeller Foundation that allowed me to write the memoir, and six team awards to Women Writing Africa that allowed the completion of that project.

What I don't say is what I could not have imagined during the intense two years of writing and rewriting the memoir itself: how difficult it would be to "retire," not only from managing the Feminist Press, but especially from working on the Women Writing Africa project, which kept me in motion through 2009. What I understand now is that my life in motion was not simply the experience of being in planes, trains, and other moving vehicles, but the emotion of working with other people. At least so far, I haven't found any way to recreate that experience in retirement.

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### JUDITH KAPLAN



I was born in 1938 and grew up in a working-class neighborhood of the Bronx, NY. I was the eldest of three daughters; my brother was born when I was 16. My mother, the first of seven daughters of a working mother, had to leave high school to

contribute to her family's finances, which she deeply regretted. She and my father, a high school graduate, were adamant that I go to college and have a career.

Early on I got the sense from her that raising children was a duty. It was what women did, and certainly wasn't fun. She wouldn't allow me to baby sit. You'll have plenty of that when you have your own children, she'd say. This wasn't the prevailing pro-natal message other neighborhood girls absorbed. Most of them were first-generation American and went to public schools. For boys, education to prepare for a good career was most important; for girls it was important to get a good job as a secretary, sales clerk or similar occupation until they married and had children.

The seed of my interest in women's history sprouted in first grade with a classmate's report about her aunt, the first woman to become Commissioner of the New York City Department of Health. That a woman held such a high position impressed me very much; the only career

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women I knew were teachers or nurses. Also learning about great women such as Eleanor Roosevelt and Amelia Earhart excited me, and I was thrilled by the work of the WACs and the WAVES in WWII.

In fifth grade I was awarded admission to a non-neighborhood school for intellectually gifted children and in 1955 graduated from the Bronx High School of Science. However, despite having the best public education in the U.S. I received no career guidance. After graduation I got an administrative job and attended Hunter College at night.

In 1957 I met Warren Kaplan, just out of a two-year Army stint. I was impressed with his ambition, intelligence and sense of humor and he fully appreciated my intelligence and ambition. We married at the end of 1958. In 1960 I graduated with a B.A. in Psychology. Warren became a stockbroker, and I got my license and joined him. We worked together in various aspects of finance and later in business. I was entrepreneurial before the term was known.

Around this time I read Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*, which affected me greatly. I'd known that women were not respected for their societal contributions and were expected to dedicate themselves exclusively to husband and children. I knew of areas where women didn't even have equal legal rights, but I didn't think anything could be done to change that.

Until early autumn of 1965. I was pregnant and one day visited a high school friend. On her coffee table was an AAUW magazine with an article about discrimination

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against girls. We read the article and decided to write a book about the various aspects of this discrimination. We even went so far as to list the chapters of the book and allocate who would write each topic.

After my son was born I returned to work as an insurance agent with New York Life. I'd been impressed that NYL had women agents and especially that its board included a woman, though common coffee break chatter was Who did she sleep with to get there? By now The Feminine Mystique was the rage. I read it and immediately called my friend: Emily, forget our book. It's been written.

The conclusion of The Feminine Mystique noted the founding of the National Organization for Women. I searched in NY and Washington yellow pages and libraries but couldn't find NOW. The first chapter, NY NOW, was formed in 1967, but I didn't know about it. As far as I knew there was no NOW office and no meetings.

Yet NOW's activity put it in the news and by the early 1970s I'd found it and joined the NYC chapter. Though I paid my dues, I seldom attended meetings. Then I began receiving notes from someone named Jacqui Ceballos (NOW-NY President) about upcoming events and meetings: Judy, we miss you, please come to this or that meeting or event. So I started attending and signed up for the Image, Religion, and Child Care committees. My first feminist action was a letter to Hallmark Cards about a traditionally skewed birth announcement or birthday card, and I participated in actions at newspaper offices to protest sex discrimination in newspapers and employment practices, especially sex-segregated help-

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wanted ads.

I found news articles about women of achievement of particular interest and began collecting postage stamps and first-day covers (i.e. an envelope cancelled the first day the stamp is issued) about women's history and noticed that a very small percentage of stamps honored women of achievement.

Soon I was very busy as the chapter's fundraiser and my interest in historic women's items worked to the chapter's advantage. At that time gambling was illegal except as fundraisers by non-profit organizations, so for our first one I produced a Monte Carlo night. I rented roulette wheels, sold Monopoly-like dollars with images of Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott in lieu of Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln.

The denominations were \$100, \$500 and \$1,000 to instill the idea of women getting used to handling large sums of money. The prices charged for the currency were \$1, \$2 and \$5, and guests bought it to use for their roulette bets. The items were auctioned following the roulette games and people used their winnings to buy things such as books, store and restaurant gift certificates, toys and gifts, gourmet baskets, all donated by local businesses. A book might be first offered at \$100 and the winning bid might be \$1,000. The currency concept and auction added much fun and the night netted the chapter \$700. Later I was elected chapter treasurer. I'm happy to say the bottom line profited greatly during that period.

NOW was my primary organization, but I was also a

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member of AAUW, WEAL, NWPC and other feminist groups at various times. I subscribed to feminist magazines and avidly absorbed articles on women's history.

I proposed to my NOW Board that the chapter produce a collectible Women's History series of First-Day Covers. From 1976 to 1980 I produced and sold approximately 180 different covers in quantities of between 500 and 1,000 each. The series was successful in raising money for NOW-NY, raising consciousness among philatelists about the achievements of women, and pressuring the U.S. Postal Service into issuing more stamps to honor women's history and achievements. I am proudest that many subjects of the NOW-NY FDCs were later commemorated on U.S. postage stamps. (The First Day Covers are sold on the web to collectors by Knottywood Treasures.

All this time Warren and I were raising our son Ronald and daughter Elissa, as well as working in our business dealing in first-day covers. My family attended marches together, many times for ERA and Choice, and once my father joined us. I continued to be involved with NOW and attended conferences around the country. Warren was also a member of NOW; his main interests were abortion rights, gay rights, equal rights, education and career opportunity for women, and stopping violence against women.

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Judith Kaplan, organizer of the "Women Speak Out Now" April 6, 2002 conference, "We accomplished exactly what we wanted to. Our goals included celebrating the past 30 years in the advancement of women's rights and women's choices and creating an Agenda to continue to shape women's future rights and choices." Pictured: Sheila Jaffee, Judy Kaplan and Mary Cameron

We d started our business selling packets of used postage stamps for resale to gift stores in planetariums, history, space and aviation museums and nature centers. In 1980 we moved to Ocala, Florida to expand, where I immediately became active in Ocala-Marion County NOW. Florida was then a target state for passage of the ERA, and our chapter was especially active on that front. We later moved to Boca Raton and I transferred to the South Palm Beach chapter.

I joined VFA as soon as it was formed. On April 6, 2002 I organized an all-day event with NOW-SPBC and FAU Women s Studies Department at the Boca Raton campus of Florida Atlantic University. Titled Women Speak Out, the concept was to hear the concerns and suggested solutions of students enrolled in Women s

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Studies classes. The first time VFA included young women as part of a main event, it was a most successful day.

The women s history collection--the stamps, first-day covers, signed letters, books and artifacts I d begun collecting in the 1960 s grew in quantity and value over the years. Called the Kaplan Women s History Collection, in 1990 I donated it to Central Florida Community College in Ocala for a Women s History Center. When CFCC changed its focus about ten years later, I purchased it back and endowed the Judith Kaplan Chair for Women s History/Women s Studies/Library Support at CFCC (now Central Florida College). My plans for the collection are currently unformed.

I am on the Board of the National Women s History Museum, now in the process of establishing a world-class women s history museum on the Mall in our nation s Capital. Please go to our award-winning website <http://www.nwhm.org> to read about women s history, women of achievement and the current status of our Museum goal. It is a project long overdue, one that, like the First and Second Wave feminists, will record history and change the future for all.

I believe passionately in the role VFA is playing in documenting the history of the Second Wave. I continue to work with NWHM and VFA to preserve that history to help assure that never again will the story of feminist movements be erased from history.

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### Patricia Budd Kepler

It is 1973 and I am at the National Meeting of the United Presbyterian Church where I am serving as staff person for the Church's Task Force on Women, the group giving leadership to feminist issues within our denomination. Wilma Scott Heide (NOW's third president) is scheduled to speak at our breakfast and I receive a call the day before, saying that she has pneumonia and cannot come.



I remember that day as if it were yesterday. Wilma was a dear friend and knowledgeable, creative, dedicated, effective, and a noted feminist. We so wanted her to be with us, cherishing her depth of understanding of feminist issues and the integrity of her commitment to justice and compassion.

Desperate, the task force asked me to speak. I entitled my hastily written speech "The Liberation of God." Being forced to step up to the plate enabled me to put into words some thoughts that had been brewing inside me for some time, and continue to evolve to this day.

My work in the feminist Movement led to my understanding that our perception of the nature of God was evolving along with our perceptions of the nature of women and men, and, as our relationship to one another was changing, so was our relationship to God. We were liberating God from a patriarchal box at the same time

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that we were liberating ourselves. We were dealing with both simple, immediate justice and the complex justice that changes worldviews and internal landscapes.

The Presbyterian Church was one of the first denominations to develop a feminist agenda during the Second Wave of the Feminist Movement. I myself cannot claim any credit for this. I fell into the role as staff for the task force when I was serving as General Secretary for United Presbyterian Women in the national Board of Christian Education.

I was not yet a self-conscious feminist when staff responsibility for women's issues in our church landed in my office, but I was a fast learner. The first year that we reported to our General Assembly, the commissioners laughed. They didn't laugh the next year. That first year of laughter awakened many of us to the seriousness of sexism and the need for transformation in the church. A vision of a social order beyond patriarchy began to grow in us as we worked with others in the Movement.

The Women's Movement allowed many of us to finally give voice to what experience had already taught us. For some of us, our participation in the Civil Rights Movement and the Anti-War Movement provided important lessons on how to work for change--in ourselves and our world.

I was privileged, as I worked with the Task Force on Women and United Presbyterian Women and traveled across the country to meet and engage with people of all ages, races, and ethnicities.

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But I began in the middle of my story. Looking back on my early life, there is nothing remarkable to report. My father grew up in a small coal mining town and was raised by a widowed mother and older siblings. Though poor, they were respected members in the community. That small town and coal mining history is in my blood.

My father was the first in his family to finish college. He went on to earn graduate degrees, in law and in political science. My mother, an immigrant from Germany, came to the States alone when she was seventeen. Her mother followed later, and lived with us.

My parents lived in Lancaster, PA when I was born. Two years later, my sister Mary came along and much later, my brother Harold and my sister, Theresa. We were a close knit family. My mother focused on her children and my father's career. Over the years, she proved to be a very strong woman.

We later lived in Philadelphia where my father practiced law and taught at Drexel. Mary and I attended a magnet school for girls. My siblings and I went on to earn Bachelors degrees from Drexel. I then went to Princeton Theological Seminary where I earned two graduate degrees. I was one of three women in a class of about 200.

In addition to education, faith was an important part of my family's life. Our church community, St. Paul Presbyterian Church, nurtured me and encouraged my leadership.

My religious experiences clearly influenced my choosing

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Ministry as a career. All along I was being formed by strong women and men who had faced and overcome challenges. people who had a natural, inherent strength, not one that came from position or money or other outward signs of power.

When I began to address feminist issues, I did not see women's attaining power or wealth in societal or intuitional terms as the only source of desired power. While we clearly worked for equality between women and men and helped open doors for women in economic and political leadership, we also cared about women's right to exercise ethical and spiritual leadership in the whole society.

I treasured compassion with justice, civility with equality and relational integrity along with equal rights in marriage. I also learned some rudimental things about international liberation theologies.

I met Thomas Kepler in Seminary. We married before our senior year and I was pregnant with our son when I graduated . My husband and I were the first clergy couple in the United Presbyterian Church.

The year before I graduated, women's ordination was approved in the United Presbyterian Church. After Seminary my husband became the pastor of a church in New Jersey.. Thirteen months later our second son was born and I was still fixed on being the best homemaker I could be. By the time I was pregnant with our third son two years later, that wasn't working out too well. Being a Minister's wife was more challenging than I had ever imagined. For me, being a Minister was easier.

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When an opportunity to serve as the Pastor of an African American church nearby was offered to me, I accepted and never looked back. After eight years and a brief teaching stint with my husband in Florida, we moved back north to Lansdown, PA. where I became staff for the national Presbyterian Church. Later I accepted a job at Harvard Divinity School as Director of Ministerial Studies, and we moved to the Boston area.

Before leaving the Board of Christian Education I became involved with our nation's Bi-Centennial Commission and the birthing of the Women's Coalition for the Third Century - which brought together women from many organizations, secular and religious, of all different persuasions to celebrate women's contributions to American life. Eventually, I became President of the Coalition. We drafted a Declaration of Interdependence and I was privileged to write the first draft. In 1776 our nation had adopted The Declaration of Independence and in 1876 had been presented with a Declaration of Women's Rights. In 1976 it was time for women and the men and children who wanted to join in, to call our country to interdependence.

When we ratified our Declaration, we added Declaration of Imperatives, a document spelling out our commitment to women's equality in an interdependent society.

After Harvard I become Pastor of Clarendon Hill Presbyterian Church in Somerville, Massachusetts and faced the challenge of putting into practice in community context the feminist principles and issues I had dealt with so long on a national scale. This was the real test! And in that Pastorate of over seventeen years, I continued to

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be drawn into international interests - especially in the Middle East and Africa.

After retirement, I went on to serve as Interim University Chaplain at Tufts and with my husband, served in two Interim Ministry positions. We became more involved with homosexual rights in the church.

One of the primary issues I have struggled with all my life is the challenge of combining a career with marriage and parenthood. In some ways this remains at the root of feminist issues for many of us. I finally had to write a book that addressed those issues. "Work After Patriarchy: A Pastoral Perspective" was published in 2009. Before taking on that subject I wrote "Life Lessons from my Dog," a somewhat fanciful book with serious theological reflection.

I am very aware as I write this, that I am not so much writing about my life, but the lives of all feminists as they are set in historical and environmental perspective. The lives of feminist activists are intertwined. Everything I am, everything I did, and anything I will continue to do has come from my relationships with others.

We veteran feminists pass on our experiences to the next generations -- among them our daughters and sons and their children. whose lives grace ours and who will be called upon to make their own contributions.

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### MYRA KOVARY

I was born in Columbus, Ohio in 1952 and grew up in Ithaca, NY in a very modest home with my parents and younger sister.



My mother was born in Germany in 1921. She and her brother and sister were sent on a Kindertransport to England just before World War II and thus survived the Nazis. Their parents were later deported to Minsk where they were killed.

My father was born in Czechoslovakia in 1920. He and his brother were wrestlers and were the first students of Imi Lichtenfeld, a martial artist who later went to Israel and founded Krav Maga, the self-defense system that is used by the Israeli Defense Forces. (I didn't find out about their connection to Krav Maga until after I got my black belt in Tae Kwon Do in 2010.) In 1939, the brothers were attacked by two Nazis. With assistance from their father, they beat the Nazis almost to death and all three men were thrown into jail. A few weeks later, the head of the prison let them out in the middle of the night. They met up with my grandmother and fled to the countryside, later to Hungary, and to the US in 1940. If this hadn't happened, they probably would have been killed in concentration camps, as were many members of our family.

My father and his brother served in the US Army during

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the war and my mother served in the Civilian Censorship Division of the US Army in Germany after the war. She also immigrated to the US. My parents met in Ohio and got married in 1950. They managed to live remarkably stable lives. My mother never got a high school diploma, but she taught German at Cornell University until she retired. My father attended college on the GI bill, attended graduate school at Cornell, and taught Spanish and linguistics at the State University of NY at Cortland. Knowing what they experienced made me very aware how important it is to stand up against injustice.

In the 1960's, Ithaca was a hotbed of radical politics. A bit precocious teen ager and very bored in school, I participated with the Cornell Students for a Democratic Society in protests against the Vietnam War and against Cornell's housing policies that caused rents to be unaffordable for the local people.

I graduated from high school in 1969 and went to the Woodstock Music Festival that summer. I entered Cornell University in the fall. In 1970 I marched in Washington against the Vietnam War. The feminist movement was just starting, and I resisted it mightily. A housemate, who had attended a speech by Kate Millett at Cornell, decided she wasn't going to wear a bra, shave her legs or wash the dishes anymore. Well, we lived with two guys – so who ended up doing the dishes? Me!!! Without knowing anything about it, I decided women's liberation was a bunch of crap. So much for being precocious!

But at least I had heard of Kate Millett. My mother was really a feminist. In 1970, she told me, "Kate Millett is the

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brains behind the women's liberation movement."

I dropped out of Cornell and decided I wanted to play the harp. After a few lessons with Alice Chalifoux, the distinguished principal harpist of the Cleveland Orchestra, I asked her opinion of my chances of making it as a harpist. Her reply was, "Myra, get your ass to Cleveland and I'll make you a harpist." So off I went.

I studied at Case Western Reserve University briefly, decided to concentrate on the harp, transferred to a school without walls (Empire State College, SUNY), and stayed in Cleveland studying the harp while finishing my degree. I graduated from Empire State with a Bachelor's degree in music and theater in 1976.

Shortly thereafter, while practicing the harp, I pulled a muscle in my hand and Valium was prescribed as a muscle relaxant. I had a very bad reaction to it and ended up in a psychiatric institution, where I was force-medicated with heavy neuroleptics and was threatened with electroshock "treatment." I managed to get out only when my parents decided the hospital staff was crazier than I and had me transferred to Upstate Medical Center in Syracuse, NY (where Thomas Szasz, a radical psychiatrist who had written a book entitled "The Myth of Mental Illness," was on the faculty). After being there for a week, I was discharged. I began freelancing as an orchestral harpist in the Ithaca area and have been doing it ever since.

But music didn't keep the freedom-fighter part of me engaged. Still hanging on to dreams of making the world a better place, I realized that without money, we hippie

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types would never be able to actualize our dreams. My favorite bumper sticker was "It'll be a great day when the Defense Department has to hold a bake sale to buy a B-1 bomber."

In 1979, tired of having to hold fundraisers and relying on donations to support all the progressive work being done in Ithaca, a few activist friends looked into starting a bank, but found a credit union was an easier way to go. I was a founding Board Member of the Alternatives Federal Credit Union (AFCU) and served on the board from 1979 - 1986. The goals of the AFCU were to support cooperative businesses, make loans available to women and self-employed people, promote organic agriculture, alternative energy, and energy-efficient vehicles. The AFCU has grown to well over a \$50 million operation and serves as a model for other community development credit unions around the country.

I got married in 1982, had two children, and left my husband in 1986. I was involuntarily institutionalized in psychiatric facilities shortly after I left and again several years later during what was a long and ugly custody battle. The battle finally ended after nine years, when my ex-husband succeeded in using my psychiatric history to gain control of our two children. I didn't see them again until they were young adults. It was a very traumatic experience for all of us. Reading Phyllis Chesler's "Mothers on Trial" was a life-saver during that time. My relationships with my children continue to be difficult to this day.

I still personally struggle to stay on this side of the locked doors. It has put an enormous strain on my sense of self,

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on all the significant relationships in my life, on my ability to earn a living, and on my sense of connection with society in general. It also inspires my advocacy against forced psychiatry.

The way I survived my experience of forced psychiatry was by connecting with people who shared similar experiences. In 1980, I co-founded the Mental Patients Alliance in Ithaca, NY – a support and advocacy group opposed to forced psychiatry. I initiated what has become a world-wide day of demonstrations against psychiatric oppression and a celebration of MadPride on Bastille Day.

From 1980 to 2001, I served on the Board of Directors of the Mental Health Association in Tompkins County in Ithaca as president, vice-president and chair of various committees. I launched several programs including a Hospital Advocacy Program and a Crisis Hostel Project that provided short-term housing and peer support to avoid psychiatric hospitalization. The Crisis Hostel Project was written up in the New York Times.

I represented MindFreedom International at the United Nations during the negotiations on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities from 2002 - 2006. I worked with Kate Millett, Celia Brown, and a team from the World Network of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry led by Tina Minkowitz. When the text of the Convention was adopted in 2006 and included full recognition of all human rights for people with disabilities, including users and survivors of psychiatry, I proudly declared "The revolution has begun!"

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In 2009 I co-founded the Center for the Human Rights of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry (CHRUSP). CHRUSP's mission is to work for full human rights and legal capacity for all, an end to forced drugging, forced electroshock and psychiatric incarceration, and to the provision of support that respects individual integrity and free will.

I continue to work as a professional free-lance classical harpist and harp teacher. I perform for recitals, weddings and receptions as a soloist and in a flute and harp duo. I recorded two CDs, one of flute and harp music entitled "Morning Light" and a solo harp CD entitled "In Pursuit of Happiness." I commissioned Ithaca composer Laurie Conrad to write two new chamber music works, "Visions" for flute and harp and "Images" for flute, violin, viola and harp, both of which she dedicated to me. I performed the world premieres and recorded CDs of both pieces. I played my harp for the Dalai Lama when he visited Ithaca in 1991 and I played in the General Assembly Hall at the United Nations celebration of the Entry Into Force of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2008. More information on my CDs and harp career is available at [www.myrakovary.com](http://www.myrakovary.com).

I also hold a Masters in Landscape Architecture from Cornell. And I finally got it together as a feminist when I did an independent study on women artists while I was a student in the landscape architecture program. When I read Kate Millett's book "The Loony Bin Trip",

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I called and thanked her for having the courage to have written it. She invited me to her farm in Poughkeepsie, NY. We became friends several years later and I spent many years helping her run her Women's Art Colony/Tree Farm. In the course of my friendship with Kate, I learned more about feminism and met many Veteran Feminists of America and gained appreciation and respect for the



Myra and Kate Millett at the UN

work of both the first and second wave feminists.

I am a member of the Ithaca Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Task Force, the Board of Directors of the Finger Lakes Independence

Center, the Board of Directors of the Alternatives Venture Fund (a non-profit affiliated with the Alternatives Federal Credit Union), a member of the National Women's Martial Arts Federation, and I'm proud to be a member of the Veteran Feminists of America.

My latest attempt to incorporate feminism into my work as a human rights activist is as the moderator of the listserv for the International Network of Women with Disabilities (INWWD), which we launched in 2008 when it became clear that women with disabilities needed to be more visible on the international scene. I got involved with INWWD because users and survivors of psychiatry are under-represented in the disability rights movement

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and women are particularly oppressed by the patriarchal structure of psychiatry. Women's voices need amplification in the movement advocating for the human rights of users and survivors of psychiatry as well. Connecting with other women with disabilities has been an excellent opportunity to advance a feminist perspective that I hope will tear at the roots of psychiatric oppression.



Myra plays at the UN  
photo by Diana Signe Kline

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### **Diana Kurz**

I was born in 1936 in Vienna, Austria. My parents and I came to the US via Italy, Switzerland, England (where I learned to speak English) and Ireland. We settled in Brooklyn NY, and eventually moved to Kew Gardens, Queens. Because of the large body of work I have done on the subject of the Holocaust, I think it is important to



mention that we were forced to flee Vienna in 1938, and that although we came to the United States when I was four years old, the events of WW II directly affected my life and childhood. Family history and my parents' generosity in raising two of my orphaned cousins, survivors of concentration camps, as their own children instilled in me an awareness of the importance of social justice and caring for others.

My father, Benjamin Kurz, a businessman but in many ways unconventional and "bohemian," encouraged me to follow my own path, and instilled in me the idea that I was capable of accomplishing whatever I desired. My mother, Lillian Kurz, was an early example to me of a woman who, while raising four children--my younger sister, me, and our two cousins--could also have a full life outside the home. She was for many years an active leader in Hadassah, a women's organization that sponsored a hospital in Jerusalem. Through my mother and her friends, I grew up with the awareness of how a committed group of women working together can be a force for creation and change.

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My mother appreciated the arts throughout her life. In her mid-sixties, she and a friend opened a successful art gallery in Queens that she ran until she was in her nineties while also being involved in philanthropic endeavors in the neighborhood. Consequently, from an early age we children had before us the image of a strong and independent woman, and a father who was proud of and supported her accomplishments. My sisters and I were encouraged by our parents to follow our own paths and dreams and were never made to feel limited in our aspirations because of our sex.

Making art has been the predominant focus of my life; from my earliest years I knew I would be an artist. I recently found a report card from nursery school in London, when I was 3 years old, in which a teacher noted "good sense of color and excellent brushwork."

I had violin and piano lessons from age 5 until I went to college, but never art lessons. I went to a conventional local public high school, Forest Hills High School in Queens, NY because we did not know there was a High School of Music and Art. In college (Brandeis University, BA, 1957) I took every studio and art history class possible. I remember being profoundly inspired by a talk to our senior class by Martha Graham, who emphasized that one can do anything if one sets her heart to it, a daring concept for a woman in the 1950's.

I then attended Columbia University's School of Painting and Sculpture (MFA in Painting, 1960), where I studied primarily with John Heliker, one of the rare professors who encouraged his female students. Along with art history classes, an influential course for me was in

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Chinese and Japanese philosophy. This led me to a greater interest in exploring Eastern religions and philosophy, which in turn influenced my approach to making art and to life in general. I was also privileged to take a class with Margaret Mead.

Although at Columbia I was awarded a General Scholarship and a Brevoort-Eickemeyer Fellowship, I also worked part-time teaching nursery school. While many of the male art students at Columbia went on to teach art on the college level, I was not told, and I did not realize, that I was as qualified as the men. It is important to note here that I had no experience of a woman art professor. For the next few years I supported myself teaching children. My first teaching job on the university level was in 1968 at Philadelphia College of Art (now University of the Arts). I subsequently taught painting and drawing for many years at such as Pratt Institute, Queens College, University of Colorado in Boulder, Naropa Institute, Virginia Commonwealth University, SUNY StonyBrook, Cleveland Art Institute, Art Institute of Chicago. In all my teaching I was especially aware of my women students and tried to give them the encouragement and confidence to be themselves that I did not get from most of my male teachers.

Abstract Expressionism influenced my thinking and painting while in school, and for the next few years my work was gestural in style and large in scale. Note that this was a time when a great compliment to a woman artist was that "it could have been painted by a man," a phrase that sounds absurd today but that was how it was 50 years ago.

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I received a Fulbright Grant in Painting to France in 1965-6 and lived in Paris. The French painter Jean Helion became a mentor and encouraged my painting representationally. Having felt the need for new forms and structures, I had already started to incorporate suggestions of figures and still-lives into the abstract compositions, and now in France I was beginning to paint from direct observation—still-lives, studio interiors and window views—subjects I continued to explore upon my return to New York. I also regularly drew and painted directly from the human figure.

I worked outdoors from landscapes during residencies at the artist colony Yaddo in 1968 and '69, a practice I continued at other artist residencies including MacDowell, Virginia Center for Creative Arts, Hambidge Center, Millay Colony, etc, as well as whenever I was out of the city for any length of time.

My first personal experience of uniting in a cause with other women was participating in the Women's March for Peace (Jeanette Rankin Brigade) in 1968 in Washington to protest the Vietnam War. The energy of thousands of women in the march around the White House was extremely powerful and very moving and inspiring to me.

I was an early member (since 1972) of the Women's Caucus for Art, exhibited in many all-women and feminist shows, took part in feminist discussion groups and joined marches and demonstrations protesting inequality in museums and galleries.

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In 1970, I bought and renovated the Soho loft in which I still live and work. Throughout the 70's I painted directly from life, mostly large paintings of over life-size nudes, female and male, posed singly or in pairs. I often included windows and/or mirrors to create a complex



Double Francesca (Francesca Woodman) oil on linen 56" x 72" an example of my large figure paintings I did in the 70's and 80's.

spatial structure. Color and painterly gestures were important elements of the imagery. In my art, my approach to giving equal dignity to women and men, and to women's bodies as painted by women, were expressions of my thinking on the subject.

I had begun to exhibit in 1963, and in the 1970's had solo shows in several venues and was also fortunate to

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have four solo shows at Green Mountain Gallery in Soho, a gallery that showed many women artists. I was also in group shows in Colorado; The Rose Art Museum; Brooklyn Museum; Artist Choice Museum; Indiana University Art Museum, among other places.

During a MacDowell Colony fellowship in 1977, I completed a nine-foot-tall self-portrait as the Hindu Mother Goddess Durga, the image of power and vigor. It was my contribution to "The Sister Chapel," a collaborative feminist project of 13 artists shown at PS 1 in NYC, and other sites. There are plans for it to be re-assembled and exhibited again.

In the 1980's I painted clothed figures in interiors, exploring more complex compositions, color relationships, and narrative relationships between the people. I also worked extensively with still-life subjects, primarily using as models the American Art pottery and decorative fabrics from the 1930's to 50's I had collected for years, juxtaposing cultures, patterns and objects to imply narratives that are up to the viewer to interpret. As Sandra Langer wrote in an article about my work in Arts Magazine, February 1984: "As a repository of thoughts and feelings her paintings symbolize a human ethics and consciousness all too rarely encountered in modern life."

I exhibited with Alex Rosenberg Gallery in NYC from 1980 until it closed in 1989, and also had solo shows in those years at Snug Harbor Cultural Center; Brooklyn Botanic Garden; Bienville Gallery, New Orleans; Thomas Center Gallery, Gainesville, Florida; Rider College, New Jersey. During the 1980's I was also in many important group shows in New York City and throughout the US

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and in Moscow (Russia).

Awarded an American Center Residency in Paris in 1985, I again lived and painted in France for a year. The paintings I did there were exhibited in a solo show in Aix-en-Provence in May 1986, where I had the honor to meet Grace Paley. Among my memories of that year is the large silent funeral procession for Simone de Beauvoir.

I was very active from 1992-94 with WAC (Women's Action Coalition), a direct action group started in NYC in 1992 by a group of artists in response to the Clarence Thomas-Anita Hill hearings. It was a heady time; the energy and protests and actions reminded me of the feeling of early 1970's feminism. I was part of the Diversity Committee of WAC, working to foster diversity of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic background, etc. Some of the issues we were involved with included rape trials, exclusion of women artists from major art galleries, and the Republican and Democratic conventions.

When I started a small watercolor in 1989 to memorialize family members who had perished in the Holocaust, I never imagined that painting overtly personal works inspired by my family's experiences and commemorating specific people, were to preoccupy me for the next fourteen years.

In writing this essay, I realize that my experience on the Diversity Committee of WAC may have prompted me to do this work. These paintings are large with over life-size figures as in my previous paintings, but done from imagination and photographs, and often incorporating

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text and other media. They are narrative and often multi-paneled installations or in the altarpiece formats inspired by early Renaissance paintings. While I hadn't set out consciously to paint about women, I realized most of the images were of women and children. As the late feminist writer and critic Arlene Raven wrote about looking at these works, "The artist insists on the intimate and individual responsibility of each pair of eyes and each heart."

Works from this series have been exhibited in eleven solo shows and many group shows throughout the U.S., as well as in a solo show in Vienna at Bezirksmuseum Josefstadt in 1998. It is most meaningful to me that two of the largest installations were purchased by Historisches Museum der Stadt Wien (the History Museum of the City of Vienna). Evelyn Torton Beck, whom I met at a VFA event, wrote a very perceptive article about my work in the spring 2009 issue of *Feminist Studies*. In 1997, with a VCCA-Austrian Federal Ministry of the Arts Residence award, I lived in Vienna for several months and did work inspired by architectural elements and cityscape views from my windows. In 2003 I began a series of pastels and larger paintings based on volcanoes and the landscapes, which impressed me during a visit to Hawaii. They were exhibited in a solo show at Showalls in NYC in 2007.

I am at present continuing an ongoing project of a series of portraits begun at the Atlantic Center for the Arts in New Smyrna Beach, Florida in 2005. After the many years of working almost exclusively on the solemn subject of the Holocaust, I had wanted to paint again directly from life and to celebrate people who are alive

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now, and to affirm in some way that each life is precious.

I am now also working with imagery of landscapes and animals (I am involved with animal rights), and continue to draw regularly from the live model. Encouraged by Jacqui Ceballos and Gloria Orenstein, I am also thinking of doing portraits of women important in the Feminist Movement. I welcome your visit



**Freedom Fighters from REMEMBRANCE  
(Holocaust) Series oil on linen and wood and paper  
76" x 57"**

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## Lee Kefauver and daughter Kari Lavalli

When I began working in the Women's Movement during the second stage of feminism, my daughter was eight years old. As with so many other feminists of that time, we were motivated in large part by the hope that we could change society so that our daughters would not have to fight for their rights as we had been forced to do. I had been blessed with a bright and charming daughter who shared my feminist views. With the backing of her feminist sisters, she fought her way through the old traditions she encountered in the public schools of Dearborn, Michigan and opened to girls classes which previously had been reserved only for boys. She went on to earn a bachelor's degree from Wells College in New York and then earned her Ph.D. in marine biology from Boston University.



She accepted a tenure-track position in the biology department of Southwest Texas University in San Marcos four years ago. In a way, it was a "coming home" experience for her, as her great-great-great-grandfather, James Gibson Swisher, had been one of the first European-American settlers in Texas, having come there with Stephen F. Austin in 1834. He was one of the signers of the Texas Declaration of Independence from Mexico. His son, John Milton Swisher, was the youngest soldier at the Battle of San Jacinto, and is pictured in the painting of the surrender of Santa Anna which hangs in the state capitol at Austin. But evidently, the freedoms for which our forebears fought 165 years ago are being subverted by the administration of Southwest Texas University.

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The chair of the biology department at Southwest Texas University has subjected her to the most blatant sex discrimination and harassment, reminiscent of practices engaged in by universities thirty years ago, and his actions have been upheld by his superiors, the dean and the vice-president of the university. The SWT Biology Department has 25 male professors (one of whom is a minority), compared to 6 females (one of whom is a minority). Highly qualified women applicants are not even given consideration for open positions which go to far less qualified white male applicants. Teaching loads assigned to my daughter have been much heavier than those of the male professors, which leaves her much less time to pursue research - a qualification for achieving tenure. Although she has performed more service than her male counterparts, is mentoring more graduate students, and has received the highest of student evaluations, which earned her a teaching award from the university, she has just been issued a terminal contract.

It is of little comfort to me that my daughter's story is not unique. Today it seems that universities all across the United States are actively engaging in blatant sexual discrimination. The American Association of University Women is presently pursuing 12 sex discrimination cases in university settings and is interested in my daughter's case. In recent years, AAUW has supported 58 sex discrimination cases against universities. And while the laws we "old feminists" strove so hard to see enacted will help her in any legal battle she may engage, it breaks my heart to see that the years of effort fought by my sisters and me have borne so little fruit. Our daughters will have to continue the fight. Truly, societal evolution is not an ascending ladder of progress!

When my daughter objected to her treatment through the university grievance avenue, she was told that she was

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up against a system established by "the good old boys." I was reminded of the comment made by one Florida legislator when ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment was defeated in that state:

"I fondly hope that one day these 'good old boys' will grow up and become men!"

### **UPDATE 5/2004: Lee Kefauver's daughter files suit!**

Kari Kefauver has left Southwest Texas State University and has filed suit in State Court charging discrimination and retaliation. The American Association of University Women's Legal Advocacy Fund is backing her suit.



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(Lee Kefauver served as state coordinator of the National Organization for Women in Michigan, as president of Women's Equity Action League (WEAL), Michigan Division, and as lobbyist for Michigan WEAL. She presently is a member of the Massachusetts and National Women's Political Caucus, Emily's List, and the Veteran Feminists of America.)

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## Veteran Feminists of America's Fabulous Feminists

### Clay Latimer

I was born in Montgomery, Alabama, in 1944, and grew up wedged between the conflicting cultures of the evolving post-war philosophies of the military regarding equality and the attitudes of the 1950's Deep South toward racial segregation. At the time my father was stationed in France with the U.S. Air Force and my mother was supporting the war effort as a volunteer "Gray Lady" with the American Red Cross in Montgomery. After my father returned home, I lived alternately on Air Force bases and in my hometown. When I was fifteen, my parents died prematurely within months of each other, both of natural causes, and I moved to New Orleans to live with my maternal uncle and his family.



As a ten-year-old I had been witness to the tensions created when Rosa Parks illegally maintained her seat on a Montgomery city bus. And the day before celebrating my sixteenth birthday in New Orleans I watched the local television broadcast of six-year-old Ruby Bridges being escorted by U.S. Marshals into an all white elementary school. These were the memories that would later nurture my civil rights activism as a young adult during the sixties.

Though the societal messages in my youth about racial equality were ambiguous, my parents tried to teach me

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that gender was not a disabling factor. When I told my father I wanted to be a detective, he made a fingerprinting kit for me (because they didn't sell them in stores then) and taught me how to take fingerprints from people and how to lift them from surfaces. When I told my mother I didn't know if I wanted to be a writer or a lawyer, her response was that Erle Stanley Gardner was both. She also insisted that I take typing in high school so I would always be able to make a living. As it turned out, years later I earned a living operating a teletype machine while I attended law school at night. Though my mother was correct that my typing ability would serve me well, both my parents were wrong about their expectations that my life would be free of gender-based inequities.

After I graduated from high school, I spent several years rotating from academic endeavors to civil rights activism with no clear goal in either direction. During one hiatus from academia in the early sixties, I moved to a small town north of New Orleans and spent a year teaching at a Catholic school in a rural area for a community of biracial families whose children were having difficulties integrating into the racially segregated schools in the area.

In 1964, I enrolled in what was then Southeast Louisiana College in Hammond. During my first semester, shortly after we had joined an African-American male acquaintance for a cup of coffee in the cafeteria, two female students and I were summoned to the Dean's office and grilled by the Dean of Men, Dean of Women and Dean of Students who asked questions like "What are you trying to do, get us on the cover of

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Life magazine?" In genuine naiveté, we asked what we had done wrong. They explained there were vertical relationships and horizontal relationships, and that by sitting with an African-American male friend, we had transgressed into the zone of a horizontal relationship. We were finally dismissed from the Dean's office and spared any punishment, but that incident left an indelible impression and motivated me more than ever to work in the progressive movements of the time.

In the mid-sixties, I moved back to New Orleans and became involved in the peace movement and civil rights efforts as a member of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. When the Justice Department ordered the desegregation of public schools in Louisiana, I was one of a group of women (identified in the local press as "housewives") who accepted teaching positions at a public high school in Plaquemines Parish to prevent the closure of the school by the Parish President, Leander Perez.

On August 26, 1972, I joined New Orleans NOW and the same day attended my first day at Loyola University School of Law. I went to school at night, worked full time during the day and received my Juris Doctor in 1976. Almost immediately after joining NOW, I became active in a statewide effort to lobby for an equal rights guarantee for women at the 1973 Louisiana State Constitutional Convention. But the result was the adoption in the 1974 Constitution of a diluted provision prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex only when arbitrary, capricious or unreasonable—quite different from the equality we had lobbied for.

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Following the failed campaign, I headed an ERA Task Force for New Orleans NOW. Thanks to the persistence of Jeanne Helwig, then president of the League of Women Voters in Jefferson Parish, and Dottie Dahlberg, also active with the League, we founded ERA Central of New Orleans, the first ERA coalition in Louisiana. Bonnie DeNoux was the first president and I served as the Political Action Coordinator.

ERA Central maintained an office in New Orleans provided by the local AFL-CIO affiliate and a phone line that was an extension of my home phone. In spite of the resources invested in the efforts, the Louisiana Legislature defeated the ERA at least seven times.

In 1974, I was one of approximately 50 Louisiana women selected to participate in the National Women's Political Caucus's "Win With Women" training in Athens, Georgia, a project designed to teach women effective campaign strategies to increase their numbers in elected office on local, state and national levels.

During that period, while I was still in law school, I secured funding through the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities to direct a grant program, "The Legal Status of Louisiana Women" administered by the YWCA. With the assistance of Janet Mary Riley, a professor at Loyola Law School and a member of the Louisiana Law Institute, and Helen Kohlman, one of the few established women attorneys who was willing to work on feminist issues, a coalition of organizations, including NOW and the YWCA, provided educational presentations and videos throughout the state focusing on the infamous "Head and Master" provision of Louisiana law which

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gave husbands nearly absolute unilateral control of the couple's community property.

This project turned out to be a huge mobilizing tool. Several women attendees privately described situations we thought needed to be referred to the courts. In addition to achieving justice for women, we hoped that one of the cases would result in a ruling regarding the unconstitutionality of the discriminatory elements of the Louisiana Community Property system.

One of those women was Selina Martin, who discovered after her separation that her husband had mortgaged their home without her knowledge, to pay his gambling debts. I referred her to Dorothy Waldrup, a local attorney, who represented Selina pro bono. When the court refused to declare the "Head and Master" provision unconstitutional, she lost the home to foreclosure.

The combination of the failed ERA campaign, the diluted version of an equality provision in the State Constitution, the educational efforts of the "Legal Status" programs, the injustice of the various court decisions, and other factors created a statewide groundswell to support revisions to the community property system. When Riley presented her version of the revision of the laws to the Louisiana Law Institute they refused to accept it. Courageously, she submitted her version directly to the legislature through a senator who introduced it for her. It included a more equitable management system that passed into law in the late seventies and took effect in 1980, and "Head and Master" became a shameful part of Louisiana history.

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One other effect of the "Legal Status" programs was the beginning of documentation of the need for services for battered women. Because the husband had control over the family's resources, women had few options. I routinely reported these disclosures to the YWCA administration but funding realities prevented it from expanding services during that fiscal year. So, as I was instructed by YWCA administrators, I directed those women to the YWCA Rape Crisis Line. In 1977, with funding secured through the documentation of the need for services from the Rape Crisis program, the YWCA opened the first Battered Women's Program in the State of Louisiana, and provided a 24-hour hotline, crisis intervention, telephone and office counseling, and referral services.

Prior to the passage of the community property revisions, in 1974 I authored a pamphlet for the New Orleans NOW Legal and Legislative Committee entitled "How Marriage Can Change Your Life," which explained the details and implications of the "Head and Master" provision. In 1975, I represented NOW as a member of the **State's** Attorney General's task force for the preparation of a Marriage Pamphlet, chaired by Pat Evans, to be distributed to couples applying for a marriage license informing them of the community property laws, including the "Head and Master" provision. Additionally, I wrote articles on the inequities of the community property laws in *Distaff*, a feminist newspaper published in New Orleans by Mary Gehman and Donna Swanson in the 70's and 80's.

In 1976-1977 I served as State Coordinator of Louisiana NOW. During my tenure, with the guidance and

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expertise of Kathy Bonk, national Chair of the NOW Women in Media Task Force, we filed petitions to the Federal Communications Commission to deny license renewals to over 70 Louisiana radio and television stations for failures to include women in public service access and community programming. One result was to ensure that NOW was represented on the community advisory committees the FCC required major television and radio stations to establish.

In 1977 I served on the Louisiana Women's Conference Coordinating Committee and on its Women and Law Task Force which was chaired by Ollie Osborne from Lafayette. At that statewide conference, I was elected a delegate (and the only NOW member) from Louisiana to the historic National Women's Conference in Houston in November. Our delegation was exceptionally strong, especially for a Southern state, due mostly to the



Clay Latimer, Martha Gaines, Ollie Osborne NOW  
Convention 1976.

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leadership of Pat Evans, head of the Governor's Bureau for Women.

I became director of the Louisiana statewide coalition ERA United, which had been kept alive by Karline Tierney, for the last years of the nearly dead ERA campaign in 1977-78. The last but successful effort to secure an additional three years for consideration by the states yielded no additional ratifying states and the Amendment died in 1982.

As a member of the Board of Directors of New Orleans NOW from 1972 to 1977 and again from 1985 to 1986, at various times I was Coordinator of the ERA Task Force, the Women in Media Task Force, and the Women in Politics Task Force. I represented Louisiana NOW on the National By-laws Commission in 1975, served on National NOW's Task Forces on Women in Politics, Women in Media and Older Women, and was a delegate to the NOW National Conference in 1985.

After graduating from law school, I wanted to remain involved in political activism, so I went to work full time for the YWCA until four years later when I was persuaded to take the bar exam. Incredibly, I passed on my first try and was ultimately offered a job as a public defender in Juvenile Court in Orleans Parish. Unfortunately, my public defender's salary could not keep up with the cost of living, so eventually I took a job as an attorney for the state child protection agency where I remained for over 25 years.

As an attorney for the Louisiana Department of Social Services (later called the Department of Children and

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Family Services) from 1983 until my retirement in 2011, I represented the department in child abuse and neglect cases. As a state employee, though my activism was stifled, I continued to try to address civil rights and women's issues. I served as a member of the Board and Treasurer of the Metropolitan Battered Women's Program, as the founding Treasurer and Board member of CASA (New Orleans Court Appointed Special Advocate for children in foster care), as Co-Chair of the Domestic Violence Committee of the New Orleans Bar Association, as a member of the Medical and Social Work Committee of the Mayor's Task Force on Domestic Violence, and as a member of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Lesbian and Gay Issues.

Immediately upon my retirement, I was invited to serve on the Louisiana LGBT Task Force, a project to address the needs of LGBT children in foster care. Shortly after, a colleague and I were asked to present at a state child welfare conference in Tennessee on the use of infant mental health teams in juvenile court proceedings. We presented that same material in August 2013 at the conference of the National Association of Counsel for Children.

I am currently serving on the Board of the Forum for Equality, a Louisiana organization that advocates for equal civil rights for the lesbian and gay community. Additionally, I am one of the NOW representatives to the Legislative Agenda for Women (LAW), a coalition to develop and support legislation to improve and protect the interests of Louisiana women.

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I am also a NOW representative to Louisiana Courts Matter, part of a national coalition whose purpose is to influence the expeditious appointment of judges of diverse backgrounds to fill the current backlog of federal judicial vacancies. As a representative of that coalition I was invited to a forum at the White House in June 2013 to discuss the issue of the stalled judicial nominations with members of the Obama Administration.

Also in June 2013, I began my term as member of the New Orleans Human Relations Commission Advisory Committee, charged with overseeing enforcement of the city ordinances prohibiting discrimination based on race, creed, national origin or ancestry, color, religion, gender or sex, sexual orientation, gender identification, marital status, age, physical condition or disability. I continue to maintain a private law practice representing children in Juvenile Courts in the New Orleans Area in abuse and neglect cases.

Non-political activities include participation in a fiction writers' group where I am trying to learn to write fictional accounts about women's struggles to find the freedom to be who they want to be. My retired racing greyhound and I just completed our second year in the Visiting Pet Program that visits patients at local hospitals or nursing homes monthly. I also volunteer at the New Orleans City Park greenhouse.

*NOTE:* Clay has received many awards over the years. In 1978 she received an Outstanding Feminist Award from the Jefferson Parish Chapter of NOW; in 1990 a special recognition from CASA, New Orleans. In 1994 she was the recipient of the Citizen of the Year Award by

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the New Orleans Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers; and in that same year the Public Service Award from the Gillis Long Poverty Law Center of Loyola School of Law. In 2006 the local Human Rights Campaign presented her with the Equality Award; and in 2012 she was given the Children's Law Award from the Louisiana State Bar Association for "commitment and dedication to providing for the legal needs of children in Louisiana."

Credit for information on Janet Riley's efforts to enact community property revisions goes to Dr. Janet Allured, Professor of History at McNeese University in Lake Charles, and currently visiting professor at Tulane University in New Orleans. This information is contained in Allured's book on Louisiana women.

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### BARBARA LOVE

If Second Wave activists were graded according to their contributions, Barbara Love would be in the top ten. For more than 40 years she's never wavered. When one door closed, she opened another-- and if there was no



door to open, she'd cut one out of the wall of sexual bias and create a new venue to fight for women's and gays' rights .

So when does one realize that one is a feminist, that one is different? For Barbara it was at a very early age. At home in Ridgewood, NJ, she wondered why women had to be in the kitchen while men were in the living room discussing things of world import.

She felt she was a disappointment to her mother, an important woman in town, important the way women could be in those pre-feminist years. Head of the Debutante Cotillion, president of the Women's Club and other clubs, Lois Love hoped her daughter would follow in her footsteps and make her proud. "I thought the Cotillion stupid, degrading and a waste of money." Barbara admits. "Not only that, I hung out with the poorer kids, rather than the 'club set' and that was radical."

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She felt she didn't "fit in" during her childhood, but her one joy was swimming. "When I was three years old," she relates, "I had to swim across the pool with my five-year-year-old brother at an event at our country club. After that, I swam all summer, entered swim contests and won many NJ state championships. A headline in the *New York Times* lauded me with an article titled *Love At Thirteen Is Good*. Today at 72, Barbara swims in Master's competitions, competing in the most demanding events. She often wins because, she explains, "I am the only one in my age group, so winning five gold medals isn't so impressive, as most of the time I have no competition."

Barbara realized early she was gay. She remembers having a crush on her third grade teacher. In middle school she had crushes on girls, but never spoke about this (there was no one to talk to anyway). Later, as a journalism student at Syracuse University, she learned that lives of gays were sad and often perilous. Women were thrown out of college for being gay. After college she spent two years in Europe. In Italy she taught at an American school. On returning to the U.S. in 1961 she went to gay bars, which she found degrading. There was no gay movement and gays could be arrested for whatever reason.

Barbara learned about NOW from radio host, Long John Nebel, whom she had interviewed as part of her job as a journalist. Nebel recommended she talk to a feminist friend of his, who introduced her to Muriel Fox, a NOW founder. Muriel sent her to Dolores Alexander, who had joined NOW after interviewing Betty Friedan for *The Long Island Press*. At the time NOW was only a national

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board and a small New York chapter, which met at Betty's apartment in the Dakota building. Preparing for the first meeting, Dolores gave Barbara a recipe and told her to cook a chicken for the board of directors. She says, "I couldn't believe I'd joined the women's movement to cook!"

She found Betty harsh and demanding so kept her distance. But there was much activity in the chapter and a passionate group of young activists, including Kate Millett and Rita Mae Brown. There were demonstrations against Colgate-Palmolive, and the New York Times; against hotel and restaurant men-only dining rooms, some of which Barbara helped organize. In 1970, because she realized the importance of providing a resource on women by their abilities and professional accomplishments, she compiled, edited and published *Foremost Women in Communications*.

Meanwhile the lesbian cause was the main topic of conversation, and many "straights" were thrown off kilter. Some NOW members weren't even aware that some of their closest cohorts in the movement were gay. Betty Friedan herself freaked out and began to portray the lesbian presence as damaging to NOW, which inspired Barbara to respond publicly. "My life had gotten better since I'd joined NOW and even better when I joined the women forging the beginnings of lesbian liberation," she recalls. "I stayed with NOW to work with others to gain acceptance of lesbianism as a feminist issue." Our efforts were successful in that at the national conference in California in 1971 NOW passed a resolution spearheaded by Arlie Scott proclaiming lesbianism a feminist issue. In 1976, at the historic International

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Women's Year conference in Houston, Friedan publicly endorsed the resolution of lesbian rights. With Morty Manford, a leader of the Gay Activist's Alliance, and their mothers, Barbara started *Parents of Gays*, today a nationwide organization. She says proudly, when in 1968 I finally had the courage to tell my mother I was gay, her response was 'First to thine own self be true.' She joined me in the 1970 Gay Pride march in New York." Barbara was also one of the founders of Identity House, a free walk-in center for gays and their families still active today."

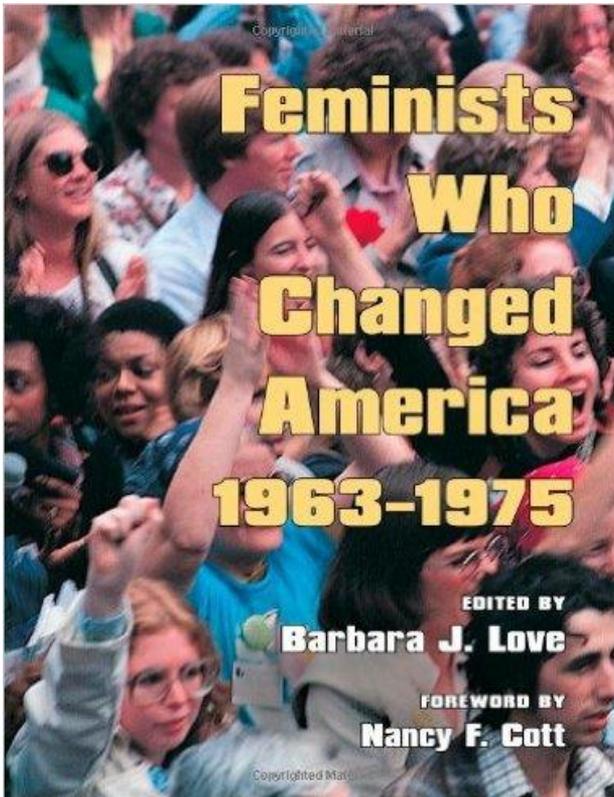


Barbara Love and her mother at a Gay Rights March, June 29, 1974. Photograph by Cary Herz.)

Nineteen-seventy-one saw the publication of *Sappho Was a Right-on Woman*, which she co-authored with Sidney Abbott. It was the first nonfiction book with a positive view of lesbianism and it is still in print.

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Though involved in her career as a writer/editor, for the next few years Barbara continued her behind-the-scenes activism. In 1998, inspired by the founding of VFA, which was organized to document the history of the Second Wave and honor all who made it happen, she began a monumental mission: to record the bios of the pioneers who led and made the revolution.



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*Feminists Who Changed America 1963-1975*, published by the University of Illinois Press, is a masterful work that belongs on the table of everyone involved in the Movement. Barbara credits VFA members who helped accomplish this reference work documenting the contributions of more than 2,200 feminists. She is now working on a next edition/supplement so as to include many who missed the first go-round.

Not only is she still involved in collecting and writing up bios of pioneer feminists, but she often travels around the country to introduce the book at VFA and NOW events, which she sometimes helps plan. She's been to Denver for one planned by Ellie Greenberg, to Los Angeles where Zoe Nicholson's NOW chapter gave her an outstanding welcome. She starred at the 2007 VFA conference that introduced the book at Columbia and Barnard, and in March 2009 she and Eleanor Pam held a powerful event in Pompano Beach, Florida. She will consider going anywhere in the country to help you celebrate your local heroes.

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### LYNNE LITWILLER

My Mother's marriage in 1938 was kept a secret in order for her to keep her needed and beloved job as a first grade teacher. She was "outed" by her pregnancy and my subsequent birth in 1940. Accordingly she lost her position as required by the dictates of the time. One of my earliest feminist "clicks" occurred when she related this to me some years later.



The childhood "clicks" kept coming. After my Mother opened her own private kindergarten, I observed my exhausted Mother in the kitchen one evening receiving instructions from my Father as to how she could better iron his shirts. She had worked all day; the next day's kindergarten preparations were yet to be done; and the dinner she was preparing was cooking on the stove. With a child's sense of justice I asked why she didn't tell him to iron them himself. She looked at me and said nothing, but soon thereafter a housekeeper arrived to handle the household responsibilities, including the ironing. There were times when the housekeeper, "Mary", arrived limping and with bruises on her face and arms, administered by an abusive husband. On those days my Mother took care of her. Mary came to us as scheduled until the day she died.

In her quiet way my Mother strove continually to make a difference for girls and women, offering supportive and

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encouraging help whenever she could. Our home was always open for visits and stays by young women training for careers at nearby hospitals and colleges. A college education for me was a given; my Father, while strongly imbued with the male privilege mindset of the time, was supportive and at times an active advocate on my behalf.

My high school years presented their own lessons of proscriptive womanhood and I spent them actively rebelling against the requirement that girls must wear dresses and take "Home Economics". When the session on doing laundry came up, I enjoyed the orchestrated overflow of bubbly suds spewing throughout the room. Similar "accidents" occurred during the sewing, ironing, and cooking phases. While the teacher gave me a passing grade I'm sure it was out of spite and a fervent desire to never see me again.

In 1957 I graduated from high school and entered Stephens College where I learned to fly and became a member of the competitive collegiate flying team, the "Jack Aces". Having a special aptitude in higher math and the sciences and an interest in aeronautical engineering, Stephens paid for and enrolled me in classes at the University of Missouri which would be creditable toward an engineering degree. Buoyed by a new sense of justice when I graduated from Stephens (A.A. 1959), I entered Penn State's engineering program that same year. There I was totally unprepared for the hostility of a particular professor who repeatedly attempted to humiliate me in class and who assigned me a final grade of D when I deserved an A or at worst B+ -- a situation he was forced to amend after my Father, an

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accomplished engineer and former professor himself, drove to Penn State and arranged through the Dean to meet with the professor and me to review the final exam, which was to be "90% of the final grade". No mistakes were found. It had not even been scored. My grade was changed but also my life. The message was clear: without an influential Father there would have been no vindication. Engineering was not survivable for me as a woman. I left Penn State.

Thereafter I went on to graduate from the University of Missouri with a B.A./M.A. in political science. During the years at "M.U." I took a special interest in the politics of the Cold War, minored in the Russian language, and taught American and comparative government on an instructorship. In 1961, having achieved fluency in Russian, I was selected to be one of a group of exchange students to the USSR pursuant to the Cultural Exchange Agreement of 1957 negotiated by Eleanor Roosevelt. Before we embarked on the trip, Eleanor Roosevelt met with us at the UN headquarters in New York. It was the year before her death and she was frail, but still magnificent and inspirational.

After my return from the USSR, I wrote my master's thesis about the life of Rosa Luxemburg and married that same year – 1962. Bill and I celebrated our 50 years together on September 22, 2012.

When I began the job hunt in 1963, jobs were sex-segregated, and needless to say, the most and the best were in the male columns. After seeing a "male wanted" ad for which I was particularly well-qualified, I took it to the private employment agency with which I had

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contracted and pleaded with the reluctant agent to call for me. Agreeing that I was highly qualified for the position she relented. I watched as she asked the employer whether he might consider a highly qualified woman for the position. She grew quiet, her face flushed with embarrassment, and she kept repeating "I'm so sorry, I'm so sorry. It won't happen again." Not only was the call the waste of time that she said it would be, but it possibly jeopardized her standing with the client. It was a crushing experience.

I went home bereft of hope, sat on our staircase, and cried a very long time until very still. My worried husband talked me back and vowed we would fight this together. Thereafter providence moved.

Motivated by role models Eleanor Roosevelt and Frances Perkins, I took the civil service exam which resulted in a good score and thus the ability to compete against the veteran's preference in effect at the time.

Soon thereafter Bill came home excitedly one afternoon with the news that he had approached a man at the handball court who reportedly was about to open a subregional office for the National Labor Relations Board. At the interview it was clear that gender was no problem for this man who appreciated my preparation for all questions relating to the National Labor Relations Act. Thus began my professional career as a Field Examiner with the NLRB in 1965. Later I held the position of Head Mediator with the National Mediation Board (the agency's first woman mediator), followed by various supervisory, managerial and expert level positions with the NLRB. I retired in 1995.

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The early NLRB years were interesting for the complaints the Officer-in-Charge received for sending a "secretary" into the field and for staff issues such as male entitlement for the best offices, all of which the Officer-in-Charge dispatched with unwavering fairness. This changed, however, upon assignment to a different region a few years later, where I was precluded from performing important parts of the job such as Hearing Officer, and subjected to scrutiny by the Director no male agent ever encountered. During this period I found the National Organization for Women and joined in 1968.

Mercifully, in 1970 I was able to transfer to the Seattle Regional office where the Director actually wanted a female agent. While I had heard that the sun rarely shines in Seattle, it did for me.

Keeping as low a profile as possible given the sensitive nature of the job, I continued my NOW involvement in Seattle. I immediately joined the Seattle Chapter, and was a prime mover in founding the Snohomish County Chapter in 1971. Also that year I was elected to the National Board of the National Organization for Women where I worked on many issues, including the ERA and employment issues, but most intensively on the Equal Credit Opportunity Project as its National Coordinator and Coalition Head. This effort documented the discriminatory experiences of credit-worthy women. As a married woman I had found that I could not establish credit in my own name regardless of being at least as credit-worthy as my husband: applications were returned with statements that credit is established in "the husband's name only". Since my job required a great

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deal of travel, I was forced to submit receipts for travel expenses with my husband's name on them.

The implications for women attempting to establish businesses or otherwise fully engage in commerce were enormous. Accordingly I gathered evidence from women all over the country who had been denied credit even when making substantially more money than husbands. I organized protests, such as mass application mailings for credit cards with instructions to issue in the applicant woman's name only; I wrote proposed legislation; I gave speeches and media interviews; I worked with other women and organizations, including Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg then affiliated with the ACLU Women's Project; I sought the support of Senators and Legislators; and I testified in various venues regarding the extent and impact of credit non-availability. Of far-reaching importance was the presentation of testimony on May 22, 1972, on behalf of NOW before the National Commission on Consumer Finance, a panel of prominent Presidential and Congressional appointees.

Senators William Proxmire and Bill Brock took special interest in the evidence I presented, even including leaving the panel to review the documentation of denials. Also testifying that day were the Hon. Bella Abzug, the Hon. Martha Griffith, the Hon. Patsy Mink, and other coalition members. The effectiveness of the day's testimony seemed to be affirmed by the banking representatives who approached me as I left the hearing room with promises of credit --- and attractive job offers. The culmination of the effort was the enactment of the Equal Credit Opportunity Act, enabling women since

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1974 to obtain credit in their own right and to establish their own credit histories.

My retirement years in Oceanside, CA, are spent irritating proponents of sexist tradition whenever and wherever I find them, playing bridge, and enjoying my final years with Bill. Sometimes during moments of quiet reflection I wish for some female deities, a surname lineage for our daughters, a non-sexist language.... Dreams of a core feminist. Like the owl of Minerva which 'flies only at dusk', the wisdom of gender respect and equity may come only in the later stages of human history after many more waves of feminist struggle. In the meantime, having been a participant in this wave, I reflect upon Jill Ruckelhaus' stirring speech, circa 1971, "...we will never give up...", and in gratitude for her inspiration I am able to look back at the end of my days and say "Once in my life I gave everything I had for Justice."

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### REBECCA LUBETKIN

Ours was an uprooted family. My parents, Abraham "Bud" Levin b. 1904, and Jessica Denenholz Levin, b. 1912, grew up in the same remote part of New York City. Far Rockaway was a small beach town with limited access to New York's urban centers. Their story as a couple, and thus my story, began a distance away in rural New Jersey, far removed in those days from their roots.



Both were children of lawyers and each was suddenly orphaned as a teenager in the 1920s. Their mothers had no income source. In the absence of government relief programs, they had to make their way for themselves and their families without material and moral support. My father's father died at 48, leaving his son Bud, in college, as well as a daughter who had just graduated from Barnard in 1922 and was in her first year of medical school. To support his family and to make possible his sister's dream of becoming a doctor, Bud left college. Though still in his teens, he was able to establish a light manufacturing business in Kenilworth, New Jersey, a town of about 900, far removed from home. In doing so he enabled his sister to complete medical school at Columbia University in 1926.

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Jessica, the fourth of 10 children, was 18 and a Cornell freshman when her father died in 1930, leaving an ailing widow with 3 children in college and 5 younger children (ages 9, 10, 12, 14, and 15). A graduate of Hunter College High School (a girls school), Jessica was able to stay in college, graduating from Cornell in 1933, at the height of the Depression when jobs were impossible to get, when there was no safety valve for survivors; and she had five siblings still at home to help support. The following year, when Jessica was 22, their mother died.

When Jessica and Bud married in 1936, Jessica worked in the family business and also gave birth to six children, the first five of whom were born within 4 ½ years. As though this was not enough, both still maintained heavy commitments to their families back home. While our parents were always present in our lives, they were often distracted by their enormous responsibilities; our day-to-day care was provided by a housekeeper who lived with our family until I was 10. All of this took place from 1939-1949 accompanied by the anxieties of World War II, the Holocaust, and the early years of the Cold War.

Our isolation was more than geographic. We were a mismatch with this tiny homogeneous community. We were different in religion, socioeconomic status, parental education and expectation. One of three Jewish families in town, we felt distanced from our peers, not only due to overt anti-Semitism; but also to cultural differences. Our parents' expectations of us reflected their own educational backgrounds in contrast to that of most of our peers' parents who were recently-arrived immigrants, farmers and factory workers, whose formal

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education ended before high school.

I was born at the end of 1938, with a twin brother. He was the only boy, with five sisters. Our father was a conservative with traditional and rigid values. He did not, however, privilege his son over his daughters. Standards and expectations were the same. Very intimidating, he was determined to limit his wife's and children's access to outside influences in order to maintain the centrality of his values and to keep us within the fold. That was onerous, but there was an upside. Having such a strong self-contained family life with so many siblings proved a benefit in a community in which we didn't fit.

Fortunately when I was 11 we moved to Millburn, NJ, a suburban community that was more salutary. It was a much better match in educational aspirations and support: achievement in school was more valued there, though we still had a feeling of not quite belonging. That feeling was grounded in a climate of real, but unacknowledged, biases, based not only on religion, but also on ethnicity, income, one's section of town or elementary school, and perceptions of who was smart and who was not. As a result, many of our classmates felt marginalized as well. Though Millburn had a small Jewish community, we still felt the effects of religious prejudice; this was manifested not in school but in limited social acceptance and in community programs and country clubs that were outright discriminatory. A major portion of town was restricted—Jews could not purchase homes there. Few students were unkind; they tried their best to mask their disinterest in/distaste for peers who were different. No bullying or harassment, we were simply irrelevant to their lives outside of the classroom. It

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seemed we were violating some social norm just by living there, and should be grateful.

It is not so surprising that I was not aware of sexism. If anything, in my family females seemed privileged: my brother did not have a better deal than his sisters; my mother was well educated, more so than my father; my father was willing to leave college to put his sister through medical school. With that background, I did not notice the many gender inequities the world doled out. But I am sure that my early experiences sensitized me to issues of injustice and thus played a part in preparing me for my future activism.

I graduated in 1960 from Barnard (Columbia University), a women's college where women's education and futures were taken seriously and where no pursuit was seen as inappropriate for women. In fact I did my graduate work in political science (then considered a male pursuit), and later worked as an instructor of public policy at Rutgers, when Rutgers College was still all male.

I met my husband, Daniel Lubetkin, when he was a member of the State Legislature. I was part of a team of Rutgers academics that had been requested by the Legislature to conduct an analysis of its procedures with the objective of proposing recommendations to improve the legislative process

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Daniel, a lawyer, was one of the legislators I interviewed for this study. We married in 1963, and gave birth to two daughters in 1967 and 1968.

One great influence on me was that in my early years I had been raised by paid help; I determined early that, when I gave birth, no activity outside of the home would be more important or have higher stakes or be more worthy of my devotion than the rearing of our future children. And so Dan and I embarked on a very traditional marriage; he was the sole earner and I was the caregiver.



Rebecca with husband  
Daniel

By the late 60s, when our daughters were 2 and 1, I had heard of the beginnings of the women's liberation movement. But I discounted it, telling myself that "women's lib" may be needed by some, especially those who personally suffered from a big, bad father or husband, but I did not fit into that category and so didn't need it. Then one day in 1970 I was reading an article in the Barnard Alumnae magazine about the new movement that referred the reader to a list of recommended readings. I read *Black Like Me*, and it changed my life!! The author, John Howard Griffin, a white Texan, had traveled by bus through the racially segregated south as a Black man, and described the differential treatment he received, even from unknowing acquaintances, based only on skin color. I likened sexism to racism, realizing, for the first time, that sexism

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is not just personal; it is also social, cultural, political—transcending one's individual circumstances.

Things changed quickly. I was still a full-time child-rearer/homemaker (for the next five years), but joined a consciousness-raising group with diverse members. (That group was supposed to end after 10 sessions, but actually continued for 30 years!!) I joined NOW in 1971 and began to see limitations based on gender around every corner—in our daughters' preschool and elementary school, in their organized, recreational activities, in athletics—a girl could not be captain of the safety patrol, could not ride a bike to school, could not play recreational soccer or basketball, could not play kickball with the boys at lunch, but had to remain on the blacktop. Books had mostly boys as main characters, and there were almost no biographies of women in the school library. In classrooms teachers focused on the boys, called on them more often, and asked them more probing questions. There was lots more.

While I worked on many issues, my main focus was on schools. I was chair of NOW-NJ's Task Force on Education when we filed hundreds of separate formal Complaints with the New Jersey Division on Civil Rights contesting the practice of requiring middle school girls to take home economics and boys to take shop (and for the most part not allowing cross-gender enrollment). We won and seemingly overnight, schools opened all courses to both sexes.

There were many struggles and triumphs, local, state and national. Most changes are taken for granted now,

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but in the 70s generated strong opposition and even mockery; for instance:

- persuading schools to allow children to stay for lunch rather than requiring them to go home from noon to 1:00, thereby freeing mothers for other pursuits. I was attacked as being a Communist who wanted the government to take over the rearing of my children.
- advancing the passage and implementation of Title IX. We increased dramatically the number of girls' sports and teams as well as the availability of appropriate facilities, press coverage, coaches, and tournaments. I was accused of trying to turn our daughters, and other people's daughters, into muscle-bound lesbians.



1974 NOW Wonder Woman Conference

Before Title IX was promulgated I joined with a friend to found a consulting firm to help schools make the changes we felt were needed. Without a legislative mandate, hiring us depended on schools seeing the

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advantage of change, so there were few takers. Through NOW we advocated for State legislation assuring equal educational opportunity. When we succeeded in getting the new law and regulation passed, I was invited by New Jersey's new Office of Equal Educational Opportunity to design and direct required professional development for all educators in the new mandates.

And then in 1975, Rutgers University asked me to write a grant proposal to support training for educators in how to achieve equal opportunity. That proposal was funded, and resulted in the creation of the Consortium for Educational Equity, and I was hired as executive director at the rank of assistant professor. For the next 25 years the Consortium provided leadership to schools in making the changes needed to transform the educational practices and programs to provide equitable education opportunities.

Originally targeting schools in New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, and only gender bias, the work was later expanded, through successful competitive funding applications, to reach much of the country as well as to include policies and practices that limited students based on race and national origin as well. I also served as Associate Director for Equity of the Rutgers Center for Mathematics, Science, and Computer Education. By the year 2000 I had advanced to full professor and finally, with my retirement, to emerita professor.

I am the author, editor, or publisher of numerous books and articles and videos. Among them were the earliest policy and practices manuals for restructuring

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educational programs to provide equal opportunity. These include pioneering (1976-79) guidelines for developing equitable opportunities in athletics as well as curriculum guides in social studies, language arts, and the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) fields. We also designed and conducted scores of Futures Unlimited conferences at local colleges to interest girls in pursuing careers in STEM fields. We assembled in our library the largest collection in the country of multimedia resources in educational equity.

What made it all possible was Dan's extraordinary support as I moved into employment. Clearly I was changing the rules that had structured our lives from the beginning when, inspired by the feminist movement, I applied for and was offered that assistant professorship in a field that did not exist and which I would have the good fortune to define myself. It was an opportunity afforded to few—to be able to pursue my feminist passion and to be paid for it. We both knew I could not accept without substantial changes at home. I had to give up my determination to avoid paid child care help. After-school care in those days was available only in poor neighborhoods. Not only would we need a housekeeper (the children were then 8 and 7), but Dan would have to do many of the tasks only a parent can do. The inconvenience and radical intrusions on his time would in no way be compensated by my very low academic salary. He sacrificed many of his own professional and personal goals to accommodate our family's new needs, making it possible for me to take a job 35 miles away that required my absenting myself from home from 7:30 am to 6:00 pm daily.

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We have been married for 48 years, our daughters are grown, each married with two children. Julie Lubetkin lives in San Carlos, CA, and Dr. Erica Lubetkin lives in Manhattan. I have been retired for 11 years, although I have continued to work part-time as a consultant at Rutgers. Since retirement, I have been an activist primarily in international women's rights: my causes have been genocide, rape as a weapon of war, slavery, honor killing and sex trafficking. These activities include writing, demonstrating, political organizing, lobbying, and canvassing. I was also involved in the anti-war movement as an active member of the Raging Granny Brigade, protesting the Iraqi War in various places including the Times Square Armed Forces Recruiting Station.

I'm a member of VFA's Board and among my other current volunteer activities is involvement since 1993 as part of the production team for the television show, "New Directions for Women," produced by the Morris County chapter of NOW through CableVision and aired in many outlets of the country. I became host of the show in 2007. More than 200 shows have been produced, and all are archived in the Sophia Smith Collection at Smith College; most shows are available on youtube at [www.youtube.com/mcnownj](http://www.youtube.com/mcnownj)

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### **JENNIFER MacLEOD**

I was born Jennifer Ann Selfridge November 1929 in London, England. My father was a business executive and son of the American founder and head of Selfridges, a large department store in London. My mother, the daughter of a British attorney, was a secretary and then a homemaker. My three brothers and I had dual American and British citizenship.



In 1940, when I was ten, we moved to the U.S, on the second to last passenger ship that crossed the Atlantic before none were permitted to brave the U-boat infested ocean, a month before the date Hitler had set to invade England. Following my father's career demands, we moved frequently—from Darien, CT to Fair Haven, NJ, to Madison, WI, to Red Bank, NJ.

As the girl of the family, little was expected of me other than "behaving myself" (which I did) and "doing well in school" (which I also did, skipping a couple of grades along the way). While my brothers were encouraged and tutored and sent to superb private schools, I went to local schools in England and then to public schools (good ones, fortunately) in the U.S.— a total of nine different schools before I started college. Though

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unspoken, it was amply clear that I was expected to be working in a job such as secretary (their initial aim was for me to go to secretarial school ), and as quickly as possible, to attract a "suitable" husband who would support me and our children. After my parents' deaths, I came to understand and forgive them for their treatment of me as the girl in the family. Following the mores of the time, they had done the best they knew how. It was up to ME to break out--which I did.

I graduated from high school at the top of my class in Madison, WI, and my parents agreed that I could enter the University of Wisconsin a short bus drive from our house.

I excelled academically for two years at Wisconsin U (my brothers had moved on to MIT) and persuaded my parents to let me transfer to Radcliffe College (for "girls") of Harvard University. Our class of 1949 was kept to no more than one-fifth the size of Harvard's, but competed head to head with Harvard students who were provided with much superior academic and living conditions. Encouraged by a brilliant young professor of psycholinguistics, Dr. George Miller, who sponsored my honors research project that resulted in an academic journal publication for which he gave me co-authorship, I graduated magna cum laude Phi Beta Kappa in (research) psychology at age 19.

Now I needed to earn a living. Powerful academic, economic and career discrimination against women was everywhere. Jobs that would use my skills and education, and pay enough for me to live on (let alone have opportunities for advancement) were non-existent.

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I resented that enormously, but it was ubiquitous reality and it seemed women had no choice but to live with it.

There appeared to be one other option. As was the case with many of my Radcliffe classmates, I did what was expected -- I fell in love with a Harvard classmate (John Macleod, a World War II Air Force veteran who later became an advertising executive). We went to France (on his GI bill) for a few idyllic months of study at two universities, and then moved to New York City, the best place for John to start his advertising career. I was determined to have a career (and we certainly needed the money), so I took the only job I could find—as a typist.

But I kept looking, and somehow managed to get into the social research field, though at the lowest level (as a typist again). I worked my way up , always far more qualified, but paid little more than half what men received. Continuing to work toward a professional career, I sought and received a good fellowship that paid my tuition at Columbia University and enabled me to earn my PhD. in (research) psychology in 1958. By this time we had moved to Princeton, NJ.

There I joined Opinion Research Corporation as a project director (the first female member of their professional staff), and later was promoted to the research director category, - still paid far less than my male cohorts. In another step up, I was made the company's chief psychologist, even as I shifted to a part-time schedule so as to raise my children, Pamela and Scott, born in 1960 and 1962. My children brought me and still bring me great joy, and have always supported

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me in my feminist convictions. They also gave me three delightful grandchildren, Catherine, Ian, and Jennifer.

And then came Betty Friedan's extraordinary "Feminine Mystique," published in 1963, which made me realize I WAS NOT ALONE! In February, 1966 I attended a NOW organizing meeting in Princeton, New Jersey and was elected its first president. The Princeton chapter became one of the most effective chapters outside a major city through the early 1970's. Highlights of that experience are in my bio in *Feminist Who Changed America*. One highlight I didn't mention was being interviewed by Hugh Downs on NBC's Today Show on Women's Equality Day, August 26, 1971. That interview was live to an audience of millions. I'd no advance knowledge of the questions I'd be asked, but I amazed myself -- coming through with flying colors. As a result, henceforth I was completely unfazed, appearing on many radio and television shows, and speaking to audiences of any size, sometimes without notes.

I'd left Opinion Research Corporation earlier in 1971, when I hit their glass ceiling ("We'd love to make you a vice president, but unfortunately our clients would never accept a female vice president"), but I was soon recruited to be the Director of the newly created Center for the American Woman and Politics at Rutgers University's Eagleton Institute of Politics. I was tremendously excited about my job, but left after only six months as a result of an irreconcilable policy disagreement: The research program I developed and proposed highlighted my recommendation to conduct a national survey of public attitudes toward women in politics, to serve as a starting benchmark. The head of

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the Eagleton Institute completely rejected that proposal and told me to develop a proposal to survey the wives of politicians. I almost burst into laughter, but he was dead serious--and adamant. I left soon after. (Years later the Center did become a very effective force in advancing women in politics.)

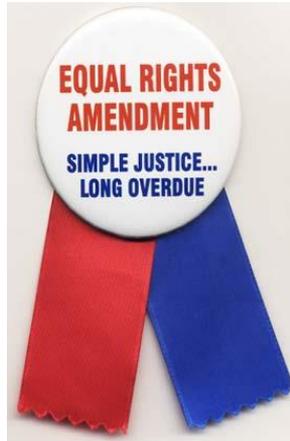
John Macleod and I divorced amicably in early 1972-- I gladly accepted child support but refused alimony. I was left with our house and custody of our children, but no job. However, the Eagleton Institute gave me a one-year \$10,000 grant to conduct another one of the projects I had proposed: a content analysis of high school civics textbooks with regard to their treatment of women. I hired my young and talented feminist friend Sandra (Sandy) Silverman (now Sandy Silverman Souder) to assist with the content analysis part-time (for a very low hourly rate, all I could afford), so I had time to build a feminist consulting practice. The resulting book, "You Won't Do," subtitled "What High School Textbooks on Government Teach High School Girls" was published in low-priced paperback in 1973 by \*KNOW, Inc., the feminist publishing firm in Pittsburgh. (I named Sandy co-author because her contribution was so essential and so effective). It sold well at feminist events and conferences, and later for women's studies courses.

I had begun earning income from corporations for my feminist consulting efforts and anti-sexism workshops, plus some well paid lectures, most of them about women in the workplace. (I was on roster of the \* New Feminist Talent Associates.)

Campaigning for feminists to be paid for their expertise

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instead of giving it away to corporations and educational institutions under pressure to reduce their sex discrimination practices, I co-founded the Association of Feminist Consultants and served as its first head. Sandy Silverman followed me in that position. By 1975 we had nearly 100 members, including some familiar feminists such as Karen DeCrow, Ronnie Eldridge, Muriel Fox, Gerald Gardner, Jo-Ann EvansGardner, Wilma Scott Heide and Ann Scott.



From 1975 to 1977, I had a stint as VP for Human Resources for one of my consulting clients, the Fidelity Bank in Philadelphia, which was under a federal government consent decree requiring them to eliminate their long-standing discrimination against women in their staffing. I learned a lot those two years, but more important, I had the great fortune to meet (on the Princeton to Philadelphia commuter train), Robert (Bob) Marchisotto, the research pharmacologist who later became (and still is) my second husband.

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In 1977, I returned to my home-based consulting practice, Jennifer Macleod Associates, which became my full time--and very satisfying--career until I retired in 2000. Most of my clients were major corporations such as AT&T and Exxon, and the nature of my contracts with them varied greatly--but always reflected my feminist convictions.

In the 1980's, with my children grown and Jennifer Macleod Associates thriving, I volunteered with Beyond War, an organization working to reduce the worldwide danger of nuclear war. I had other rewarding interests and hobbies -- including art, architecture and design, traveling around in the US and abroad, and family genealogy. In the 1990's, after being blown away by Riane Eisler's remarkable "The Chalice and the Blade," I focused my efforts on her Partnership Movement and Center for Partnership Studies, working closely with her, writing a section in her second book, participating in conferences (including a world-wide conference in Crete in 1992), running workshops, and editing their newsletter.

I closed Jennifer Macleod Associates in 2000 and returned to unpaid feminist activism, focusing my efforts on the continuing disgrace of our U.S. Constitution that still denies women of America the constitutionally-guaranteed equal rights that should have been our birthright long ago. I co-founded the still active ERA Campaign Network, and was its national coordinator, designer and newsletter editor, The ERA Campaigner, and ran its website ([www.ERACampaign.net](http://www.ERACampaign.net)) until 2010 when I and my husband, who was sadly ailing, moved to Meadow Lakes, a continuing-care retirement community

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in East Windsor, NJ.

The fight for the ERA—or for some other way to obtain fully and permanently constitutionally guaranteed equal rights for the women of America--continues. It has been an extraordinarily difficult slog, but what feminist goal was ever easy to achieve in women's continuing struggle to fully emerge from tens of thousands of years of almost universal complete domination by the male half of the earth's human population?

As I age, the extraordinary ongoing revolution for the women of America—and the world--stays very much alive for me, as it does for all of us and for our struggling sisters all over the world.

\* KNOW, INC was founded and run by Pittsburgh NOW activists, Jo-Ann and Gerald EvansGardner.

\* New Feminist Talent was founded by Jacqui Ceballos, Jane Field and Dell Williams in 1972.

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### **ROBERTA MARGARET YOUNG MADDEN**

I was born in Council Bluffs, Iowa, on the ninth of November 1936 and brought up in Ames, Iowa, right in the middle of America. I was the eldest of four children, my sister Judy was a year younger, sister Sherry six years younger, and brother Charles Loren nine years younger.



I was a serious child and, as the eldest, was most aware of the precarious position of the family's finances. My father, an accountant, worked for the government during World War II. After the war he worked in various businesses, never successfully. He was a poor provider and I remember a time when we didn't have enough to eat. My parents divorced when I was fifteen.

I was a young child when my mother took a job in Rushing's Supermarket. When I was twelve, she came home from work one day and told us she had been passed over for the manager's job in favor of a man who was younger and less qualified. For the first time I felt outrage and became aware that some things are just dead wrong. I remember my mother saying, "He was just a bag boy, that was all he did." That instant marked my awareness of injustice. Even today I won't retire from activism until racism and sexism are eliminated.

Life seemed to go on as before in our two-story white house at 511 Lincoln Way after the divorce, but I had changed significantly. I took a job in the supermarket

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that had discriminated against my mother and used my earnings to buy books to improve myself.

This resulted in a scholarship to Iowa State Teachers College, encouraging a misguided attempt at becoming a schoolteacher. In those days women became teachers or nurses, and I didn't have the imagination to consider something else. Instead of going into teaching I did something seemingly even more conservative by temporarily abandoning my education to get married.

Jerry David Madden was fresh out of the army when we met. He was a writer, a radical thinker, and an exotic creature in my world. Until I met him I was called Bobby, but I soon had a new nickname, Robbie, and I changed my surname as well. Within a year we married.

My mother did not wholeheartedly support my choice of husband, considering Jerry Madden was a poet with no substantial prospects. In the early years I worked to support my husband, who later taught at several colleges and universities. In 1968 he was hired by Louisiana State University as an English professor, and we moved to Baton Rouge. There I started my political career in earnest.

Our son Blake, born in 1960, remembers "When we moved to Baton Rouge, we had dinner with the landlord of our rented house. A young teenage black man was working for the landlord-. The landlord sat us at his table, but had the young man eat outside on the porch. My mom felt he did that because the helper was African American. I remember her crying because of the situation. She never forgave the landlord and I doubt he

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could ever have done anything that would change her mind."

Public speaking didn't come naturally to me, and instances like these compelled me to speak out. I remember \*Sally Kempton saying, "It's difficult to fight a battle when the enemy has outposts in your own head." Brought up to believe that women's main role is to provide a home and children, I found the path of activism to be long and filled with challenges.

Books had been important in forming my political views; in particular, Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* awakened my realization that women didn't have to take second place.

I went back to college in 1966 and graduated summa cum laude in Government from Ohio University in only two years.

In Baton Rouge in the late 1960s, I found a job as book editor at Louisiana State University Press, where I met Maureen Hewitt, also a book editor. We became close friends at a time when the women's movement was sweeping the nation. Together we founded a chapter of the National Organization for Women. Many of our early meetings were consciousness-raising sessions. Sylvia Roberts, a feminist attorney who had successfully argued *Weeks v. Southern Bell*, became our mentor.

Maureen and I participated in national NOW meetings. Locally, we worked to change discriminatory credit laws and to focus attention on the sexism in children's books

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(boys can be firemen; girls can be nurses). "Robbie preferred being in the background," says her friend Maureen. "So she persuaded me to be president of our newly founded Baton Rouge chapter of the National Organization for Women. Robbie served as vice president from 1972 to '75."

I became an active member of Women in Politics, precursor of the National Women's Political Caucus. The organization eventually died out, but I started it again in the 1990s, and at one time we had 300 members. However, we could not sustain it, and the organization is no longer active in Louisiana.

Blake remembers as a teenager coming home to find NOW meetings being held in the living room. "I saw Mom was actively involved in making changes that have helped women and minorities," he recalls.

In 1979 I ran for state Senate as a Democratic candidate. My campaign news release read, "The needs of older citizens, especially those on fixed incomes, deserve special attention. Government ought to be more accessible to the people, and voter registration must be opened up to make it easier and simpler. Louisiana's education system should be strengthened by supporting and better evaluating our teachers. Parents want to be and must be more actively involved in the schools. Environmental problems must be solved before Louisiana's natural beauty and wholesome environment are lost forever. Voters have a right to expect equitable treatment for everyone, rather than government by special interest group."

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I lost the race to the incumbent but got a third of the vote with a campaign budget of only \$35,000. I know that my efforts had a positive impact on the people of the Senate district. Again, another consciousness-raising moment. I was once asked when I presented information, "Who wrote this for you, sugar?" It was difficult to be taken seriously as a candidate by most men.

I gave up a political career and turned my energies to working for several nonprofit organizations, including the American Diabetes Association, Common Cause, and the Baton Rouge Consumer Protection Center, and I volunteered on countless committees and community projects.

My most enduring commitment outside of my marriage has been my eighteen years at the YWCA Greater Baton Rouge. Eliminating racism and empowering women is the YWCA's mission and mirrors my own personal mission. As Director of Public Policy and Women's Health, I created the ENCOREplus breast health program, which helped low-income women get free breast and cervical screenings. With Maxine Crump, I helped design the highly successful Dialogue on Race program, and as Director of Racial and Social Justice, I established it as a major program, later adopted by other YWCAs. I also created other events dealing with racial and social justice for the YWCA and the community.

In 1993 I was diagnosed with breast cancer. My treatment was a lumpectomy to remove the malignancy and radiation to stop it from coming back. This experience served as motivation for my later work on breast cancer awareness. I'd thought my diagnosis was

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a death sentence, but soon learned that early detection meant a good chance of survival.

Researching my condition, I found that black women were more likely to die from breast cancer even though the incidence of the disease was higher in white women. Late detection is one of the factors that contribute to this disparity. My lump was found early due to my regular self-checks.

On Mother's Day 1995, I launched the YWCA Greater Baton Rouge ENCORE plus program to raise awareness of breast and cervical cancer. The program targets African American women who more often don't have insurance or may not be aware that they need regular mammograms and Pap smears to check for breast and cervical cancer, but helps all women who need the service.

**THE EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT (ERA)**, first proposed in 1923, has a straightforward goal: to ensure that equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States government or by any state on account of sex. I'd already spent a decade working to have the amendment passed in Louisiana and in 2004 I again took up the challenge and helped to organize the Louisiana ERA Coalition. The group has lobbied and testified for the ERA twice in recent years; both times it was defeated in committee.

\* Sally Kempton, a journalist and early radical feminist left public life early on and became a nun and follower of the late guru Muktananda.

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Robbie (middle) testifying for the ERA with State Rep. Monica Walker (right), lead author for ratifying the ERA in Louisiana in 2007.

### **FAST FORWARD**

Last year Robbie and her husband moved to North Carolina . Retired from the YWCA, she immediately began whipping things up in her new hometown, organizing an ERA activist group and a forum and dialogues on race. Her dedication was noticed by the High Country Press, MAY 27, 2010 ISSUE. Excerpts from article written follow:

### **MAY 27, 2010 ISSUE**

Workers Needed for Equal Rights Amendment  
Ratification North Carolina One of Three States Left to  
Ratify Story by Bernadette Cahill

Iowa-born Madden lived in Boone more than 40 years ago when her husband, author David Madden, taught at

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the Appalachian State Teachers College, now ASU. She was in town last week initiating a hunt for local supporters to work on ratification. She began the process in Black Mountain when she moved from Louisiana six months ago. Boone was the first stop on an evolving statewide trail.

The ERA, first introduced in Congress in 1923, was approved by the House in 1971 and the Senate in 1972, with a seven-year deadline on ratification. The deadline was later extended to 10 years, but the ERA stopped three states short of ratification in 1982. It has been introduced in every session of Congress, except the current session.

Madden's plan is to establish a network of individuals in each of North Carolina's 120 state electoral districts; the individuals would lobby their district's representative regularly about ratifying the ERA.

"Women are not included in the Constitution except for the right to vote. That is the only protection they have. They don't have the protection that minorities have," said Madden, stating why it is important to have the ERA ratified.

"For every legislative battle we have to start all over again."

### **The Three-State Strategy**

When the ERA failed ratification in 1982, it was believed the amendment was dead and the process would have to begin again. But in 1992, a major development

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occurred that may have resurrected the original ERA. That year, the Madison Amendment concerning congressional pay raises passed ratification after 203 years, reported the ERA campaign website [www.eracampaign.net](http://www.eracampaign.net).

This 27th Amendment's incorporation into the Constitution has raised the possibility of the continuing viability of the ERA, especially as mention of a deadline is not included in the text of the amendment.

ERA supporters have adopted what is known as the "three-state strategy," an attempt to have three more states ratify the amendment and challenge the deadline. Madden's proposed network to lobby for ratification in North Carolina is part of this three-state strategy.

The ERA would be "the bedrock" in the Constitution that equal rights litigants could point to for redress and if it went to the Supreme Court, "they will win," she said.

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### **LEAH MARGULIES –**

I was born in New York City on April 12, 1944 into a Socialist family. When I was three we moved to a rural town in Massachusetts where we were the only Jewish family. It was right after the war and news of the Holocaust was emerging, so early on I was aware of the deadly aspects of discrimination. My family moved to New Rochelle, NY in 1950.



When I was nine I had a life changing experience. It was 1953 and we drove through the Jim Crow South to Hollywood, Florida . I was overwhelmed by the poverty— black people living in shacks with newspaper walls and corrugated iron roofs, tilling fields by hand or with a mule. The “whites only” gas-station toilets and water fountains shocked me. This experience influenced the rest of my life.

When I was 15, I went south with the American Jewish Society for Service to work at what had been a school for blacks after the Civil War in the Georgia Sea Islands. It was 1959; soon it would be too dangerous to send NY teenagers into the South to work for integration, but I ended up spending the 1960 summer as a Junior Counselor for a tiny Quaker camp in the mountains of North Carolina. We were part of a small group of

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children (12–16 years old) that integrated (temporarily probably) the local movie theater—we walked in all holding hands.

When I started college in 1962 girls weren't allowed to wear pants except in 15 degree or below weather. By that time I was an activist and before long became a feminist but didn't really know it. In sophomore year, along with 22 other women at Boston University. I lived in the French Dorm. It attracted, a group of girls who wanted to speak French as part of dormitory life; we were not interested in sororities and fraternity parties but in civil rights, student rights, and later antiwar demonstrations. Being part of a group of strong, defiant women was what I wanted, but it still didn't have a separate consciousness for me.

So, what does a girl without any real direction do after college? In 1968 I got married to someone who was a draft resister and draft counselor. By this time, one of my friends from BU graduated and moved to NY where she got involved with "Citywide," one of the first women's liberation groups in NYC. She tried to recruit me but I was leaving for New Haven—my husband was starting grad school at Yale.

I went to my first consciousness-raising meeting there in December '68 and talked about the time a boyfriend in high school told my mother I should be a lawyer because I argued so strenuously. My mother's response: "That's ridiculous, she's going to be a housewife!"

When I got home from the CR meeting I woke my husband. "This is where I'm going to be for the rest of

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my life," I said, "and I want to play flute!" Later, a small group of us began to jam.

By September '69, the first group of women came to Yale, bringing Kit McClure, a real rock musician. Florika, a child prodigy violinist ready to play bass, was already in New Haven. Judy literally needed to play drums and Ginny was a skilled horn player. I was a rank beginner, but with several others we started the **New Haven Women's Liberation Rock Band**. Over the next four years we played in front of the Capitol for the first National Abortion March; at Niantic Prison where the Black Panther women were in jail. We played at Cornell—and needed a police escort out of Ithaca because the men were furious that the women wouldn't let them come into the dance.

Often we would lead workshops—why we needed to change the misogynistic rock world, and we would teach rudimentary skills to demonstrate that any woman could learn to play. Together with the Chicago Women's Liberation Rock Band, we recorded an album, "Mountain Moving Day."

At the same time, my political education expanded. The husband of one of my friends was a political economy professor at Yale. In mid '69 he called my house to offer a researcher job to my husband. I answered the phone, and I told him —"That's so sexist, offering the job to my husband; he doesn't want or need a job but I do!" I was hired on the spot.

Thus began my education about multinational corporations, their global reach and transcendence over

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nation-states. After forming a research collective and producing a reader on corporate expansion (this was later "appropriated" by the **Institute for Policy Studies** into their book, "Global Reach"), Judy and I started the Women's Research Project. We led workshops, created slide shows and wrote articles about everything from the way advertising socialized and portrayed women to the global expansion of consumer markets into Third World countries—controlling political revolution through the consumer products revolution. As a result of all of this, my marriage split and Kit McClure and I formed the first all-women's living collective in New Haven.

In 1974, a group of us left the band and moved to NYC to join an alternative lifestyle community which developed a political theatre company, where I continued to play rock music. Also that year I was hired as a fact checker for "Hungry for Profits," a book of case studies of exploitation by food and drug corporations in Latin America. Here I learned for the first time about the deadly marketing practices of the baby formula companies in Third World countries.

Soon after, I was hired by the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility to develop programs around world hunger. We challenged the marketing practices of the US-based infant formula companies and soon we were in a lawsuit against Bristol Myers, makers of Enfamil. (The problem: infant formula companies aggressively market powdered formulas in Third World countries to mothers who can't possibly use it safely

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since you need clean water, refrigeration, know how to sterilize, etc. The result—infant malnutrition and death.)

Nestle was the biggest offender, so in summer 1976 I proposed to the European activists a boycott of Nestle—they said No, you have to do it in the US. I recruited a few other believers, started **INFACT**, and Infant formula Action Coalition. and in July 1977 we launched the Nestle Boycott. That resulted in the UN adopting a code of marketing (WHO/UNICEF International Code of Marketing of Breast Milk Substitutes) to attempt to control this industry. The boycott in the US ended in 1984, but it continues to this day in many parts of the world.

My work on the Code resulted in my decision to go to law school, defying my mother's prediction. After graduation in 1985 I became a legal aid lawyer (5 years); helped start an Environment program at the UN Centre on Transnational Corporations, and started a legal office at UNICEF to put into national law the Code of Marketing adopted in 1981.

By this time, despite never marrying again, my greatest desire was to become a mother. I decided to adopt and in September 1991 my dream came true. I had put an ad for a baby in a college newspaper and 3-½ weeks later my son was in my arms! His birth mother and her sister chose me over several married couples because they had boycotted Nestle as children. Ryan is now 19, and an accomplished drummer, artist and skateboarding videographer.

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The VW bus is the New Haven Women's Liberation Rockband, circa 1972

In 2000, a group of us got together and planned a reunion of the New Haven Women's Liberation Movement; 92 came from all over the country for a nostalgic weekend. It was during this period that we learned about and joined VFA.

In 2006 I was hired by a consortium of legal aid organizations, pro bono groups and Bar associations to lead New York State's legal aid Internet portal, LawHelp.org/NY. We have grown enormously, serving hundreds of thousands of low income New Yorkers. By the end of 2010 we had about 465,000 visitors viewing 3.5 million pages of civil law information such as how to fight an eviction case, get an order of protection in a domestic violence situation, or challenge a default judgment in a consumer credit lawsuit. Because of this work, I was honored in November 2010 as a Purpose Prize Fellow for being a "social entrepreneur" as a senior.

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I remain active in challenging corporations—I'm on the Board of Corporate Accountability International (formerly Infact), and we are currently challenging big tobacco, working to ensure public funding for our public water systems and challenging corporate control of food. (We helped the San Francisco Supervisor win the vote in early November to end toy giveaways for children's fast food meals.) And I'm a member of the Program Committee of the American Friends Service Committee's Nationwide Women's Program.

In October 2010 I joined the Brooklyn Women's Chorus, led by Bev Grant. with whom the New Haven Women's Liberation Rock Band performed in the '70s. To put it mildly, my life was transformed by the Women's Liberation Movement, by feminism. I am living proof that Sisterhood Is Powerful.

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## THE HONORABLE ANITA MARTINEZ

I was born in Dallas in 1925, the fifth child of six, and a fifth generation Texan. My mother's family had received a Spanish land grant in the San Angelo-Bandera territories. Both my parents were raised in San Angelo and proud of their Texan, Mexican, Spanish heritage, which they instilled in their children. They had moved from San Angelo to Dallas to find a new life.



**High School Graduation Day**

El Barrio, Dallas' Little Mexico, was my home from birth until I married. My family lived on Pearl St. which was about a 20 minute walk from the heart of downtown. Our neighborhood was one big extended family. A neighbor lady taught us dance and for anyone interested the lessons were free. My friends and I would put on shows in our crepe paper costumes on my front porch. Our routines consisted of fragments of Ruby Keeler or Ginger Rogers movies that we had seen at the Majestic

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or Palace movie houses. We would dance for people passing by. Some would stop and applaud our attempts. Their recognition of our efforts made us feel that we mattered.

My father worked for himself, using his truck to move people and things about and transporting workers to the onion and cotton fields on the outskirts of town. From the time I was five years old he would take me with him and the pickers when Mamanita would let me. My reward at the end of the day was a Nehi orange soda -- HEAVEN! Papa and I were simpatico and his death in 1941 at the age of 45 was almost unbearable. Our family had lost our protector and champion.

My mother was a licensed beautician, a business woman, unique for a married Hispanic woman at the time. Our living room was her beauty shop, the meeting place for neighborhood women. My sisters and I were expected to help out on Saturdays. The living room smelled of coffee and pan dulce, permanent wave solution and filled with the sounds of women's conversation and laughter.

On December 8, 1941 the day after President Franklin D. Roosevelt declared war on Japan I turned sixteen. I still had two years of high school to complete. To help the war effort I volunteered at the old Parkland Hospital on Maple Ave.

On Sundays I worked as a dietician's aide behind the kitchen's steam table. During that time I got a taste of civic involvement by going door to door getting signatures to have the street in front of our house paved.

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My efforts paid off. Soon, our street was paved, and I realized that the positive initiative of one person could benefit others.

In 1941, when my father passed away, my mother had a stroke that required her to wear a leg brace. My older brother and 2 older sisters were leaving home to get married, and my mother was urging me to quit school and get a job to help with finances. It took a lot of pleading and the intervention of an older sister to impress upon my mother that finishing high school and going to college would allow me to qualify for better jobs and would lead to a better life.

When I was 15, I met my husband, Alfred, who lived on the northern edge of the Barrio. His family owned El Fenix Café, a very successful business. During the war he was a pilot in the Army Air Force and I was a secretary with the 8<sup>th</sup> Service Command. In 1946, after the war, we married. I quit my job to begin our family and had 4 children in 4 years - Al Joseph (named after my only brother, Joe, who was killed in combat), Steve, Priscilla, and Rene. I was a volunteer at their different schools and involved in my husband's business by way of the Women's Auxiliary of the Dallas Restaurant Association (DRA). My involvement with the DRA eventually led to my candidacy and election for City Council, and, in 1969 I was the first Hispanic on the Dallas City Council. At the time I met a number of influential professional women, including Vivian Castleberry, editor of the Women's Section of the Dallas Time Herald. These women were my allies when I served as President of the DRA's Women's Auxiliary.

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I needed to know how to get more publicity and recognition for the restaurants that were members of the DRA. Vivian's suggestion was to create an event that would have the whole town talking. So I organized "A Taste of Dallas." It was held in a downtown hotel and showcased the restaurants, all owned by husbands of members of DRA. For an entrance fee of \$5 the attendees could sample the food of two dozen restaurants. It was a sold out success and has become a yearly event

Connie Stakathos Condos , another new friend and ally, was president of the YWCA board at the time I served on the Y board, and the only woman on the Citizens Charter Association (CCA), the political organization for downtown businesses looking for people to endorse for the Dallas City Council. Though these men had not heard of me Connie assured them that if they endorsed me I would win. With reservations, but trust in Connie's judgment, I was added to their slate of candidates and ran for Place 9 At Large. Four others were seeking the same seat, but I garnered 53 percent of the vote and was spared having to face a run-off.

As Councilwoman Martinez I used my political muscle to help the poor of West Dallas, one of the most underserved areas of the city. I wanted to know from the people who lived there what ten improvements were needed immediately and made sure they were delivered: In a few years the area had better sanitation, a health clinic, street lights, paved streets, a library, a recreation center and other basic city services.

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Once neglected, these citizens now saw that I could get things done and began to trust me, and I became more involved in their community. As their voice at city hall during my four year tenure I was able to persuade other Hispanics to serve on boards and commissions. By the time I left office West Dallas finally had a recreation center which my fellow councilman voted to name "The Anita N. Martinez Recreation Center". To this day, ANMRC, is one of the most used facilities of its kind city-wide.

I left public office in 1973 and was asked by President Nixon's administration to evaluate the effectiveness of the Peace Corp in North Africa, the Near East, Asia, and the Pacific. Three years later I delivered my report to President Ford. What I learned about the heart of a Peace Corps volunteer led me to believe that a U.S. President with Peace Corp experience would make an excellent president because he or she "gets it".

The Anita N. Martinez Recreation Center opened in 1975, and the West Dallas community now had a place where learning, exercise, and the interaction with others outside of their families was possible. Spending a great deal of time there, I discovered that children of humble Hispanic people with little interaction with others outside of family allowed themselves be pushed aside by other children. Many were from families who expected them to leave school early to bring in money to help the family, something I knew much about. Graduating from high school, attending college or aspiring to excel in whatever field did not figure in what their parents needed from them.

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The best I could do for them was to get them to start standing up for themselves. If they could learn more about their rich heritage, this would perhaps instill the pride and confidence they needed to compete.

The DRA's Women's Auxiliary provided the seed money for the recreation center's first ballet folklorico classes. Enrollment extended to every child, from age three to seventeen. Through dance, music, and performance the youngsters were able to learn about where they came from, enable them to enlighten others, and add to the rich diversity that is a hallmark of a great city. These dancer/students are goodwill ambassadors extending the hand of friendship to the citizens of Dallas.

The Anita N. Martinez Ballet Folklorico (ANMBF) is celebrating its 38th anniversary. My school continues to strive to elevate Hispanic children who are here now, and to anticipate the needs of Hispanic children not yet born. Besides teaching dance the training helps them to be proud and confident citizens. The school encourages them to graduate from high school and get college degrees -- their ticket to a better world. Their performing, which may look like whirling and stomping around a stage, is actually teaching them discipline and teamwork and how to present themselves to others.

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On any day you will find me going to meetings, raising money, writing letters, making phone calls -- prevailing on others to contribute time, money or both to ANMBF.

In 2009 ANMBF became a resident company of AT&T Center for the Performing Arts.

Where I was born, the loving people who raised me, the community that surrounded me, helped shaped my destiny. I was able to accomplish because of a shared vision with others who believe that a city is only as strong as its weakest link. "*Truinfar en la vida es hacer truinfar a los de mas.*" To triumph in life is to help others triumph. This proverb continues to guide me.

My children are now in their early sixties. I have three grand children and a great granddaughter, Alejandra. With my husband, Alfred, and I look forward to the future with great expectations.

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### **BARBARA MATERKA**

I was born Barbara Fisher on December 25, 1919 in Rockford, Illinois, where my maternal grandparents lived.



Since my father was an educator who eventually went into administration, we moved several times during my childhood, each time because of a better position opening for him. It was the period of the Great Depression, so jobs were not plentiful for those like my father who were soldiers returning to civilian life after WWI.

I remember life in small towns in the Midwest as very pleasant and especially cherish my years from 10 to 16 spent in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan in Newberry, a small isolated lumber town. Life centered around the schools and the Community Center. We all learned to toboggan and ice skate and dance.

Football and basketball were highly popular. Most of us strived for good grades in school and were proud when we achieved them. We didn't need to be taught tolerance for other cultures and beliefs because we were all friends: Swedish, Finnish, Catholics, Protestants and Jews, with a few Canadian French mixed in.

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With a father who was my high school principal and being an only child, I always understood I would be attending college and that I could choose my own field. However, I also understood that the only fields open to girls were nursing, teaching or secretarial jobs. I chose teaching, which prompted my parents to insist that I attend the University of Michigan, the best school they could afford for me. Happily, I was delighted with their choice. Striking out on my own on a huge campus was challenging but immensely exciting. Best of all, I found that in the 30's and 40's, women there were expected to be as active and live up to the same standards as men, even though there were vestiges of more "protection" for women, such as week-night curfews.

I was even pleasantly surprised when my zoology professor suggested I would be a good candidate for the School of Medicine. (Women physicians were almost non-existent at the time.) Another example of the university's progressive attitudes was evident when my political science professor urged every woman in his class to join the League of Women Voters after graduation. This was 1941 and he expected women to be politically active!

I was tempted by medical school, but realized my parents did not have the resources to help me pursue that dream, so immediately after graduation I took a job teaching. Yet I was still eager to learn more, so I also enrolled in graduate courses on weekends and during the summers, paying my own way, and finishing my M.A. degree in January 1943.

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A wartime marriage brought me face to face with sex discrimination and male chauvinism for the first time in the person of my southern-born husband, who had old-fashioned ideas about women's inferiority and a married man's male privileges. We lived in Ann Arbor, Michigan, when he returned from WWII to complete his residency in surgery.

Two children were born in Ann Arbor from this marriage: Kathleen, who married a Frenchman in France. She is deceased (2002) but her daughter, Elsa Brunet, born in 1980, is an M.D. practicing Family Medicine in Paris, France. My son, Dr. Brian Mahon, is a practicing psychologist, who lives in Manhattan in New York City and is married to Alice Phillips, an artist. They have no children..

In 1950, my husband and I and our children moved to Texas to start his practice in surgery. He was from Texas originally and attended the U. of Texas before coming to the Medical School of the Univ. of Michigan.

After years of trying to make the marriage work, I finally liberated myself in 1964. And that is when I first felt like a real feminist. I was on my own with two teenage children to educate with very little help from him, but I knew I could handle the situation and I did. I returned to teaching, moved into a small apartment and went on with my life.

After a couple of years, I married William J. Materka, who came to Dallas from New Jersey to study at SMU on the GI bill. We met when we were both performing in Kiwanis Club benefit musicals during the late 50's and

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early 60's. He is deceased (1984) but his two children (my stepchildren) live in the Dallas area and we are very close. I consider his grandchildren to be my grandchildren and they think of me as their grandmother. There are six Materka grandchildren, and as of March 11, 2011, there is a great-granddaughter, Chloe Sunshine Link (pictured left).

This second marriage allowed me to give up my job (1967) and become active in the community. I joined the first women's organization to grow out of the suffrage movement recommended by my political science professor, the League of Women Voters. We were soon involved in the drive for the ERA and on reaching a consensus for a woman's right to decide when and whether to bear children. It was an exciting time for feminists and I remember marching for the ERA in Houston and then celebrating after the state of Texas passed its own ERA. I went on to take a succession of positions with the League, culminating in serving as Dallas president, and two years on the organization's state board.

Our study of reproductive rights led me to accept an invitation to serve on the board of Planned Parenthood of North Texas and five years later to chair that board. During my term there I traveled to Washington with a local group to march for reproductive rights. Locally, we often faced fierce opposition from the Religious Right of that day, with demonstrations outside our clinics and attempts to "crash and disrupt" many of our public gatherings and conferences.

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Nevertheless, women's organizations began to proliferate and I became active in the Dallas Coalition for Reproductive Rights, the Women's Issues Network and the Dallas Women's Council. My husband and I performed in a number of sociopolitical satires for such groups as the Dallas Women's Center, The Amigos (a tri-ethnic group fighting racial discrimination), the League of Women Voters and an environmental group called the Texas Conservation of Natural Resources.

All in all, I'm happy that my activist years occurred when they did. Civil Rights and Women's Rights were the cutting-edge issues of the 1960's and 70's. They inspired me and many others to work hard and long to help bring about much-needed change. The struggle goes on, but those of us "of a certain age" saw the Movement take hold and were pulled into action. Some of the accomplishments we remember are:

- revoking the Texas Poll Tax
- desegregation of the Dallas public schools
- a woman's right to hold property in Texas in her own name
- women becoming eligible to serve on juries
- the Roe v. Wade decision
- passage of the ERA in Texas
- some advancement toward equal pay for equal work

My favorite hobby for the last 25 years or so has been world travel. I've been to India, as well as to Thailand and Malaysia, China and Japan, Australia and New Zealand, around South America's horn and the Cape of

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Good Hope, to Alaska, to above the Arctic Circle in Norway; I'll just have to miss the Antarctic and such exotic places as Easter Island. Glad I traveled when it was easier and cheaper! I have already traveled to most of the places on my dream list, thank heavens! Probably won't do much of it from now on, but I am going on a "People-to-People" Tour of Cuba the first week in March.

We look forward to seeing a new generation of women taking up the good fight for complete equality for Americans of all ethnic backgrounds and all genders.

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## BEVERLY ANN FITCH McCARTHY

I was born Beverly Ann Fitch in St Louis Missouri in 1933, the only child of Clyde Fitch and Else Clara Marie Graf Fitch. Among other things my parents taught me the importance of work well done. "If you cannot do it right, do not do it at all, be courteous to adults, be on time, be honest, and tell the truth."



I attended grammar school and Blewett High School, and had outstanding teachers. I loved school and participated in the school activities. I delivered the 8<sup>th</sup> grade commencement speech and learned the meaning of "A chain is as strong as its weakest link", which has stuck with me my entire life . I also sang in the youth choir at church and attended summer Bible school.

My neighborhood had a large Jewish population, so I learned a lot about Jewish culture. We lived near Forest Park where I was introduced to the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra which began my love of classical music. I enjoyed the Art Museum, ice skated on the pond and rode my sled down what was known as Art Hill, and visited Charles Lindberg's Memorial

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where I was enamored of the "Spirit of St. Louis" airplane.

In this era of racial injustices I think I was aware of racial inequities early on. St. Louis was not integrated and the only black person I knew was Sophie, our maid.

In 1948 my family moved to Venice, California - a very different environment, where I attended Junior High and High School, and continued my around the clock activities.

I was a member of the High School Drill Team, vice-president of the Science Club, secretary of the Cosmopolitan Club, founder of the Aphrodesians (sorority), Mariner Scout for three years, Senior Banquet Chair, wrote for the school newspaper, vice-chair of the Senior Ball, vice-president of the Delphian Scholarship Organization, of the Girls Athletic Association Board, chair of Girls League hospitality committee, and Chaplain of Rainbow Girls .

In high school I was a member of the Chatelaines, the 10th-11th grades girls' honorary society, and president of the Venetian Ladies, a 12th grade honorary society. As a delegate of our Girls' League I attended a convention in Phoenix, Arizona for all the Girls' Leagues in Arizona and Southern California. Upon graduation I was elected to the Epehbian Society of Los Angeles, and became a Life Member of the California Scholastic Federation.

Outside of school I worked 15-20 hours a week, and participated in various debutante functions prior to my coming-out ball, a private community event.

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Ever since the 10th grade I have earned my own spending money, bought some of my own clothes and books and paid for my tuitions through scholarships, etc. My parents were always there for me, but I liked making my own money. I'd opened my first bank account at the age of eight because I gave up my bedroom for WW II factory workers, and was given the rent money of \$7. Being able to work gave me a sense of independence, responsibility, and an acquaintance with the working world.

In the fall of 1953 I entered the University of California Berkeley on an Alumni Scholarship. This was my first experience in living away from home for an extended period of time. Although I loved home and waited anxiously for all vacations, I was never homesick. I pledged a sorority and was elected president of my pledge class. Sorority life was an exciting experience however, I wish I could have had an opportunity to live in a women's group more representative of university students. Sororities tended to be more elitist.

My mother once said to me "You grow wherever you are planted". I did not know a soul when I arrived on campus. In joining a sorority, I immediately had a home away from home. It was the right place for me at the time.

In 1955 I was a senior at Cal and still relatively naïve about politics. Active in student government, I moved to integrate the men's and women's football rooting sections. As president of the Associated Women Students, I was annoyed about the men's rooting section attendees throwing their huge flash cards into the women's rooting section. Those cards really hurt

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when they hit. In addition, the men had the best seats in the stadium. My motion failed miserably and I made the cover of the Daily Cal. This experience was probably the wakeup call that I was a feminist, a word not heard in campus conversations. Friends, more politically aware than I, presented me with posters of suffragettes carrying banners reading "Votes for Women."

I knew nothing about the women's struggle to get the vote. Women were rarely mentioned in history books. I was unaware of the lack of female representation in local, state and federal political office, and of how few women were teaching or holding administrative posts at Cal. Several women were teaching physical education as well as dance classes and I met weekly to talk about women's issues with the Dean of Women, \*Katherine Towle, the first woman to head the United States Marine Corps Women. I almost took a commission as a Marine Corps Officer, but decided to go to graduate school instead.

Busy as I was with college and work I found time for my favorite sports -- swimming, horseback riding, ice skating, sailing and tennis -- and for dance -- especially square and folk dancing and the jitterbug.

During my years at high school and college, I attended some 20 conventions which took me to NYC twice, San Francisco, Asilomar, and other facilities in California. Yet, with all this travel, the farthest I had ever been out of the United States was to the very northern area of Mexico.

My employment experiences have included day camp

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counselor, water front director, playground director, drug store clerk, delivery girl for a film company, private secretary, assistant bookkeeper, grocery store clerk for my parents, baby sitter, and many more.

In 1953 I received my AA from Los Angeles City College in psychology. At the University of California Berkeley I added physical education as a co-major, because eventually I wanted to go into student personnel work as I felt that in this phase of instruction teachers have more of an opportunity to associate with their students on a less formal basis. PE is very valuable in the moral, physical, social, and mental growth of all individuals - if properly taught. From the practical side education offered employment security, a good salary for women, and a sense of responsibility and accomplishment in educating the youth of America

In 1957 I earned a master's degree from Stanford University with a major in education/student personnel and guidance. I attended Stanford on a fellowship and served as an intern on the Dean of Women's Staff and was a resident assistant supervising 75 co-eds. During the summer quarter, as Student Body Vice-President I headed the campus police department and was in charge of the flicks -- and I had a secretary and was paid a salary!

One evening, in my dormitory, I met Russian President Alexander Kerensky who was president in 1917 before the Russian Revolution. He escaped to America and was studying at the Hoover Tower. It was an extraordinary experience to meet such an historical figure. I often wonder what Russia would

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have been like if the Revolution had never occurred and he had been allowed to remain as President.

After graduate school I went on to teach full-time at Monterey Peninsula College, Santa Barbara City College and San Jose City College.

In 1963 I moved to Stockton, California where I served as a counselor/instructor in Psychology, and Marriage and the Family at San Joaquin Delta College. I adopted daughter Elizabeth that year and son, Michael in 1964, and met John Linley McCarthy, a third generation Californian, where he was also working. On St Patrick's Day in 1973 we married.

It was a powerful time. Betty Friedan had written *The Feminine Mystique* and in 1966 the National Organization for Women and the Women's Liberation Movement ushered in the second wave of the feminist movement. In 1971 the National Women's Political Caucus was formed, and NOW and the NWPC were working with the American Association of University Women (AAUW) to bring women into equal roles with men and for the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment.

During these years I marched several times for Planned Parenthood – and was informed by counter-protestors that I would burn in hell. I marched on National Secretary's Day to protest the underpayment of secretaries I wrote a letter to the editor about sexual harassment and was invited to deliver a talk to several hundred Stockton Unified School District administrators. It was "standing room only. I let them have it, but I never received a thank-you note.

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An entry into politics – the Stockton City Council and the Stockton Unified School District Board earned me a “thick hide.” I was called a “femiNazi,” derided for my liberal politics, and sniped at in the local press for advocating the singing of patriotic tunes in the classroom. I founded and chaired the San Joaquin County Commission on the Status of Women for 30 years. On behalf of the Commission I delivered a cactus to the all-male Yosemite Club (now defunct) for not admitting women. Later they invited me to join.

In 1973 the president of the Stockton Branch of AAUW asked me to be on her 1974 Board of Directors, and to head up the Committee on Women. I accepted reluctantly because of other time commitments, because she was a good friend, and she indicated there would not be a lot to do – just



**a teacher at San Joaquin Delta College in  
Stockton, CA. in 1963**

attend the board meetings. Little did I know how my life was to change. As I looked through the AAUW materials from Washington, DC. I read about

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Commissions for Women, consciousness raising groups and other feminist organizations. It all sounded so interesting and worthwhile.

So I contacted Carol Benson, co-founder of the local NOW chapter, and asked for help getting the women in San Joaquin County together to discuss issues, e.g. comparable worth, pay equity, affirmative action, domestic violence, rape, alcoholism, reproductive freedom, education, gender equity, and a Talent Bank to encourage women to apply for boards and commissions. I soon realized that all issues were women's issues. We invited every woman's group in San Joaquin County to attend.

The turnout at the Library was phenomenal. Thus started the Women's Council of San Joaquin County, soon to be renamed the San Joaquin County Commission on the Status of Women. The Commission later affiliated with the Association of California Commissions and the National Association of Commissions for Women. It is one of only two California women's commissions not funded by a governmental entity.

Women in Stockton received very little positive public recognition. There was no female Stocktonian of the Year, no women in the men's clubs, and no women in the Commercial Exchange Club or the Yosemite Club. So in 1975, "International Women's Year," the SJCCSW launched the first Susan B. Anthony Banquet Honoring San Joaquin County Women of Achievement. Fifty guests attended the banquet which was held at the University of the Pacific. Internationally recognized business woman Tillie Lewis received the first award.

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In 1983, I was totally surprised when I received the Anthony award. SJCCSW remains politically non-partisan to this day, though we lobby/for and against bills that we perceive will have a profound effect on women and girls.

I've been president of the historic Philomathean Women's Club; Stockton Chapter, American Association of University Women; Sunflower Presents, Inc. (performers who entertain convalescent home residents); Auxiliary to the county Child Abuse Prevention Council; the county Family Resource and Referral Employer-Supported Child Care Coalition; the Stockton Redevelopment Commission; and the county National Women's Political Caucus. In 1973 I was the first woman to be elected president of the Stockton Symphony Association and served for four consecutive years.

For many years I chaired the Commission on the Status of Women. We put on 22 major conferences using the facilities of San Joaquin Delta College and the University of the Pacific. One year we wanted a woman lawyer to speak on wills and trusts, so I called the County Bar Association, and learned that there were exactly 12 women practicing law in the entire county! Since then we have sponsored 39 Susan B. Anthony Banquets honoring women of achievement, supported Affirmative Action when it was the law in California, worked on pay equity and comparable worth issues, and with Lincoln and Stockton School Districts to insure compliance with the new Title IX legislation, and through our Talent Bank encouraged women to apply for boards and commissions and, yes, even run for office. I never thought I would see the day that the Stockton City Council would have five women serving at the same time.

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In 1985 at age 52 I officially retired, giving me more time to work for radical changes in society. I've marched for the United Farm Workers and continue personal boycotts of businesses that do not treat their employees correctly. Also active in non-political affairs, I've headed the Stockton Opera Guild and chaired the Opera Association; the Civic Theatre League; the Symphony Association and the Alliance; and the Haggin Museum Department of Museum Travel Auxiliary. My husband and I were honored in 2010 when we received the Stockton Arts Commission's highest accolade, the STAR Award (Stockton Top Arts Recognition) for participation, support, and contributions to the arts.

It may all sound like overkill, but it was fun some of the times. I loved being the event coordinator in 1998 for the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of Women in America, 1848-1998, with Jackie Speier, now the United States Representative for California's 14<sup>th</sup> Congressional District as keynote speaker. Some of us came to the luncheon at Elkhorn Golf and Country Club dressed in 'suffrage' clothes and carrying placards." In 1995 I co-chaired the Women's Suffrage 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration.

I was elected to the Stockton City Council representing District 4 in 1990 and to the Stockton School Board in 2006, from which I recently retired. "I had the support of most of Port of Stockton's board members, and I think that's why I got elected. In 2010 I became chair of the school board wrapping up "four of the hardest years of my life."

In 2007 at an awards luncheon honoring county women at the Stockton Golf and Country Club, the

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Commission on the Status of Women honored Jacqui Ceballos, President of Veteran Feminists of America. Jacqui told us the story of the founding of VFA and received a standing ovation. She also bestowed medals to about fifty women activists.

Now much of my enthusiasm is directed to the national board of Veteran Feminists of America. I was elected to VFA's board in 2010 and serve through this year. VFA brought second wave women activists back into the movement. I was thrilled to attend VFA's latest conference, held in September in Los Angeles.

Currently at age 81, I am working on the 40<sup>th</sup> Susan B. Anthony Banquet Honoring San Joaquin County Women of Achievement to be held on Susan's birthday, February 15, 2015. During the past 40 years we have honored approximately 400 outstanding women. I continue to support feminist women running for office, and men who support feminist values. I also encourage women to apply for governmental boards and commissions through our Talent Bank. I still serve as treasurer of our local NOW chapter. Of course, I am working on the passage of the ERA and the ratification of CEDAW by the United States Senate and House of Representatives and continue to support the proposed Women's History Museum in Washington, D.C. I have been blessed to be born a feminist.

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### **VFA SALUTES RECENTLY FOUND HEROES OF TITLES VII AND IX**

VFA receives fascinating emails and phone calls - from women and men who are writing books and articles or making movies about the movement, from the media, from many who need help and advice, and often, from pioneer feminists who have just discovered VFA.

Recently we heard of two heroes of the landmark cases, Titles VII and IX. For a while it looked like we'd have a continuation of the political party which was chipping away at all we'd won in the past 50 years, putting these landmark cases in jeopardy. If that had happened we'd be urging you to get back out into the streets to fight to keep them intact...but now we can afford to celebrate! So it is with great joy that we honor and introduce our newly found heroes to you - Merikay McLeod and Vincent Macaluso, and while doing so, celebrate them and Titles VII and IX. Our next issue of ENEWS and our webpage are dedicated to Merikay McLeod and Vincent Macaluso.



#### **MERIKAY McLEOD AND TITLE VII**

In 1971, 24-year-old Merikay McLeod Silver, a writer and devout member of the Seventh-day Adventist church was thrilled to be hired by her church's West Coast publishing house.

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With a woman founder of the church, Ellen G. White, and non-discrimination written into the church's wage guidelines, Merikay expected to be treated equally in every way by her employer. But her expectations were soon shattered. Not only did she earn far less than the other (male) assistant book editor, she earned barely enough to subsist. She filed a class discrimination lawsuit under TITLE VII in 1973 and settled out of court in 1978 as a single litigant, after the judge had reduced the case from a class action sex-discrimination lawsuit to that of a single litigant. Merikay was supported in her efforts by fellow-employees Lorna & Gus Tobler, her male counterpart, Max Phillips, and her attorney, Joan Bradford.

The EEOC, using Merikay's evidence, reinstated the class action in 1978 and, eventually, won the equal-pay battle. In 1983, \$600,000 was distributed to women workers in the publishing house, and wage scales were more equalized throughout the denomination.

Merikay tells her story in "BETRAYAL." She's donated her book as a gift to all donors of \$200 or more to VFA. Said VFA's board chair, Muriel Fox , " This is the most riveting book I've ever read about a woman's lawsuit against sex discriminating employers - I couldn't put it down till I'd absorbed every exciting word."

VFA highly recommends this book as "a must read". One that should be in every library in the land.

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### **MERIKAY McLEOD IN HER OWN WORDS:**

I became a women's advocate in the early 1970s because of a group of managers who were determined to keep from paying women fairly for their labor. At the time I was in my mid-20s, working as an assistant book editor at a Seventh-day Adventist publishing house in Mountain View, California.

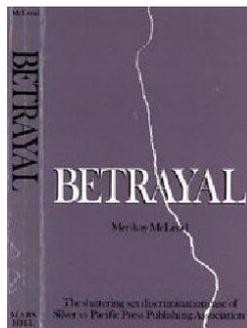
About six months after I was hired, I learned that my male counterpart earned 40 percent more than I. When I asked our supervisor about the disparity, he explained that the church had a "head of household" policy, in which the main wage earner in a family took home more money.

A few months later when my husband, Kim Silver, lost his job and said he wanted to go back to college, I encouraged him, reasoning that I would then be the main wage earner in our family and could receive head of household status. But, when I requested head of household, I was denied. In fact, I learned that no woman had ever received head of household status at Pacific Press.

Being an idealistic optimist, I was certain that the men in management simply did not understand that they were breaking federal law. So I and others, spent months trying to convince them to change their pay practices. When it became clear that the men were not going to do what was right, and that I was the only woman in the publishing house with a clear-cut male counterpart, I filed a class-action lawsuit (Silver vs Pacific Press Publishing Association, Civil Action #C-730168 CBR).

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I was supported in this endeavor by Lorna Tobler, long-time editorial secretary at Pacific Press. She knew where all the records were that proved women were systematically denied equal pay and equal opportunity for advancement. I could not have successfully pursued litigation without her or my attorney Joan Bradford. It was definitely a team effort!



I have been told that I was the first person in the nation to successfully bring to bear Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 on a religious employer. My suit and those that followed, changed the pay practices of Pacific Press and, in a domino effect, the pay practices of church-related schools, hospitals and colleges. My case and those that followed, including a suit by the EEOC and one by the US Dept of Labor, were precedent-setting and have been repeatedly cited in other sex discrimination lawsuits against religious employers.

My case was cited in the 1986 U.S. Supreme Court case of Ohio Civil Rights Commission v Dayton Christian Schools. I was able to be at the Supreme Court that day in support of Linda Hoskinson, the church school teacher whose contract was not renewed because she had given birth and the men managing Dayton Christian Schools believed she should stay at home with her infant rather than return to her teaching position.

(One point of interest: Linda and I had been classmates

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at Mattawan Elementary School in Michigan in the 1950's. She read my book, *Betrayal: The Shattering Sex Discrimination Case of Silver vs Pacific Press Publishing Association*, and said it gave her the courage to pursue her case all the way to the Supreme Court. The Court ruled 9-0 in her favor.)

Since I helped Pacific Press improve its employment practices, I have pursued education, earning master's degrees in sociology, women's studies and spirituality. And I continue writing, both as a freelancer and as a daily newspaper reporter.

In 2006, I was named a Woman of the Year by the Adventist Association of Women, in recognition of the Pacific Press case. AAW posted a video interview of me on You Tube. Much of my writing supports women and men doing good in the world - from those who work with foster children to those who help AIDS orphans in Zimbabwe.

I hope my stories encourage and inspire others to do what they can to make a positive difference in this life that we all share.

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### MAURA McNIEL

*The Maura Award is one of the highest honors given in our community for women helping women. Established in 1978 by the Women's Center of Dallas, it was renamed the Maura Award for Women Helping Women in 1986. It is now managed as part of the Leadership Forum by the Dallas Women's Foundation, which Maura helped found.*



Maura on her 93<sup>rd</sup> birthday

It is difficult to remember the day I knew I was a feminist because all of my life, I was involved in cutting-edge-of-change issues. My first conscious “aha” moment came in May 1971 when I attended a meeting in Ann Chud’s living room in Dallas, Texas, where a group of 14 had been invited to talk about our lives, our needs, our restrictions and what we could do about them. Ann had told us: “Once a year SMU gives us a feast with its Symposium on the Education of Women for Social and Political Leadership, but the rest of the year we starve.” So, how could we make the banquet last all year?

The Symposium had been created by SMU’s Dean of Women Emmie Baine at the request of President Willis

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Tate "to do something special for women" as a part of the celebration of its fiftieth anniversary. He did not know what he was unleashing. In 1966 Dean Baine assembled a group of leading women of the area to help her determine what women most needed. The result was the first Symposium that brought to the SMU campus leading thinkers from throughout the country in a two-day event that mixed students, community leaders and Symposium keynoters in discussions to explore the role of women. It was, indeed, an intellectual feast.

So it was that on that balmy spring night in May 1971 as I made way to the Dallas meeting that I had no idea that my life, as I was living it, was about to change forever.

Most, but not all, of us in the room knew each other.

Thirteen were present. \*Ginny Whitehill (pictured right with Maura), the only one invited who was not able to come, was in New York at the bedside of her ailing father. The rest of us introduced ourselves and began sharing our life experiences. As powerful as it was to have found a safe place where we could share things that many of us had never voiced aloud, the meeting began to bog down. We could only so long indulge in self-revelations. The meeting's purpose, as outlined ahead of time, was to find ways we could reduce the impediments that were holding us back.



Judge Sarah Hughes took over. Barely five feet tall and maybe was 100 pounds, Judge Hughes a formidable presence in the community, and she had zero patience for meaningless palaver. "You all get your act together,"

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she said. "Decide on your main concerns. Find a leader for each issue. After that we'll meet again to determine how to proceed." She turned to me. "Maura," she said, "you will be President. You are not working, so you have the time...and you get things done." Then she turned to Sandy Tinkham, handed her a pencil and said, "Sandy, you will be Secretary because you take good notes. Any questions?" There was a moment of shocked silence before the room burst into spontaneous applause.

That's how I became the leader of the feminist movement in Dallas.

How well was I prepared for the assignment? Not very. But I did have some organizational skills that had been honed a couple of years earlier when I participated in the first Explore program in Dallas. Created by women—Jean Swenson, Gail Smith, Jeannette Ivy, Mary Vogelsson and Fran McElvaney—at NorthHaven United Methodist Church, Explore was a three-hour, once-a-week for eight sessions that challenged women to explore possibilities for their lives beyond the tradition role of wife/mother/homemaker. Classes were limited to 24 and taught by professionals who trained themselves and then taught others. At the very first meeting, we were told to introduce ourselves without referring to husband, children, parents or siblings. Some of us had nothing to say. I was one of them! The experience gave me expanded direction for my own life and I remained on staff for two years helping to teach others.

Many times for the next year or so after I was "anointed" leader of this new women's group, I wondered what had hit me.

**I was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota, on April 11, 1921.** It was only a year after women got the right to vote, and grew up during the Great Depression. My

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parents were second generation Scandinavian, my father, Oliver William Anderson and his family from Norway in 1870, and my mother, Hazel Anderson Anderson and her family from Sweden in 1850. I am the oldest of their four children. My brother, Harley, was born in 1925; my brother, John, in 1928, and my sister, Gretchen in 1936. We had an idyllic childhood, though we did not recognize it as such until much later when the travails of life produced experiences of comparison.



Maura, age 10...just hanging from a tree

My father, an insurance man, provided our livelihood and my mother added the

zest. We lived in Minneapolis, but had a cabin on Lake Pokegama in northern Minnesota, where we spent many summers. My mother loved getting to know the local Native American women and once exchanged some of her iron skillet for their hand-woven baskets.

I am so grateful to my parents for teaching me that all people are worthwhile and should be treated with dignity and am grateful that they practiced inclusion. I did not recognize that others focused on differences where my family found community. One day the U.S Government came to our area, took our Native American friends and shipped them off to "Indian" Territories. My grandfather did everything he could to recover them, but to no avail, and it was very sad for all of us.

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High school for me was wonderful. I was on the staff of the yearbook, a tennis tournament winner and, among other things, the lead opposite Harry Reasoner in our senior play. Yes, the same Harry Reasoner who would say, following the launch of *Ms Magazine*, that after six months those women rebels would have nothing else to say.

I enrolled in the University of Minnesota in 1939 and graduated three years later, *cum laude*, with a double major—English and Psychology. I had been rush captain of my sorority, Kappa Alpha Theta, and was tapped to Mortar Board. And I had studied with some of the country's most outstanding professors, among them B. F. Skinner, Buckminster Fuller and Robert Oppenheimer.

Our world crashed and our Eden ended on December 7, 1941, when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor and we were catapulted into World War II. Overnight, many male classmates signed up for the military. After graduation, I signed up for an engineering drafting degree at the Minnesota Museum of Art, planning to go to work for the war effort at Norden Bombsite.

When I was not immediately hired after completing my drafting degree, I took an interim job at Donaldson's Department Store. A friend and I became the creative artists, designing the store's windows. We lifted those heavy mannequins, designed and dressed 16 display windows, we designed the in-store displays - not once but again and again. In addition, we planned and emceed style shows—all for \$30 a week! We had an in-store intercom for emergencies, and I persuaded the president to let me do a half hour show of music and information every morning. I loved it! I wrote the script during my lunch break, and my pay envelope contained an extra \$5.00 a week!

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The city of Minneapolis opened entertainment centers for men in the military. It was there I met Richard Crouch Arbuckle Jr., a tall, gorgeous Marine Corps officer. He danced divinely and played tennis like a pro. What more could anyone ask for in a husband? We were married on December 28, 1943. But the marriage was a disaster, not to be saved by the birth of my son Rick in 1945, so I took my son and moved home.

Even while my parents welcomed me and exulted over their grandson, I knew I had no time to feel sorry for myself. I was a single mom with a child to support. For the first few weeks I wrote, putting all my frustrations, anger and uncertainty into a novel I called "Quicksand." When the first and only publisher I approached turned it down, I tore it up and burned it. It had been good therapy, so it had served its purpose.

My mom and I used to make a lot of my clothes. When I learned that Perry Brown, a dress manufacturer, might be going out of business, I went in to buy fabrics and zippers. They knew that I had done some modeling and asked me to try on a dress for a customer and I did. When she left, I went back to the owner and asked if I could comment, and gave him several blunt ideas on how to improve the dress. The designer overheard and was irate. She walked out slamming the door so hard the glass broke, saying "You do it then! I quit!"

There was a market coming up, the owners' last hope to rescue the business. I felt terrible and responsible, so I found myself offering to do their line. I did, and they helped me a lot, especially cutting and sewing. I was inspired and the clothes sold very well. That got me noticed as a designer. I have a large envelope of designs, clippings and ads that I saved, and the clothes would still be good today.

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After two successful years there at Perry Brown, I was recruited by Donovan Manufacturing Company, which billed itself as the leading Dallas fashion house. There a young associate, recently graduated from West Point to improve operations, interviewed me. His name was Tom McNeil.

The initial interview went so well that he all but offered me a job. Then he took me out to dinner. The next day he sent me a note with flowers. The next day he took me to lunch, offered me the job of head designer and explained that he did not date his employees!

True to his word, Tom McNeil did not date his employees; after I started working there, he resigned from his job and courted me relentlessly. We were married February 1, 1953, and there followed some wonderful years. I was in love with everything. I had three children in three and a half years—Bridget on February 3, 1955; Andrea on November 29, 1956, and Amy on July 19, 1959. Amy was born with profound Down's syndrome and institutionalized at birth. The experts told us her life expectancy was a few months to at most three years; she died in 2015 at the age of 55.

In 1961, after a long day skiing in Vermont, I went out for "one more run" after dinner and shattered my leg. I was hospitalized for weeks, with a hip-to-toe cast, with the possibility of never walking again – and a teenager and two small children at home. With lots of physical therapy and continuous exercise, I did walk again. But the injuries and poor healing have continued to plague me throughout my life, causing other issues with my bones and walking, so today while I enjoy great health in most all ways, walking is more and more difficult for me these days.

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As a wife, I followed the prescribed role for married women in the 1950s. We entertained constantly; I cannot remember how many dinner parties I planned, cooked, served and hosted, both to advance the career of my husband and because I was determined that our family knew our neighbors and our community. As a mother, I opened the world to my children, took them everywhere. I was a Cub Scout and Campfire Girls leader, a PTA officer, and the High School Sunday School teacher at Midway Hills Christian Church for 10 years during the turmoil of the 1960s.

As a community volunteer, I dived into every evolving cause—the Civil Rights Movement, environmental issues, and neighborhood enrichment projects. I served on the boards of the Dallas Council of World Affairs, Pan American Round Table, the National Council of Christians and Jews, Common Cause and KERA-TV. I was a founder of Block Partnership and Save Open Spaces.

At parties, I began almost every expression with “Tom thinks....I could not comprehend the unrest that many women were beginning to express. I read Betty Friedan’s “The Feminine Mystique” and felt sorry for all those women who were disgruntled and congratulated myself that I was not one of them. I thought that there were too many problems in the world that needed addressing and women could wait. I had bought the whole package!

**Then came the awakening!** Explore, SMU's Symposium. The meeting at Ann Chud's house. I have not been the same since.

I took the assignment that Judge Hughes had given me to be President very seriously, and slept only fitfully that night as I began to comprehend what lay ahead of me

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and how I would handle it. I spent the next two weeks exploring possible leaders for each task force. I was astonished at the expertise of possible leaders and amazed that not a single person turned me down.

On August 17, 1971, I invited all the task force leaders and any of their team to my house for a meeting. We expected about 30 or so and it was closer to 70 spilling over in my house. Even Judge Sarah Hughes came, and sat at the head of our long dining room table. I sat across from Eddie Bernice Johnson, who said she was thinking of running for the Texas legislature. I just burst out like I do and said "Eddie you are black and a woman, you will never get elected." She said she wanted to try. Judge Hughes said "Go for it." I said "You, as a nurse, have such a good job at the VA. Be sure you get it in writing you can come back to the same position when this is over. But good wishes." (She was elected, and is still in the U.S. Congress even today in 2015).

We settled on the 9 task groups and the name Women for Change. We would begin our work to advance women with nine task forces: (1) Child Care, (2) Counseling, (3) Education, early; (4) Education, advanced, (5) Employment, (6) Legal, (7) Media, (8) Political, (9) Office location. We decided to plan for a big general meeting in the fall. Everyone seemed excited and ready for action.

These were the nine Task Forces and their leaders: Dr. Flo Wiedemann, a psychologist, headed counseling; Esther Lipshy chose child care; Higher Education was headed by Dr. Barbara Reagan, an SMU professor; Lower grade Education, by Dr. Sonya Bemporad, director of the Dallas Day Care Association; Employment by Peggy Gue and Trudy Shay, both of whom had personally experienced discrimination at their work; Legal by Attorney Sue Goolsby; Media by Dr. Elizabeth

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Almquist, teacher/activist in communications; Public Relations by Dr. Mary Ann Allan, professor and social activist, and Space Search by Dr. Carolyn Galerstein, professor at the University of Texas at Dallas.

On October 15, 1971, we had all of our background information organized and had secured the auditorium in Umphrey Lee Student Center at Southern Methodist University for our official founders meeting. *The Dallas Times Herald* had published a story, together with a coupon, inviting anyone interested to attend. The responses overflowed expectations. Three hundred and fifty women showed up for the meeting. Our Dallas audience was augmented with guests from Austin, Houston, Fort Worth and other Texas cities. Judge Hughes gave the keynote speech, explaining the need and the mission. I followed with an outline of what we had already done, explaining that we had, for their approval, chosen a name and had selected task areas in which to begin our work. I gave them a list, then sent them in groups of 25, each with a leader, to separate rooms at the University to discuss what they had heard and make recommendations. After an hour they returned. Transformed! Before the meeting disbanded, 300 had signed up and paid dues to become members.

Within a few weeks, the space search task force had found us offices in the new Zale building. We began our work twofold: With women who needed help, and with companies that were legally obligated to comply with the 1971 Presidential Order for Affirmative Action, but needed help in responding to the law. We had longer and longer board meetings on Saturdays as the organization expanded and our responsibilities increased.

Very soon our lofty goals of research and education gave way to crisis management. For the first few months

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we were open, most every call I answered at the office was from a woman who had been raped or beaten. I called members and personal friends to help. We were often told by women that when they reported the crime to the police, the interrogation was almost as bad as the rape. We were amazed at the seriousness of the problems so many women were having. I was so consumed with crises that there was little time to think and evaluate.

In 1972 we brought Gloria Steinem to Dallas and she packed the SMU Business School auditorium to capacity. Women students flooded in; when all of the seats were filled, some rimmed the stage for seating. Our membership exploded. Also, in 1972, I made 72 speeches to any group where I was invited—from AAUW to Zonta, lots of church groups, all-male groups, Rotary and Kiwanis, (at that time they had no female members.) With the help of volunteer office staff, I put out a monthly newsletter, wrote and printed a brochure, designed a logo.



We worked diligently for the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment and were proud that Texas was one of the first states to vote for its passage in 1972.

We supported two of our Texas sisters, Linda Coffee from Dallas and Sarah Weddington from Austin, who brought Roe v Wade to the Supreme Court. The “Wade” in the famous lawsuit was Henry Wade, the Dallas District Attorney. Many women in Dallas had been working to find a pregnant woman who could be the plaintiff to challenge the abortion prohibition in

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Texas, and found the woman we know as "Jane Roe" living in Dallas. Virginia Whitehill went with the lawyers to the Supreme Court in February 1973, and the gatekeepers tried to prevent the attorneys Sarah and Linda from entering the court because they were assumed to be secretaries. In a landmark decision about privacy, these young ladies won the case to make abortion legal in all 50 states.

I remember that day in Dallas reporters asked me what I thought of the decision. I could gratefully say, "No more back alley tragedies. And this most difficult and painful decision is where it ought to be – with a woman, her doctor, and her family". More than 40 years later we continue to debate this in the country. I still believe women need to control their own bodies, and men are still seeking to control women.

We encouraged our friends to run for public office and were thrilled to support early winners Ann Richards for governor, Annette Strauss for mayor, Harriette Ehrhardt for state representative, Eddie Bernice Johnson for the state representative, and later for the U. S. House of Representatives. They led the way for countless women who now hold public office.

In 1973 we held Credit Hearings at an open meeting at Dallas City Hall and invited women to tell their stories. One said she had been running the family business for two years when her husband succumbed to dementia but the bank would not give her a loan without his signature. Another said she had been supporting her aging parents for almost a decade; her mother had died and she needed a loan to buy a new car. The bank turned her down until she went to the nursing home and got her father's signature on the application. A representative from Washington was there, and in 1974 the Equal Credit Opportunity Act was passed to prevent

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creditors to discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, religion or marital status.

Title IX passed as national legislation in 1972, but no changes were forthcoming in our school system. The most popular "sports" for girls were cheerleading and drill team, and there were no opportunities for girls to play soccer, basketball, volleyball, softball, etc. The Dallas schools were fighting Title IX, so I made an appointment at a Dallas Independent School District school board meeting. "As Women for Change members, and mothers, we would like ongoing sports for boys and girls open to anyone with interest and ability". The chairman asked, "Are you saying a girl could play football?" I replied, "It's possible, but not probable." The chairman said, "Football pays for every sport, and they will never pay to see a woman sweat". They all laugh, and I respond, "There has been recent legislation called Title IX which says no person on the basis of sex can be excluded from participating in an educational program or activity receiving federal funds". They essentially dismissed me, so I thanked them and left. We immediately proceeded to file a lawsuit for non-compliance, and they were eventually forced to comply with the law.

As needs surfaced and women stepped up to lead groups in which they were vitally interested, our nine task forces far outpaced our original goals. It is impossible to know how many different groups branched from the Women's Center and/or we created the atmosphere in which they were accepted by the community. Here are a few: The Dallas chapter of the National Organization for Women; Women's Equity Action League, The Dallas Women's Political Caucus, Women's Issues Network, The Rape Crisis Center, the Southwest Women's Federal Credit Union, the Family

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Place, Dallas' first shelter for victims of family abuse, the Dallas Women's Foundation.

I cherish the long parade of women leaders whose work made change possible, among them Virginia Whitehill, Vivian Castleberry, Joy Mankoff, Adlene Harrison, Victoria Downing, Kay Cole, Gerry Beer, Shirley Miller, Helen LaKelly Hunt, Becky Sykes, and Marjorie Schuchat.

My personal role in this ever-growing, ever-changing revolution was all-consuming. I put in long days, sometimes as many as 12 hours, tending to our growing organization at the office and out in the community. I then went home to a constantly ringing telephone and listened as women's hesitant voices spilled stories of neglect, poverty and abuse. I went to every task force meeting, both to support the leaders and to determine where there were duplications of service and/or voids in our projects. I did everything I could to be inclusive. We invited groups of to our monthly meetings—African American, Hispanic, Catholic Women, Church Women United, American Association of University Women, League of Women Voters—and we learned that while we can invite/include them, no group wanted to give up its autonomy. When we were charged with elitism—we were, middle class, educated white women—we had to admit that it was true, but we kept the welcome mat out to all.

All of this had a price tag that our low membership dues could not support, so I became the chief fundraiser. It was in this capacity that I went to see Bette Graham, who as a former secretary had parlayed Liquid Paper, a product she created to paint over typing mistakes, into a multi-million dollar business. She and I shared many things. Both of us had been single mothers striving to support our sons; both of us were artists, she in painting

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and art collecting, and I in fashion design. She immediately understood what we were doing for women and provided funding for several Women's Center innovations. One of my great disappointments was that her early death cut short our most ambitious project. We envisioned a women's building and she had bought property and hired an architect to draw plans that included small shops on the first floor to provide income to support the building, meeting rooms on the second floor for non-profit groups and four small apartments on the top floor as temporary residences for single mothers struggling to find their way to independence. Sadly, this dream died with her in 1980 when she passed away at age 56 from untreated high blood pressure.

Eight of us attended the first United Nations-sponsored International Women's Year in Mexico City 1975 and came away impressed, inspired and ignited. I met educated, articulate women from all over the world who were facing the same problems in their countries. I became the North Texas advocate for the Women's Agenda developed after the conference by Gloria Steinem and others.

In 1978 we created the *Women Helping Women Awards* to honor those on the front lines of change. Eight years later the board approved an official name change to *The Maura Awards for Women Helping Women* in 1986. I am honored and humbled. This annual event is now sponsored by the Dallas Women's Foundation, and draws up to a thousand guests every year.

In 1985, Helen LaKelly Hunt returned to Dallas to help a diverse group of us who were determined to create a foundation, with the goal "to be able to invest in longer-term programs that would facilitate systemic change". The Foundation was built on the belief that when you invest in a woman, there is a ripple effect that benefits

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her family, her community, and her world. In the first decade, we awarded \$3.5M in grants, and today the Dallas Women's Foundation has granted more than \$23M to over 1000 program benefitting more than 250,000 women and girls. Little did we "founding mothers" know that the Dallas Women's Foundation would rank as the largest of the 160 women's funds worldwide!

For 30 years The Women's Center changed lives, our own and the lives of others. By the end of the century, it became clear that we should no longer continue. Many of our original founders, including myself, had moved away from Dallas. Other organizations, several of which we had birthed, were doing the work we were founded to do, mostly better than we could because they were single-focused where we had been, as nearly as possible, all things to all women. By 2002, it was time to let go. We gifted our remaining most significant "projects" to other non-profits, emptied our offices, turned the key in its lock for the last time and walked away. We could declare victory through our many accomplishments.

Backing up a bit, in 1976 in the midst of all of the women's center activities, came the worst tragedy in my life - the death of my precious daughter Andrea. She was born with a magic touch that enhanced the life of everyone she met. At 19, she was involved in a car accident that ended her life—and a large part of mine for a long time. There were years of grief and less energy for "causes" outside of my family life. Another tragedy that evolved more slowly – but has a happier ending - was the deterioration of my handsome, brilliant son. Rick was in graduate school when he began to hear voices that were not there.

It wasn't until 1984 I came to the shocking realization

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that all the troubles my son was experiencing were the result of mental illness -schizophrenia. Despite a degree in Psychology, I knew little about it, or the hidden world of mental illness.

A friend suggested I phone Nancy Webster. Our first conversation was two hours. She became my tutor. I started going to a group whose members had a family member with mental illness. I listened and learned and read and became absorbed. My natural instincts for making change and advocating came back into use for this very difficult situation faced by so many.

We learned how to bring comfort and courage and learned how to advocate for the mentally ill and their families. The silence regarding mental illness was deafening - I had lunch with over 15 different women who told me I was the first person they had ever told that a family member had a mental illness. It is a life long struggle for families.

In 1989 we copyrighted a 221-page book – still useful – called *A Helping Hand*, “A Community, Media, and Legislators Resource Guide to the Mental Illness System in Dallas County Area”. We funded an emergency service van with trained personnel to be called by families in a crisis situation with their mentally ill family member. And we became one of the first official chapters of NAMI - National Alliance for the Mentally Ill - one of the most effective grass-roots organizations in the country.

Much of this second wave of feminism described here happened over 30 years ago. So, what has happened in my own life since then? I gave myself permission to start over, just as I had long counseled other women to do. I got divorced; the marriage had disintegrated long before I took that step. And despite all that I had seen go

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wrong financially for women in divorce, I did not hire a lawyer and left the marriage with only my beloved Mercedes convertible and almost no other assets. I moved away from Dallas in 1990, and now live with my daughter Bridget and granddaughter Catalina in California. I could not have survived without her!

I have been able to enjoy a great "retirement" – we live in a great house in Los Altos, and I don't miss the crazy weather extremes in Texas or Minnesota. I have traveled extensively, have attended the Monterey Jazz festival for 20 years, and enjoy family life with my teenager granddaughter who is a delight in my life. My son, Rick, with great effort and determination, and no medication - has managed his life well. He lives alone in a house he bought in North Dallas, and when I go to visit him he treats me like a queen. He has supported himself doing long-distance hauling in a 1985 truck he bought. For 27 years he has traveled across the country averaging a million miles a year with no accidents. I am incredibly proud of him.

I consider the Women's Movement the most profound revolution in the history of our world and consider it an honor to have been a part of it. My gifts have been my stamina, resilience and flexibility, my openness to the strengths of others, and my *Do It Now!* Mantra.

I think I have always recognized the interdependency of all life, and I agree (of course) with Hillary Clinton when she says, "Equal rights for women and girls are the "great unfinished business of the 21st century." At 94, I am still passionate about women's issues, and I am a forever feminist. And every spring I go back to Dallas to be a part of the Dallas Women's Foundation Leadership Forum and Maura Women,

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### Judith Meuli

Judith Meuli was the national secretary of the Feminist Majority, an organization she founded with Eleanor Smeal, Toni Carabillo, Peg Yorkin, and Katherine Spillar in 1987 to encourage women to become involved in public affairs and the electoral process and a board member of the Feminist Majority Foundation.



In 1988, she co-authored a book with Toni Carabillo entitled *The Feminization of Power*. The book grew out of a traveling exhibit that Meuli and Carabillo created for a twelve-city Feminization of Power campaign tour to empower women to run for office in 1988.

She had been an activist and an organizer in the feminist movement since she joined the National Organization for Women in 1967.

In 1968, she was elected to serve for two years as secretary of the Los Angeles Chapter of NOW. From 1971 to 1977, she served almost continuously as a member of NOW's National Board of Directors. From 1971 through 1974, she served as Chair of the National Membership Committee, instituting reforms for the fast-growing organization such as central dues collection and an anniversary payment system. In 1974, she also chaired NOW's National Nominating Committee. In 1976, she was elected coordinator of the Hollywood chapter. She served as President of Los Angeles NOW from 1998 to 2000.

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She was co-editor of NOW's national newsletter, *NOW Acts*, from 1970 to 1973, editor of *Financing the Revolution*, a catalog of fund-raising tips, in 1973, and co-editor of NOW's national newspaper, the *National NOW Times*, with a circulation of 250,000, from 1977 until 1985.

For the major part of her professional life, Ms. Meuli had pursued both a career as a writer, graphic designer and jewelry designer and a career as a real estate broker and developer. In the latter role, in 1990, she designed and constructed a building to house the media center and archives for the Feminist Majority.

Ms. Meuli held a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Minnesota. For 10 years after graduating, she was a research scientist at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, and the University of California, Los Angeles, where she studied renal physiology.



NOW demonstration 1970 Photo by Judith Meuli

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Her career as a scientist ended when Ms. Meuli discovered that although she taught medical students research and surgical techniques, she was discouraged from entering medical school because she was female and, at thirty years old, she was considered too old.

In 1969, she co-founded the Women's Heritage Corporation, a publishing company that produced the Women's Heritage Calendar and Almanac and a series of paperbacks on such figures as Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucy Stone. In 1970, she formed a graphic arts firm with Ms. Carabillo in Los Angeles. Women's Graphic Communications produces and distributes books, newspapers, political buttons, and pins.

Ms. Meuli designed many of the symbols and logos of the women's movement, such as the designs for Woman's Equality, Human Liberation, Sisterhood, Matriarchy Lives, Woman's Peace, Older Women's League, Equal Rights Amendment, Woman Thinker, Failure Is Impossible, NOW's Commemorative medallion, and many feminist issue pins in cloisonné enamel.

Her biography appears in *Who's Who In America* and *Who's Who of American Women*.

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### VICKI MOSS

I was born in New York City at 6:30 a.m., September 8<sup>th</sup> 1936, a scrawny baby resembling a tiny monkey, as my mother sometimes reminded me. I turned into one of those New York kids who liked to be right. The kind who, after much sturm und drang, grows up to be a writer.



My parents, Max Dresner and Minnie Weissman, said I'd brought them good luck: the end of my father's year-long struggle with unemployment; the end of the Great Depression. My brother came along five years later, 1941, in time for World War II.

At nineteen, I marched down an aisle, my hands shakily holding a lily-and-rose bouquet, my eyes teary behind a white veil. My young husband lifted it to kiss me after stomping on a glass, predictably smashing it. I hadn't been looking forward to this day the way I thought I should. I worried I was plunging into something I had little enthusiasm for and less understanding of. But, in any case, my part in the event was nearly over.

After the brief ceremony, everyone applauded as my new husband and I made our entrance and took our seats. , separated for the time being until after the traditional blessings, first over wine, then over *challah*.

It wasn't an orthodox Jewish service in which men and women sit separately – it was supposed to be more modern – yet only men stood around the table presided

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over by my patriarchal, white-bearded grandfather, my *Zeyde Shulim*, as my cousins and I all called him. ["Zeyde" means Grandpa in Yiddish.] He blessed the wine in Hebrew, holding up a silver cup from which he then took a sip, indicating that everyone was to do the same.

I sat at a table with women, forgotten for the time being, my only function, according to ancient tradition, to be fulfilled later when I'd produce a son.

In fact I produced two sons. The marriage lasted only 15 years – but it led to what later became the best part of my life: my five grandchildren.

It was 1972, the weekend of the first meeting in Amherst of SWIP, the Society of Women In Philosophy. I had gone back to college and was now the proud possessor of a bachelor's degree in philosophy. I was enrolled in the doctoral program in philosophy at the brand new Graduate Center on 42<sup>nd</sup> Street in Manhattan. I was the Philosophy Department's first representative at SWIP.

My husband and I had recently separated.

I left that Saturday morning and drove the four hours to Amherst, the first time I would be leaving my children, twelve and fifteen, with neighbors for a whole weekend.

It was SWIP's first meeting on the east coast. November 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> 1972. Some of the suggested topics included such issues as: the maternal instinct; moral dimensions of reverse sexism; feminist studies – which hardly sound revolutionary now. But then!

When I walked into the meeting room of the hotel in Amherst and began mingling with the women, when I

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took a look at the agenda and then attended not only speeches, but also small communal workshops – unlike the way men in the western philosophy establishment discussed philosophical issues; they instead excelled in one-upmanship and fierce competition – my mind began to expand as minds were doing in the seventies, though not all of them from ideas.



With these women declaring themselves to be philosophers, not waiting for men to dub them so, philosophy would change the world—and I, a fledgling philosopher among them, would have a role in that change. We wouldn't sit and wait to be told by our male professors what kinds of things philosophers should wonder about; we could wonder our own wonders, seek our own answers, even devise our own new methods for our investigations.

It was the most exciting weekend of my life.

But before I would have a chance to tackle the philosophical establishment, I returned home to chaos. Papers, ashtrays, beer cans, empty record album sleeves strewn all over the living room. The note on the kitchen table explained what was going on. My fifteen-year-old son had gone off to start what he was calling his "life."

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Many phone calls later filled in some of the details. He and two friends from summer camp had gone on a hitch-hiking adventure. Their ultimate aim was to reach the Haight: Haight-Ashbury in San Francisco, though they'd started by hitch-hiking north-east first to a commune in New England. In the exact opposite direction of The Haight. My ex-husband and I found our son, finally, two weeks later in Las Vegas at a runaway shelter after we tried in vain to follow in his tracks.

Meanwhile, somehow I managed to teach my classes. But doing work for the courses I was taking at the Graduate Center was impossible. I barely managed to keep my home running. I kept imagining my son dead in a ditch, or alive somewhere, someone's sex slave. My younger son and I ate Big Macs every night and soothed ourselves by watching episodes of Star Trek, sitting side by side on the couch in the den, the telephone nearby. That's when we became Trekkies and friends, comforting each other during the crisis.

My ex-husband and I ultimately traveled to Las Vegas to pick up our son after the Las Vegas police called and told us they had him in a jail cell. He and his two friends had headed south first, having heard that they could get free nickels at the casinos.

"He can wait there for you to come and get him," the cop told me, "Or we can have him stay at the local runaway shelter. He'd be free to leave the shelter any time he wanted," the officer added.

Until the 1970s, running away from home was considered a crime, a "status offense." The 1970s marked a change and kids were seen more in need of protection and care. Now they could get temporary shelter, counseling, and some after care.

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This was when our family entered the picture and how our boy got to stay in one of the shelters designed specifically for kids like him.

The officer put him on the phone, and he promised not to go anywhere else. "I'm ready to come home, mom. I won't leave."

We flew out to Vegas to get him.

But my career as a philosopher was over.

Picture this. It's 6:30, a Tuesday night. I'm outside on the sidewalk on West 48<sup>th</sup> Street in Manhattan, glaring at the chartreuse banner in the bank's window with my name on it in big black letters. That sign, with its message: "Welcome New York Business Women" was Jerry's idea, not mine. Jerry was my new boss. [Jerry isn't his real name.]

Just a couple of months before, I'd been out of work – and wondering what marketable talents I had. Now I was running business management seminars for women. And these classes, my seminars, brought the bank—otherwise exposed only to bad press it had gotten in recent Village Voice articles for dealings it had with "connected" politicians and business types—*my classes* brought this small commercial bank a sudden unfamiliar eruption of *good* press: stories in all the city's papers; news features on major tv channels; me giving talks at conferences all over the city. Women calling every day to sign up, though we could take on only thirty at a time for every four-week sequence. We had cycles planned far into the following year.

How did this happen?

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My across-the-street neighbor in Englewood, N.J. , Jerry, the new president of Central State Bank, appointed by the Federal Reserve to clean up the bank's shady board and its questionable business practices—revealed as such in the recent series of Village Voice articles—had spotted me one day moping on my front steps. My three-year teaching fellowship had ended; I'd dropped out of graduate school.

He strolled over. When I told him about my frustrating job hunt, he offered me a job. He happened to be, he told me, just then looking for someone to sell the bank's services. He told me to find a group other banks weren't good to. My mind leaped to women.



Seated: Beverly Olman (deceased); Sharon Berman; Reva Calesky; Karen Olson; Ava Stern  
Standing: Donna Ferrante; Vicki Moss; Jacqui Ceballos; Bernice Malamud

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Now on the air and in printed media, they started calling me "the feminist banker."

\* It was a heady time. I was swept up into the most extraordinary time in women's history since Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Now I was consorting with such amazing women as Jacqui Ceballos, Midge Kovacs, Ava Stern, Elaine Snyder, Donna Ferrante; I spoke on platforms with Betty Friedan, Mary Anne Krupsak, Bernice Malamud, Carol Bellamy.

How could my life not be changed?

A poster, designed by me, hung over my desk with a picture of a fist and a dollar sign: "Liberation is Economic Power." How could I not want to change the world?

But here's another scene from the same period.

I'm in the president's office, asking Jerry to consider a customer's loan application. The customer is a documentary film-maker with two successes under her belt and the award of a big government contract for a new project. The actual funds won't come through for another six months, and she needs money to start filming now.

I think it's a slam-dunk.

"Does she have a house?" Jerry asks, looking at the forms I place on his desk. I'm standing in front of the desk, lacing and unlacing my fingers behind my back.

"Why?" I ask him.

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"For collateral." He nearly sneers as he tosses the words at me. "You don't think I'm going to just give away a hundred thousand dollars."

"She's got it covered by the contracts," I counter, sure I'm on safe ground.

"*Government* contracts" Jerry emphasizes the word "government," but I don't notice his tone, still confident my client is solid.

"Yeah," I nod, "government contracts." *After all*, I'm thinking, *she's not asking for a million dollars like his male clients do.*"

At this point, he comes out from behind the desk. As he gets closer to me, he reaches out and puts a hand on each of my shoulders. For a moment, I think he's about to praise me for landing this solid new customer.

"And you *always* trust the *government*," he sneers again, at the same time sliding his hands down my arms.

His next move is so swift, I can't figure out even later reflecting on it how it happened. He puts his arms around me, pulls me to him and kisses me.

"What are you *doing*?!" I shove him away and race out of his office.

Back at my desk, I touch my hair to see if it's okay, check my suit jacket to make sure it's still neatly buttoned. I'm in a panic, hoping no one in the bank can see on my face or in my body language what just happened. Lacking the confidence to do what Anita Hill did many years later—speak truth to power—I can't even recognize what the truth is.

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And so, after other such incidents, I fall into a depression. Finally, it overwhelms me; I have to get away from him.

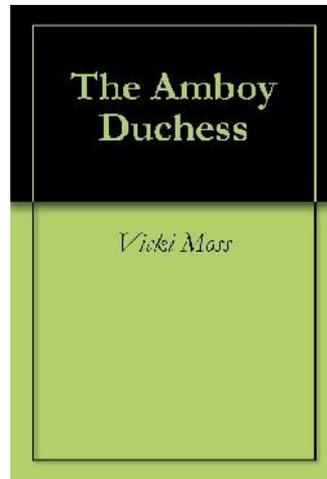
Another career disappears into oblivion. But I am transformed.

My life's work is clear. I'm a committed feminist.

Since then I've marched for abortion rights with members of NOW; been a Marshal in DC at such a march; joined in at events run by WILPF (the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom); some by Code Pink. I've run workshops at domestic violence shelters.

When the Anita Hill hearings are on Jerry calls me—by then, I am living in Manhattan. He says: "It was sexual harassment, wasn't it?" *Imagine?!* We finally had the words; even he now recognizes that his behavior wasn't unique, wasn't even strictly personal; it was political, a power game. It wasn't exactly an apology, but it was the best he could do, and it was *something*.

The next phase of my life led to my writing career. Like many writers, I've had lots of jobs: college professor, newspaper reporter, cab driver, editor, women's center director. Currently, I teach writing and literature at SUNY's Fashion Institute of Technology. My novels include *The Amboy Duchess*, *Solo Flights*, and *The Lust*



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*Chart*, available on Amazon's Kindle.com. I'm currently working on my fourth novel, *Saving Lives*.

\* Around 1972 the feminist movement was no longer involved in around the clock activism. With constant pressure from feminists around the country almost all laws limiting women's rights had been changed and many women were now working full time and forming new organizations, like the Women's Bank and New York Women's Business Owners .

**Vicki Moss** is author of three novels, *The Amboy Duchess*, published by Horsetooth Press, as well as *Solo Flights* and *The Lust Chart*. *Alien On the Road*, a poetry memoir, and *Blood Memories*, a collection of short stories, are also published by Horsetooth Press. **All are available at Kindle.com.**

She also has written five children's books. Her poems and short fiction are in national literary journals. Her poem, "Minnewaska," won a prize from *Sensations Magazine*. Gannett gave her an award for investigative reporting. *Solo Flights* earned second place in the City College of New York's Jerome Lowell de Jur's Writing competition.

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### **CINDY NEMSER -**

In 1969, I met a group called **WAR** was planning an all women exhibition called "X to the 12th Power." I was invited to one of their meetings and someone asked me the question that changed my life. "Have you ever experienced any discrimination due to being a woman?"



That query woke me up!!!

I began to realize how much sexual discrimination I'd experienced from the time I was born in 1937. As the daughter of Jewish middle class parents who sought to be "Americans," no one thought of preparing me for a Bat Mitzvah. None of the women in my family had ever had one, although the boys had Bar Mitzvahs. So I was deprived of a serious religious education. But I visited my grandfather at the synagogue on high holy days, and I loved Passover, when my grandmother and my mother's sisters and their husbands all got together.

I was a fat kid, teased by my cousin Barry, (who to this day addresses me as Cecil the Nicil). When he called me names, I cried. His father, Uncle Eddie called me a cry baby. No one stood up for me. From the time I was a small child I loved to draw and paint and art became my consolation. I wanted to be like my much admired Aunt

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Shirley, who had her own art school. When I was 12 I read Irving Stone's *Lust for Life* and immediately identified with Van Gogh, who was also an outcast but became a famous artist. So, though I had no encouragement from anyone, including Aunt Shirley, I was determined to be an artist, too. In high school I made it my major. To my despair, none of my art teachers ever praised my work. With great misgivings, I let go of art as a vocation. However, my art teachers had sent us to the **Met** and to **M.O.M.A.** and in those magical places my fascination with art was cemented.

I attended Brooklyn College, majored in education, and married Chuck Nemser in my junior year. After graduation in 1958, I was assigned to P.S. 44, an elementary school in a poverty-stricken area of Brooklyn, where the children were ill equipped to absorb the curriculum and the teaching staff consisted of hard working but discouraged women while the administration was comprised of harassed men, some also sexist.

I taught there during the day, and took classes at night at Brooklyn College graduate school and obtained an M.A. in literature. I also joined the newly formed Union and went out on the first teachers' strike. This experience, which taught me I had courage, and Emerson's dictum that nothing was as important as developing as a person, encouraged me to keep searching for a situation where I could be more effective and more fulfilled.

After 6-1/2 years at P.S. 44, I learned that NYU had a graduate division, the Institute of Fine Arts, which offered courses in every period of art history. I was ecstatic to discover I could become an art historian and study with

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the greatest minds in the field. With no hesitation, I gave up teaching and enrolled. I was also thrilled, though a little overwhelmed, that after eight years of marriage, I was also to become a mother. I gave birth to my daughter Catherine after my first year at the Institute.

But, as a wife and a new mother, my illusions of the joy I would have being instructed by greatest minds in the field were soon shattered. I had no encouragement from my professors, although I studied assiduously and had excellent marks. My thesis advisor, Donald Posner, told me I wasn't fit to obtain a PhD as I was too old to sit at the feet of a professor (I was 29). Another professor, Colin Eisler, told me that, since I was a wife and mother, I should become a volunteer. But I still retained the illusion that hard work and dedication were all that was needed to reach the heights. I was still too insecure not to believe that somehow I hadn't worked hard enough or wasn't smart enough. I had no clear idea that without a male mentor, I could never make my way up to the highest positions meted out by the men's club that controlled the snobbish, sexist world of art history

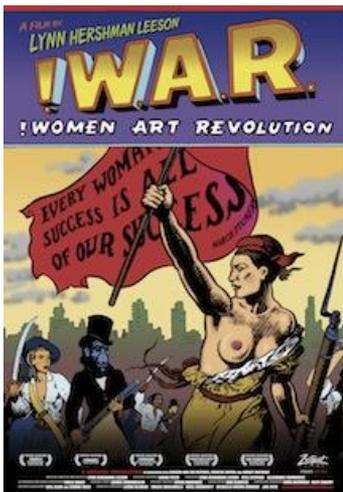
Once I attained my M.A. from the Institute, in 1966, I obtained an internship at M.O.M.A. where cronyism and prejudice toward women also prevailed. I had no powerful male helping me, so I left and created a successful art tour business. While I enjoyed the lecturing, I didn't want to be a business woman.

Through my first artist friend Irene Moss, I found my way to the world of artists that I had yearned for in my youth. Moss connected me with Arts Magazine, and eventually, I wrote articles for all the art journals. I was the first to

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interview Chuck Close, Vito Acconci, Eva Hesse, and many famous artists.

In 1969, I encountered a feminist organization called **Women Artists in Revolution**, (W.A.R.), ( See intro paragraph.) A visit with that group changed my life. I became an avid feminist, determined to fight for women's in the arts.



As a critic who had worked briefly at the headquarters of *Arts Magazine*, I had seen from the inside how dismally dealers, art publishers and writers dealt with women artists. Fortunately, around 1970, *Arts* hired a sympathetic editor, Gregoire Müller, who allowed me to do an article about the situation.

It was one of the first published pieces about sexism in the art world. I called it, "Forum of Women Artists," as it was made up of quotes. I asked the women how they felt about their status. Most refused to answer honestly, for fear of angering the establishment. The piece caused a stir.

I also contributed to an alternative newspaper called *Changes*; it gave me the opportunity to do a taped interview with Louise Nevelson. In it, one minute she spoke like a queen, declaring, "I am a women's

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liberationist." But, when I provoked her by asking how she felt about being left out of an important exhibit at the Met, she morphed into a guttersnipe, hissing, "I'd like to sue Harvard. I'd like to take a gun and shoot that other little snot nose, (She meant Rosalind Krauss, an historian and critic, much influenced by Clement Greenberg, an art world king maker, whose disciples taught at elite schools, owned top galleries and curated at premier museums including the Met and M.O.M.A.). The interview was an art world sensation.

At my suggestion, Brian O'Doherty, the editor of *Art in America*, commissioned me to write an article about the treatment of women artists before the present day. I researched thoroughly and discovered that there were great women artists in the past, but they had been written off by art historians and critics in the nineteenth century. I tested the premise right up to the present by sending queries to all the prominent 70's critics. Most of them revealed their misogyny. Entitled "Stereotypes and Women Artists" my article contradicted Linda Nochlins's claim that there have been no great women artists. Then I met Patricia Mainardi, an artist, writer and member of "Red Stockings," a radical organization. The feminist activist Robin Morgan had given Pat \$200 to start a feminist art newspaper and Pat invited me to contribute. I showed her some of my writings spoofing the haughty, hypocritical sexist art establishment, and she wanted them all. She invited me to join the board. I brought Irene Moss with me and *Women and Art* was born.

However, when we began the second issue there was a split in the political ideology of the board. Moss, Mainardi and I left and started *The Feminist Art Journal*, into

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which I introduced a "Male Chauvinist Pig of the Month" page. We had contributions from women's artists and art historian organizations both locally and around the world. I considered my "Stereotypes" piece to be the most significant analysis of the reasons that the status of women artists' was so low. There was not one female artist mentioned in Jansen's *Key Monuments of the History of Art*, the bible of the field, therefore I published it on the front page of **F.A.J.** It later was featured in the *Journal of Aesthetic Education* and included in Judith Loeb's *Feminist Collage*.



Cindy holding copy of *F.A.J.*

In 1971, I became a founding member of "Women in the Arts" and joined them when they picketed M.O.M.A. Chuck took the historic photograph of the event.

After my articles appeared in *Arts Magazine* and the **F.A.J.**, I was invited to lecture and conduct seminars at colleges, museums, and women's organizations all

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over the country. I did a slide talk as part of the presentation based on my "Stereotypes" piece. I enjoyed working with the eager women students and even sparring with the skeptical males.

In the spring of 1972 I was invited to speak at a National Women's Conference at the Corcoran School of Art, in Washington D.C., where I distributed the Journal to women from all over the country. This was a terrific launching for the magazine and our readership increased greatly. At the event I had the opportunity to speak with Patricia Sloane who was the key note speaker. I wrote up the conference for Art in America.

In 1973, Pat Sloane and I did three panels about women artists and the art world at the College Art Association held at the N.Y. Hilton. Some of the participants were Marcia Tucker, Audrey Flack, Betty Parsons and Lee Krasner. All the sessions were jammed. At the third one, Louise Nevelson strode into the auditorium and spoke forcefully of her struggles, but though she could have, she never hogged the microphone. Later women artists and historians from all over the world began to testify about the male prejudice of art teachers, dealers and curators. The room was pulsing with energy and the women vowed to take actions to remedy the situation. What an experience!!!

The young woman sitting next to me hugged me when I told her I had put the panels together. "I'm a painter from Philadelphia, she said. I want to put on an all women artists' exhibition there. Could I come and see you?" Of course, I said yes!

As Diane Burko and I conferred as to how to go about

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putting on a major exhibition, I got a flash and said: "Why only one show?" Why not have a city-wide festival with as many institutions, both public and private, presenting the work of women in all the visual arts, as well as panels of significant art world women? The main exhibition would be entitled "Women's Work," and should be a juried exhibition made up of Marcia Tucker, Adele Breeskin, Anne d'Hanoncourt, Lila Katzen and myself. Each juror could invite 20 American artists she thought to be the most gifted."

I also offered to curate my own exhibition called "In Her Own Image." The whole festival would be called "Philadelphia Focuses on the Visual Arts" or "Focus."

Diane was ecstatic. She got together a committee of women supporters. I traveled back and forth to Philadelphia, once to help convince the supporters to take on all the necessary work that would be required; later to help persuade powerful Philadelphia people to participate in making the festival come to pass. In the spring of 1974 "Focus" became a reality!

The main exhibition was held at the city's Civic Center. My show, in which I displayed 46 artists, was at the Fleisher Memorial Art Gallery. The Philadelphia papers raved about the events, and *The New York Times* sent Grace Glueck to write it up. I created a black and white catalogue, reproducing the art works in my exhibition, as a centerfold in the *F.A.J.* and wrote about "Focus" there.

After the third and fourth issues of the *F.A.J.*, both Mainardi and Moss ceased editing the magazine. But with Chuck keeping the books, and second reading,

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Carolyn Mezzello, and later Jeri Bachmann doing the layout, and Barbara Jepson copy editing, we soldiered on, publishing articles by Gloria Orenstein, Lucy Lippard, Frima Fox Hoffrichter and other distinguished art historians and writers who did pieces on little known highly creative women. Most articles were on the visual arts but sometimes they covered the other arts as well. I did so much writing for the magazine that I had no time to contribute to other publications, some of which, I and other contributors, had attacked for their corrupt behavior and sexism. The subscription list accelerated and I found it hard to keep up with assessing the art scene for significant subjects, assigning articles, editing submissions and answering letters. Fortunately I found a dedicated college student, Diane Addrizzo, to take care of the subscriptions and mailings.

Before I cut my ties with the art magazines, I published an interview with Lee Krasner in *Arts* and an article in *Art Forum*, which drew attention to her "Little Image" paintings that indicated that she influenced her husband Jackson Pollock. I also helped to make Alice Neel a feminist cause célèbre by writing about her bohemian life as well as her work in *Ms. Magazine*. In 1975, Neel painted a portrait of Chuck and me in the nude, which was reproduced in *New York Magazine* and the *Village Voice*.

At this point I put my taped interviews into a book and called it *Art Talk: Conversations with 12 Women Artists*. I had a hard time getting a publisher as they couldn't understand the need for it, even though a book about women artists had not appeared since the 1930's. Because of an article in *Ms.* I was contacted by

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Scribners. It was published exactly as I wrote it.

It was exciting interviewing the artists. Some like Sonia Delaunay, Dame Barbara Hepworth and Louise Nevelson were historic figures and grand dames. I formed a friendship with the tragic Eva Hesse, and there was a lot of laughter with the wicked, but hilarious Alice Neel.

When *Art Talk* came out, Scribners gave me \$100 for my "book tour," which I supplemented by giving slide talks at universities and institutions around the country. In California I met Miriam Schapiro and Judy Chicago. Chicago was determined to have me see vaginas in all her paintings, but I resisted, saying I felt entitled to interpret her works as I saw fit. Judy strongly resented my response, and, in one of her autobiographies, called me "Cindy the Nemesis."

In 1975, I was proud to receive an Art Critics Fellowship from the N.E.A. In 1977, I was completely wowed when The Minneapolis College of Art and Design asked me to be their Commencement Speaker.

In the summer of 1976, I wrote my first novel, a satirical roman à clé about a woman artist ready to do anything, including providing sexual favors, to reach the top. I think the book scared the publishers because it exposed the misogyny and dishonesty of the art establishment. It was way ahead of its time.

By the summer of 1977, I was burnt out and had to close the *F.A.J.* and leave the public arena for a time, though my heart was always with the fight for equality. I turned

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inward and began to write fiction. My next novel, *Eve's Delight*, dealt with a woman's sexual needs, and it found a home in 1982 with Pinnacle Books.

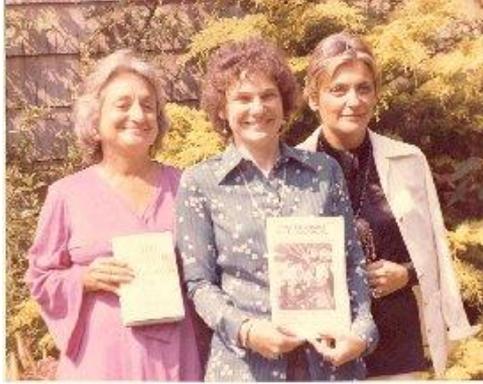
In 1989 Patsy Cunningham, the widow of Ben Cunningham, asked me to do a monograph about her husband. I'd met Ben many years ago and had written a favorable review in *Arts* about his fabulous optical painting. I had also done a catalog introduction for his traveling exhibition, so I agreed. The result was Ben Cunningham "A Life with Color" JPLArt Publishers/Texas.

In the 90's, I wrote an article about women artists for *Ms.* depicting violence, and a piece about the lack of produced women playwrights for the *Dramatist Guild Quarterly*. I published humor pieces for the *New York Times* and *Newsweek* and did theater reviews for many publications.

In 1995 HarperCollins did a reprint of *Art Talk*, adding three more 70's interviews. The book is has been translated into many languages and is in libraries and museums all over the world. It is considered a classic and is always available online and in bookstores.

In 2005, I wrote a memoir, *Tales of the 70's Art World: As Told by A Feminist Art Critic*. The book is filled with historical facts and stories about my encounters with a few male artists, but mainly the great women artists, some of whom, such as Lee Krasner, have finally come into their own. It also fills in the gaps in women's art history missing from other books about the period.

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**Cindy with Betty Friedan and Barbara Seaman**

In 2007, I curated an exhibition at the Tabla Rasa Gallery in Brooklyn called "Women's Work: Homage to Feminist Art." consisting of women artists' of the 70's, dialoging visually with young artists of the twenty-first century. The exhibit received super reviews.

I also created my blog in 2008 called Cindy Nemser's Forum, and I have continued to lecture about the need to hold demonstrations and sue, if necessary, for the equal validation of women's art in all important venues.

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### ZOE NICHOLSON

Born in Milwaukee in 1948, I am not really a pioneer feminist but it does win me the possibility of knowing, friending, sharing with many who have more than earned such a lofty title. Aside from fasting for the ERA in 1982, the second most thrilling component in my feminist life is the repeated saving, rescuing, informing that the American Women's Movement has given me.



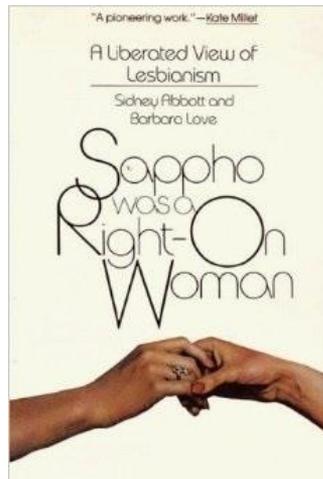
NOW tenets are basically a list of the pillars of my life. From lesbian rights to reproductive freedom, I am always the beneficiary of NOW. I have had two abortions, stood against Sarah Palin, lobbied against DADT (Don't ask, don't tell) celebrated body images, worked for the ERA, identified as straight, lesbian and bi, marched for equality in race, sex and gender. While I was not in that famous 1966 picture with my idols sitting with crossed ankles on folding chairs, the National Organization for Women has filled my daily life for over 35 years.

One experience that rises to the surface is how the Veteran Feminists of America gave me the courage to open the front door, leave the house and face life after a full year of not being able to even turn the door knob or start the car. The fear of going out of the house began in the mid-1990's. I fell into a depression which I would attribute to losing heart, losing intention, living without

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being of service to anyone The VFA and the women of the Second Wave reached right into my life and called me back to a life of activism

In Spring, 2003, I received a questionnaire via email. It was from a woman whose work I had read 25 years before, Barbara Love. Her book, written with Sydney Abbott, *Sappho was a Right-On Woman*, was one of the most important in my feminist journey. Barbara was just beginning a great treasure hunt to collect information by and about the women & men of the Second Wave. Her dream was to create a directory of pioneer feminists complete with their bios, education, stats and, when possible, information would be first hand.



The day it arrived, I filled it out and attached this little note ~

*June 6, 2003*

*Dearest Barbara,*

*I am every so grateful for your work. Over the years, as I pass through bookstores, I can never resist searching feminist history books for my name - for the work on the Equal Rights Amendment (which the*

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*Illinois Assembly passed recently!!). Of course, I find nothing. I find a bit on Sanger, on Anthony, on my foremothers - but the 60's, 70's and 80's - so many wonderful women go unnoticed.*

*I see that you are in Danbury. I hope you are going to consider including my most beloved friend, Laura Nyro. She died in her home on Zinn Road in Danbury in April 1997. I was visiting with her in March & April. She was a true feminist woman and artist. If you need any information about her, I am in her service. She was my closest friend.*

If I can be of assistance - it will be my privilege to do so. Please ask me for anything,

Zoe Nicholson

I heard back from Barbara in just a few days. She asked me if I would like to help her transform Questionnaires into biographies. On June 18, 2003, she emailed me four completed bios to illustrate how the process would work; Marie C. Wilson, Gloria Steinem, Virginia Carter and Deborah Rogow. I was hooked. And one week later I got my first Q - it was from the woman who founded the first woman-owned art gallery in SOHO.

One by one the Q's began to arrive; the first women studies program, the first abortion clinic, the first self-help group, the first to start a NOW chapter, AAUW, NWPC, on and on and on. Their lives were thrilling, one more inspiring than the next. Sit-ins, marches, and protests. Publishing and music and art. Academics and politics. And ministers and rabbis. Reading their own

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answers was intimate and felt almost holy; certainly a sacred trust. In the course of two years I was sent over 100 Qs and translated them into short bios. And one day I got an email from Barbara that said - here is your Q - Surprise! And I got to write my own biography for *Feminists Who Changed America 1963 - 1975*.

Sitting in the dark of night and the dark of personal self-imposed isolation, it felt as though these daring, courageous women were speaking to me, whispering to me, allowing me to meet with them. I would pour over the 22 answers and unfold them into paragraphs, hoping to do them justice. Their lives were so brave, so creative, so insightful that my heart and soul caught on fire again. They made me remember how much I had loved chapter meetings, standing on a corner with a sign, conferring with feminists. There was no more taking it for granted or thinking it was all in the past. It was 2005 and there was work to be done, women and girls to serve and this book to promote. I looked for the nearest NOW chapter, gathered the courage to leave the house and take a chance with my life again.

So while everyone else who picks up this astounding book, *Feminists Who Changed America 1963-1975* teeming with bios of feminist change makers, I see a personal liberation that broke the chains of my agoraphobia and healed a broken heart. The Second Wave has carried me body and soul to liberation again and again and I am so grateful.

Today, at 62, I still have not peaked as there is so much to do. A few years ago it became loudly apparent to me that all social justice movements are seeking the same

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thing; the end of the oppressor/oppressed paradigm. Age, religion, class, sex, gender and race are all intertwined and the advancement of one or another will never be complete until all categories have full civil rights. With that epiphany, I changed my business card from Feminist to Equality Activist. That shifted everything in my life; everything.

There is no disparity requiring reconciliation between my work in the queer movement, the women's movement, reproductive justice, immigration, ageism, etc. What had felt like too many things, too much going on, became all one rushing river of justice.

I am the founder and president of Pacific Shore NOW and was the National NOW liaison to the 2009 National Equality March. I am the founder of "ERA Once and For All". I am the NWPC National ERA Liaison. I serve on the Board of the Veteran Feminists of America and am their advisor on the ERA campaign.

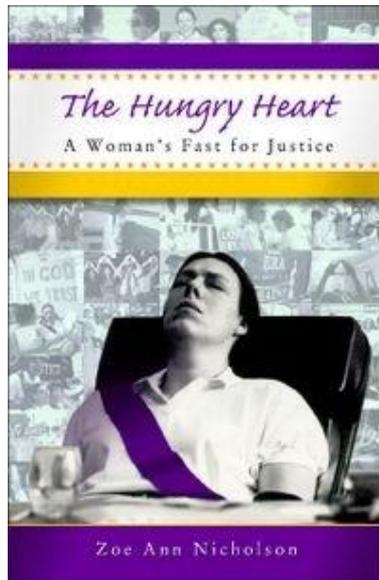
However, at this time I am proud to be speaking in conjunction with the documentary, "March On." Being featured in this movie has given me to opportunity to speak about the oppressor/oppressed paradigm in the context of the LGBTQAI Movement. This branch on the tree of liberation is on fire right now due to the roar about Marriage Equality, the promise of repealing DADT, the passing of I-ENDA and the repeal of DOMA.

The Queer Movement has taught me the power of coming out - coming out every day as life offers the question. I am bisexual. I am a feminist. I have had two abortions. I am Buddhist. I love my life. Maybe Oprah

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would call it standing in your truth but I call it coming out. There is nothing to lose and everything to gain.

As I have heard Gloria Steinem say and have experienced directly, the Equality Movement breathes. It catches on in one vein while languishing in another but, in reality, it is all one body of truth - the longing for EQUALITY. All six are matched in longing, all six are inextricably intertwined but each will lurch on its own ~ offering the contagion of success. I am asked on a weekly basis how to sustain hope, how to manage burnout, how to manage it all. It is easy because it is all the same because no one is equal until everyone is equal.



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Zoe holds a B.A. in Theology, Quincy University, 1969 and a M.A. in Ethics, USC, 1975. She began her professional life teaching high school for five years. In 1976, she opened and operated The Magic Speller Bookstore, a women's bookstore in Newport Beach, CA. In 1982, she joined six women in Springfield, Illinois, in a public and political fast for 37 days in support of the Equal Rights Amendment. Her memoir is *The Hungry Heart ~ A Women's Fast for Justice*, from Lune Soleil Press.

With the close of her independent bookstore, she served for a year as Director of the Orange County Free Clinic. In 1985, she completed the professional computer program at Computer Learning Center and worked in hi tech, software development and recruiting for fifteen years. Since 2001, she is founding partner and manages Eclipse Data Systems and Eclipse Global. She is a member of the ERA Roundtable, a life-long member of NOW and proud member of the Veteran Feminists of America.

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### JOAN NIXON

On October 21, 2015 VFA honored Muriel Fox, a founder of NOW and VFA Chair of the Board, at the Harvard Club in New York City. I was unable to attend, but immediately after the event I received enthusiastic phone calls from VFA's new president, Eleanor Pam, and from two daughters of a late dear friend, Carey and Pat Gross, who sat at a table with Long Island NOW founder Betty Schlein and other early activists. Eleanor, Carey, and Pat raved about the event, particularly about Rosie O'Donnell's enthusiastic participation. But wait! Hear the story of why was Rosie was even there.



pictured: Dell Williams, Bettye Lane, Joan Nixon  
photoby: Joan Roth

Barbara Love, organizing the event, knew that her close friend, Joan Nixon, had the same dentist as Rosie did-- and that Joan had already met Rosie in the dentist's office. So she wasted no time in reaching Rosie's assistant to invite Rosie to be a speaker at our Muriel celebration. (Of course she noted Rosie's having already

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met Joan.) Yes, her assistant answered, Rosie would be delighted. Rosie was not only there, and contributed \$5,000 upon entering, but announced that night that she would also match the gate— whatever amount VFA received at the door.

For three days afterward Rosie talked about VFA on The View--so now the world knows about VFA. And we owe Rosie's presence at that event to Barbara Love and Joan Nixon.

For many years, in her own way, Joan Nixon has quietly helped feminists, working without compensation or recognition. Without her support NOW, the Lesbian Movement and Veteran Feminists of America would not have advanced as surely and as quickly as they did.

Knowing Joan, I am reminded of how many diverse feminists make up the Feminist Movement. Some are active on the front lines, but many, like Joan, work behind the scenes, quietly, often without recognition. And now we are happy to introduce and salute...

### **JOAN NIXON**

Born in Peru, Indiana, on July 1, 1941, Joan was the first child of Miriam and Joseph Henry Nixon. Her father's family owned Nixon Newspapers, a chain of 11 Indiana papers. Joan, her sister and two brothers had a privileged but simple childhood, attending local schools and the Knox private school in St James, NY.

In 1963 Joan was a student at Wellesley College and in 1969 received a Masters Degree in History from Indiana University. Her first job was as a news photographer for her father's Frankfort Times, where she worked for three years.

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But by 1973 Joan was seeing a psychiatrist for manic depression, from which she would suffer all her life. Diagnosed as bipolar, her doctor also helped her come to realize she was bisexual. She remembers that on learning this, her father was upset, but her mother was sympathetic.

Aware that she was gay, Joan attended a lesbian conference in Los Angeles in April 1973. There she discovered "Sappho Was A Right On Woman," a book by Barbara Love and Sydney Abbott. At that conference she also met Barbara, and they have been close friends since.

Tremendously inspired by the music played at the conference by the Woman Band, Joan began contributing to them, financially and otherwise, and sometimes accompanied them on their tours. That May she took part in the first feminist music festival in Sacramento, CA, where she met Kate Millett, who produced the festival; they became close friends.

Joan joined the Lavender Women's newspaper and from 1973 to 1976 wrote for the Collective and loaned it \$10,000 to record the first Olivia Records album, Chris Williamson's *The Changer and the Changed*, which became the most popular feminist album on the charts.

Joan moved to New York City in 1976 and met Bella Abzug, then a candidate for the U.S. Congress. Mesmerized by Bella, she volunteered to chauffeur her around, and did so until Bella's death in 1998. The car, a 1992 Oldsmobile called *BellaMobiles*, symbolized Bella during that time. After Bella's death, Joan wrote the Bella papers for the *Bella Abzug Reader*, which was edited by the late \*Mim Kelber for the Bella Archives.

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Several years ago I noticed that Joan always bought tables for 12 or 14 at our events. "Who is this woman?" I wondered. In November 1999, at our celebration of Betty Friedan at the National Arts Club in New York City, I made it a point to meet Joan and get her to "formally" join VFA.

Joan was hospitalized two years ago for cancer, but it is now under control and she is back in her Greenwich Village apartment, still traveling on weekends and holidays to her house on Long Island to visit her good friend, long-time feminist activist Sydney Abbott, and sees Kate Millett, Barbara Love and others in Manhattan. She continues to help support feminist friends and their enterprises and maintains that the feminist movement not just helped her find her identity, but gave her one.

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### **GLORIA ORENSTEIN**

I was born on 3/8/38 when my mother was 38 (3 and 8 have always been significant in my life).

Delivered six weeks early, I spent my first month-and-a-half in the first incubator installed at Beth-El hospital in Brooklyn.



My childhood home in Queens, NY, was opposite a huge woods. I was warned never to wander off in those woods where terrible things could befall young girls, but I had to walk through the woods to reach my school. Despite my fears, I have continued my wanderings through dark woods to continue my education.

My father spent his later years in the shoe industry; my mother was a Jr. high home economics teacher. I have a younger brother, a lawyer. His wife is also a lawyer.

I later discovered my birthday is on International Women's Day, but I had no idea that in 1980 and 1985 I would attend conferences on women for the U.N. Mid-Decade and End of Decade gatherings in Copenhagen and Nairobi. But back to the past.

Districting was changed when I was ready for high school and I had to attend a school far from my

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neighborhood. Some of my friends' parents did what they could to have their children attend a school closer to home, but my parents decided I was to remain there. However, when it came time for my brother to attend high school they claimed he was living in a relative's home so he could qualify for a school in a better district. The first feminist alert had just rung for me--his education was obviously more important--and when he was eligible for a bar mitzvah I was told girls were not allowed to have that ceremony.

I was an excellent student and aspired to attend university and was told to consult with my rabbi about which college would be best for me. There were quotas based on anti-Semitism then. We were advised to visit the recently-founded Brandeis University. I fell in love with Brandeis and applied. My deep desire to pursue an academic career was nurtured there, and I graduated in the 8th graduating class, 1959.

During my junior year in high school I met the man who would become my husband, Steve Orenstein, a Holocaust child-survivor from France. He was studying to become a physicist.

I'd thought about majoring in physics, but the sciences--physics in particular--were inhospitable to women students. I was beginning to see gender inequities in the curriculum and culture of a coed university. This became clearer when I visited the Wellesley College campus. As we came to the Physics Building, I was puzzled about who would be using it. One hardly ever encountered women in physics at Brandeis. I asked the campus guide "Who goes there?" "Why Wellesley physics majors of

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course," she replied. Another feminist click-one that explained the advantages of attending a woman's college.

I majored in Romance Languages and Literatures (French), spent days in the library reading about Surrealism and wishing I had been born earlier in the century so could have participated in that movement. I went on the Sweetbriar Junior Year in France program. When I returned, Steve had been accepted to graduate school in physics at Brandeis. We were married on 8/3/58 (more 8's and 3's), before my senior year.

After graduation, we went with a group of physicists to live at Brookhaven National Laboratory, where they would do experimental particle research. Today the area is rife with cancer because of the radiation that spewed forth from experiments. I was only 20 and aware that the children I might have could be affected by the overdose registered on the badge my husband had to wear, so I moved back to Cambridge and attended Radcliffe Graduate School to pursue my M.A. in Slavic Languages and Literatures, leaving my husband at Brookhaven. It was not how I had envisioned marriage.

I soon learned there was a serious explosion of the bubble chamber my husband's group was using. Their experiment had to be closed, which enabled him to join me in Cambridge, Mass. Thank heavens no one was hurt. He switched from experimental to theoretical physics, and I joined a group of radicals protesting the effects of nuclear radiation.

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After a year in graduate school I became pregnant. My husband got a job at Northwestern University and we moved to Evanston, IL, where my first daughter, Nadine, was born.

Suddenly I found myself alone without family or friends and without the academic life I had so loved. I lost my bearings and fell into a deep post-partum depression. I applied to the graduate program at the Univ. of Chicago in Comparative Lit, but how could I go to classes, use the library, and take care of my child without any help? My husband would be teaching at the other side of the city and there were no childcare centers in those days.

I ended up taking a position as a Teaching Assistant in French at Northwestern, and it was amazing to me, but also to my therapist, that the day I began teaching my first class, my entire depression vanished. No therapist in 1961 could understand that a woman might feel fulfilled if she exercised her profession, rather than be a full-time homemaker. After a year of teaching I was convinced I must obtain the doctorate I had given up to follow Steve to the Midwest.

Eventually we moved back East, and I taught French at Lexington High School in Massachusetts. Though pregnant with my second child, I wanted to return to graduate school so applied for a Danforth Graduate Fellowship for Women. Fortunately, my husband found a job in physics at Queens College, and that brought us back to NY. This was the first time a grant was created which gave priority to women who had put off graduate studies to raise a family. The fellowship paid for university fees, for child-care and nursery school, and

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covered all my academic expenses until I earned my Ph.D. from NYU in 1971.

I received my doctorate with a dissertation that later became a book entitled "The Theatre of the Marvelous: Surrealism and the Contemporary Stage" (NYU Press 1971). My second daughter, Claudia, had been born right before we moved to NYC. Today Nadine is a Curator of N. European Prints and Drawings at the Metropolitan Museum in NY, and Claudia is a Professor of Theatre at Hunter College. She is also the mother of my two wonderful grandchildren, Caleb and Sophie.

We spent the academic year 1971-72 in Paris where my husband was doing physics research. I found a teaching position in English at Paris III, a branch of the University of Paris. I visited the women of Surrealism-artists Leonor Fini, Meret Oppenheim, Jane Graverol, and poets Lise de Harne and Joyce Mansour; participated in the Mouvement de Liberation des Femmes, and took my children to feminist protests in the streets of Paris.

None of this sat well with my husband, and our marriage slid on a downhill spiral. The last of the conflicts occurred when the university required me to come in on a Saturday and my husband declared I had weekdays to go to work and belonged to him on Saturdays. Of course I went in to perform the required task, and after many arguments we decided to separate for the summer. The children went to camp, he stayed in Paris and I visited Leonora Carrington, the Surrealist artist I had met just before leaving for France. She lived in Mexico, and had invited me to spend the summer with her.

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The previous summer I had been finishing my dissertation and was looking for Surrealists from Latin America. Someone suggested I write to Leonora, and we corresponded almost daily. Nothing had been written about her in the early 70's so she sent me reproductions



Leonora at her painting easel with the chequered vest

of her visual art. I was astounded by the beauty of her art and decided to include her in my dissertation. I would have to go to Mexico to speak with her in person, but had no money for travel. I decided to purchase a Mexican dress, hoping the vibes would enter my brain and enlighten me about the meaning of her cryptic, but absolutely incredible imagery. One day, just as I had asked the cosmos to send me an answer, the telephone rang and a most distinctive English accent spoke: "This

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is Leonora Carrington. I have just arrived in New York and I would like to meet you." I was elated.

We met that night and remained dear friends for the rest of her life (she died in April, 2012 at 94). In New York I took her to a meeting of OWL (Older Women's Liberation) and we met with Betty Friedan, Jacqui Ceballos and Irma Diamond. Leonora wanted to start a branch of NOW in Mexico City. She was sailing for France in a few days and wanted me to go with her. Thanks to my brother I was able to make the trip by plane.

The time I spent with Leonora opened my eyes to the Celtic roots of her literary and artistic vision. I was able to spend six weeks as her guest in Mexico the following summer. It was a most extraordinary entrée to her world. She saw the traces of the ancestors at the archeological sites we visited. It was the dream trip of a lifetime.

After I returned to the States I began the long search for a permanent teaching position. We were the first generation of feminist scholars in every field. Eventually I was hired as Assistant Professor of English at Douglass College of Rutgers University in New Brunswick, NJ. Before this I had published the earliest articles on The Women of Surrealism and on Frida Kahlo in The Feminist Art Journal (1973), and in 2012 the seed I planted long ago came to fruition. The exhibition "In Wonderland" at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art is about the women of Surrealism who after WWII settled in New York City and Mexico City, where their work flourished.

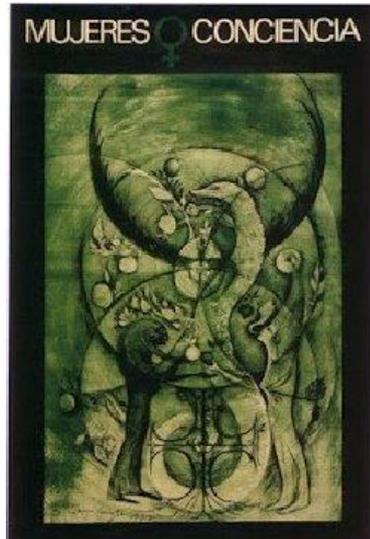
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In the early 70's, feminist art historians began to think about why women had been omitted from the canon of the greats in art history. Today we are revising our pedagogy and methodologies to fill in the blanks, and transform our history into a feminist legacy to be proud of.

One day, on my visit to Mexico a year later, I was sitting at a table in the plaza, and an American man introduced himself to me: He was Robert Lima, now retired, and his field of specialization was Surrealism. "I have

just come from a meeting of the American Comparative Literature Association," he said, "and I thought I'd stop in Oaxaca before returning to Penn. State University where I am a professor." He asked if I knew it was to be the 50th anniversary of the "Manifestos of Surrealism" by André Breton. I told him I was working with a magazine, Shantih, on a Surrealism issue. He asked if I could I present this at the conference the next year. I had original information on the women of Surrealism, I told him. He invited me to give a paper with a slideshow at his conference.

On my return to New York, I told my husband I would be going to the conference for one weekend. He was



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furious. "If you go I will not be here when you return. I am not your baby sitter." Of course I had to go, and my presentation was extremely successful. It never occurred to me that Steve would actually leave the children alone, but that's what I came home to--another dark woods I had to traverse. My girls and I managed to hold up during this critical turn of events.

I had no idea how I would ever find a permanent university position or a social life. Inspired by the Left Bank women who had created a lively literary culture in Paris at the beginning of the century, I began doing research on Salon Women. I wanted a life of Letters, but I was born in the wrong century and without the fortune I'd need. Then it occurred to me that we could have a salon with many women working together and contributing to the funding. Two years later, when I attended an all-woman poetry reading, I got up the courage to ask if anyone would like to form a salon. The response was overwhelming.

And so began The Woman's Salon for Literature in New York that lasted from 1975 to beyond 1985. We met one Saturday night each month, eventually in Erika Duncan's loft in Westbeth.

In time we created a special program that we took to the 1977 Houston Women's Conference. Kate Millett and Olga Broumas came with a group of us, and we gave readings from our works. I spoke about women's salons from the 17th to the 20th centuries.

In 1982 I was forced to return to the job market as I did not get tenure at Douglass. I was in the English

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Department, but had been publishing in Comparative Lit, and Douglass had no such department. However, during my seven years there, I had become Chair of their Women's Studies Program and directed the Rutgers Junior Year in France. It did not take long to get my next job at the University of Southern California. I was happy to have the opportunity to move to a warm climate with an excellent university. Nadine stayed in NY to finish college at Barnard, and Claudie moved with me to attend USC, blessedly tuition free.

When the time came for tenure in Comparative Literature, I needed recommendations from famous feminists in France. I'd been a friend of Helene de Beauvoir, Simone de Beauvoir's sister, so I requested my department send my dossier to Simone. One day I heard stamping above my office. My feminist colleagues had received Simone's letter of recommendation and were dancing. I was in complete shock! The letter certainly helped getting me tenure, and I am so grateful to Simone, whom I had never met. Later I learned from Helene that Simone had never done this for anyone else.

During my 30 years at USC, I have team-taught with feminist male professors. I loved awakening students to new ideas. I would send them on quests for lost pieces of women's art and literary history--things they might find in their grandmothers' trunks in the attic--to fill in the missing parts of our social history. Later I would teach smaller seminars on the Dada, Surrealism, and avant-garde movements, and eventually I founded an archive of feminist artists from Southern CA--video interviews by the students who visited the artists in their studios.

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Duplicates are also deposited at the Rutgers Feminist Institute.

One of my goals was to attend every international feminist conference where I could deliver a paper-either on The Women of Surrealism or on the Re-emergence of The Goddess in Art and Literature by Contemporary Women, which referred to my second book, "The Reflowering of the Goddess." I was fortunate to have traveled to conferences around the world and became involved in creating the first conference in the U.S. on an emerging field known as Ecofeminism.

In 1987 as I was working on the creation of this conference which resulted in the book "Reweaving the World: The Emergence of Ecofeminism" co-edited with Irene Diamond, an event redirected my life again. Berit As, a Sociology professor from Oslo, Norway, phoned to say she was coming to Los Angeles and wanted to know if "they" could stay with me. When she revealed she was traveling with a Shaman from Lapland, my head began to spin. In 1972 I'd asked Leonora Carrington why the protagonist in her novel, "The Hearing Trumpet", a 92-year-old woman, wanted to go to Lapland so badly, she replied: "Gloria, the Shamans of Lapland just happen to be the most magical people on earth!" I never forgot that.

I did not know what a shaman was, nor could I have told you where Lapland was, but eventually I found out. I was stunned that Berit was traveling with a shaman from Lapland, and she had to stay with me! I arranged to meet them in my office, and invited several professors to be there.

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The shaman was exquisitely beautiful in her native costume with jangling fringes. She began to sing a yoik, a chant that calls in the spirits of deceased ancestors. As she sang, we were literally transported to the ancient times of humanity's origins. During this meeting the shaman informed me I had to make a trip to Samiland (Lapland is actually called Samiland) because "The Great Spirit has called you, Gloria and you have to come to meet the Great Spirit." I was in shock, but felt it was true. This extraordinary Sami woman, then in her forties, was the next shaman in line after her father, the Great Shaman of the Sami people. I went the next summer, and I did make the trek to climb the three mountains. I never saw the spirit guides who helped me but I did dream of one whose photo was on the wall of the Great Shaman's house. It was his father, also a shaman.

I also heard the voices of the ancestors from the Otherworld call me by name in the middle of the night, and I heard them again after I visited the Sami Sacred Site. Thus I learned that the spirits of the deceased are alive in another dimension, are able to observe us, and can often make contact.

All was magical until the shaman's second son was killed. She went into a deep sadness, and refused to go to a hospital because she wanted to die and find her sons in the spirit world. At Christmas time I brought her home to rest in the California sunlight. A few years later she died of what we call cancer, and what she always referred to as a spirit war.

After she died, I became very sick. No doctor could diagnose what I had. Eventually I was sent to a Jewish

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woman healer, a shamanic clairvoyant, who knew what had happened to me and how to cure me. The healing process went on for years, but I owe my life to her, and to her bringing me back to Judaism after my long journeys with the Goddess religion and with Sami Shamanism. I am grateful to be healed and to be returned to the religion of my birth.

Now I have begun to do research on Jewish women artists. I have written a few pioneering articles on them— one published in *Nashim*, which comes out of Israel and Brandeis, and is on the web. I began to collaborate with artist Suzanne Benton and a committee of artists on *A Salute To Women Artists*, for VFA in 2003. We awarded medals to feminist artists of the Second Wave who came from all over the United States.

I plan to retire in January 2013. While my life has had its challenging moments and I have traversed many a dark woods in my quest for knowledge, I am fulfilled by the wondrous journeys I have made to the realms of the Marvelous, the Magical, the Great Goddess and the Shamanic Mysteries, and I will be forever grateful to the teachers who inspired me and to the feminist activists on whose strong shoulders we now stand as we welcome new generations of visionaries expanding our feminist legacy into the new millennium.

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### Dr. Eleanor Pam

Born to working class parents, I grew up in a slum in Brooklyn, a neighborhood in which *Murder, Incorporated* flourished. My father, Simon, was often out of work because he regularly challenged his union's leadership's corrupt practices.



They punished him by giving him just enough work to prevent us from starving. He supported us by playing pinochle and poker with burley men in stained undershirts who sat in our kitchen day and night, none of whom had his extraordinary memory for recalling every card played. This continued until he had enough money to go into business for himself.

Although funds were tight, my three brothers were expected to go to college and become professional men. I, the only female, was programmed to become a secretary, get married and procreate promptly.

I was an excellent student, skipping grades three times. In high school I was placed into an Honors Program for Intellectually gifted students. Proud of this academic achievement, my mother, Berta, still preferred that I be tracked into a course offered typing, bookkeeping and shorthand. I would also be expected to contribute to the family finances and help put my brothers through college. My dad, an intellectual and a political activist, stayed out of it, just as he never attended parent-teacher nights or graduations.

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Mom and I clashed over my going to college, in the same way we differed over other basic things. In fact, when I was born she took one look at me and burst into tears, then handed me over to the nurse, who was her cousin, and would not touch me again until we left the hospital a week later. This pattern of rejection never changed -- until I married a loving and supportive man (Robert Juceam) with a promising career in law and gave birth to three children (Daniel, Jacquelyn & Gregory).

Actually, I was a battered child. But my mother was an outstanding grandmother, which redeemed her and allowed me eventually to lay down the toxic burden of memory and childhood trauma, and to put the past to rest. Through our common care and love for my children, we had finally become friends and I was able to love her. Now a wife and mother myself, I had miraculously morphed into the daughter she wanted and she became the mother I needed.

But growing up with a rejecting parent was hard. My brothers were spared. Their mother was warm, giving and fun-loving; mine was volatile and dangerous. I imagined it was because I was a girl. So I became an athlete, better than my brothers actually, and the closest I could get to being a boy. Eventually, I became strong enough to stave off the attacks and beatings.

But in those earlier days, when I was a skinny and vulnerable kid, everything I did and wanted seemed to anger her, even reading. When my mother saw me with a book it became another sign of my deficient character,

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this one signaling indolence. My sentence was immediate; I was assigned to dust, iron or wash dishes. It was clear to her that I was just hanging around, doing "nothing". I felt like Cinderella, getting all the chores while my brothers were allowed to go out and play. But books were my sustenance. So I read secretly, ingesting them furtively, guiltily, hungrily-often in the dark with a flashlight--and whenever I heard approaching footsteps I'd fling the book out of our 3rd floor tenement window into the filthy alley below, hopefully to be retrieved the next day.

In resisting the vision my maternal parent had in mind for me, a future that most of my friends seemed to happily embrace, I confused us both; I didn't seem to be like everyone else. But my mother yearned for the respectability of being just like everyone else. This was her fantasy of a mother-daughter relationship when one day we would shop together in perfect companionability. She was constantly telling me who to be. I didn't have the answer yet, but I knew I could never be the person she envisioned.

In the end, I won the battle over college. Somehow, I convinced her that I should continue with my academic studies and not become a secretary. Feeling guilty, I mentally compromised and got a part time job in Manhattan as a filing clerk, working four hours each day, five days a week, for the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company. This entailed a daily subway commute that ate up another two hours of my overcrowded day. Such a grueling schedule of mindless work, plus the rigorous curriculum at school was punishing. But although I was always exhausted, somehow I managed to squeeze in

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time and energy to write for our high school literary magazine, serve as its editor-in-chief, maintain a respectable grade point average, and receive medals for academic excellence at graduation. Ah youth!

It was understood that I would attend tuition-free Brooklyn College, the place where all in the neighborhood who were college-bound went. And everyone I knew did go to Brooklyn College. I went to Brandeis University, a small, intellectually competitive private school outside Boston, and majored in Philosophy on a work scholarship. I hadn't said a word about my plans to anyone in the family until the acceptance letter came in the mail. As I read its contents I knew my life was going to change dramatically and permanently. I had altered my fate and was getting out. It was the happiest day of my life.

After graduating in 1957 from Brandeis with Honors in Philosophy, I moved to New York's Greenwich Village, raising eyebrows from the folks back home. It also raised suspicions that I was up to no good. In those days, females lived with their parents until they got married. Once again, I was out of step. Still, I acquired three graduate degrees from New York University, including a doctorate.

It was an exciting time to live in the Village. I mingled with many people who were later to become legends, acquired a circle of unique friends and led a free spirited lifestyle that popular parlance dubbed as "bohemian." One day I was introduced to an unusual woman. Her name was \*Kate Millett and she lived on the Bowery.

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She dragged me off to organizations and protests which espoused causes of every kind and stripe-civil rights, anti-Vietnam War, pacifism-many of them fringe groups too bizarre even for my unformed tastes. On a cold evening in 1968, Kate took me to a meeting that resonated in a way the others had not. We sat in a room with passionate and argumentative women who had recently formed an organization called NOW. I joined, and my life changed again.



**Kate Millett and Eleanor Pam  
at Kate's "Farm"**

My own career had taken off. Although only in my early 30's, I was a full professor and dean at a college at CUNY (City University of New York), and an adjunct professor at New York University's Graduate division. Given my background, it was logical that I co-founded, in concert with Kate--NOW's first Education Committee. She was Chair and I, Vice-Chair. A committee of two, we elected each other. Together, we tackled the daunting job of analyzing curricula and pedagogical trends across the country, K through graduate school.

Kate and I took turns presenting our findings and recommendations in a report that we read at a NOW meeting. Our work later became the foundation for many studies and a raised national, even global

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consciousness about the systematic bias against girls and women that infected our entire educational system, resulting in dramatic changes to gender based educational practices in this country and others. It was also the precursor for Title IX.

I took feminism to work with me, learning and relearning it each day. Looking at everything through its prism changed my perspective, choices, and values.

By then I was the one of the highest ranking female administrators in our university and felt it was time to use my clout to make some much needed changes. I went to bat for individual women on the faculty and staff, especially those who were being unfairly denied advancement, tenure, promotion and other basic rights, but I had a more ambitious agenda and wanted to extend its reach into the community as well. So I convinced the president of my college--and I still can't believe that I had the nerve to even suggest it--to purchase a large private home in the neighborhood which I staffed with women from different offices and departments. This became the first Women's Center.

We offered counseling services, legal assistance and help in areas of finance, health and mental health, employment, divorce, custody, sexual abuse, mortgage applications, etc. At the opening ceremony for the Center, many politicians, dignitaries, and civic leaders were in attendance, including the Chancellor of the University. The media also showed up. It was such an impressive concept that newspaper articles heralding its existence were read into the Congressional Record.

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But I also utilized the Center for more subversive purposes. It became headquarters for feminist political activity within the university, a centralized communications system. We supported and financed a coalition group of female faculty that spanned all the colleges within our university and printed and distributed its newsletter. We were the support apparatus for disaffected and disenfranchised women whether they came from the custodial or clerical staff or held high academic or administrative rank. Females in our workplace were discriminated against, whatever their level of employment. Eventually, we escalated to a class action that cited CUNY for discrimination against women. It took ten years of contentious litigation but the lawsuit, which was the largest and most complex of its time, was finally settled on terms highly favorable to the female faculty and staff.

My advocacy was problematic because technically I was management, not labor-and thus considered by some as a traitor to my class. But feminism trumped it all and I brushed off the criticism.

I had moved on to another college and was elected the Department Chairperson of Behavioral and Social Sciences. In this capacity I was exposed to the wide-ranging problems of student/teacher sexual harassment within academia, i.e., coerced sex in exchange for a passing grade. Far too often, I received shocking complaints and requests for intervention from students about male faculty who were under my supervision.

There were parallel issues just as troubling, I was learning, on the faculty/staff end-about supervisors who

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forced sexual favors from subordinates, rewarding or punishing female employees in proportion to their cooperation and using job security and career advancement as chips on their board game. This went beyond abuse of power; these were the tactics of bullies and predators, those who profited from the vulnerability of others. I understood vulnerability very well, so inevitably, sexual harassment became my next feminist cause.

In partnership with a like-minded colleague, I went after these men, some of whom had positions at the highest echelon of our academic world. We exposed, and then forced a vice-chancellor and the comptroller of the university, among others, from their jobs. But a case by case offensive was not enough. We needed the central administration to bless our point of view and formally make it theirs; so we lobbied for a university policy against the pernicious practices we were uncovering.

A sexual harassment policy was a relatively advanced idea for that time. Most corporations, agencies and bureaucracies did not have them. The issue itself was not a popular one, but was trivialized and mocked as an invention of man-hating feminists who were deliberately misrepresenting normal, innocent flirting. However, as a result of our passionate insistence about the need for an overall, preemptive policy, the Chancellor's office eventually set aside their hostility to the idea and capitulated. And they gave us the assignment of drafting the framework, a task we happily embraced as we set about creating hearing and disciplinary procedures, careful to include due process protections for the accused.

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After vigorous resistance by the faculty/staff union (which had a vocal majority male membership), a strong university policy against sexual harassment was adopted and is still in place today. Subsequently, I was appointed as a hearing officer to investigate and make determinations in such cases. In a really sweet side victory, I also managed to convince the union leadership to adopt a sexual harassment policy for its own paid employees.

But all this activity was tame compared with what my life segued into afterwards—a journey into a world of blood and tears as I took on the weightier issues of domestic violence and women in prison.

The Mayor of New York City, Rudolph Giuliani invited me to join his Commission to Combat Family Violence, offering me the chance to do work that was especially meaningful to me because of my own history as a battered child. I stayed with the Commission in this non-paying position for eight years. My next professional step was a natural one. I accepted a position as Visiting Professor at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice, another school within the CUNY system. Within a year I had founded a Domestic Violence Center and became its Director. This Center was vibrant and the first of its kind. Also a first was a University Domestic Violence Policy that I proposed, wrote and implemented.

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Each day at work I was baptized anew in a sea of tears.



Eleanor Pam with Jean Harris after her release from prison for killing the Scarsdale Diet Doctor, Herman Tarnower.

The traffic into my office was unending as stories of beatings, threats and terror poured in. Each tale was more unthinkable than the last. I struggled to find options for these tormented victims, but solutions were elusive. Even more unfortunate and invisible were the women I hadn't met, the ones who didn't come into my office-- because they could not, and would never summon up the courage to come forward and identify themselves as victims of abuse.

It wasn't just ideology that plunged me into increasing activism about domestic violence. It was rage. Here was a problem so pervasive and cruel that no one seemed to have the tools to address it adequately. Perhaps my early life predisposed me to identifying with wounded women, but I prefer to believe it was also an ordinary

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sense of mercy.

An important goal was to get an anti-stalking law for New York. Shockingly, our state did not have one. Together with a coalition of determined advocates, we finally succeeded in persuading the state legislature to pass such a bill. But it took us ten years to overcome ferocious resistance from opposition groups and politicians.

Increasingly, I began to speak out in the national media and in lectures around the country about the problem of domestic violence, giving newspaper interviews and appearing on network radio and television. I was on fire. The tabloids pursued me every time a celebrity assaulted a woman and his bad behavior became public knowledge. Apparently, there was commercial, perhaps even entertainment value in domestic violence, and I was always good for a quote. As my advocacy increased, so did my visibility. This noise eventually led to an interesting invitation by the FBI.

They asked me to come to Quantico Virginia and participate in a think tank at their Behavioral Sciences unit. There was an epidemic of intimate partner abuse by law enforcement officers across the country and the FBI was taking this problem very seriously. They thought it would be useful to bring experts and professionals together so this issue could be studied and addressed. I agreed, arrived at the marine base by train, was appointed as an Honorary Member of the Advisory Board, delivered a paper about cops who batter in intimate relationships which they later published, and appeared on a panel which was beamed to every police

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precinct in the country via the FBI closed circuit television system.

The following year I was invited back to deliver another paper. This one described the dynamics of law enforcement officers who killed their spouses and/or children and then committed suicide, i.e., police homicide-suicide, an area which few knew anything about. Thereafter, I found myself in hot demand by the media whenever a story like this broke.

Inevitably, my outspokenness got me into trouble. One article containing many critical quotes from me about the New York City Police department landed on the front page of the New York Times, Sunday issue. The story--and my name--could not have been more prominent. The mayor was not pleased as he was very fond of his cops. Nor was my boss, since he was the president of a criminal justice college that specialized in the education of police officers--who were also the majority cohort of its student body. I offered no apologies or regrets.

One evening, watching television, I was shocked to see a woman I knew casually being led away in handcuffs. A retired police officer, ex-nun and a parochial school teacher, Sheila had just been arrested for the murder of her rapist, kidnapper and torturer. Despite her credible background, the jury convicted her on the prosecution's theory that she had been a scorned woman who murdered him after a date gone wrong. This was patently absurd, especially since Sheila was a life-long lesbian. In fact, she had killed in self defense, but the judge gave her a sentence of 25 years to life.

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In those days the bar for proving rape was very high. The public also had a bias and aversion towards females associated with violent acts. The criminal justice system gave them heavier sentences than men and treated them disparately and with gender prejudice. I was to see this first-hand over the next several decades.

Ten and a half years after she was first convicted, Sheila reached out from prison to ask for help. I gave it to her, launching an intense media and public relations campaign to tell her story. Within six months a federal judge vacated her sentence and she was released. That was the beginning of my interest in the plight of women in prison.

I met many inmates during my visits to Sheila. Since she had been incarcerated in a maximum security facility, the women I encountered were serving heavy time for serious crimes, primarily homicide.

After Sheila was released I began receiving requests from her former "colleagues" to review their cases, speak out on their behalf, advocate for their freedom. After listening to their stories I came to believe that the issue of women in prison was a cutting edge feminist problem. I discovered that most of the female prison population had been battered in their earlier lives. In too many instances they seemed to be serving excessive or unjust sentences, especially compared with their male counterparts and often because of their male counterparts.

I could not help everyone, but did what I could with varying degrees of involvement and success. There

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were so many, and so few of us to doing this kind of work. Before long, I was visiting and corresponding with them, some of whom are so high profile and famous that popular books and films were based on their characters and crimes. I advocated for several of them in the print and electronic media-and still do.

There is one mountain I am still climbing with an uncertain prognosis for success. For almost nineteen years I have been heavily invested in the case of Pamela Smart, a woman so vilified by the press that her innocence, as well as her image, has been fatally compromised and poisoned. I believe she is a loving, caring person who did not and was never capable of the crime for which she was incarcerated, and I agreed to act as her academic mentor helping her achieve two Masters Degrees.



Eleanor Pam, Linda Wojas (Pam Smart's mother)  
Oprah Winfrey

I am also her legal advisor, advocate, counselor, public relations guru, media spokesperson, and concerned friend. I accept every press invitation and opportunity to

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espouse her innocence and promote her freedom. My latest media appearance was on the Oprah Winfrey Show several months ago.

I have been lucky to know and work with many of the pioneers of the women's movement, the giants of my generation who changed the world. Original, generous, brilliant and courageous, these women have touched my life and enriched it beyond measure. I am humbled and grateful to have been in their company and to have witnessed the miracle and the revolution as it was taking form.

I've also had the singular privilege of serving on the Board of the Veteran Feminists of America, then as Executive Vice President and currently as president. This is the organization which honors and acts as the institutional memory of the feminist movement.

In April 2009, Barbara Love and I co-chaired a VFA luncheon in Ft Lauderdale Florida where we gave recognition to contemporary feminist leaders and pioneers of the early movement currently living in that state. There, we were moved and impressed by those excellent women of the next generation who are carrying on the work with integrity and passion.

Feminism has been my North Star and the lens through which I view the world. I was honored to be a pioneer during those early days and to witness how our feminist agenda rapidly evolved, ignited into a blazing passion for gender justice-and then into a movement, later consecrated by the exhilarating and unforgettable march

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down Fifth Avenue in August 1970, another highlight of my life.

Because of our Sisters in the movement, my grandchildren, Jordan, Jake, Ezra, Sarah and Rachel have inherited a kinder and more equitable world.



When I look through my life in feminism I realize that I have been guided and centered by the eternal question: Am I my sister's keeper? And the answer--ever and always--is unconditionally yes, yes, and yes!

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### DIANNE POST

I was born a feminist. At least that's what my mother said. Well, she didn't exactly say that. She said I was the most stubborn, obstreperous and independent kid she had ever seen. She had six so she ought to know. (pictured right: Dianne as Susan B. Anthony in a show she acted in, produced and directed.)

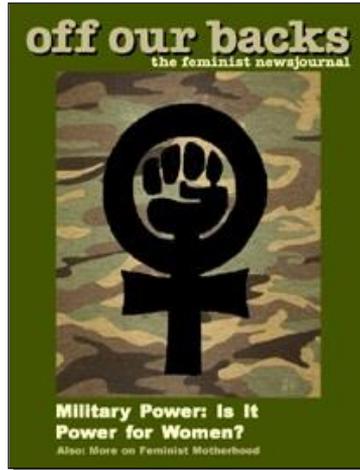


I was born in 1947 and grew up in Muscodia, WI. When I was growing up, my first-grade teacher told me that she had been worried about how I was going to manage, because she asked what I wanted to be when I grew up.... I said President of the United States. She said girls can't be President so pick something else. So I said okay then I'll be a doctor. She said girls can't be doctors, so maybe you can be a nurse. I don't want to be a nurse I said, I'll be a race car driver. She was totally exasperated and said, "Dianne, girls can't be race car drivers." My final word was well then, I'll become President and change that. Out of the mouths of babes!

In 8th grade, I was sent to high school for part of the day to give me something more appropriate to my intellectual level. So what did they send me to? Typing and shorthand, the skills a woman needed for "something to fall back on" should her husband not prove up to snuff. I still am a whiz typist. j

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Once I dropped into the **\*Off Our Backs\*** office in Washington, DC to volunteer and they gave me a stack of typing. In about an hour I was finished. They offered me all the volunteer work I could do.



At the end of 8th grade, I signed up for high school English, history, math, chemistry and shop. When I arrived in the fall, I was enrolled for English, history, math, chemistry and home economics. My protests did not avail, but I caused extreme despair by winning the Betty Crocker Homemaker of the Year award in 1961 though I was completely inept. It was a math test – if you bought this refrigerator at this down payment with this interest over these many months or that one for that, which is cheaper. That I could win. But at the regional contest, I had to cook and sew, and I was out on my ear.

I was elected president of my class my sophomore year and every year after. I wrote a political column for the school paper – once. It was about the failure of the state

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legislature to pass a fair housing law. The principal told me that I was too young to be talking about civil rights. But I had gone to Chicago with a church youth group when I was 16 and lived in the ghetto for two weeks, where we marched daily for civil rights actions. I told him it was our job to speak up, which is what education was for. He didn't agree and my column was axed.

Since the junior president had always been Prom King, what to do, what to do. So I was Prom Queen and I picked the King. As it should be. In my senior year I was already in the college prep track, but they found that I was very fast with my hands (120 wpm typing), so advised I should work in a factory. I was valedictorian, National Honor Society member, president of my class for three years, AND winner of the Bausch and Lomb science award. Yet he suggested I should work in a factory!! I asked him if he would recommend that to a boy with my record. He said no, but I was just going to get married and pregnant anyhow so what was the point. It was 1965.

My father had the idea that going to college was a waste of time and money – mine, as he never paid a dime. Years later when I was nearly graduated from law school, he changed his tune and told everyone his daughter was going to be a lawyer. He died one semester before I finished.

During college, I participated in few activities other than work and studying. I had a work/study job plus a job off campus because I needed the money. I had several scholarships and had to keep up my grades to keep them. My last years I participated in some anti-Viet Nam

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war actions and some feminist meetings but hadn't much time.

After college, I went to California and got heavily into the **anti-Viet Nam war actions** but only slightly into the drug culture. I read Betty Freidan --- recommended by a boyfriend of all things! First, I was a parole officer for California Youth Authority, and then went to graduate school at San Jose, again while working full time. I thought with a psychology degree I would understand why people did the crazy things they did. Now I know better. It seems the older I get, the dumber I get, because I don't understand anything anymore.

By 1976, I was back in Wisconsin in law school. That was the way, by golly, to fix the system – go to law school. Yup, you can see how that worked! But to keep my sanity among that lot, my first year I joined the National Lawyers Guild, Lesbian Law Students, and Women Law Students. My second year, we hosted the national Women and the Law Conference and I was co-chair. Through that, I met many of the pioneering women lawyers who are icons today – one of them on the Supreme Court.

When I started law school, I wanted to be a criminal defense attorney, but I went to hear Louise Trubek speak about her organization, Center for Public Representation, and the rights of women, and that was it. I wanted to be like her. So I switched to all things women and started working at the Dane County Advocates for Battered women. I also worked on some women and alcohol issues, women in prison, and disability issues with the newly passed

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Rehab Act in 1973.

After law school, I skedaddled to a warmer clime and ended up in Arizona, because they had not passed the ERA, and I reasoned they needed me. I was right. Within months, I had become the state chair of the ERA Initiative and shortly thereafter organized a group to sue the state of Arizona, because it donated \$10,000 of taxpayer dollars to the Mountain States Legal Defense Fund to stop the **ERA**, and Arizona had not even ratified it. The lawsuit died when the ERA did.



During the 1980's, I was very active in **Women Take Back the Night** and in the early 90's set up a women's radio show. All the while I was representing battered women and children in family and juvenile court for my daily bread – and it was just barely daily bread. In the mid 90's, I began to get more involved in the LGBT movement.

By 1998, I broadened my career into international human rights law, an area I always craved. I went to

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Moscow, Russia for two years as a volunteer gender specialist for the American Bar Association. I organized 44 seminars in 30 cities in 24 months—a busy schedule by anyone's measure. I trained women's groups, psychologists, teachers, lawyers, prosecutors, judges, and police – all on gender based violence (GBV). Along the way I trained the best of the attendees in interactive techniques to take over my work. At the beginning I was doing the entire seminary; by the end, I had found Russians to replace me. In addition, we organized a social advocate program (like our para-legals) that continues to this day, and a legal literacy program that also continues.

I then returned to Arizona for three years working for the **Arizona Coalition Against Domestic Violence** as Public Policy Director. But the international bug had bitten, and when I got the chance to go abroad again, I did. This time it was Cambodia to train legal aid lawyers especially those working in family law and those representing women. With local staff, I visited rural villages and asked the women what their needs were. Without fail, their first question was about violence in the family. They wanted information on their legal rights though most could not read, and access to free legal information and advice. So we produced a simple booklet that could be read by their children. That book is still in use today.

Hungary was the next stop to work with the European Roma Rights Center supervising the legal department. Loved the job, didn't like Hungary. But I made some lifelong friends and learned a lot about the Roma. I started a case for Roma IDPs in Kosovo who were living

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on lead poisoned dump sites since 1999 though promised removal in 45 days. It is 2010 and they are still there. The case is still going on (when I left the organization did not want to keep it so I took it with me), but it is very difficult to hold the UN responsible when they are the culprit.

Back home again, I did some short term consulting primarily for an Albanian organization on their newly-passed domestic violence law. The legislature wouldn't pass one so the people collected over 15,000 signatures, and all the politicians jumped on that bandwagon and it passed. But much work remained to get it enforced. I worked with local groups to organize community coordinated response teams, drafting protocols for all sectors on how to work together – police, prosecutors, judges, medical workers, psychologists and NGOs. Later I returned to train court constables.

On Mother's Day in 2007, I filed a complaint against the U.S. at the Inter-American Commission for Human Rights on behalf of battered women and children. Then I returned to Russia but this time to Vladivostok. I liked it much better. It was more progressive, better weather and great people. With a few thousand gallons of paint and some cable cars, it could be San Francisco. There I worked with the local bar association to set up training for lawyers on GBV issues. The IOM and U.S. State Department were opening a shelter for victims of trafficking so our attorneys came up with a protocol about how the government would work with the NGOs – normally they don't. The protocol has now become a model in Russia.

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From there, I moved to **Algeria**. I could sit on my balcony and watch the ships glide in on the blue Mediterranean waters. The project was to train 60 young lawyers--preferably women--on women's rights and domestic and international mechanisms for enforcement. The food was marvelous, the weather magnificent, and the people magnanimous. Though it was clear I was an American, they were as gracious as they could be.

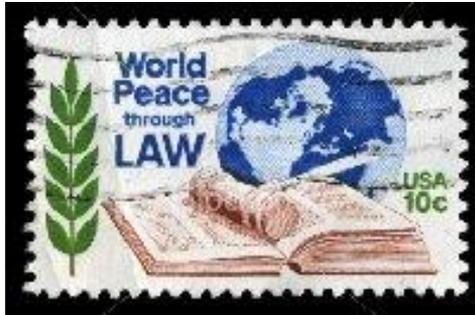
I returned to the U.S. in July 2009. Since then (besides looking for a job), I am a volunteer with the local Volunteer Lawyers Program of legal aid and the NAACP weekly, where I am on the Board.

Some years ago, we had established It's Your Choice, a fund to help poor women pay for the abortions they badly needed. No Medicaid or other state assistance is available in Arizona. The fund had gone moribund but is now revived. So far we have aided a 17-year-old rape victim, two fleeing battered women, and three others – just since July. My phone number was on the web for one week, and I was inundated with calls so now we only work through established relationships with doctors. The need is great but the resources meager.

The Arizona Historical Museum is opening a new exhibition on women next year, and I have been assisting with that. Demonstrations for Code Pink or NOW or for decent treatment for immigrants keep me hopping. Our chapter of **World Peace Through Law** is preparing presentations on humanitarian law and a resolution against our locally elected sheriff, (Joe Arpaio the new Bull Conner) and Andrew Thomas, county

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attorney (it's hard to know what to call him), for their pattern of abuse of law and discrimination. I do a lot of speaking to young lawyers handing over that still-blazing torch.



The Future? For my 60th birthday I gave myself a stunt flight in a fighter jet. For my 70th, I think it will be a trip to the international space station. And for my 80th birthday, what the hell, they say women are from Venus so maybe I'll go home.

\* Off Our Backs was a feminist newspaper published from 1970 to 1988

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### Kathy Rand

I was born in Miami Beach, Florida, on February 24, 1945, the third child of William Robert Rand and Rose Lasser Rand. I arrived nearly ten years after my sister Caryn and twelve years after my brother Sterling. While I don't believe my mother was thrilled about having a baby at the age of 42, my sister was very excited. She said it was the best day of her young life: my mother had a baby and my father bought a convertible!



My family returned to Chicago two years later, back to the South Shore community where they had lived prior to moving to Florida.

When I turned four, my parents decided that I should be in school (they said it was because I was smart, but I'm sure it had more to do with getting me out of the house!). My father had political connections in the City of Chicago, so he arranged to obtain a fake birth certificate that said I was born in Chicago in 1944 (a year before my actual birth). I began kindergarten at Bradwell School at the age of four.

I entered South Shore High School at the age of 12 and graduated at 16. I was a well-behaved child. I didn't get in trouble, I didn't make waves, I did what I was told. I was a good student.

After high school, I spent a year at the University of Illinois/Chicago and then three years at Michigan State

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University, graduating in 1965. Thoughts of a career never entered my mind. Most of my friends were going to be teachers, and that did not interest me at all. But my father advised me to get a teaching degree, since "teaching was something you could always go back to after the children were grown." I had an English major and an Education minor.

I went to Europe for the summer after graduation. When I came back, reality dawned. I did not have a husband, much less any children. So I had to actually be a teacher. I taught for one year and hated every minute of it. Over the course of the next few years I went to graduate school in California, worked at an educational publishing company and served as managing editor of *Appliance Manufacturer Magazine*, a trade publication.

In January of 1970, I was working hard at my job, living in an apartment in Chicago and having a fun life when my mother died very suddenly. While I didn't make the connection until many years later, I am quite sure that my mother's death played a role in my feminist activism.

Only a few months after my mother's death, my friends and I discovered sex discrimination. And we became obsessed. We talked about it constantly and got together for so-called consciousness-raising sessions. We were shocked to learn that the men in our company were making twice what we earned.

And then came August 26, 1970. Betty Friedan and NOW called on women to go on strike from their jobs and attend the "Women Strike for Equality" rally. I asked my boss for permission to go on strike (!) and went to the rally in Chicago. That was the start of my activism. From there, I quickly became active in NOW. I served as chairperson of the Chicago chapter's public relations

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committee. In 1971, I was elected Midwest Regional Director of NOW and served two terms, until 1974. As Regional Director, I also was a member of the NOW National Board and Executive Committee. My role was to start and work with NOW chapters in the 13-state region, including conflict resolution. I spent most of my weekends traveling. I was actively involved in national actions against AT&T and Sears, and twice debated Phyllis Schlafly. I also served as the first chairperson of Women Employed.

For the four years that I was active in NOW, the women's movement consumed my life. I held jobs, but I was much more interested in being an activist.

The first years in NOW were exhilarating. I had never confronted anyone before – much less civic and corporate leaders. I learned incredible skills. I learned public relations, which ended up as a career based on what I learned in NOW (with thanks to Joanna Foley Martin, the first chair of the Chicago NOW PR committee). I learned public speaking, organizational skills and Roberts Rules of Order. I learned conflict resolution and had a real opportunity to learn and exercise leadership skills. For the first time, I began to think outside of my own little world.

Disagreements in civil rights organizations are to be expected, and NOW was no exception. But we did not have the ability in NOW to deal with them in a constructive way. One complicating dynamic we experienced was the use by some of race and sexuality as a cudgel against others.

There were individuals in NOW – as in any movement – who created problems within the organization. Some were new to power and did not know how to deal with it. Some were undoubtedly well meaning; some were not,

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and had their own agendas. As NOW Regional Director, I was the victim of one of the latter. I became the target of a member who seemed to have unlimited resources to use for personal attacks against me – and eventually against others, including the entire NOW Executive Committee. A well-meaning NOW grievance committee let the process go on longer than it should have.

Eventually there were two major factions within the NOW leadership. There were some philosophical differences – and some personal differences. A group of NOW Board members, calling themselves the Majority Caucus, walked out of a Board meeting. We never had the opportunity or the ability to try to reconcile our differences in a rational manner and make the organization stronger and whole again.

The so-called Majority Caucus took over the leadership of NOW. The faction I was part of was basically driven out of NOW. It was devastating because I had invested so much of my time and energy and emotions into NOW and the movement. But I could no longer put up with the personal attacks. And, in the end, for me personally, it turned out to be a good outcome.

When I left NOW, I began to pay attention to my career and my personal life. I went back to school at night and in 1980 earned an MBA from the Kellogg Graduate School of Management at Northwestern University.

I married Peter Ritsos, a Chicago attorney, in 1982.

I had a very successful career in corporate and agency public relations in Chicago. My last position was Managing Director of the Chicago office of Manning Selvage & Lee, an international public relations firm. I retired in 2002. I continue to serve as a senior public relations consultant.

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Shortly after I retired, I received a call from Betty Newcomb, who had been the Indiana State Coordinator of NOW when I was the Midwest Regional Director. She was on the Board of the Veteran Feminists of America (VFA) and asked if I would be interested in joining the Board. I agreed.

In VFA, I have played a major role in coordinating three Midwest events: Chicago in 2004, Milwaukee in 2012 and St. Louis in 2014. I continue to serve on the VFA Board. One of my recent contributions was creating a Wikipedia page for VFA.

In 2015 I agreed to join the Board of the Friends of the Women's Rights National Historical Park in Seneca Falls, NY. I am serving as the PR/marketing coordinator for a campaign to update and upgrade the Park. We plan to raise \$5 million to have the Park buildings and exhibits completely updated by 2020 – the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of women's suffrage in the U.S.

My husband and I split our time between Lake Forest, Illinois, and Palm Desert, California.

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### LOIS RECKITT

I was born on December 31, 1944 in Cambridge Massachusetts of a "mixed" marriage (WASP mother and Irish Catholic father) in a "hurried" manner (my mother was quite pregnant, which I discovered in later years). I was an only child, but never felt oppressed by this.



My dad was in the Coast Guard and later worked a variety of jobs; my mother never worked outside the home. She was the book-intelligent person, he the people person. They were wildly mismatched, and although they stayed married until I was in college, I wish they hadn't. If there was violence in the marriage other than emotional, it was kept from me until my mother was in her 70's and 80's, and then only intimated. Both my parents were polio survivors with various degrees of impact from the disease. I myself had every vaccine that ever was.

My mother wanted me to attend a university and "be somebody." My dad wanted me to be a secretary or maybe a nurse or teacher so I would have "something to fall back on."

I was a voracious reader and an organizer; the Busy Beavers crafting club comes to mind. My rebellion began in 1964 at Brandeis University with the Northern Student Movement and spread to Boston University, where I organized a union of graduate students.

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As a child I'd spent summers in Maine. When I was seven I told my mother I was going to move there. She suggested I wait until I grew up. So in 1968, after four years at Brandeis (where I learned to think) and Boston University (where I learned again to memorize), with my marine biology degree in hand I moved to Portland.

I got a job teaching marine biology at Southern Maine Technical College "because they couldn't find a man to teach it," I was told. School had already started and they were desperate. I was part-time and teaching more than the regular faculty, but was paid only \$129 a week. The men all worked full time and were no doubt paid substantially more. I was one of three women faculty in the school and there were eleven women students. After a year they didn't renew my contract, I'm convinced, because I was a troublemaker.

For example, there was a very tight dress code at the school. Men's hair couldn't be any longer than the middle of their ears, that kind of stuff. Officials came into my classroom one day and took everybody out except for the women and one man. The students were told they couldn't come back to class until they got haircuts, so they went into the men's room and trimmed each other's hair. There and then I gave the students a lesson in civil liberties, and sent them to the Maine Civil Liberties Union. The subsequent lawsuit broke the dress code at SMTC.

In the fall of 1970 I became the swimming director at the YWCA in Portland. For nine years I taught hundreds of children and adults to swim until I became bored and discouraged by the low pay. When I started college I'd

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been a math major, and I've always been fascinated by math. I talked the Y into letting me help do a cost analysis of the agency and taught myself social service management in the process. They sent me to a very good training for staff with executive potential, which was helpful in many ways.

### **NOW COMES INTO MY LIFE**

In 1971 I was an activist looking for a movement. On November 13 **Wilma Scott Heide**, newly elected president of NOW, spoke at the then University of Maine at Portland/Gorham. My life has never been the same. Her inspirational and somewhat foreign words and ideas have stayed with me.

The next day we had a meeting of people who were interested in starting the first Maine chapter of NOW. We had the ten people required. I volunteered to be treasurer, and for 16 years I was in a **NOW** office-as State Coordinator for three years, then running Maine NOW out of my dining room. In 1976 I was elected to the national board.

At a women's conference at the University of Maine in Bangor in 1974 or '75 we refused to allow male reporters to attend, which created quite a stir in the press (there was then only one woman reporter in the state). At the first session a woman in the audience stood up and said, "You know, there is a real problem in Maine. When women are hurt and they have to flee their homes there is no place for them to go. So if you're willing to take somebody into your home in those circumstances, sign here." And so I signed and I sort-of feel like that was my

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signature into the battered women's movement.

**In 1983 I was elected Vice President Executive of NOW and moved to Washington in January 1984.** I hated Washington--it was unbearably hot and way too big--and to give up the ocean for any amount of time was difficult. On a positive note I was able to work with Ellie Smeal, who has the most incredible insights and political mind of anyone I've been around. For domestic violence-related concepts, Phyllis Frank later was my mentor. I was reelected in a rancorous election in 1985 and served until 1987. I left Washington in 1989.

During those five years in D.C. I worked my butt off, four years with NOW and one as the Deputy Director of the **Human Rights Campaign Fund**, a political action committee I cofounded in 1980 to lobby for gay and lesbian rights. I worked 80 hours a week and was exhausted. I had disengaged from the Family Crisis Shelter in order to give the directors who followed me full reign, but on my return to Maine I was asked to come onto the board of directors. I was on the verge of applying, **when the agency director resigned, and I applied again once again to be Executive Director. So began my second tenure at Family Crisis Services in 1990.**

I returned to what was clearly my life's work, and frequently took the words of **Representative John Lewis** to heart. Clearly now, it was "time to get in the way" of those who would oppress victims of violence. Often called "one of the most courageous persons the Civil Rights Movement ever produced," John Lewis has dedicated his life to protecting human rights securing

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civil liberties, and building what he calls "The Beloved Community" in America. His dedication to the highest ethical standards and moral principles has won him the admiration of many of his colleagues on both sides of the aisle in the United States Congress.

In March 1998 I was inducted into the Maine Women's Hall of Fame for my work in the battered women's, general feminist and lesbian/gay rights movements. In a bit of clairvoyance, I wrote 20 years ago "The convergence of the advances in reproductive technology and the emerging conservative consensus on the Supreme Court may soon bear restrictive and tragic consequences for American women."

In my life as a feminist, whether talking about the **Equal Rights Amendment**, reproductive rights or domestic violence, people always knew where I stood, and I never played games with anybody. It hasn't always been easy. I have always felt that if we were going to get to where we needed to go, we needed men with us. I think it is important for people to see both faces; those who have been harmed by this crime, and those of us who have been fortunate enough to not have such a harsh experience. I have been able to say to men, "I know you believe this is wrong. I know you want to help. I know you're terrified that you're going to say the wrong thing and upset someone. So tell me what the law ought to say in order to do what we want. But let's do this together." We need men with us, not to bolster us, but to stand beside us and to use their power to get this work done.

My work over the last decade, whether with the

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Performance Council of the Courts, the Justice Assistance Council, the Maine Commission on Domestic Abuse, the Homicide Review Panel or the Maine Criminal Justice Academy Board of Trustees, **has been building bridges between the domestic violence movement and those with the power to make change for victims and survivors of violence.** One of my proudest moments was sitting in the gallery at the Governor's State of the State in 2000 with First Lady Mary Herman, and hearing Governor Angus King declare violence against women and children Maine's Public Enemy Number One - and knowing I had been a part of the movement that made that declaration possible.

And so we have grown from a \$75,000 budget and five staff people to a \$1.4 million budget, 30 staff people, three outreach offices, a residence, an education and prevention initiative and myriad programs for elders, people with disabilities, incarcerated women and new Americans.

The greatest challenge has been to maintain a cohesive agency in seven different locations, and to find an effective structure that can support so many people doing such intense work. My main focus remains supporting the mission of the agency: providing programs that focus on individual advocacy for battered women and their children, institutional change to assign responsibility for battering to the perpetrators, and community education on the abuse of women.

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I have also been privileged for the last two years to be the President of the **National Coalition Against Domestic Violence**. I see my role as a consistent, visible face and voice in the community for the Family Crisis Services. I'm the lead fundraiser and the lead money manager and the one who makes certain that we do what we say we're going to do with the money we raise. And I'm a dreamer for the agency.



Family Crisis Services has been the constant thread in my life now for more than 30 years. I was born to do this work and I feel very lucky to have had the opportunity. I am still working as Executive Director of the Portland - based agency. In the last six months I have managed to purchase a new and beautiful six-bedroom emergency shelter for women and children fleeing domestic violence. Purchase price was \$526,000 and we are within \$60,000 of paying for it. We continue our groundbreaking work.

I just turned 65--although I am not sure how that happened. My new left knee is one year old and doing fine - as am I, despite a multiple sclerosis diagnosis nearly 20 years ago. I'm president of the **National Coalition Against Domestic Violence**. My partner, Lyn Carter, and I were desperately upset when Maine voters denied our right to a wedding in 2010, but we persist. Lyn has two wonderful daughters and we have three

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grandchildren.

In the great drama and occasional comedy that has been and is feminism in America sometimes I've had bit parts, and sometimes I've been one of the lead players. My entire adult life has been a tablet on which NOW and domestic abuse has left its mark. The experience has been sometimes joyful, sometimes painful-but never ever dull.

In my view, one of the great historical movements of our time is and has been what each of us as activists has chosen to make it. Yes, the world has assaulted us with its own agenda, but when we have been faithful to our vision of the world, the promise that is truly in the ideals of feminism--if not always the practice--we have succeeded. And ultimately we will triumph.

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### PAM ROSS

I was born December 20, 1950 in Beaver Dam, Wisconsin, during a terrible snowstorm and arrived home as a family Christmas present. My two sisters,



Pam's Mom, daughter Sara and Pam

Lorry, then six, and Yvonne, three, still feel cheated. In 1951 we moved to St. Louis, Missouri, where my father was offered a better job. My parents had a mixed marriage; my maternal grandmother was Jewish and my father was German Lutheran.

My parents' marriage was a good one. They loved each other, loved us, and discussed world politics at dinner. My mom, Ethel Burns, who had a B.A. in political science from Washington University, raised us and ran a catering business for the Jewish community. The first thing we did the morning after a catering event was to raid the refrigerator. My dad, Alex Plagenz, was a union electrician. He taught us about electricity by building a board with a buzzer on it so we could see how it worked. He also built an incubator and we raised chickens and ducks from eggs.

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Life was sweet for us every summer. My sisters and I spent many of our summers in Wisconsin on family farms. Our large extended family in St. Louis was Jewish, wealthy, loving, and sophisticated. The Lutheran Wisconsin family was hard working. Most lacked a wide view of the world and were cash-poor farmers. We saw life from urban and rural vistas, a huge advantage to me. My parents had black friends during the 50s and 60s.

It wasn't by accident that I became an activist. My parents taught us all about the Holocaust, which made us aware of life's inequities. We watched documentaries showing concentration camps and the millions of victims murdered by the Nazis. We were taught that "we would never walk by someone in need of defense." They made it clear that the German people did nothing while Jews were killed in front of them.

Tragedy struck our lives when my dad was killed in an auto accident in 1966. He was 42 and mom was 44. Mom was a warm and patient mother but my Dad's death took so much out of her that I sort of got lost in her misery. My sisters had left home by then and I became her wife, doing the cleaning, cooking, laundry and shopping while mom sold real estate.

I was lonely and fell in love with a high school classmate. Like many boys his age he was confused and left me for another girl. I was heartbroken but he soon returned. Shortly thereafter he enlisted in the Marines and was sent to Vietnam. We wrote to each other every day. Almost a year later I received a Dear John letter; he wanted out of the relationship. Once again I was heartbroken.

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One of my sisters had a friend just home from Vietnam and he became my rebound relationship. I had no access to birth control and my mother had never talked to me about it. On my 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, during my only semester at St. Louis Community College, I became pregnant. We married quietly and began a mostly unhappy marriage for both of us.

We were poor and lived in the crazy era of the late 60's when drugs were everywhere. My husband did a lot of drugs with neighbors. I got a job at the county police department after my daughter, Sara, was born in 1969. She was the best thing I had in my life. She made me realize I needed to end the marriage.

My husband had been verbally abusive but I didn't love him and just ignored it. When I told him I wanted a divorce he strangled me with an electrical cord. I blacked out but survived. He promised to grant me the divorce. A couple of days later he trapped me in the bedroom and strangled me again. I seduced him into having sex in order to save my life. My nine-month-old daughter was in the next room and I knew I had to save both of us. I was able to get the divorce but didn't get any of the ordered child support.

During the next four years I had a series of pink collar ghetto jobs--the gender opposite of the blue collar jobs that pay much better--almost always the low wage clerical ones that women do. I experienced a great deal of sexual harassment. I was asked what kind of birth control I used, had unwelcome kissing and groping. I did well though because I was smart and hard working and had the advantage of being from good schools and a good home.

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I job-hopped to get small wage increases whenever possible and learned business management from the bottom of the wage scale. Those different jobs helped me see good and bad management. I could motivate women to be more productive because I knew what their real needs were.

In 1974, I married again, to an older man who adopted my daughter. During that time I became a dressmaker so I could stay at home with her. As I sewed, I watched Phil Donahue on television and read the books he showcased. Donahue was a big influence on me; he tried out a new format promoting a more progressive view of politics, economics and women that had never been seen before, with content aimed at "women who think." His devotion to addressing the taboo issues of the time, particularly women's issues, was a big influence on me--I was being home-schooled on feminism. It was a great time for me to think and learn.

I found a good job in a trust company and learned about Wall Street while counting rich people's money. The job was an education and taught me how to use a computer but ended over a command that I make coffee. That was the day in 1976 I joined my local NOW chapter.

NOW was the perfect place for me. Attending rallies, walking picket lines and talking to reporters gave me the sense that I wasn't a bystander, but that I was doing my duty as an American. I was elected chapter treasurer in 1977, president in 1979 and had to fight to win Missouri State Coordinator in a serious race in 1981. The State had just passed an adult abuse law. I had been volunteering at our first domestic violence shelter for a year; women were having

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problems getting orders for protection so I spent every Friday advocating in court for them.

The ERA campaign was my first legislative battle. I was the lobbyist for MO NOW. Losing was painful so I turned our attention to battles we could win. We fought against mandatory joint custody in divorce, for domestic violence funding and for sexually abused children. We won the first State funding for battered women's shelters and a pilot research program on the sexual abuse of children. Missouri is a backward state--even when we had a Democratic majority they were terrible on women's issues—and we didn't pass much legislation to brag about. We were there to raise our issues and find more women to be elected.



Pam Speaking at Missouri NOW

MO NOW asked me to go on the road to form new chapters. It was surprising to me when 40 or 50 women would show up for a convening meeting in places like Springfield, Kirksville, Rolla and North Kansas City. We had an agenda that women

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responded to and the new chapters gave us more support for legislative goals. We started a State Political Action Committee and our fundraising was pretty successful. The chapter leadership supported my attending NOW PAC meetings in Washington D.C., which were great places to see powerful women supporting and promoting our issues.

Judy Goldsmith was elected NOW president in 1982, the last year I was State Coordinator. She requested women to apply for appointment to the PAC board. Their meetings in D.C. were big ones with dozens of women, but I didn't realize that only nine of them were voting members. If I had, I would never have applied, but lucky for me Judy gave me one of those nine seats. The four years I served were thrilling and the basis for a friendship with Virginia Watkins, current VFA Secretary.

Virginia and I had been friends since she was our regional director. When our appointments to the board ended, we stayed in touch. We visit each other and traveled together to Europe and around the U.S. She also urged me to join Veteran Feminists of America. We now both sit on that board as directors and officers.



Pam and Judy Goldsmith

After I divorced my second husband I found my first management job at a marketing company, where

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once again I experienced sexual harassment. When the company closed I took a job managing an OB-GYN physician practice, where they performed abortions and needed a strong advocate and P.R. person to handle the ongoing tensions. I expanded the practice to two locations. One was fire-bombed while I was at a national NOW conference.

We had Operation Rescue nuts shouting at patients and asking them why they would kill their babies. Sometimes the protesters would shove or try to stop the patients from entering. Police didn't respond to our calls for help until we experienced violence at the hand of an older priest, who shoved and bruised the receptionist. I still had to call the prosecutor and had a screaming match with him to get the police to arrest protesters who had resorted to violence.

I moved on to Democratic politics as a fund-raiser and met my present husband, Patrick Deaton, a criminal defense lawyer, while he was on a campaign for MO Attorney General. We married in 1990, the year he ran for Congress. During the day I was his fund-raiser; evenings I accompanied him to events. He lost by only one percentage point on a \$60,000 budget.

I continued to raise money for Labor-endorsed Democrats including Alan Wheat in his run for the U.S. Senate. Eventually I was offered a position as Chief of Staff at the St. Louis Board of Aldermen. I wrote and helped pass legislation to fund medical care for battered women and to arrest the men who paid prostitutes. I spent six years loving the job and feeling I was making a great contribution to women.

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The job ended in 2007 when my boss lost his election. Fortunately I was able to find a banking position just before the Recession hit. I spent another six boring years as a banker. Now I am retired and returning to political action. I sit on several boards for women (many of whom are coming out of prison) including the St. Louis Community College Foundation, Let's Start, Cornerstone Center for Early Learning, LERA (Labor Employment Relations Assn.), MO NARAL PAC and now I am the newly elected VFA treasurer.

I fight for women because I experienced so many of the problems faced by the Women's Movement, including sexual abuse as a very young child at the hands of a Wisconsin cousin ten years my senior. I was 37 when I realized what had happened to me. I have spoken openly about my personal story of sexual abuse and domestic violence during my political life to show people that victims can recover and feel no shame about it.

I am helping my daughter, now an airline captain, to raise her daughter. I am quite proud of Sara. She spent many of her early years at NOW conferences. Sally Ride came to one and Sara was thrilled to meet her. My granddaughter, Emma Martin, was born in December 2005. NOW changed my life for the better. VFA is lighting up my own second wave of feminism and connecting me to women I deeply respect. I look forward to many more years fighting for women's rights.

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### ALICE ROSSI

In the years before the founding of NOW, no matter how brilliant, educated and ambitious they were, women were expected to be wives and mothers only. But not Alice Rossi. She was out in the world working, studying and active in political causes. Yet she wasn't really aware of feminism until she was in her 40's, she says, when she became an enthusiastic proselytizer for women's rights.



Always politically active for the socialist cause, Alice finally awoke to sexist discrimination: she and other women were doing all the work and the men were getting all the credit. "That's when I began to write and talk about women's rights."

In 1964 her groundbreaking article "**Equality Between the Sexes: An Immodest Proposal**" was published in *Daedalus* and reprinted the following year in *Women in America*. It has never ceased to inspire and astound. Not content to simply define sex equality, she offered a program to achieve it: First was the provision of a network of childcare centers. Second—and remember, it was two years before the founding of NOW—was equality between the sexes, not yet a widespread societal goal. Her third, anticipating much of the early work of Second Wave feminists, was to de-sex-link [her term] occupations and to focus on how girls and women make occupational choices.

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"My theme was simple enough," she says. "I wrote that motherhood had become a full-time occupation for adult women, and motherhood was not enough. For the psychological and physical health of mother and child, and for the progress of society, equality between men and women was essential and inevitable.

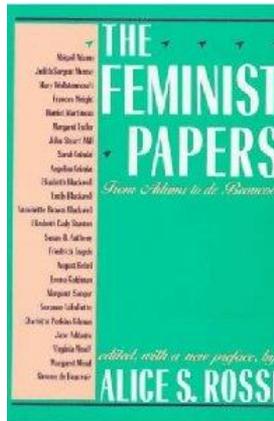
"My argument for equality was mild indeed, but the reaction of traditionalists in 1964 was not. I was considered by some a monster, an unnatural woman, and an unfit mother. My husband, also a sociologist, received an anonymous condolence card lamenting the death of his wife."

By now Alice was highly respected for her writings and speeches in that small world of aware women. In 1966, Katherine Clarenbach, head of the Status of Women Commission, urged her to attend their national conference in Washington DC. There she met Betty Friedan who, after the great success of *The Feminine Mystique*, was being pressured and was pressuring others to start an NAACP for women, and was at the conference urging attendees to leave the Status of Women Commission to start an activist feminist organization.

Katherine, still hopeful that the Commission would include her women's rights agenda, at first refused to go along with Betty. But it became clear that the Commission had no plans to go beyond its limited docket, so at the closing luncheon on the final day of the conference she, with Alice, Gene Boyer, Mary Eastwood, Catherine Conroy and a few others joined

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Betty at her table and while the luncheon speaker droned on, planned the organizing of NOW. Alice recalls that there were hours of discussion later as to whether it should be the National Organization OF Women, or FOR Women, and she was adamant that it should be FOR Women. "If men aren't included," she reasoned, "we'll not be paid attention to." She helped write the Statement of Purpose. Alice was not only in that historic founding group, but also served on the national board for four years.



Editor of the acclaimed ***Feminist Papers*** featuring works from Adams to de Beauvoir, Alice also wrote *The Family* with Harvard psychologist Jerome Kagan and in 1973 *Academic Women on the Move*. She founded and was first president of Sociologists for Women in Society and in 1969 an organizer of the Women's Caucus, ASA, and chair of Women in Academe AAUP. In 1977 she was appointed a Commissioner of IWY by President Carter.

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Born Alice Schaerr in New York City in 1922, she grew up in a Jewish neighborhood. Her mother was the traditional housewife and her father, a German/Lutheran, was a stern man and an alcoholic, whom she was a little afraid of. However, she knew he was very proud of her and says he instilled in her the idea she could be anything (though to him a woman's anything was being a secretary or a teacher).

Alice attended Brooklyn College and during World War II worked in the War Manpower Commission, the Lend-Lease program and as an Air Force base special-order clerk. Alice's first husband was Jewish and she converted; however they chose to have no children. That marriage lasted nine years. In 1951 she married Peter Henry Rossi and they had three children, Peter, Kristin, and Nina.

Alice earned her Ph.D. from Columbia University in 1957 and was a research associate at Cornell and Harvard Universities while pursuing her doctorate. She was a lecturer at the University of Chicago and a research associate in the Departments of Anthropology and Sociology. In 1964 she was on the university's National Opinion Research Center and Committee on Human Development.

Later she was a research associate in the Department of Social Relations at Johns Hopkins in Baltimore. Her next post was as Associate Professor at Goucher College in Baltimore, becoming in 1971 professor and chairperson in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology. In 1974 she became a member of the Social and Demographic Research Institute and the Harriet

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Martineau Professor of Sociology in the Department of Sociology in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, a position she held until 1991 when she retired and was named Professor Emerita.

Throughout her career, Alice has insisted vehemently that women have the right to control their bodies and has made many referrals for those seeking abortion. She has received countless awards and honors, too many to include here, but you can read about her extensive career on the Web.

Alice Rossi is one of the greatest of our early heroes, paving the way for the feminist movement. VFA has awarded her a special medal of honor and she's in our Hall of Fame. Peter died in 2006 and today, suffering from emphysema, she lives in Boston near her daughter Nina, with whom she has been recording a video memoir about family work and politics. *Jacqui Ceballos and Joan Michel*

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### MARY ANN ROSSI

I was born on January 25, 1931, in Torrington, Connecticut, to Virginia Negri Rossi and George J. Rossi, son of Caesar A. Rossi, an immigrant from Lake Como in northern Italy. After founding a construction company, my grandfather sent for his fiancée, Maria Mascetti Rossi, whose family was in the silk industry.

For many years, my father, George Rossi, was

Superintendent of Streets in Torrington, and later a state highway inspector.



My mother, well known as a New York buyer and saleswoman for a local department store, became interested in politics and was elected to the CT State Legislature for three terms in the 1940's, the first woman from Torrington to serve in the House of

Representatives. My father was a loyal supporter of my mother's career. My only sibling, Norma Virginia Rossi, 18 months my senior, and I were introduced to the State Capitol in Hartford at an early age. Norma was later supervisor in the City Department of Social Services until her retirement.

In high school I was inspired by a wonderful Latin teacher, Mary A. Barrett, who was gifted with the talent of instilling in her students the desire to live up to their highest potential. She became my lifelong friend. I received my B.A. in Classics from Connecticut College

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for Women in New London and my M.A. in Classics from Brown University, Providence, RI, where I met my future husband, J. Bruce Brackenridge, a doctoral student in physics and an Isaac Newton scholar. We were married in 1954 and had four children, one of whom died of cancer in 1995.

Bruce died of prostate cancer in 2003 after a battle of eleven years. He continued to teach after his retirement in 1996, and his last article on Newton was published the month of his death. His book, *The Key to Newton's Dynamics* (U of CA Press) is still appreciated by Newton scholars.

Bruce and I taught at Muskingum College in Ohio, and later moved to Lawrence College (later University) in Appleton, Wisconsin. Bruce taught Physics and the History of Science, and I translated parts of the *Principia* for his Newtonian research and articles. I taught Latin, Classical Literature in translation, and Freshman Studies. I also chaired the Art Exhibition Committee, founded the Lawrence Chapter of the Archaeological Institute of America and introduced the Latin Carol Service, after the one at Brown, which was broadcast each year on the local radio station. Confident that I was contributing to the academic and social life of Lawrence, in 1971 I learned otherwise.

After teaching there for eleven years, I was fired from my position in the Classics Department. Five other women professors had also been fired. The reason? A budget cut! We did not need the jobs, we were told, since our husbands were on the faculty. Up to this point in life I had not been aware of discrimination against women. It

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hit me like a rock! I was instantly aware of every subtle and blatant comment, criticism, and insult to women.

I became a sponge, soaking up the affronts, insults, and crimes against all women. I was transformed, and my life changed utterly and completely. There was no going back to ignorance. It became my obsession, my compulsion, to uncover and discover this insidious plot against women, so pervasive that it was the air we breathed. And it was poisoning us.

Hence my life took on substance and purpose, and I found inspiration from many amazing women, among whom were Gloria Steinem, \*Kathryn Clarenbach, and \*Gene Boyer.

After leaving Lawrence, I taught at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay; Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana; and the City Literary Institute of London, England, where I received my Ph.D. in Classics from Birkbeck College, University of London. I received a scholarship to study at the American School of Classical Studies in Athens, Greece in the summer of 1953, and was inspired by the ancient sites to continue the study of the classical civilizations of the Mediterranean.

As a recipient of summer grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities I studied at Princeton and Stanford Universities, and at the American Academy in Rome. After receiving my doctorate, I was appointed Assistant Professor of Classics at Ball State, until 1986 teaching Classical languages and literature, etymology, and women's studies. While at Ball State, I helped organize the first Women's Week and was a principal

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speaker. Betty Friedan drew crowds for her later visit to the University.

I was Honorary Research Fellow at Birkbeck (1986-88), from 1989-1992 and 1994-1995 a Research Fellow at the Women's Studies Research Center of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where I studied women in ancient religion and society, as well as in the current movement of Church women working for full equality in church ministry and government throughout the world.

While at the Women's Studies Research Center, I received a grant to organize a tour of six cities for the Italian scholar Giorgio Otranto, who had published evidence of women priests in the early Church. I had translated his work into English and in 1991 it was published in the *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*. Otranto's tour received national coverage.

Otranto was astonished by the interest shown everywhere. In three weeks, he was made aware of the movement for women's equality in the Church, and perhaps this "click" was made more urgent by the coverage of the Anita Hill/Clarence Thomas hearings then being televised. The BBC film crew later traveled to Bari to interview Otranto, and his testimony was significant in the production of *The Hidden Tradition*. When he left for Italy, he carried with him an article by a feminist theologian and published this article in his journal, *Vetera Christianorum*.

Our small group of concerned women began to gather weekly and the first Appleton Chapter of NOW was born. Wherever we saw injustice, we took action: Dolly

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Byrne was paid half as much as her male co-worker at City Hall. After two years, this injustice was corrected.

We organized an Alice Doesn't Day and marched down the streets of Appleton. An official of the Governor's Commission for Women heard my talk and invited me to be a member of the Commission. As chair of the task force on Battered Women I gave testimony that helped make wife battering a felony in Wisconsin. I convinced the head of a bank not to discriminate in making loans to creditworthy women. A law was passed making it mandatory: the fee for negligence was \$2,000. Viola got her loan, even though her husband was unemployed because of an injury. And through DIAL, the Directory Identity Action League, we worked for two years to convince the telephone company to include the wife's first name with no additional fee. Wisconsin was the first state to realize this economic necessity of being visible in the telephone book. There are still states that have not achieved this elemental need.

We noted sex role stereotyping in school texts and complained to the principals about such discrimination. Usually the books were removed. The Appleton women of NOW tried to inspire other women to be activists for women. We started a Womencenter and kept in touch with City Hall on the progress of ERA legislation. Can you believe that has not passed yet?

During a sojourn in London, I was invited to present a paper on the Green Paper on Women's Rights. It was a conference held by the Women's International NOW of London. I criticized the Paper for not facing the problem of discrimination against women, and explained Titles IX,



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In 1976 Governor Lucey appointed me to the Wisconsin Governor's Commission on the Status of Women. As Legislative Coordinator of this Commission I chaired a task force on Battered Women. In 1978 I was elected to the Executive Board of the National Association of Commissions for Women. Later I was interviewed at the American Consulate in Florence and the American Embassy in Rome, Italy. My interview on battered women (a term then new to the Italian consciousness) was included in a television program on women shown throughout Italy. My Italian relatives viewed this series in their homes. One cousin in Varese invited me to address her women's organization on the topic and later they viewed the film. I spoke in Italian.

My translation of Otranto's evidence of women priests in the early centuries of the Church was presented in 1991 at Hunter College, New York, at the Fourth International Interdisciplinary Conference on Women. My translation was published in the *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* (May 1991); it is cited in *Megatrends for Women* (1992), and in newspapers and magazines. I read my translations of the lectures of Otranto and accompanied him on a tour of six USA cities (1991). Ari Goldman of the *New York Times* mentioned Otranto's pathbreaking work (October 19, 1991). *The Hidden Tradition* aired three days before the Anglican Synod voted in favor of ordaining women (November 11, 1992). The producer of the film Angela Tilby emailed me: "The film was seen by nearly two million people, which was a good figure for our late night Everyman spot...I have letters from women deacons and others who were encouraged by the evidence of the film."

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I was interviewed by USA Today, the National Catholic Reporter, and by many Wisconsin newspapers and public radio stations. News of women priests traveled abroad, and I was interviewed in London by the Catholic Herald, BBC Radio 4, and the London Broadcasting Corporation.

The UW-Madison Press Office referred the media to me for a reaction to the synod vote on women's ordination in London on November 11, and published my comments in a front-page article in USA Today. Interviews over public radio in Wisconsin increased the attention to the argument over women's ordination.

The Catholic Women's Network invited me to do a lecture circuit in the UK in 1993. Various departments of theology have sponsored my appearances in England, Scotland, and Wales. The Annual General Meeting of the National Board of Catholic Women chose domestic violence for their annual study project. The report was sent to the Bishops' Conference in April 1994, and then to every parish priest in the UK. At the end of May the International Association of Women Judges (IAWJ) convened in Rome, and the NACW report was sent to this conference as well as to Vatican officials to protest the exclusion of women from this conference. The New York Times and Washington Post covered the action by the coalition of American Nuns in St. Peter's Square on October 22, 1994.

In April 2008 I spoke at a symposium at Molloy College (Long Island) on "Women in Early Christian Priesthood"; in October 2009 I taught a course on Women in Early Christianity at Lawrence University, Bjorklunden

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campus; In April 2010 I was on a Trailblazers' Panel at UW-Oshkosh Women's Center.

On April 21, 2010 I spoke on Judy Chicago's The Dinner Party at the Noonhour Philosophers' Club, Appleton, WI, and gave an introduction to this trailblazing feminist work to the memory of the lost women of history. I later gave another presentation with Estella Lauter (one of the participants in the making of The Dinner Party) at the Lawrence University Emeriti Retreat in Door County, Wisconsin. We showed the poster "From Now On," a collaboration by Judy Chicago and Adrienne Rich, signed to me by Judy Chicago.

I have emphasized the awakening of women to their second-class citizenship in this formative period. I believe the recovery of women's past achievements will transform the expectations of our younger generations today.

My four offspring echoed my concern for equal rights; one young son, Rob, wrote a paper on the unequal treatment of girls in school textbooks. Lynn, my elder daughter, wrote a paper on the Equal Rights Amendment for her college course in political science. Today my family continues to thrive. Lynn, is a non-profit executive; Rob has entertained our troops in Afghanistan and comedy audiences throughout the U.S.A. Scot teaches Asian religions at Alfred University in New York; he and his wife, Maggie Chen Brackenridge, and children, Bruce and Sandy, are settling in after three years in China. My younger daughter, Sandy, who died in 1995, was a member of NOW Seattle and a staunch supporter of my struggle for

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women's equality. Sandy Rossi was Quality Control Officer on foreign fishing vessels on the Bering Sea. I try to live up to her expectations always.

The Second Wave was punctuated in northeastern Wisconsin by the proliferation of consciousness-raising groups, chapters of the Women's Political Caucus, Wisconsin Women in the Arts, and courses in women's studies, like the ones I developed at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay: Women: Crisis in Society, and Sex Role Stereotyping in northeastern Wisconsin. It is encouraging to see the strides made in Appleton to rescue victims of domestic violence. I am a founding member of Harbor House, our Appleton refuge for battered women and their children and am listed as a founding member of the National Museum of Women in the Arts. I fervently hope that the recovery of women's past achievements will transform the expectations of our younger generations today.

\* Kathryn Clarenbach and Gene Boyer were founders of NOW. Both were NOW officers for several years.

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## MARLENE SANDERS

July 15, 2015

NEW YORK (AP) — Marlene Sanders, a veteran television journalist for ABC and CBS News at a time that relatively few women did that job, has died of cancer. She was 84.

Sanders was also the mother of CNN and New Yorker journalist Jeffrey Toobin, who announced that she died Tuesday on his Facebook page.

*"A pioneering television journalist — the first network newswoman to report from Vietnam, among many other firsts — she informed and inspired a generation," Toobin wrote. "Above all, though, she was a great mom."*

Sanders was a producer for the late Mike Wallace in the early stages of his career. She wrote, reported and produced news and documentaries for WNEW-TV in New York before joining ABC News in 1964. She worked there for 14 years.

She was the first woman to anchor a network evening newscast in 1964 when she filled in for Ron Cochran. She reported from Vietnam in 1966 and later became the first woman to be a vice president at ABC News, where she was head of the network's documentary unit.

She moved to CBS News in 1978, where she also wrote and produced documentaries. She often reported and wrote on the women's movement, and closely followed the status of women in her own industry, said James Goldston, ABC News president.

Sanders co-authored a book, "Waiting for Prime Time: The Women of Television News" and taught at both New

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York University and the Columbia Graduate School of Journalism.

*"Marlene Sanders got there first," Bill Moyers said. "That women are finally recognized as first-rate professionals is due in no small part to the path-breaking courage of Marlene Sanders."*

Memories of Marlene Sanders are pouring in from our VFA Members:

Marlene was tough and honest and no-nonsense in expressing her opinions, but she was a loyal friend to many of us. She was generous with her time and her financial support for numerous feminist projects including WomensENews and the film "She's Beautiful When She's Angry." She helped to support several VFA projects too. She was a good friend of Betty Friedan, and Betty stayed at Marlene's apartment when visiting New York City. *Muriel Fox*

\*\*\*\*\*

8 weeks ago she went to her grandson's graduation from Brown, 7 weeks ago she went to Iceland, 6 weeks ago she had a stomach virus that turned out to be rampant cancer, she went into hospice care yesterday at 12:00, died at 1:40 PM. She died in the no-nonsense efficient way she did everything. *Charlotte Mayerson*

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### **Marlene Sanders: TV news correspondent, producer, documentarian and news v.p.**



I was a child of the Depression, born January 10, 1931 in Cleveland, Ohio, to a family struggling to stay middle class. My family name was Fisher, my stepfather's name. My father, Mac Sanders, and my mother were divorced and I grew up with my half-brother, Rob Fisher. I went to public schools and was what was considered a tomboy, enjoying baseball in the quiet suburban streets.

By the time I reached high school I somehow knew that I would take a different path from the women I observed around me. There was no discussion in the 40's and 50's of careers for women. We were expected to marry well, with possibly a job we could "fall back on" if need be.

The options were unattractive to me: nurse, teacher, clerk. I became enamored of the theatre from age eight and had begun to get parts in local community productions, and later in high school plays. Everyone in

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my Shaker High yearbook wished me well on the stage or in the movies!

During my high school years, I also was influenced by a history teacher, Alfred Bosch, who perceived correctly that I was deeply interested in current events as well as history. He introduced me to a variety of publications that supported the Progressive Party candidate Henry Wallace for President, in 1948. My family assumed I would grow out of my unconventional political beliefs as well as my theatrical aspirations and that I would marry and settle down. I did in fact marry, and my husband, Buddy Kahn, was a high school boyfriend, several years older than I.

Fortunately, we both wanted to move to New York. He had been admitted to Columbia's Teachers College to pursue a PhD in psychology, and I could search for theatre work.

As it turned out, I mostly got secretarial jobs. Neither my theatrical career nor the marriage was working out. During a trial separation over one summer, I found a job that might help me make the transition into production work. I was hired at The Theatre by the Sea, in Matunuck, RI where I was assistant to the producers. Since it was just a summer job, I talked to anyone who crossed my path about work in the fall.

Fortunately, one day I was sent to the train station to pick up a radio guy from Chicago who was co-producing a play at the theatre as a pre-Broadway tryout. His name was Mike Wallace. Mike told me he was going to anchor a new TV news program at a local station in NY and his producer, Ted Yates, was putting together a staff. He introduced me, and miraculously I was hired.

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Thus began my long career in TV news. I rose from production assistant, to associated producer, booker, news writer and producer.

Meanwhile, Buddy and I had divorced and I had begun to go out, mostly with celebrities I met through work, but also with friends of my male colleagues. One day a co-worker suggested I should meet Jerome Toobin, manager of The Symphony of the Air, an orchestra formed after NBC dissolved the NBC symphony. We met, had instant rapport, and were married 3 months later. Meanwhile the job at Dumont, CHANNEL 5 had expired with the advent of new management. Jerry and I had been married about a year, and I had finally felt ready for motherhood.

We were years away from a women's movement. I knew no other working women. I worked until two weeks before Jeffrey was born. It was the end of May, 1960. When Jerry and I married I had no idea that the orchestra was on the brink of bankruptcy and collapse. But he was not making much money anyway, and I realized I'd better get back to work. I had an easy, good natured baby, but I was bored and restless and we needed more money.

I managed to locate a housekeeper who would work for my paltry unemployment compensation until I found a good job. It took a few months, but I did. This time I became a full-fledged member of the Writers Guild, and worked as a writer producer on a Westinghouse Broadcasting show called PM East. Two years later, that job ended and I was hired at WNEW Radio as Assistant News Director and produced weekly half-hour radio documentaries. During the newspaper strike of 1963 I began broadcasting news, as well as anchoring most of the documentaries. There were few women on the air, but WNEW had only a few complaints. I was blessed

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with a low voice and avoided the stereotype of women in general who supposedly had high pitches voices with no authority.

Since the orchestra's collapse I was the sole support of my family. I was overworked and felt I needed to move on. An ad in Variety announced their search for another "news hen". Obnoxious as that phrase was, I applied, auditioned, and was hired as a network TV correspondent for ABC in 1964.



My stay at ABC lasted 14 years. During that time I was an anchor, including subbing for the male night-time man in the fall of 1963 when he had laryngitis. The New York Times noted it was a first for a woman. But nothing changed as a result. During those years i covered major news events and in 1966 became the first woman from TV to cover the Vietnam war. At home, all was going well. Jerry had landed at CH 13 and had become Bill Moyers's exec producer, and then news director. I had hired more help at home since I traveled so much, and Jeffrey was thriving.

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In the course of covering LBJ's Great Society programs, one day in 1963 I found myself in a reception line at the White House next to Betty Friedan. I had not yet read "The Feminine Mystique", but knew about it and knew I was far from one of those housewives "with a problem that had no name". I was thrilled to meet Betty and we began a conversation and friendship that thrived for all the years that followed until her death. She told me about plans for NOW, and through her I met the movers and shakers who became the faces of the women's movement.

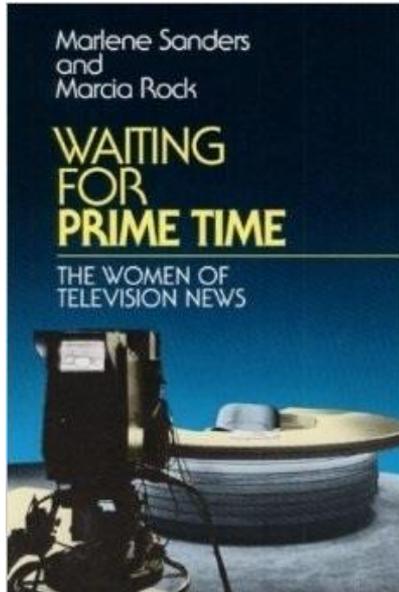
Over the years, I covered their events and produced the first documentaries on the Movement, including in 1970 Betty Friedan's national Strike for Equality and in 1972 The Hand that Rocks the Ballot Box, as well as several others.

One of the feminist affairs I covered was the Congress to Unite Women which Betty organized in 1969 in her attempt to unite the many radical feminist groups with NOW. I negotiated with the organizers and had permission to film, with some restrictions. Sadly, the film disappeared, and I later heard that three or four participants had confiscated it and thrown it into the East River. They thought I had violated some of the rules we had agreed on that allowed me to film there. This was untrue. Also, because I worked for the mainstream media, they decided I was not trustworthy. It was definitely hard to cover the more radical feminist groups.

Among the many feminist groups that organized at this time was Women in the Media. I was involved with them and also was deeply involved with ABC's Women's Action Committee. Much of the activities were documented in a book I wrote with my friend Marcia Rock, called "Waiting for Prime Time: The Women of Television News" (Univ of Ill. Press). It was first

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published in 1988 and updated for the paperback in 1994. (There is no website for the book since it was published before they existed, so it has to be ordered from the University Press at 1-800-621-2736. The NYU bookstore also has copies on hand.



My life might appear to have been charmed, but in 1967 my second son was born, unfortunately with Down Syndrome. He is severely retarded and has been living in a small group home of many years. He will need care for the rest of his life.

My son, Jeffrey Toobin and his accomplished wife Amy McIntosh have two children, Ellen and Adam, and I am happy to have lived long enough to see Ellen through college, and Adam as a talented student journalist at Brown University. Son Jeffrey's fame has exceeded my

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own. He has written six books, is a staff writer at The New Yorker, and is CNN's senior legal analyst.

My own career went through many ups and downs. Changes in ABC's management forced me out as VP & Director of Documentaries, another job first for a woman. I moved on to ten years at CBS News, followed by four years at Channel 13 hosting Metro Week in Review. My husband died in 1984 following surgery for a brain tumor.

After my departure from reporting, I worked for the Freedom Forum organizing media panels at their NY offices. And for 11 years I narrated documentaries for HBO on a variety of subjects, including a 10-year-long series called "Autopsy". In 1992 I began teaching Advanced TV Reporting as an adjunct professor of journalism at NYU, and that continues as of this writing in 2014. I am a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, and a board member of a venerable anti-poverty organization, The Community Service Society.

And one other thing: I returned to a love of art and have been studying at the 92nd St. Y for the last 8 years, and painting portraits in pastel and oil. It's nice to have free time after all these years.

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### Betty Schlein



I was born in Brooklyn on April Fool's Day, but in 1931, there was no time for foolishness. It was the bottom of the Depression. My father had lost his job as a distributor for Paramount Pictures, and with it, his self-confidence and most of his dignity. Soon, we had to move into my grandparents' modest home, where tight quarters and too many adults in charge left no room for a little girl growing up to be anything but "very good." (For further details of my family life, read about the Jack and Sylvia Portnoy Debating Society in Philip Roth's *Portnoy's Complaint*.)

Ours was a house wracked with poverty and pain, and the effects were long-lasting. My mother was determined to move out and make us a self-supporting family. In 1939, she and my father opened a summer day camp in Brooklyn's Manhattan Beach, but it was not to be. With war looming, the beach was closed to the public and became a United States Coast Guard

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station. Fortunately for our family, this did not stop my mother. She started a nursery school, which she ran successfully for all the years of my childhood and for the rest of her life.

She had been the only girl in a family of high-achieving brothers: A dentist, a lawyer, a doctor, and a businessman who went into the family textile business her father helped found on the Lower **East Side**. Though she was extremely intelligent, she was the only one of her siblings without a college education. She resented it all her life.

For my mother, education was the key to the future, and no matter what she had to sacrifice (and she reminded me repeatedly of those sacrifices), her daughter was going to go to college. I matriculated at Smith College, and later transferred to Cornell University.

I graduated in 1952, armed with a degree and the vague idea of actually using it. So I went to Washington, DC to look for a job. There, I discovered that the only available jobs for women were for secretaries – and I don't mean Secretary of State or Defense. I had been Secretary of the Student Council at Abraham Lincoln High School in Brooklyn, NY. But the only jobs in DC required typing and getting coffee. I couldn't type! And I didn't want to fetch coffee.

Instead, I moved back to New York and earned a Masters degree in Early Childhood Education at Columbia Teacher's College, the appropriate option that a young girl of my education and background did in those days. Ironically, my parents – who were so eager

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for me to receive a college education – were much more skeptical about my Washington career ambitions. So they were greatly relieved that I had “gotten that out of my system” – “that” being any aspiration to a more high-profile profession ... all the while encouraging my brother to do so.

As a measure of my own acceptance of the societal norms of the day, I remember feeling grateful that I didn't have any “real talent to write, paint, or dance,” because that would have created a difficult conflict: How could I do what was expected of me – get married and have children – while pursuing a challenging career?

At that stage, the answer eluded me. I fell in love, got married, had three children by the time I was thirty, and then, like so many women of my generation, developed the “disease **that had** no name.” It was a classic syndrome, with typical symptoms: I had a loving husband, a lovely home, loveable children ... and a pervasive sense of something missing.

When trauma struck – in close succession, I lost my mother and my father-in-law, almost lost one of my children, and experienced post-partum depression after the birth of my youngest child – the emotional ambush was crushing. Five years of psychoanalysis later, I was ready to re-engage with the wider world... And, lucky for me, the world was ready too.

The times, they were a-changing, as **Bob** Dylan famously sang. And I wanted to change with them. After working against the Vietnam War and for civil rights, I went to a meeting at my local synagogue in

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Merrick, Long Island, where I heard **Jacqui** Ceballos speak on a panel with a radical feminist. The animosity from the audience was palpable: They asked, "Where are your children?" But I remember asking how they could find jobs for women in a bad economy.

Soon after, I went to an organizing meeting for a new chapter of the National Organization for Women. There were about 20 women attending, and we went around the room answering the question, "Why are you here?" I had no ready answer. But as one of the women told us the story of how her father would not let her attend Radcliffe College after she was accepted because the boys in the family came first, I felt that intense jolt of recognition so many experienced in "consciousness raising groups." It clicked. I knew why I was there. When I applied to Cornell Liberal Arts College and they accepted only one woman out of five applicants, we did not know to call it discrimination. When my parents had far higher expectations for my brother than for me, I did not know to call it bias.

It clicked, and kept clicking. I had begun to find my calling. From a girl who had been grateful to have no 'real talent,' I discovered that I had been wrong. I had plenty of talent, and it was political – the gift of organizing. I think I was born with a latent political gene in my DNA, but it took the women's movement to wake that dormant drive.

Not long after joining the local NOW chapter, which had about 70 members at the time, I was elected President (not Secretary). It was the event that changed my life. Within two years the Long Island chapter became a

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powerful force of over 500 members, the third largest chapter in the country at the time. We helped organize the New York State NOW and the Women's Political Caucus. The Coalition Against Domestic Violence started in my basement, where our board meetings were held, when one woman said we ought to do something about "battered women." We weren't sure what that meant, but it didn't take long to find out. We also started a Divorce Information Center and many other issue-oriented organizations.

My life took off in the most unanticipated directions. I was elected as a member of the New York State Democratic Committee and soon was chosen as Vice-Chairwoman. That combination of NOW and Democratic Party politics put me at the cutting edge of the dynamic changes that were occurring and gave me the opportunity to help bring women into positions of leadership in the community, the party and government. I embraced it full force.

After nominating Mary Ann Krupsack the first woman to run for and win the office of Lt. Governor, I was chosen to head the Women's Division of the New York State Democratic Committee founded by Eleanor Roosevelt in the 1920s. I also sat on the Board of Directors of the group working to restore Eleanor Roosevelt's home at Val-Kill. We made the Women's Division into a feminist training ground, where women could gain the experience of organizing, speaking, and lobbying for our issues. It was a soaring moment and we were ready to fly.

In 1978, I was appointed Assistant to the Governor of New York State, and with the leadership of Governor

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Hugh Carey's Appointments Secretary, Judith Hope, we helped furnish that office with an abundant supply of talented women. In fact, through Judith, Governor Carey appointed more women than any prior governor in New York State.



Anne Ford, Betty Schlein, Hon Mario Cuomo and Hon. Hugh Carey New York State Democratic Primary night 1978

In both 1976 and 1980, New York State was host to the Democratic National Conventions, and I was honored to play a key role in winning the fight for the equal division of delegates. And of course, in 1984 Gerry Ferraro made her historic run for Vice President. At the time, it felt like we had finally made it. But history has shown that we still have much to do, and many battles remain. My three children, then teenagers, shared my enthusiasm and activities and have become successful activists in their own right.

We went on to institutionalize our gains through the Long Island Women's Network, and then the Women's Fund

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of Long Island and we worked closely to help develop Emily's List and the Eleanor Roosevelt Legacy, both created to encourage women to run for public office by training them and supporting their candidacies.

Professionally, I developed a firm that provided consulting services to non-profit organizations and served on many boards including the Long Island Community Foundation. I have continued to work to support candidates for public office who champion women's rights and issues improving the lives of women and girls.



Betty Schlein and Gloria Steinem (campaigning in Massapequa in 1975 for passage of the ERA in New York State)

Just as the women's movement made the personal, political and the political, personal, I have found that sometimes, simply by networking -- joining together in informal groups, from ad hoc meetings to address single cause issues, to luncheon groups to discuss common

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interests – women can change their communities, their country, and most important, their own lives.

To this day, I continue to support the ongoing fight for equal rights for all. I am proud to be a veteran of the women's movement and a Veteran Feminist. Most recently, I had the honor to contribute to the remarkable documentary film, *Makers*, and it is one of my life's greatest pleasures to continue providing support and encouragement to young activists and the causes we care about.

And as I look back over a rich, long, and fortunate life, I am enormously grateful to have been born and lived my life as a Jewish woman in America in the second half of the twentieth century. I can think of no better time or place in history.

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## SUSAN SCHWALB

I was born in New York City 1944. My sister Rita Ann Schwalb was born in 1946. My dad, Morris Schwalb was a lawyer and then a judge; my mom Evelyn Rosenhain Schwalb was an artist. She worked in ceramics and jewelry and painted in oils. When I was around ten she went back to school to get a teaching license and



Photo: James Arzente

taught art and metal shop in the Junior High School in Riverdale and other schools. She even had her own gallery in our Riverdale apartment building where I had my first solo show while in college.

I wanted to be an artist since I was five years old. My first art classes were in an after-school program at PS 86. I still have the first oil painting I made--an idealized landscape of an imaginary mountain, a lake, some fir trees, a small house and a setting sun.

While in junior high school I began studying with the painter Anna Meltzer whose work evolved from realism

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to a personal abstraction related to cubism. She had a skylight studio at 50 West 57 St. and every Saturday I took the subway to my classes. I drew still-lives in charcoal and tried to draw figures and portraits. I was building a portfolio to apply to the High School of Music and Art. My JHS 115 (Elizabeth Barrett Browning JHS) had terrible art classes; there were sewing classes but no craft classes; the all-girls school was training us to become secretaries and mothers.



"Using the arc and the circle representing the universe and the earth, Schwalb creates vividly colored works that combine silverpoint, gold leaf .... Here the artist contemplates spiritual existence, using brilliant sky blues, steel blues, waves of sepia, deep wine reds, and subtle filigree of silver lines...."

— Cassandra Langer, Women Artists News, Fall 1990

After two tries I was accepted to Music and Art. It was a long commute, but M&A was a sanctuary for me and I felt like an artist; those three years were the happiest of my life. I exhibited works in the Semi-Annual Exhibition and even had a solo show of paintings in the hallway, a big deal at the time. We had amazing teachers including

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the well-known painter May Stevens. One of my favorite teachers was the printmaking instructor, Miss Pferdt.

When I applied to art school I wanted to leave New York City. Carnegie Institute of Technology (now Carnegie Mellon University) seemed like the perfect place, with a campus in Pittsburgh. I studied graphic design and fine-art classes. After graduation I came back to New York and found a job at Dell Publishing as a book-jacket designer. I had to look under "help wanted male" as there were no jobs listed under "help wanted female," and I was the first woman in the art department except for the secretary; however my salary was less than the male designer.

I began to share an apartment in Manhattan with my sister and life seemed to hold exciting promises. One month after we moved in together she was diagnosed with melanoma and two years later she died. It took me over five years to recover from this loss. I joined the Vietnam anti-war movement and made posters and buttons for demonstrations. By then I was working as a freelance designer, hardly making a living, but somehow able to afford my little rent-control apartment.

In the summer of 1971, I lived on Cape Cod trying to reconnect to my own artwork. My first works were pen-and-ink watercolor drawings based on dreams and imaginary landscapes. In 1973 I went to the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts and the MacDowell Colony. These were transforming experiences, working in large studios, three meals a day and no distractions.

At VCCA I met the feminist writer Elizabeth Fisher and

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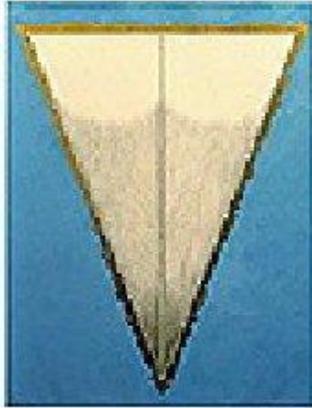
became art director for her literary magazine Aphra. I found my way to Women in the Arts and I was hooked. Soon I volunteered to be the designer of the first WIA newsletter, working with Cynthia Navaretta (who is still my friend today). WIA held numerous actions to change the status of women artists, at one we demonstrated at galleries that didn't show the work of women. I remember picketing Pace Gallery on 57 St with Cynthia. Patrons there were astonished to learn there were any women artists at all.

In 1974 while sharing a house in the Hamptons with artist friends I discovered silverpoint and within a year it had become my primary medium. My first series of metalpoint drawings was on the theme of the Orchid (1974-78). For the first year I drew from one dried flower exclusively, seeing it from many points of view. Meant to evoke sexual as well as spiritual themes, the orchid was a symbol for me and for women. Relatively small drawings though later enlarged, in 1977 they were shown in a solo exhibition at the Women's Series at Rutgers University and then toured to several other universities.

In 1977 a group of us from WIA went to Albany to choose delegates for the National Women's Year Conference to be held in Houston, and tried to elect someone to represent women artists there. I became the elected delegate, while a few others were appointed later on. I remember Gloria Steinem standing on a chair with a bullhorn encouraging us to stay in lines for hours before we could cast our votes for slates for pro-choice and pro-ERA women. Back in New York I networked with writers and artists so there could be an art space at

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the Houston conference. During this conference I heard about the next international UN conference planned for 1980 and decided that women artists coming from all over the world had to be represented.



In Schwalb's ethereal silverpoint drawings streams of whispery lines — surely it is impossible to make thinner lines than these — cascade downward. They form sliding, blossoming organic shapes so close to touching you can feel the heat between them. Schwalb achieves great tension between formal delicacy and sensuous, even erotic, content.”

— Christine Temin, *The Boston Globe*, 2/26/1987

It is a long story of how I was able to get this conference to come into being, including a trip to Denmark to secure support from a major museum and a meeting with a group of women artists in Copenhagen. This was long before email and the internet, and I would call Denmark from the offices of a UN official. Daily I received 50-100 letters and packages from women who wanted to participate. In a wonderful book, “Women Artists of the World” edited by Cindy Lyle, Sylvia Moore and Cynthia Navaretta about the first International Festival for

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Women Artists, I describe how I was able to form a committee of over 100 women in the US to bring this conference into existence.

It was a heady time, and in July 1980 the conference opened at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek Museum. We had slides, posters, books and original art from more than 30 countries, and women artists from over 20 countries held readings, performances, and panel discussions. Numerous museums and churches in Copenhagen held special exhibitions and for the first time The State Museum of Art showed 19th and 20th Century Danish women artists from its permanent collection.

I have no idea how I made art during the year I worked on this conference and taught part-time at City College, but there are a surprising number of works dated from 1979 and 1980. By this time I was combining silverpoint drawings with fire and smoke and creating box sculptures. These works have a more abstract quality, but evoke the same sensuality and spirituality. I scratched and tore into the paper as well as used smoke and burning with silverpoint. The works were like a ritual act and in some cases the drawings seem to exist only for a moment. My Headdresses and Parchments speak of a lost space being reclaimed by women. I used burning and tearing as part of my technique until the mid-1980's.

In the summer of 1981 I was accepted at Yaddo. I was back working in my small apartment, but the summer changed my work as well as my personal life. I met the composer Martin Boykan who taught at Brandeis University and lived in Newton, MA. Within a year I was

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dividing my time between Boston and New York, something I do to this day. In Boston I searched for a network of women artists. I helped found the Boston chapter of the Women's Caucus for Art, its first open meeting in my husband's living room. My husband and I married in 1983. I taught part time at Mass College of Art and continued my involvement with national WCA and College Art Association conferences.

In my work of 1988-90 the female body remained as a source in such works as "Emblem" and "Spiritus Mundi." A large drawing from this series was included in "Power, Pleasure, Pain: Contemporary Women Artists and the Female Body" at the Fogg Art Museum in 1994.

Since 1996 I moved further into minimal abstraction and have continued to push the limits of silverpoint. My current work is the most reductive to date. I now make works that fuse painting and drawing.

I have an additional network of much younger women artists in New York, a supportive husband and since 1990 have been able to devote myself to my work on a full-time basis. I make a living as an artist and have work in many important museum collections around the world including the Museum of Modern Art, New York, the National Gallery, Washington D.C., The British Museum, London, The Brooklyn Museum, NY, Kupferstichkabinett - Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Germany, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, and The Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, England.

Recently I joined Facebook and am looking forward to continuing the work for women's rights through the

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internet.

Susan Schwalb is one of the foremost figures in the revival of the ancient technique of silverpoint drawing in America. Most of the contemporary artists who draw with a metal stylus continue the tradition of Leonardo and Durer by using the soft, delicate line for figurative imagery. By contrast, Schwalb's work is resolutely abstract, and her handling of the technique is extremely innovative.

Paper is torn and burned to provide an emotionally free and dramatic contrast to the precise linearity of silverpoint. In other works, silverpoint is combined with flat expanses of acrylic paint or gold leaf. Sometimes, subtle shifts of tone and color emerge from the juxtaposition of a wide variety of metals. In recent works, Schwalb abandons the stylus altogether in favor of wide metal bands that achieve a shimmering atmosphere reminiscent of the luminous transparency of watercolor.

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### Elizabeth Shepard

I've lived two lives, says Betty Shepard, today of Naples, Florida. When the feminist movement began I was living in the suburbs of New York, caring for my husband and children and involved in community affairs. I never thought of myself as deprived in any way -- until 1970, when, as a lark, I took part in the march for Equality on Fifth Avenue in New York and was awakened to the inequities and discrimination towards the female sex.



Elizabeth Shepard with husband, John.

To start at the beginning: I was born in Beloit, Wisconsin October 7, 1918, the only child of Hungarian immigrants. My parents, Louis and Elizabeth Vigh, named me Elizabeth Louise for both of them. I was supposed to be a boy, but they loved me, and I knew it.

At age seven, the day we moved to Elkart, Indiana, I explored my new neighborhood and found a tennis tournament being held for local children. Someone asked "Do you play?" I didn't, but I would like to. I wasn't wearing sneakers, so was told to remove my shoes and a tennis racket was put into my hand. "All you have to do is hit the ball over the net and keep going," someone said. I won the match from a little boy, and I was hooked. From then on much of my youth was spent playing

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tennis. I met my future husband John Shepard on the courts at the University of Wisconsin where I entered college in 1936.

My dad didn't know why women wanted to go to college, but I had to go, though I hadn't the foggiest idea of what to study. My father had ulcers, so I chose a career in dietetics to find out why. But when I graduated his ulcers had healed.

I met John Shepard, again in New York City, where he was studying at Cornell Medical College and I was in the first class Cornell held for therapeutic dieticians. My first job was at Carle Memorial Hospital in Urbana, Ill. I returned to New York and married John in 1942. I worked as a therapeutic dietician at the Payne Whitney Psychiatric Clinic and later, at the Good Housekeeping Magazine Bureau as a chemist. This was during World War II, and John was soon conscripted. Now, with a salary, we could afford the baby I so wanted. When my son was born I worried that I couldn't possibly love another child as much. But as soon as I saw my daughter, who was born in 1947, I knew I could. I learned then that love is never limited, but extends to take in all those that we can.

After the war we moved to Manhasset, Long Island, where John entered private practice. Now I was a suburban housewife. Volunteering became a big part of my life. I was president of the PTA and active in local politics. I liked being a mother. I think I said no to my children 3 times -- once to my son when he wanted a motorcycle, to my daughter when she wanted a horse, and no to any fighting before breakfast. And I said no to

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myself when I was asked to run for NY State Congress. How could I have two teenagers at home and a husband who rarely was there.

I never thought of myself as deprived in any way until August, 1970 when a friend called to tell me that NOW, the National Org for Women was going to have a march down 5th Avenue for equal rights. "Let's go" she said. "Oh Maggie, I said.... we've just been thru the Civil Rights and the Peace movement, and now this movement of kooky women? I'm not sure I want to go." "What else do you have to do?" she asked. But the time of the march was 5 o'clock. "That's the time I prepare dinner, I said. I'll check with John." "Oh John won't care", she replied. And of course he didn't.

A few hours later I was marching on 5th Avenue with thousands of women I had never seen before, many who were older than I, some nicely dressed, and some I would have liked to neaten up a bit. The sidewalks were filled with on - lookers. People were pouring out of offices staring at us. "Betty Shepard, what on earth are you doing here?" I thought.

As I marched so many emotions were pouring over me. I couldn't sort them out. The march ended at the Public Library Park where we heard speeches by Betty Friedan, Gloria Steinem, Flo Kennedy and many others. The word I kept hearing was equality, equality, equality... and I thought, "I don't feel unequal in any way." Then I heard that the march was on August 26, 1970 because it was the 50th anniversary of suffrage, the amendment that finally gave women the right to vote. "My goodness, I thought. In 1920 I was two years old and my mother

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couldn't vote!"

We were given a flyer which stated the reasons for the march. The first was educational opportunities, the second was equal pay for equal work, the third was childcare. I had trouble with this one, as I felt strongly that women should take care of their children. The fourth was reproductive rights -- all reasonable demands. These were definitely not kooky women! I decided I'd better look up this NOW.

The next week I joined the Nassau County chapter. The members, mostly housewives, were so smart. I paid dues, but there were scholarships for those who couldn't afford to. You had to be active at least on one committee. I looked at the numerous committees and thought, I need to learn about consciousness raising. And I've done lots of public speaking, so I should be on the speaker's bureau. There was one called female sexuality. What did that mean? Then there was a media committee. I joined them all.

Thus began 15 years of almost around the clock work for women's rights -- speaking, lobbying, organizing, doing surveys. I spoke at churches, women's groups, men's clubs...I especially enjoyed speaking to high school kids. In the school's hallways I'd hear. "We're going to hear a women's libber." And when I faced the students I could see the disappointment in some. "Hum, you were expecting a young woman in a T- shirt and jeans and no bra", I'd say, not an old grey haired woman. Then I'd begin my spiel. The kids were intrigued. After the lecture many, mostly boys, would stay to talk to me. I remember one boy saying, "I know what you're talking about." "Oh,

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is your mother a feminist?" I asked. "No, he said, but my father left us and my mother had to go to work, and she gets so mad because men doing the same work are getting a lot more money." "Your mother is a feminist," I told him.



Then there was lobbying in Albany and in DC. Once in DC in the corridor of the capitol I bumped into a group of teen age boys add - from Catholic High Schools. "Are you here to study legislation?" I asked them. "No, they said, to lobby against abortion." Suddenly I was steaming, but I made myself cool it. "Do you have

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sisters?" I asked. Most said yes. "Do you love them?" "Yes." "Supposing your sister is gang raped and becomes pregnant and she doesn't want to have a child by a rapist. Would you want her to go thru that?" Well, they'd never thought of this. "And furthermore, it could happen to your mother as well" I said. I left them looking puzzled, but thinking.

One day I ran into one of my senators in the hall at the capitol. I stopped him and, in a rather controversial way, I have to admit, I asked ...How are you going to vote on the abortion legislation? Are you going to vote as your constituents want you to, or your religion? He would vote his conscience, he said, and he turned and walked away from me. Before I knew it my hand had caught his shirt tails, and I was demanding of him.... "I want an answer!" I was so enraged that I didn't hear his answer. I learned then that anger is not only blind, but deaf, and realized that if I was to be persuasive I had to control my anger.

### **She was born handicapped. She was born female.**

In 1971 word came that Midge Kovaks of New York City NOW's Image Committee was organizing a national campaign aimed at the sexist media. The idea was to stop the portrayal of girls and women as silly, immature nincompoops. We were given a record about sexism in the media, along with several wonderful posters, which I later learned were made by Anne Tolstoy Wallach of the J. Walter Thompson Ad Agency. One poster of a sweet toddler, a little girl who looked perfect in every way, really got to me. The caption said, "This healthy, normal baby has a handicap. She was born female." This was incredibly heartbreaking. I had to spread this around. I called the local radio station, got an appointment to see

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the director. We talked about the rampant sexism in the media. "Would you NOW women like to do a public broadcast?" he wanted to know. "Do I hear you correctly? I asked in disbelief. I'll ask our board."

But the board had no idea what to do. A month later they hadn't come up with anything, so I realized I would have to do it. I decided I'd create a program rather than give a lecture, so I took a crash course in Communications at Hofstra U, then developed the program. Called SPEAKING NOW I presented it on local radio for five years. My husband was retiring and we were moving to Florida, so I turned it over to the chapter. It ran for another 19 years, and then I lost track.

The Nassau Country Medical Auxiliary, to which I, as the wife of a physician, belonged, asked me to speak to them about SPEAKING NOW. I would rather do a program about doctor's wives -- about you, I said, and suggested they let me interview them. They agreed.

It was a real eye opener for all of them. One doctor's wife was a doctor herself, but most were, like me, more or less happy housewives. The program broke all attendance records for the Auxiliary. Now they asked me to do another on female sexuality. That one blew their minds and they insisted their husbands needed to hear this. Soon I received a call from the president of the medical society asking me to give the lecture I'd given his wife. I said yes, but the women wanted the same lecture I'd given them for their husbands. How was I going to do that? And there was no way I could adapt it. I told my husband he didn't have to attend, but he

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insisted, so I had not only to talk to husbands of my friend's about female sexuality, but to my own husband.

It was the last and most important meeting of the month. Standing before this prestigious group I told them that I was nervous, but as I looked at that sea of male doctors (and about 4 female doctors) I realized that in this case I was the professional. I began by saying that I was exceeding my own comfort level and if I exceeded their's , to feel free to leave.

Then I began to explain that female sexuality meant everything about women -- how they wore their hair, how they walked and particular how they talked. And I spoke of those body parts that we had no terminology for. I told them that I'd asked women how they referred to those secret parts and got more than 26 astounding names. Most women called them simply "my privates", or "down there," But the ones I found most interesting were "tinkalinkee" and, can you believe, "Christmas." The breasts were most synonymous with food items, everything from walnuts to water melons. "No one has ever talks about the clitoris, I told them: the organ that provides orgasm for women." I went on to explain different ways women can come to orgasm. After the lecture a doctor stood up and said he'd come only because it was the last meeting, and he couldn't believe all he'd learned. There was a wonderful round of applause. No one had walked out.

For many years John and I attended golf tournaments in Pine Needles, N.C. By now I'm known as "that women's libber." Once a man came in and addressed John, "God damn, all we hear today is women's lib" .then he said

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approvingly, "That's some kind of a wife you have." My husband replied, "Yes, she'll nail you to the cross every time with her truth." So I lived the feminist movement with a feminist husband.

As I was beginning to understand this new anger within me I was no longer the Betty my husband and friends knew. But as I liberated myself, my husband, too was liberated. It's just a happy and exciting place to be.

I enjoyed both my lives -- that as a housewife/mother and that of a social revolutionary. The early feminist movement was a time of constant, intense work with many setbacks and frustrations, but we accomplished so much, and, looking back I see that, in spite of the negatives, it was probably the most joyful and fun revolution of all time and I was fortunate to be a part of it.

Elizabeth Shepard received the VFA Medal of Honor in 2002 at a VFA event held with West Palm Beach NOW and Florida Atlantic University. She and her husband have lived in Naples, Florida since 1985. Dr. John Shepard was a noted neurosurgeon. Their son, Dr. John Shepard Jr, is a doctor at the Mayo Clinic in MN. Daughter, Judy is a speech therapist in California.

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### **NAN SNOW**

I was born in Carnegie, Oklahoma, in 1936, at the southern edge of the Dust Bowl during the Great Depression. My parents had left their Arkansas home to seek bridge construction work in Oklahoma. By this time, Works Progress Administration (WPA) construction projects were under way, my father



Nan Snow 1970s

found work, and for several years we crisscrossed Oklahoma living wherever a bridge was being built. We left Carnegie when I was six months old and did not return. Finally, out of curiosity, I returned in the early 1990s to stand by the bridge my father had built, the doctor's office where I was born, and the house where we lived.

Imagine! They were all still standing after all those years.

As World War II got underway, we were living in Tulsa, Oklahoma, where my father was working for the DuPont Company. In the middle of the war, he was sent to work in Washington state. My father was assigned to work at the Hanford Reservation. I still remember him coming home and saying to my mother and me that he didn't know what he was working on - it was top secret - but he

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had never built walls as thick. It was only at war's end that we learned he was helping build an atomic bomb plant.

Living in Washington was a memorable experience for me. It was at the height of World War II. We listened to the war news every day on the radio and grieved when our next-door neighbor's son was killed in the Battle of the Bulge. It was in Washington that I first attended an integrated school. I still recall that the unofficial class leader was an African-American girl who demonstrated impressive abilities at that early age. Over the years, I have often wondered what became of her, but because I cannot recall her name, I will never know.

At war's end, we returned to the family home in Harrison, Arkansas, so that I, an only child, could receive a stable education. Harrison, which dubbed itself Hub of the Ozarks, was an idyllic place to grow up. The beauty of the mountains provided a perfect setting for hiking, swimming and enjoying the outdoors. Girls and boys alike took advantage of it. However, it was there, in high school, that I had my first "aha!" feminist moment. A group of us girls loved to play basketball. We went to the school superintendent and requested that we have a girls' high school basketball team. He said no, it wasn't "lady-like." And besides, did we want to be like those girls in the country schools surrounding Harrison that did have teams? We said yes, but to no avail. Little did I know then, that years later I would write a master's course paper on Title IX and its role in women's athletics.

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After high school graduation, I attended Arkansas State Teachers College (now the University of Central Arkansas). By this time I knew I wanted to be a journalist, having had two grandfathers who had owned two small-town newspapers. I majored in journalism, serving as editor of the student newspaper, and working in the public relations office where I wrote press releases for the college. It was there I met, and later married Ken Snow. Ken had moved away from Harrison the year before I moved there and I had heard so much about him from my friends, I felt as if I knew him before we ever met. He was a member of the college baseball team, and we have both shared a lifetime love of baseball too. We have made Little Rock, Arkansas, our home all of our married life. We have no children. Ken is now retired from a career in the federal service as a loan officer with the U.S. Small Business Administration.

I worked as a newspaper reporter and advertising agency copywriter following graduation. When Ken and I moved to Little Rock, I applied for work as a city-beat reporter at the venerable Arkansas Gazette, a Pulitzer Prize-winning newspaper, honored for its fair and compassionate coverage of the 1957 Central High School integration crisis. Alas, in 1959, I was told by the editor that women were not allowed in the city room: my second "aha!" moment. Two years later they had become used to me providing them press releases for the advertising agency for which I worked, all, that is, but the sports editor who never knew that sports writing was part of my reporting work. They finally offered me a general assignment reporter position. I took great pleasure in turning it down.

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By this time, my interest in public service had led to work in the federal service. While with the U. S. Office of Personnel Management, I was appointed Federal Women's Program Coordinator for the five-state region of Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas. It was also about this time that "The Feminine Mystique" became a popular topic. I was an immediate convert and later signed on to membership in NOW and the Arkansas Women's Political Caucus. While some people refuse to see Arkansas in a progressive light, I believe we formed a strong cadre of feminist women in our state. At the same time, as an affirmative action officer for the federal government, I began to work for minority rights and against racial prejudice, always remembering my positive experience as a young schoolgirl in Washington.

During this time, in the early 1970s, I also served on the Arkansas Governor's Commission on the Status of Women chaired by Diane Kincaid Blair, a University of Arkansas professor for whom the university's Blair Center for Southern Politics and Society is now named. Under Diane's leadership, our 1973 Commission issued a landmark report on "The Status of Women in Arkansas" In 2013, the report is being celebrated on its 40th anniversary. The Women's Foundation of Arkansas, in cooperation with students at the Clinton School of Public Service in Little Rock, have published an updated report of women's status in 2013. Also the Blair Center and the Clinton School will join forces to mark the anniversary with special events.

My work with the government and with the Governor's Commission gave me unique opportunities to attend

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feminist conferences across the country where I was fortunate to hear some of the leading feminist voices of the time: Congresswoman Bella Abzug, Congresswoman Barbara Jordan, and Governor Ann Richardson to name but a few. I was hooked. Their message was mine. Jordan became a hero when I heard her, at the International Women's Conference in Houston, thunder about opponents of feminism, "Tell them they lie, and move on."

Also while serving as Federal Women's Program Coordinator, I became acquainted with Dorothy D. Stuck, a former Arkansas newspaper editor and publisher, and then Dallas Regional Director of HEW's Office for Civil Rights. Together we traveled the region conducting upward mobility seminars for women employees. We later left the federal service to establish a management and publications consulting firm in Little Rock which we brilliantly named Stuck & Snow Resultants. We couldn't resist the lure of combining those "catchy" names, and Dorothy dubbed us Resultants, because she wanted us to be consultants who got results for our clients.

After retiring 15 years later, in the 1990s, we embarked on a project dear to our hearts. Believing that the accomplishments of Arkansas women had been largely omitted from the state's history, we wrote a biography of Roberta Fulbright, known as the mother of Senator J. William Fulbright, but never for her own accomplishments as a newspaper publisher and columnist, influential voice in state politics, and savvy business owner. The book, *ROBERTA: A Most Remarkable Fulbright*, reached bestseller lists in

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Arkansas and received a commendation from the National Association of State and Local History. Imagine, too, our pleasure when we attended the dedication in October 2012 of the new Roberta Fulbright Dining Hall on the University of Arkansas campus. After co-authoring "ROBERTA," I wrote another book, "Letters Home," a World War II memoir, which also reached the state's bestseller lists.



**Hillary Clinton, Nan Snow**

I became acquainted with Hillary Clinton in 1981 when Dorothy Stuck and I attended a conference analyzing Bill Clinton's loss to Frank White in a race for the Arkansas governorship. Hillary made an impressive presentation at the conference, and we were so impressed, we invited her to lunch and a friendship was born. She and Dorothy then served together on the board of the Southern Development Bancorporation. Dorothy and I formed a small informal

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group of women during the 1980s who sometimes came by our office before work to share experiences and ideas. Hillary, then Arkansas's First Lady, and Joycelyn Elders, later to become U.S. Surgeon General, came when they could spare the time. I was impressed with Hillary then and I remain even more so today.

I served two volunteer appointments in Bill Clinton's Arkansas administration. Because of my interest in education, I was appointed to chair the Technical Education Advancement Study Committee to make recommendations to the state legislature on the improvement of post-secondary technical education in Arkansas. I also served on the Governor's Advisory Council on Vocational-Technical Education. I then worked briefly in the Arkansas transition team office as he transitioned from Arkansas to the presidency. It is a still a joy to see him come home now on frequent occasions to the Clinton Presidential Center and hear him still talking Arkansas politics.

In the early days of 1993 when Bill Clinton became President, Hillary was swarmed with a mountain of correspondence. She invited five friends - including Dorothy Stuck and me - to spend several days in the White House to help clear the backlog of correspondence she had received. She joined us in the evenings in the White House when she could.

The experience was memorable on its own, but was made even more so by a previous experience. I had worked one summer in Washington, DC years before, while I was in college. Many was the time I had stood outside the White House gates and wondered what it

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was like inside. Little did I know that years later I would find out. What an experience Hillary gave us all.

In addition to an abiding interest in politics and government, I have also taken time to volunteer in other areas of interest and concern. I have served on the boards of the Butler Center for Arkansas Studies, the Arkansas Women's History Institute, Encore for Women's Health, and the University of Central Arkansas Foundation.

As a 16-year breast cancer survivor, I have served as president of the Arkansas Affiliate of Susan G. Komen for the Cure. In a fundraising effort, I convinced three other breast cancer survivors to participate in a project I called 4 Survivors, 4 Rivers 4 a Cure. Together, we novices rafted four white water rivers in Arkansas, Colorado and Utah, raising \$10,000 for the cause and risking life and limb. We four agree we wouldn't take anything for the experience, but we also wouldn't do it again.

On a calmer note, I am currently a member of the advisory board of the Archives of Women of the Southwest at Southern Methodist University, my graduate school alma mater where I received master's degrees in liberal arts and in public administration. We are assisting the SMU Central University Libraries in funding and maintaining archives of women and women's organizations throughout the southwest.

In January 2013, Dorothy Stuck and I joined the other Arkansas Travelers for a reunion of the group which campaigned across the country for Bill Clinton and

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later for Hillary Clinton in their runs for the presidency. The Clinton Presidential Center in Little Rock is now featuring a special Arkansas Travelers exhibit. I invite anyone traveling this way to stop by and see what citizens can do in politics when fervent about a candidate or a cause.

I entered the world of work at a time when it was extremely difficult for women to obtain professional positions, but since this was soon followed by the feminist movement, I credit it with opening doors. Also, I have been fortunate to have had women role models along the way such as Dorothy Stuck, Diane Blair, and Elly Peterson, also a dear friend and former co-chair of ERAmerica. I had only to observe them to know what I needed to do to.

Today, I enjoy retirement, volunteering for the organizations I have mentioned. Ken, too volunteers with the AT&T Pioneers who have made him an honorary member for helping them build wheel-chair ramps for persons in need in the Little Rock area. We also enjoy traveling and go to the West whenever we can. We sometimes spend part of the summer in Colorado or Arizona.

It has been quite a ride, the rafting experience especially. I have participated in the 1960s-70s women's movement while pursuing my passion for women's equality, including their history, education, employment and health. Thanks VFA!

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### **KAPPIE SPENCER**

I was born in Owatonna, MN on August 3, 1925, the fourth of five siblings, and "another" girl. With but one brother, my parents were encouraged to "try again" for a boy, who arrived when I was six. The message I received was that there was something wrong with being a girl.



But I remember how proud my mother was on every Election Day because she voted! She never missed a vote in her lifetime--nor have I. Together my parents laid the groundwork for my devout feminism. I didn't understand the Depression but never felt deprived because everyone was poor. We played softball with a cracked bat and a ball with the stuffing coming out.

At seven I joined the Brownie Girl Scouts and learned girls were as good as boys. That created a lifelong challenge in a friendly rivalry with my older brother, which I won as often as not. Yet it rankled when my Dad took his sons hunting and fishing while his daughters stayed home to can tomatoes and varnish the dining room floor "so it would look nice when Daddy and the boys carne home."

Then came WWII, with my wonderful brother in Patton's Third Army serving as a Scout ahead of the front lines. One day he was machine-gunned and left for dead in an open field. He lay there until dark, when he could sneak into the forest and make his way back to his own lines.

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In 1946 I learned to fly an Ercoupe, the world's safest, "spinproof" plane, and soloed on July 5 that year. When I took my cross-country flight test, I landed in Mankato, MN, headed for the flight shack for verification and was met by some very surprised men. "It's a girl!" they shouted.

I graduated from Grinnell College in 1947, where I had met my husband Mark Spencer. We were married in September, and that was the end of my flying. As all dutiful wives did, I followed Mark as he took helicopter training in New York, then entered FBI training in Quantico, VA, assignments in Savannah, GA, Florence, SC and finally Washington, DC, where I found my niche--politics!

Yet Mark's mother coerced him back to his hometown, and we were back to the "dutiful wife" bit in Afton, IA. But bear it I did--for 15 rotten years. I had a fourth child, and became a Cub Scout Den mother, taught bible school along with substitute teaching and adult education. After sending two sons to MN for the last two years of school so they would have a chance at college, I rebelled. We moved to Des Moines, where in 1969 Mark became a financial planner.

My mother had died in 1965, and her will stipulated her estate was to be divided into five equal parts. One trust was set up for "Daughter A," another for "Daughter B" and a third for "Daughter C." The next line said "and my sons will be given their inheritance outright." The daughters would be "given" their money for expenses for themselves, their children, and their "last illness and burial." When the wills were written, my sisters were 28

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and 29 and I was 20; our two brothers, deemed capable of handling their money immediately, were 14 and 21. Further, if my parents had another son by birth or adoption, that child at any age would be eligible for his share immediately. But that was the conventional wisdom of the day.

That's when I wrote "Whose Money Is It Anyway?" a 16-page exposé of those practices that I distributed widely through the financial planning industry. I have continued to distribute it at conferences and other venues. Based on my story Congresswoman Louise Slaughter sponsored the "Fair Treatment of Women by Financial Advisors" bill which passed the House unanimously, was revised in the Senate, and incorporated into the Financial Services Bill of 1999.

After moving to Des Moines I continued my work in Girl Scouting, and was horrified when a small group of businessmen decided to build a hog confinement just south of our new open-air units and dining room. I mobilized farmers and others who had made odor complaints, and we requested a hearing at the Department of Environmental Quality. We lost that battle, but I learned valuable lessons -- including the art of lobbying and using governmental units to apply pressure when needed. I also discovered that women were routinely ignored for appointments on those boards and commissions.

I had joined the American Association of University Women in 1975, and when I decided to run for the Iowa Senate in 1976 I also joined the National Women's Political Caucus. I ran as a Republican against the

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Senate Majority Leader in a district with only 15% Republican registration. I ran a campaign on a shoestring and lost, of course, but again found the cards stacked against women.

We could not even be found in the telephone directory! In 1977 as an elected delegate to the National Women's Conference in Houston I was inspired by Betty Friedan, Bella Abzug, Gloria Steinem and all the Big Wheels in the women's movement.

In 1978 I became the Legislative Chair for Iowa, and by 1980 had been appointed to the national Legislative Committee for the American Association of University Women. Then in 1982 I became the National Legislative Chair, followed by two terms as AAUW Director for Women's Issues. At the same time I served on the Board of Directors for the NWPC.

First it was in Iowa, when phone companies began soliciting married women's names in their directories, I something they had fought for years. With my testimony at an IA Commerce Commission hearing I convinced them they were actually losing revenue by this exclusion. That battle was won and soon the practice spread nationwide.

Next it was the fight to get newspapers to list mothers of the bride as something other than "Mrs. Him," followed by listing women by name in anniversary notices. The obituaries were sexist as well. One example from my files says, for example, "Ronald Jones lost his wife when she was killed by a car on Thursday. My husband, Mark who had always supported my work, died in 1986.

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Probably my most important gift to women was the National Gender Balance Project which I founded in 1988 based on an Iowa law made mandatory in 1987. I created a packet and blanketed the U.S. with those packets containing a complete battle plan for getting the law passed in any state, and by 1995 it had already been passed in at least 15 states. Most recently it was brought down to the local level in Iowa--again the first in the nation. I also distributed them at state and national conventions, and even in Europe and Asia. I did a two-hour workshop in Huairou, China at the Fourth World Conference for Women. One result was the formation of the Florida Women's Consortium.

I used the networking system on a number of issues, and created packets for targeted mailings. In 1992 the Christian Action Council threatened a boycott against Pioneer Hi-Bred Seed Corn International for having supported nine Planned Parenthood Clinics in Southern Iowa (none of which offered abortion services). Pioneer buckled and withdrew their \$25,000 annual contribution.

I immediately produced a 20-page "Operation Red Alert"--another "How To" piece. I mobilized women farm owners nationwide and sent the packet to women's health networks, women's agenda networks, and presidents of national women's organizations. We got results! The mother of the CEO, who had been a founder of Planned Parenthood in Iowa, sent \$25,000 to Planned Parenthood. Other companies and individuals sent gifts and the health clinics survived.

I have attended countless ERA Marches, Marches for Women's Lives, rallies, and presented workshops in

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Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, and China. Among issues I have fought for or against are Comparable Worth, The Railroad Retirement Act, Unnecessary Prophylactic Mastectomies, RU486, Industrial Homework, Title IX, Affirmative Action, Reproductive Rights, the Lilly Ledbetter Act, Female Genital Mutilation, and the ERA--always the ERA.

Today I live in Sarasota, Fl. I am a life trustee for Grinnell College, and the 2010 recipient of their honorary Doctor of Laws degree. This year I met with two classes at Iowa State University on Women in Politics, and with one at Grinnell on Social Justice Activism. In February 2011 I will be doing a special presentation on the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) for the young women of UNIFEM, who will be walking in Sarasota to create an awareness of Violence Against Women. I will be there walking with them.

I am a volunteer/member/supporter of Planned Parenthood (Iowa and Florida), Girl Scouts (Iowa and Florida), American Association of University Women, Women's Resource Center, United Nations Fund for Women (UNIFEM), National Women's History Museum. I furnish monetary support for the Center for the American Woman in Politics, Iowa State University Carrie Chapman Catt Center, and the Iowa Women's Archives, which will be receiving all of my papers.

For fun, besides music and art I enjoy my four children - Greg, Gary, Dane and Carol; my 8 grandchildren and 3 great grandchildren.

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I am still writing Letters to the Editor, writing to my Governor, Congressional delegation, and to special legislators in many states. I have written special handouts for national and state conventions, among them "It's a Man's World Unless Women Vote," "Women Power: It's a Capitol Idea," "Don't Leave It All To The Experts," and "Iowa Equal Rights Amendment: Test your Perceptions."

Much of my work was painstakingly done on an old Royal Portable. An electric typewriter eventually made life easier, and then the computer, and now the Internet. But even without all the latest conveniences I would still be making waves.

**SAD NEWS:** Kappie was full of life when we talked about her bio a few weeks ago. After the holidays I tried reaching her for a final edit, but she didn't answer emails or phone calls. I thought perhaps she was traveling, but why wouldn't she respond to emails? I called Sonia Fuentes, also a resident of Sarasota. Sonia learned that Kappi is gravely ill. Sudden pains turned out to be an especially virulent lung cancer. I'm in touch with her daughter, Carol, who says it is just a matter of time before Kappie leaves us. VFA is glad to pay tribute to Kappie while she is still with us.

As we salute another great pioneer feminist we also remind all of you how important it is to leave instructions to your family to notify your friends in VFA when you are unable to do so yourself.

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### KAREN SPINDEL

Karen Spindel was a full-time female undergraduate mechanical engineering student at George Washington University in the mid-1960s.

In 1969, her senior year, Karen went with her Student Chapter of the Society of Mechanical Engineers on a tour to Bethlehem Steel in Sparrows Point, MD.

When she arrived with her male classmates, Bethlehem Steel personnel prohibited her from touring the plant because she was a woman. They positioned an armed guard in the seat next to her on the bus while the rest of the students toured.



In 1968, Karen earned a "women's badge" from Tau Beta Pi, the Engineering Honor Society, which at that time did not accept women as full members. A year later, when the rules changed, she became the first woman member of Tau Beta Pi from GWU. After her graduation in 1969 Karen faced and fought rampant job discrimination against women, and finally became an engineer for Robins Engineers & Constructors in Totowa, NJ. One of her first assignments was to design overland conveyors for Bethlehem Steel.

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Miss Karen S. Spindel was awarded Women's Badge No. 573 by District of Columbia Gamma at George Washington University on May 4. She is from Passaic, New Jersey, and will be a senior in mechanical engineering this fall. She is a member of the A.S.M.E. and holds a George Washington University Trustee Scholarship. She is the only female undergraduate engineering student at the University and has written about her unique situation for the engineering magazine. In her spare time she enjoys the cultural and political benefits of Washington. During summers she is a counselor for pre-nursery school children in New Jersey.



KAREN S.  
SPINDEL

This article and picture appeared in the July 1968 issue of The Bent of Tau Beta Pi. I received a Tau Beta Pi Engineering Honor Society Women's Badge my Junior year at GWU. If male, I would have become a member but in 1968 they didn't allow women. Instead they gave us badges and printed our pictures in the magazine. A year later, during my Senior year, Tau beta Pi voted to accept, rather than except, women; and I had the

pleasure of becoming the first female inductee from GWU. - Note: Tau Beta Pi was founded in 1885. When I earned the Women's Badge in 1968, I became the 573rd women's badge holder in 83 years since Tau Beta Pi's founding. That gives you an idea of how hostile the profession was toward women both at the university and employment levels.

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In the mid-1970s she organized a protest at the Passaic Public Library, demanding that women be allowed to get library cards in their own names. "Prior to that protest, women had to declare their marital status and use Mrs. followed by their husband's name on their library cards!"

In 1972 she joined Passaic County NOW, served as membership coordinator for 20 years, and is still active today. She has lectured on the ERA "at any location that would invite us".

Says Karen, "During my 30 years-plus of activism, I have organized marched and rallied in New Jersey and DC and written enough letters on topics such as equal rights, sex discrimination and gender stereotyping to fill a book."

Karen lives in Clifton, NJ where she is completing and seeking a publisher for her chronicle of growing up feminist and frustrated in a sexist society. She is also a partner in a clinical quality software company, Database Place LLC which is in its infancy.

Karen is the proud mother of two feminist daughters. Samantha, 37, has a masters in counseling and runs an "I can problem solve" program for at risk students in Paterson, NJ. Rachel, 20, is a Junior at Smith College majoring in politics. (September 1986, in Seneca Falls! One of the best gifts I ever received was being honored by daughter Samantha with a page in the Women's Hall of Fame Book of Lives and Legacies for my 50th Birthday.)

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### MARY STANLEY

I was born in 1927. My parents were in vaudeville. When it was time for me to be born, they returned to my mother's hometown of East Grand Fork, Minnesota. But the hospital was across the river in Grand Forks, North Dakota, so I guess you could say I was born in North Dakota.



pictured: Alice Powell and Mary Stanley

Vaudeville died shortly thereafter and my parents settled in New York City. My father became a theatrical agent for William Morris. My mother, a real beauty, became a manicurist at the Best Barber Shop in Times Square. There she met and fell in love with the boss' son and divorced my father when I was 3, and married my stepfather (whose father was the first manager of Jack Dempsey). My stepfather legally adopted me. Both my fathers were Jewish. My Catholic mother sent me to Catholic school.

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We lived in the Bronx on the east side of the Grand Concourse not too far from Yankee Stadium and always hated the Yankees. Why? They wouldn't let the kids go in free when there were empty seats while the Giants always did. And we used to slip under the turnstile at the elevated train with permission because the man knew we were not going any place.

The first place I go to eat when In NYC is the Carnegie Deli (it must be the Jewish part of me). As a child I went to Mass and Communion every school day morning. My mother gave me 10 cents for breakfast after church and instead of going to the bakery I went to the Jewish Deli next door, where they grilled the hotdogs in the window; every morning I would go for my hot dog with sauerkraut and a celery tonic. One day a neighbor lady saw me there and told my mother what I was eating for breakfast. I was enjoying it so much at 7:30 in the morning that my mother laughed and said "That's my Mary." It was okay by her. Memories..... Memories

During this marriage, my mother endured nine miscarriages and finally gave birth to my sister, Joyce (now deceased). They divorced when Joyce was three years old and my mother moved us to Milwaukee, Wisconsin. I was 14 years old and went to work immediately as a waitress. My mother had to go to beauty school to get her license, as there was no reciprocity between NY and Wisconsin.

During World War II, Milwaukee was a popular Navy weekend "leave" town. I met a young sailor three years my senior and thought I was in love. We married in 1943 and were together two days before he went overseas. I

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had to leave my Catholic High School because I was now a married woman. When he came home from the war two years later, we had three children in three-and-a-half years. He didn't work; I did. He was abusive and I was miserable, especially when the police were called and would do nothing because they did not see him beating me. Finally, one night after a police visit, and after all had gone to sleep, I took my three children and left, hiding until a few days later. My ex-husband was subsequently committed to a mental asylum.

I got the money to go to Portland, Oregon, where my mother lived and where I had a good job waiting for me. I started work as a waitress at the Best Seafood Restaurant in downtown Portland, working nights (5 pm to 1 am). During the day my grandmother took care of my children, none of school age. My eldest was three when I left my husband, my middle one-and-a-half and youngest three months. Guess what? I was pregnant again – thankfully I was referred to a physician who performed a safe, clean, although illegal abortion in his office for \$100. How could I raise the three children I already had, much less another?

To increase my income, I went to work days in direct door-to-door sales. With my outgoing personality, I was a natural. I made enough to buy a three-story house. One of my customers at the restaurant was a progressive bank manager who financed the mortgage. I rented out the three rooms on the top floor to three working women, and this rent made the payments. My family, mother and grandmother shared the first two floors. One of my renters recommended me to her boss of a new freezer food-plan company new to Oregon. I

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was impressed at the interview and gave it a try, My success at these sales was such that I left my waitress job to work fulltime for the Rich Food Plan.

A promise was made that in six months the most successful agent would become sales manager. If that promise had been kept, it would have been me. But they brought in a man from out of town to be the manager. Looking at the sales records, he was surprised that the top name on the board was a woman. He asked me how I did it, and being a smart aleck, I told him, "Put a ring on my finger and you'll find out." He did. We got married three months later in 1953 and lived mostly happily for over 47 years until his death in 2000.

Jay Stanley legally adopted my children and we were a family. He had more confidence in my ability than I myself did and lovingly pushed me forward and joined in my interests. I had not voted—Jay was a Republican and made me become one, too. He was very knowledgeable politically, but not active. The first years of our marriage we were on the road selling ourselves and "time" for a radio program. We had a client that was in our old freezer-food business; we worked for him for about six months and moved to Phoenix, Arizona, and then in 1961 to Fresno, California to open our own frozen food business.

Jay ran the sales and I ran the business. My first big decision after arranging the financing at the bank was to hire a meat cutter. The man we inherited would not take orders from a woman and he quit – so what! I hired a better man. By 1964, our business was going well. Barry Goldwater, my Arizona hero, was running for President. I

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joined the Republican Women's Club, got active locally, then statewide, and was co-chair of my county's Ronald Reagan campaign for Governor of California. We won.

Now comes the best part of my long life. Ronald Reagan appointed me to the California Commission on the Status of Women. During the years I served I was the only businesswoman on the commission and the only woman from the Central Valley. Fresno and the Valley are not Los Angeles, nor do the women have the same opportunities as those in L.A. or San Francisco. I believe my lack of formal education allowed me to relate more to the average woman in those days. I was elected treasurer by the other commissioners, planned and prepared the budget and as a result, was invited to speak before women's groups, like the Business and Professional Women, AAUW and others.

I joined NOW in 1967, the year they adopted the ERA as a goal. My feminism and commitment came full circle with my entry into the National Women's Political Caucus in 1971. I had joined local NOW before there was an NWPC, if only to prove that Republicans can be feminists, too. I still maintain my NOW membership but FRESNO, my home town no longer has a chapter. Our NWPC-Fresno chapter has 124 members, we meet monthly at a dinner meeting and 45-60 attend every month.

Millie Jeffrey, the 3rd Pres of NWPC changed my life by asking me to develop a logo for the caucus so that we could wear the logo on a pin as NOW did to identify each other. Jill Ruckelhaus gave a fabulous speech at the 1977 Conference. Using her photo and her wording I

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developed a poster, which is still used today. We have printed and sold over 12,000 posters about the event.

Many years have passed since those early exciting days of the Political Caucus. Today there are more and more women running for office --and winning. But there is still very much to do. One day we will have a woman president and there will be as many women in Congress as men. Until that time our work goes on. And, as long as I have the energy I will be doing as much as I can to make it happen.

JILL RUCKELHAUS COMMENTS ABOUT MARY: I would document the life story of Mary Stanley, who still, to this day, travels the country promoting pro-choice women with her merchandise table and passion for electing women to office. I believe strongly that feminism is the movement of many movements, the story of individuals, each with deeply personal experiences, diverse and profound. All told, our stories speak many truths. Jill Ruckelhaus.

Mary has made great friends among the women she helped elect and for whom she did pro bono fundraising BEFORE they became national Icons --- including Donna Brazile, Senators Dianne Feinstein, Barbara Boxer, Olympia Snowe, and Nancy Kassebaum; Congresswomen Maxine Waters and Jackie Speire. And, she headed the Republicans for Geraldine Ferraro for vice president campaign.

The Fresno Chapter she cofounded elected the first woman to the state senate and has 3 members who served in the Assembly in this RED district -- the mayor,

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a council member and the County Sheriff and District Attorney and the tax collector, auditor/ controller. Three members are on the Board of County Supervisors, three on the school board. All, Republicans and Democrats, are prochoice progressives.

Mary has received many honors for her work, including VFA's Medal of Honor which she received in August, 2009 in Stockton, CA. Jacqui Ceballos

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### CHARLENE SUNESON

With four years of elementary school and carpenter papers, my father Oscar left Sweden for the U.S. in 1923. Using Chicago as a home base, he went wherever there was work, ultimately becoming a contractor specializing in walk-in coolers in food establishments. My mother Violet Chappell, born in Zion, Illinois, was raised in a fundamentalist religion in which only males are congregation leaders. After two years of high school she worked as a bank clerk, but left her job to follow my father. I was born in 1934 in Waukegan, Illinois.



As a homemaker my mother became severely depressed. Her withdrawal meant my younger sister Beverly and I had far more physical freedom than most. Sports were permitted and I took up ice-skating. However, all reading material that had the potential to conflict with my mother's religion (practically everything except numbers and calculating) was forbidden. Thus, my fascination with charts and statistics ensued and my sister came to excel in math. Also acceptable was an elementary school home mechanics program where girls and boys practiced sewing, electrical connections, carpentry, etc., in the same classes.

High school students took home or shop classes based on their gender. I enrolled in foods and clothing because my friends did. The school newspaper reported on my

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swimming, diving, bowling, and horseback riding. My sister's sports included championship baseball. One summer the two of us were left alone at a cottage my father had built in Wisconsin. Having the freedom to read a book about a religious man, I realized that not only did other religions lack merit as taught, so did the one in which we were raised. However, it took several days before there was the courage to face that what one internalized as righteous (or desirable as an occupation), may not be, especially when it restricted women. I changed to a college preparatory program taking every science course and received the Bausch + Lomb Science Award upon graduation.

Next was the University of Chicago. Most meaningful were the readings of historical debates showing that the opposition to equality on the basis of class (among whites) was similar to that between races. The bad news was that there was nothing relating to inequality based on sex.

Looking for adventure and a career, upon earning my Bachelor's Degree I joined the U.S. Navy. After becoming a line officer, I was assigned to the Pentagon and the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations for administrative and communications jobs. Wives of successful naval officers, previously naval officers themselves, told me, "Whatever you do, don't get married." I took their advice and continued my adventurous career, "hopping" memorable flights aboard military aircraft.

Personnel work in Kodiak, Alaska followed. Next was another personnel job in San Diego where my sister also relocated and worked on safety factors of nuclear reactors at General Atomic. I took a course in oceanography at Scripps Institute.

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No longer content with a shore job to which women Navy line officers were confined, I requested and, incredibly, in 1961 became the first woman line officer to be assigned to sea duty. I expected the negative reaction from Navy men, but was saddened by those Navy women who essentially ratified their traditional niches. On board, I was not permitted on the bridge or in the engine room. During the Cuban Missile Crisis we left the Pacific via the Panama Canal loaded with supplies and waited in New Orleans. I was told that if the ship went to Cuba, I would not.

Shortly thereafter, although I was "a credit to the WAVES and to the naval service," the Navy announced it no longer would assign women line officers to sea duty, nor would there even be a sea-going code in my record. Not until the height of the Women's Movement and a forward looking Chief of Naval Operations did the assignment of non-medical women to Navy ships resume.



Needless to say, I now had a heightened interest in women's status and the sociological and psychological means by which women were kept "in their place." In my next assignment, recruiting for women officers in Ohio and western Pennsylvania, a senior at a Catholic women's college told me her degree would be in "Hospital Secretary!" Because the Catholic hospital

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across the street needed secretaries, her college channeled women into these jobs.

I recruited more women officer candidates than there had been in the past. Unfortunately, during the last month of my recruiting tour, the first acts of a new area director of naval recruiting were to downgrade the women officer program and direct that I write a memo apprising my replacement of her work circumstances. He was not happy with a portion of my memo and made a negative entry in my fitness report, which meant that after three more years I would be required to leave active duty.

During the next two years I was an aide to an admiral at a NATO base in Naples, Italy. However, adventure was no longer sufficiently rewarding. Lois Byrum, an earlier Naples naval officer destined to be a charter member of Twin Cities, Minnesota NOW, sent me notice of the formation of the National Organization for Women. It was time to professionally address the problem of sex discrimination. An Italian sociologist recommended that my final Navy year (from mid-1967) be in New York City, the place most likely to facilitate my transition to change-oriented goals.

That last year I worked at another personnel job, studied for a Master's in Sociology at the New School for Social Research (with a couple courses on women), and joined the newly created New York NOW. I was in awe of those creating NOW's Bill of Rights at the 1967 NOW Conference in Washington, D.C. and their courage in defying both the religious right by adopting reproductive rights and the Labor left by adopting the Equal Rights Amendment, the former with input from Muriel Fox and the latter facilitated by the presence of suffragist Alice Paul.

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My first New York City NOW task was assisting Kate Millett in the writing of "Token Learning" (on ways women's colleges short-changed their students) by providing data on the standings of these schools. My first office was Legislative and Political Affairs Committee Coordinator. Committee members, including Beth Buchter, Cindy Cisler, Jim Clapp, Nancy Erickson, Donna Loercher, Beverly Olman, Lorraine Rechill, Marilyn Schnauffer, Carol Turner, & Ann Wallace, each with their own issue, sent legislative goals to mayoral candidates for their support. When candidates did not reply, we held demonstrations in front of their offices, which produced immediate response. The ERA Coordinator, Ann Wallace, arranged actions in Washington, D.C. to get the ERA out of committee. A trip to San Francisco included a sit-in with Betty Friedan and a couple dozen others to open the Squire Room at the Fairmont Hotel to women. I was elected Chair of the New York City Board. My first political campaign contribution was to Shirley Chisholm when she ran for Congress in 1968.

Upon my father's death in 1970, my sister and I went to a Brotherhood of Carpenters union office in Chicago to place a death notice and obtain a burial benefit. As we entered, a union employee yelled, "We don't hire women carpenters." When we did not leave, he repeated his outburst. This was five years after such discrimination had been outlawed. Having already completed my Master's, I moved with my mother to California, where my sister remained.

One of the first of many Los Angeles actions was protesting the omission of women from Labor Department Affirmative Action regulations. In 1971 I became L.A. NOW's Legislative Action Committee Coordinator and later the Southern California Legislative Coordinator. Jean Stapleton arranged for the Los

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Angeles Times to publicize our "Barefoot and Pregnant" awards to legislators with the worst voting records on women. In response to a Catholic bishop excommunicating women who had abortions, I appeared on television advising viewers that NOW was giving the bishop its (mythical) recruiting award because his actions resulted in new NOW members.

Eliciting a promise from State Senator Mervyn Dymally to introduce "Marriage as Equal Partnership" legislation, I proposed that both spouses, rather than the husband in an intact marriage, be in control of community property. Los Angeles NOW member Lynn Peterson testified in the State Senate on behalf of this change. Other groups in Sacramento became involved, resulting in the enacted compromise that "either" spouse could be in control. Years later the law was amended to require that "either" spouse had to act in a fiduciary manner toward the other.

To help California women identifying with different types of activism all contribute to the ratification of the ERA, we developed "Legislative Guidelines" featuring various strategies (letter writing by Gigi Thousandfriend, lobbying by Geri Sherwood and Mary Samis, demonstrations by Lynn Peterson, and unorthodox actions by Rebecca Anne Gould). There were problems from both political parties. I did a zap action leafleting the plates at a Republican Women's dinner because the group had not yet supported the ERA. On the other hand, it was necessary to threaten to organize a swing district to vote Republican upon a Senate vacancy in order to produce a domino effect to remove a Democratic roadblock. Three days later the Senate voted to ratify the ERA.

In addition to local involvement, I was a National NOW Board member from 1971 to 1974 and National

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Secretary from 1974 to 1975. Early on I created an extensive ERA time chart showing the limited amount of legislative session time remaining in the states that had not yet ratified. However, my most important contribution at the national level was helping NOW move from a position of abstaining from political action to that of *using* political action, by obtaining an IRS ruling enabling NOW to take political action without losing tax-exempt status, the first or one of the first in the nation upon new criteria.

My day job, through all of this, was that of Equal Employment Specialist (Investigator) in the Los Angeles District Office of the EEOC enforcing Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which outlawed employment discrimination based on race, national origin, religion, and sex. Some at the EEOC were unsupportive of the anti-sex discrimination aspect of the law. After indicating my concern that another investigator who said she "would not want to fly in a plane piloted by a woman" was handling sex discrimination cases, I received proportionately more sex discrimination cases than other investigators.

A promotion to Senior Equal Opportunity Specialist was then denied because I had investigated more sex discrimination cases and fewer race/national origin cases than others. An appeal to the Civil Service Commission ultimately resulted in promotion to Senior Specialist and a meaningful back pay award, "possibly the first EEO monetary award from the Civil Service Commission" according to my attorney, Bette Bardeen. In 1975 I received the Everywoman Award from the American Civil Liberties Union for my efforts to have the EEOC give attention to sex discrimination.

Promotion to Supervisory Equal Opportunity Specialist came at the first opportunity. The demands of this

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higher job precluded active involvement with NOW, although I always remained a member and took action on women's behalf at my workplace whenever warranted. As the Head of Los Angeles Systemic Programs, I insured that sex discrimination situations were on an equal footing with race and national origin counterparts and insisted on sex by race/national origin analyses. Long wishing I had a PhD, as soon as I was eligible, I retired.

During these years, my sister, then the owner of a bicycle shop in Oregon, built a beautiful home, literally with her own hands. Beverly and her husband Carl were still kayaking at age 75. While my mother's depression lessened somewhat over the years, her continuing practice of destroying anything conflicting with her beliefs meant she lived alone until shortly before her death at age 91 in 2000.



Acceptance into the University of Southern California's Sociology PhD program, with concentrations in gender, aging, and quantitative methods, enabled me to pursue my equal opportunity interests regarding the continuing

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exclusion of women from non-traditional physically demanding jobs. Contrary to what common knowledge might predict, controlling for relevant variables my dissertation showed that as physical demands of occupations increased, job satisfaction of women and older workers increased. A favorite story found during my "comparative historical" literature review was about a miner who had a sermon preached against her in church. She replied that her mining did not *cause* her divorce; instead it *enabled* her divorce.

After receiving my Sociology PhD and a certificate in Gender Studies, I became active again in NOW and used my membership to help military women when a Congressman who had worked to block opportunity for women in the armed forces was nominated to be Secretary of the Army. Even so, baby step by baby step, opportunities have increased for women in the military. Unfortunately, the same may not be said for women in civilian construction trades. Although the Brotherhood of Carpenters website now has a section on "Sisters in the Brotherhood," women remain less than 2% of the craft. I am unaware of any instances where construction crafts have assumed responsibility for their pasts regarding women and have self-imposed and attained serious affirmative action goals.

Currently operating as an independent sociologist, I am gathering material on the ongoing channeling of women's energies by those deploying "celebration of what men have allowed women to be" strategies. Hopefully, the more women who know their history in this regard, the fewer there will be "doomed to repeat it."

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### AL SUTTON

It is difficult to imagine that the year I was born - in 1933 - was only 13 years after women in the United States had the right to vote. I was raised in a Middle Eastern, predominantly



patriarchal community, in Brooklyn, New York, that imposed limitations on my two sisters and my mother. After I chose medicine as a career, I found a similar patriarchy: there was only one woman in my medical school class of one hundred.

As a physician, I practiced Pathology at State University of New York but maintained an active interest in the arts. I trained as a filmmaker under cinematographer, Arnold Eagle at the New School in New York; and as an actor at the Warren Robertson Theatre Workshop, New York. My medical documentary, "Fraternal Twins: The First Year of Life," was widely distributed to universities in the 1980s. Later, I produced and performed the title role in the award winning film, "The Poet Englestrom"; and I wrote, produced and played the lead role in, "Five Valid Reasons for Murdering Lisa," a satirical film exploring the roots of misogyny.

My stage work includes the lead role in "Sing, America: Norman Mailer in His Own Words" at the Actors Studio; "Bringing the Fishermen Home" by Deb Margolin, at Dixon Place. As co-founder of the Perfectly Frank Cabaret Theatre, we produced over 40 new plays, mostly in downtown New York venues, including Dixon Place, Here, Home for Contemporary Theatre, and Le

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Poeme. Currently, a feature film, "Caballo," is in development.

Since retiring from medicine I have found other interests, which, like the medical ethic, fall under the rubric of "Do No Harm." Most recently, I have explored the proclivity of our species for killing our fellow members. This interest was stimulated by a book entitled, "The Most Dangerous Animal" by David Livingstone Smith, with whom I'm collaborating on a mixed media project. The project deplores our culture of violence, citing the killing of 200 million people over the last 100 years, through war and acts of genocide. The project's goal is to create a movement towards a saner society.

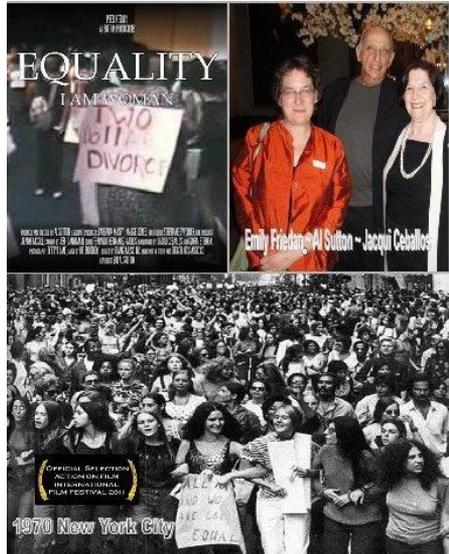
This project feels like a natural sequel to a documentary I completed in 2010, entitled "Equality, I am Woman" based on footage I shot of the Woman's March for Equality in New York City in August 1970, a march that celebrated the 50th anniversary of women's right to vote. Equality is an ideal I've actively pursued throughout the years: the Civil Rights march with Southern Christian Leadership Conference in 1970 from Macon to Atlanta protesting police brutality in Augusta; the first Gay Liberation march in June, 1970, which was a reaction to the police action at Stonewall Bar in 1969; a protest against the proposed neo-Nazi march in Skokie, Illinois, in the 1970s. (upper right corner of photo: Emily Friedan, Al Sutton, Jacqui Ceballos)

Women's equality should be a natural right, yet it has been politicized, by tying it to religion, economy and birthing rights, rendering the issue almost unrecognizable. For a woman, though, the issue of

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equality is complex: she must maintain her own personal emotional and psychological stability, so that her belief in her right to equality is not mitigated. Often, she must also defend herself against personal attacks that she receives along the way. Thus, she must take care of herself while moving the world forward.

I dedicated "Equality, I Am Woman" to my mother, Luna Sutton, who was born in 1910 and passed away in the waning hours of 2010. My mother's life spanned an eventful century, where she observed the evolution of the rights of women and minorities. She was my greatest inspiration.



The women's movement has always been confronted with a male-controlled society that is threatened by its claims for equality. In 1970, the media did its best to ridicule the Women's March for Equality in New York City as being comprised of a handful of misguided women, using the worst pejoratives. In its coverage of that event, The New York Times underestimated the numbers of the marchers by a factor of 10.

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With men, there seems to be a disconnect in our behavior that disables our empathy, and allows us to pursue our own personal entitlement to the detriment of women. One could also describe this male quality as a cocktail of expedience, ambition, self-centeredness, arrogance, blindness or a kind of stupidity. After all, what could be more basic to our lives in this world than the notion of equality? Our society has been able to make wonderful advances because we have cooperated with one another. We need our neighbors. We need our mates, our partners, not as slaves, but as equals, because it is the right thing to do and because, as a society, we are no stronger than our weakest links.

Misogyny, in my belief, is the hostile, emotional underbelly of man's resistance to accepting women's equality. A man may vote correctly, share in the household chores, and maintain a tokenism of being a fair mate; but if he does not examine his deepest feelings, he will not be free of the hostility that fuels gender inequality. The male perspective is formed from infancy. His mother appears omniscient and omnipotent, creating life and nurturing it. As he matures, he develops awe in the face of her natural gifts, her gracefulness, often leading to a lifelong obsession with women's sensuality. So it is not unusual that some men are resentful and jealous of her. Someone said, "The measure of a society is the level of intelligence and maturity of the majority of its members." We still have a long way to go to achieve an equal society, but we are on the way.

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*PS from Jacqui:*

*In early 2010 Jeanne McGill, publicist representing Al Sutton, discovered the film he'd taken of the 1970 march, and then somehow found me. As head of New York NOW's Strike Committee I'd planned many of the August 26th events and remember that march as the joyous culmination of the most exciting day in the early feminist movement. Thus began several months reaching out to many who had taken part in the march. As the memories poured in, Jeanne was inspired to put them into a book, soon to be published. Meanwhile Al edited the film, adding Helen Reddy singing "I Am Woman" and Gloria Steinem and me sharing our memories and Betty Friedan's speech at the rally after the march. All this culminated in our celebration of Betty on June 17th. We are grateful to Jeanne for her major role in this little drama, and to Al for the film and his gift of over 200 copies to share with you.*

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### **KARLINE K. TIERNEY**

I was born in Auburn, New York, in 1926. My parents, Jane and Karl Koenen, already had a daughter and assumed I would be a boy, and I'd be Karl, Jr -- so they did not plan any girl's names. Thus, they added "ine" to my father's name to suit the situation. Later they had another daughter. We three sisters never had brothers.



My mother, Jane Theobald, grew up in Waterloo and Seneca Falls, NY, living back and forth between her grandmothers because her father died when she was a year old. Her father's family instilled in her a love of education and encouraged her to attend college. It did not happen, and she left school after 8th grade. But it was her determination that my sisters and I go to college, so important in our lives.

My grandfather, John Koenen, had left Germany as a teenager on the advice of his own grandfather, who told him that he should go to America, for if he stayed in Germany he would be living in wars all of the time. He settled in Oneida, N.Y., where there was a substantial German population. He later married Veronica Loosman and the two moved to Auburn, NY, where he began work at the American Locomotive Co. and thus was exempt from the military

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During World War I, my mother did clerical work in Washington, DC for military officers. Though she was there during the suffrage era, apparently she was not influenced by it. I regret that I never talked to her about those experiences, or her ideas on the suffrage movement, but she was very supportive of my work for women.

My sisters and I attended our Catholic parish elementary and Holy Family High School, and later, the all-female Nazareth College in Rochester, N.Y. Early in high school I was fascinated with science and went on to major in chemistry. It did not occur to me or the several chemistry majors in my class that there was anything strange about our taking chemistry, or that we would be inhibited in any way in such a career. I think that was one of the advantages of an all-girl college—we did not have to cope with competition from or harassment by male classmates. Part of this was the influence of WWII when demand for scientists was high and everyone was encouraged in those fields. In fact my chemistry courses were concentrated into the first three years of college because of the wartime need for scientists. The war ended prior to my graduation so there was no need to leave college.

My first experience with activism was as a college junior in 1947 when the National Student Association was forming. It was at the start of the cold war and "leftist" students (some actual Communist party members) hoped to influence and control the organization. Catholic colleges were encouraged to participate so as to counter that influence. The Dean, Sr. Teresa Marie, appointed me to attend the initial meetings at the

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University of Notre Dame in preparation for the founding of the NSA and subsequently its formation at the U. of Wisconsin, Madison. We were encouraged at Notre Dame to become active in the group and to begin recruitment of non-religious colleges in our area as a counterbalance to the "Communist" influence. I was elected Secretary of the New York State group, and began recruiting the U. of Rochester This effort also provided a greater social life for me as I met young men there. Efforts to balance the participation in the NSA were successful and it went on to be a beneficial organization. My lesson: you *can* successfully effect change.

After graduation I was employed by the Federal government at the Office of Rubber Reserve in Washington, D.C. This office had been formed to oversee the development of synthetic rubber during WWII when the Japanese had captured the sources of natural rubber in Southeast Asia. Not long after I met Martin Tierney, a former chemist at Rubber Reserve who had worked in the synthetic rubber program during the war. He had studied chemistry in Germany and his ability to speak German opened major opportunities for him at the end of the war. We were married in 1949 and settled in Naugatuck, Connecticut, where his work now took him.

The years following our marriage were very traditional—I kept house, we adopted three children and opened our home to three foreign exchange students for one year each while they obtained a high school diploma in the U.S. We also provided a temporary home for several young children. In 1952 I joined American Association of

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University Women, which provided a stimulating environment for many college-educated women who were full time homemakers, as well as for professors and other teachers. During the 1950s my husband frequently traveled to Europe and AAUW was a great source of friends and intellectual activity during his absences.

In 1965 Marty's work took us to Baton Rouge, Louisiana, where AAUW provided new friends and activities. Sylvia Roberts, the lawyer who won the case against Southern Bell for NOW in 1966, informed us about the injustice of Louisiana's laws toward women. The legal provisions of the community property system had been based on Napoleonic law and rendered women with few protections. I helped with efforts to change those laws, joined the National Organization for Women and was involved in consciousness-raising related to the status of women in general. I had begun teaching science in an elementary school. NOW was informing me of the high level of poverty among elderly women, so I resolved to work in a position that would provide a pension. My children were now grown and leaving home. I returned to college at Louisiana State U. to bring my chemistry up to date and also studied Environmental Engineering, as environmental issues were gaining prominence and the need for legislation was becoming obvious.

Led by Sylvia, Pat Evans and Margaret McIlhenny, Women in Politics was formed in the early 70s. Its purpose was to bring to light the discrimination toward women that existed especially in Louisiana. We petitioned TV and radio stations to increase the number

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of women on their staffs and worked to elect more women to the State Legislature. The group eventually evolved into the Louisiana Women's Political Caucus. I served as Chair of Women in Politics for two years.

In 1972, after more than 50 years of effort by women, Congress passed the Equal Rights Amendment -- "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any state on account of sex." Each state legislature now had to adopt this proposed amendment. To become a part of the Constitution, three quarters of the states - 38 - had to ratify the Amendment. In an afterthought Congress added that "there would be only seven years to accomplish ratification."



Karline Tierney at Nat'l ERA March 1978 Washington DC

This became a part of my life and changed -- it to this day! I set about to form a coalition of state organizations supporting ERA-- all the major women's organizations plus union, religious and justice groups. We reached a

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total of over 100 and called it ERA United, which I directed from 1972 through 1975. We opened an office, provided by one of our most ardent supporters, to coordinate lobbying efforts. We had a separate person to identify answers to objections to ERA: Francine Merritt, PhD, speech professor at Louisiana State U and a lobbying coordinator, Mary Metz, PhD, professor of French at LSU. In 1973 I became state Legislative Chair of AAUW. This provided access to whole areas of the state where women were seeking ratification. We lobbied every day the Legislature was in session. The League of Women Voters kept a hotel room across from the capitol where we'd gather for strategy sessions and rest between committee meetings. ERA did not get out of committee the first year of lobbying.

In 1972 I became a founding member of the Louisiana Women's Political Caucus along with Sybil Taylor, Roberta Madden and others who had been active in Women in Politics. The Caucus provided an extra opportunity to push for electing women. In 1974 I became a member of the Governor's Task Force on Women and Credit and was Chair of the group in 1975.

1974 Louisiana was selected by the national coalition for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERAmerica) as one of the states on which to concentrate that year. Many states had already ratified and the national coalition was now working where strong activity already existed. Several national organizations sent personnel to Louisiana to conduct lobbying and organize workshops. The National Woman's Party sent their President, Elizabeth Chittick, who had successfully influenced conservative legislators in Washington, to

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help us. Although much progress was made, we did not achieve ratification in 1974.

I had been seeking work in the chemical industry for two years. In the course of interviewing, one company informed me that they had all male employees and would like to keep it that way. After notifying the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, I was given their approval to seek legal redress. With the help of Sylvia Roberts the lawsuit was settled in my favor.

Subsequently that summer I was offered a position with Allied Chemical in their technical group. As I finished my workday I would go to the LWV hotel room to shower (my work was very dirty) and dress for the lobbying effort in the late afternoon and evening at the Capitol. In the late evening I was on the phone with ERA supporters using a separate phone line in my home paid for by the LWV. This was a hectic schedule! There were times when my husband and I would be shopping at midnight for the week's groceries. On Sunday we would cook for the entire week and bring my clothing for the week to the hotel.

\*I must pay tribute to my husband for his patience and support during this and future times. There were women engaged in working for women's rights whose husbands were not in agreement with them, legally or socially, and divorces resulted. This was very sad. My husband came to the Legislature, lobbied on several occasions and wrote letters to the Editor.

The 70s were filled with women's movement activities. Because of my AAUW activities and the ERA coalition I was giving speeches throughout the state. In 1975 I was

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appointed National Chair of the AAUW study/action topic "The 21st Century: Deciding Now".

When the committee (seven members from around the country) had its first meeting in Washington, DC, we introduced ourselves and it turned out that every member either had, or was currently engaged in lawsuits related to equal opportunity. I knew I had an activist group!

This position placed me on the AAUW Association Board and kept me in touch with the 21st Century committees throughout the nation. AAUW brought in futurists to make presentations and we put together a program on decision-making, using as our theme that women did not participate in the decision making of the organizations governing our lives and we must change that. This position also required me to travel to speak at state and regional AAUW conventions urging members to plan for and influence the 21st Century. At the end of the two-year study/action program, the committee put together a summary of actions taken by AAUW branches around the country.

In the 70s I joined and later became a Board member of the National Woman's Party, the group founded by Alice Paul to seek ratification of the Suffrage Amendment. As most feminists know, following ratification, she composed the Equal Rights Amendment for passage by Congress, but it took over 50 years to be submitted to the states for ratification.

I attended many NWP events at the Sewall-Belmont House in Washington in the 80s and 90s. Elizabeth Chittick was President all that time. Many prominent

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Washingtonians , including Cokie Roberts, Sarah McClendon, and Helen Thomas, worked with the NWP. The first woman appointed to the Supreme Court, Sandra Day O'Connor, sometimes attended our events.

In 1974 and 1975 I was a member of the Governor's Task Force on Women and Credit, chairing the group in 1975. In 1974 I received the Alumna of the Year award from Nazareth College, and in 1975 received the Advancement of Women Award from the Baton Rouge chapter of NOW.



National Women's Conference 1077 Houston. Louisiana delegation - Karline, center, voting YES to support

In 1977, with the efforts of Rep. Bella Abzug, Congress passed legislation to conduct state conferences to celebrate International Women's Year. These were to be followed by a national IWY conference scheduled for Houston, Texas, one of the most exciting and productive events of that decade. I served as Treasurer and workshop coordinator for the Louisiana IWY

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conference. Workshops covered all aspects of women's lives and attracted participation from hundreds of women from all over the state. At the end of the conference we elected a delegation to represent Louisiana at the Houston conference and I was lucky to be included.



Karline (Front line, 4<sup>th</sup> from left) Nat'l\_ERA March 1978  
Washington DC

The Houston IWY conference in November was a highlight for in the women's movement. Activists in national and state politics and prominent feminists participated in drawing up a National Plan of Action. Roslyn Carter, Betty Ford, Pat Schroeder and other female members of Congress and writers and activists of all persuasions were present. It was there I met Barbara Mikulski from Maryland, who later became the first woman U.S. Senator elected in her own right.

We continued working for ratification of ERA in Louisiana and other non-ratified states. Supporters held

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an immense march in Washington to ask Congress to extend the seven-year deadline, which it did, with 1982 for final ratification. But only 35 states had ratified by the deadline. In Louisiana we held a Jazz funeral to note the demise of the original ERA and the start of "A New Day Beyond ERA". The Amendment awaits further action. Removal of the deadline altogether was introduced as a Resolution in the Senate in 2012 by Sen. Ben Cardin of Maryland. We who are still working for ERA support that resolution.

From 1974 on I was working in the chemical industry. At Allied I had been assigned to the Environmental group to maintain compliance with the newly passed Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, the purpose of which was to minimize toxic by-products and waste and to clean up previous dumping of hazardous materials. I began similar work in 1980 at CIBA-Geigy in St. Gabriel, LA. In 1985 I was transferred to CIBA's headquarters in Ardsley, N.Y. to work on Superfund cleanup. Superfund sites were those abandoned by unknown owners as well as others caused by known companies. The companies were required to clean these sites working with the Environmental Protection Agency. This transfer resulted in our move to Ridgefield, CT.

In 1983 I ran for the AAUW board position of Director of Women's Issues and won a two year term. This again gave me a voice with members and I was able to advocate for the issues important to women in speeches nationwide.

In 1995 I joined a group from AAUW to attend the Women's Conference near Beijing, China. As a member I provided a presentation on waste minimization.

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Interface with Chinese women was interesting as they began dipping into the mysteries of a competitive economy. Newly graduated women and men had the option of working for a state enterprise or of joining independent corporations usually partly owned by Western companies. The Beijing Women's Conference was a wonderful opportunity for women from all the world to meet and work together and to again put forward plans for improving women's lives.

As we continue our efforts to ratify the ERA, I speak on the subject whenever possible and support the efforts to remove the deadline.

Karline now lives at the Charlestown Retirement Community in Catonsville, Maryland. She was the first resident to be elected to the governing Board of Directors.

\* Elizabeth Chittick had saved the Sewall Belmont house from destruction or removal to another location by using her "old fashioned" feminine wiles on the males in power -- and she also saved the house from bankruptcy. She died in 2009 at the age of 100.

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### **SHEILA TOBIAS -**

Forty years, 12 books, myriad memberships, scores of good feminist friends, later, I have no regrets.

It was great to be alive in the 1960s and 1970s (to paraphrase Wordsworth) and to be a young feminist was very heaven!

*Sheila Tobias August 2010*

I never write about my childhood, or my family. As far as I am concerned nothing significant happened to a well-adjusted and school-successful little girl until I went to college with two exceptions but they were only important in retrospect.



1) My mother dragged me to hear Eleanor Roosevelt making a train stop in our home town during the 1944 reelection campaign for FDR.

2) A volunteer Christmas children's present wrapping project brought me to an historic "Women's Institute" in my home town, no longer much used, but harboring smells, and secrets of an earlier time. "Who worked here? What did they do? Why is there no remnant of what was here?" I wondered and never did find out but the time in the Women's Institute (I was about 12) set me up to study women's history much later.

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As a teenager, I was blessed by late physical (sexual) development, so I could be a child longer and enjoy a bunch of likeminded nerdy males in my classes with whom I could interact without dating or "going steady." I was a serious student of pretty much all subjects, a lover of languages, and dreamed of living abroad. (Much influenced by WW II movies and novels and even more the memoirs of the expats of the WW I generation.)

I had a great time in college; and much adventure during 4 and half years in low level journalism jobs in Europe. Home to a graduate program I didn't like in European history, and which I left in 1965, never to return to get a PhD.

I liked women, but I liked the company of intellectually stimulating men, too, a lot. I just didn't want to limit myself to one partner, one life style, one career, or one country. Having children seemed to me like doing childhood all over again.

A big part of my emotional life (what engages other women when they have home and hearth) was taken up with men - lots of them and great relationships bringing no regrets even when they ended. That's certainly not "meat" for a feminist biography. Having decided early on NOT to marry and be a HouseWife/Mother, I was freer than most of the women of my generation (b. 1935) to explore myself, try out different men and different lives and avoid commitment of either kind: personal or professional. I married when I was 35 to someone who agreed to my conditions: no children. (That marriage lasted 10 years; my subsequent marriage is still going on after 23.)

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Now, if I wasn't a freak, I was certainly an outlier. But remember: all those WWII movies placed family off stage.

I did flounder in my 20s but only partly I thought then (and still think now) because of discrimination though I have observed (since then) that the women mentors who might have guided me (women 15 years my senior, born in 1920) were just not there. They had lost their professional jobs during the Depression and never really recovered the momentum one needs in one's twenties to succeed in one's forties. Needless to say, there were NO women professors at Harvard-Radcliffe where I went to school.

But I never blamed anyone or any misogynist system for my not getting ahead. I figured it was because I was not able to commit: I shuttled between journalism and academe: too journalistic for my graduate program, too academic (and too scared to go to a war zone) to be a journalist. Of course there were barriers, but Frances Fitzgerald - 7 years my junior - got herself to Vietnam in the mid-sixties from which she wrote a great book "Fire in the Lake." And my classmate, David Halberstam, made himself a lifelong career in the same era with "The Best and the Brightest." So I couldn't blame anyone but myself.

What made me ripe for feminism as the 1960s wound to an end was a growing respect for other women especially those I met in the course of civil rights summers in the South and anti-Vietnam war work in New York and Ithaca. I was most impressed with Southern white women whom (I wrote at the time) couldn't be part-

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time civil rights activists. Once they crossed the line, their churches and their families turned them out. Inspired by southern women of the recent past, like Lilian Smith ("Killers of the Dream") and other southern women writers, they seemed braver and more authentic than the women and girls I had grown up with; even than the WWII survivors I had met in Germany.

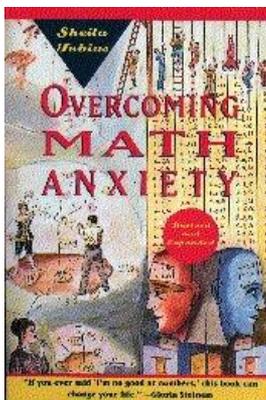
In the South I worked for a Black woman who exuded a comfort with authority my women age mates were not even aiming for. She was Lucille Whipper, the wife of a Black minister in my Upward Bound project. In selecting me to be her assistant director, Mrs. Whipper gave me my first experience working for a woman and I was nearly 30 at the time.

As my age mates and younger women emerged from anti-war and civil rights to form women's liberation cells in 1968-1970, I connected - even though I had not the litany of complaints that drove the others. The IDEAS drew me, especially the analysis of Kate Millett, whom I met and got to come to Cornell, early on, and the (I thought) interesting and contrasting leadership styles of Gloria Steinem and Betty Friedan. (I got to know both.)

I joined them not because I needed the Movement, but because they drew me in. And once in, I discovered what I had been prevented from learning how to do and to be at Harvard and beyond, namely something of a leader, and altogether committed to something other than my career. And of course, once I stopped trying to figure out what I wanted to do, there it was waiting for me to take up.

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At the time I joined the feminist movement (1968-69) I had given up my PhD but not yet Academe where I felt much at home. I was a junior Administrator at Cornell where the most recent boyfriend (later husband) was pursuing a cutting-edge PhD in environmental policy (1968!! before Earth Day). My boss, the vice president, was a physicist (I would be drawn to physicists ever after) and he gave me wide berth to do and invent programs.



One of these was a "Conference on Women" in 1969, encouraged by Kate Millett and the New York radical women. The Conference (which I audiotaped and wrote up in a short book, still in the Cornell archives) changed my life and that of scores of Cornell/Ithaca women. A Women's Studies course (one of the first) and a Women's Studies Program

(definitely one of the first) followed in the next two years and I was suddenly on the right side of history! Being a writer, I was notating all that happened, collecting syllabi of new "feminist" course materials, and meeting dozens of like minded academic and not so academic women around the country.

I collected the first women's studies syllabi into a booklet I wrongly named "Female Studies" but anticipating a continuing series of volumes, denoted it "No. 1." I attended meetings of various women's groups in the

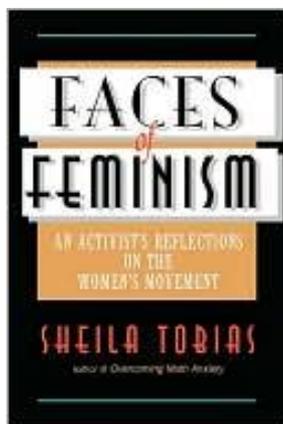
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East and began to be invited to talk about "sex role socialization" "women's studies" and eventually "*Math Anxiety*", "*Know your Weapons*" and the many other subject areas I found myself and others opening up. I made tremendous friends, far fewer enemies than one would have anticipated. I had "arrived" at a place I felt was going to be mine for a very long time.

Forty years, 12 books, myriad memberships, scores of good feminist friends, later, I have no regrets. It was great to be alive in the 1960s and 1970s (to paraphrase Wordsworth) and to be a young feminist was very heaven! *Sheila Tobias August 2010*

### From the Editor:

For the past 25 years, Sheila Tobias has been studying, writing, and lecturing on "neglected issues in science and mathematics education," supported by the Ford, Rockefeller, and Sloan Foundations and by the Research Corporation of Tucson, Arizona. Among her best known books are *Overcoming Math Anxiety*; *Succeed with Math*; *Breaking the Science Barrier*; *They're not Dumb, They're Different*; *Revitalizing Undergraduate Science: Why Some Things Work and Most Don't*; and *Rethinking Science as a Career*.



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In addition to her books on science/math anxiety and avoidance, Sheila published her own political retrospective on the Second Wave entitled *Faces of Feminism: An Activist's Reflections on the Women's Movement* (1997) reviewed in the N.Y. Times by Wendy Kaminer, and with Jean Bethke Elstain *Women, Militarism, and War: Essays in History and Social Theory* (1990).

Her demystification of weapons, war policy, and defense spending, *What Kinds of Guns are they Buying for Your Butter?* brought her to Tucson Arizona to collaborate with defense specialist Peter Goudinoff in 1981. The book was published in 1982. But Sheila stayed on in Tucson for the rest of her career. Other co-authors of that book were Bella Abzug's one-time assistant, Shelah Leader, and Shelah's husband Stefan. That is the only one of Sheila's books out of print.

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### **MAGGIE TRIPP –**

I was Born Female, but, of course, I was not Born Feminist.

Like other Philadelphia-born and bred girls, I expected to become a wife and mother; but, instinctively, I wanted to explore what else I could be. And from childhood, I had a very independent mind. (In public school, my report card was usually PP9. That's Poor for Conduct, Poor for Effort and "9" -- the best grade in the class. (I was bored.)



The very idea of staying in Philadelphia for college drove me wild. I chose Barnard College in New York City; it was the closest thing to a convent...one narrow bed, one dresser, a small desk and a set of rules on the back of the door including front gates locked at nine p.m. to seal us from the men across the street at Columbia. I lasted six weeks, then returned to Philadelphia, in time to make the January term at Penn. I went to Wisconsin and Cornell for the next two summer sessions to catch up with my normal graduation date, the Class of '42.

But Penn didn't escape my boundary-breaking nature, either. Women in those days were automatically assigned to Penn's College for Women. I wanted to learn about business. After a bit of a wrestling match with the powers that used to be, I was admitted to classes at the Wharton School. As the only woman then at Wharton, I was called "ballsy and aggressive," a title I publicly acknowledged years later when I was invited to

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return to Penn as the featured speaker at the merger of the College for Women into the mainstream University of Pennsylvania.

Oh, yes, and did I mention I was married for a year and a half by graduation.time? It was obviously one of my better decisions for we've now been wed more than seventy years. Alan has always helped me with my writing -- the one thing I'll admit he does better than I do.

During World War II, I managed to have two children - Alan got home often - and took courses towards my Masters in Art at Penn. But as soon as the war was over, I plunged into business ventures. Flowers-Every-Friday was a subscription service. For three bucks a week, we'd deliver flowers of our choice to your house - the clever part was that we'd go to the wholesale flower market at 5 a.m. and buy whatever was plentiful and cheap. The men who ran those wholesale houses couldn't believe that two women (me and my partner, Doris Beifield) could sell and pay for so many flowers, so it was all cash on the flower bed.

Tiring of rising at 5am to deal with condescending men, I morphed to the art gallery business. Gallery 252 in center city Philadelphia was devoted to contemporary art and local artists, some quite excellent, though hardly famous. I learned the truth about big time art when I took some paintings by best young artist to New York and urged Leo Castelli, the dean of art dealers, to give this kid a break. Leo Castelli told me, "My dear, he's quite good. But so are dozens of other young artists I've seen. And, you see, what my clients buy is my opinion of my artists." I decided that, whatever I might do next, I

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wanted to be the arbiter.

Then, in 1966, to my surprise there came a request that moved my focus to academia. Ginny Henderson, the universally respected Assistant Dean of the School of Women at Penn, called to say she had a grant from the Carnegie Foundation to fund a course on "what women do with their lives." Ginny overcame my protestations of pedagogical ignorance by putting me in a 30-day intensive training for teachers.

I taught that course, twice. What I saw was women wearing Peck & Peck suits who wanted to talk endlessly about anything they might do -- but not really wanting to do anything. That was a clue. There was a lot of work to do to change women's self-image.

That's when we moved to New York City. But I didn't leave Philadelphia far behind. Ginny Henderson and I conceived and wrote a proposal for a book to show women how they could be in command of their lives. We titled it, "The New Isabella." after the Spanish Queen who dominated her world. Dean Henderson sent me to the dean of literary agents in New York, Carolyn Stagg, a wonderfully bright woman, then about 75 years old, who read the book proposal and told me: "My dear, you're writing about quite modest goals for women. Go down to The New School in Greenwich Village and catch up with the times."

And that's where feminism caught up with me. I signed up at The New School for a class in women's rights. I was the only one in a dress, not jeans. The more I listened, the more I knew how much I had been missing.

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It wasn't a question of fighting for an isolated justice here or there. It was a movement, an uprising, a sea change in women's accepted roles.

To learn more about this new movement, I called the New York Women's Resource Center. I said to the woman who answered the phone: "My name is Maggie Tripp and I've moved here from Philadelphia and I'm taking a class on Feminism at the New School and I'm looking for more information on the subject." "Look," she said, "I don't know what you're looking for but there are just two of us here. I'm Abortion and the only other one is Rape."

After a few months of investigating Feminism - with much more success than my first telephone call -- I told Ruth Van Doren, head of the Women's Studies department at New School that I could teach a class called, "The Changing Consciousness and Conscience of Women - Liberation How?"

Now the New School operates as a marketplace: people propose courses and, if the title and outline sound right, the course gets listed in the New School catalog. Then, if enough people sign up to make the course profitable, it gets a classroom and away you go. If not, you're cancelled. Well, women signed up in droves to find out how to get liberated - and I figured out the lectures week-by-week.

"The Changing Consciousness..." lasted four semesters. As my own consciousness and horizons expanded, the women's movement exploded and I was exposed to the minds of such socially intelligent people as Caroline Bird,

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Gloria Steinem, Bella Abzug, Margaret Meade, Jesse Bernard and so many more great women. I expanded the feminist premise with courses on small topics like "The Present and Future World of Women." When New York University, New School's Greenwich Village neighbor, wanted to engage with the growing women's movement, they borrowed a group of us from the New School to do a year-long series of seminars.

One fine day, Ruth Van Doren called me and asked: "NOW wants someone to give a short talk to a meeting of the buyers for Federated Stores. Can you do it? You know, tell 'em about how women and women's roles are changing. Of course, I said, "yes" - without even asking what it would pay. (Turned out to be \$50.) Then came the hard part. What do I say? What do you tell a group of hard-nose retailers, mostly men, that they don't already know - something they'd accept -- about women? As always, I consulted my husband. He provided the winning opening lines: "Good morning, Buyers. My subject today is how you can beat last year's numbers, week-by-week, month-by-month. Oh, and incidentally, I'm going to mention a few things you may not know about how your women customers are changing."

Verbalizing my beliefs about free choice for women became a habit. And being at New School in the late Sixties and Seventies was the right place to build a reputation. I became the Women's Studies Maven in Residence, being quoted in newspapers and writing articles for magazines from the feminist journal, *Aurora*, to the plebian publication, *Modern Bride*. In an interview, *Long Island Newsday* dubbed me, "The respected mouthpiece of the Women's Liberation Movement."

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Someone, I know not who, recommended me to Program Corporation of America, a leading Speakers Bureau and soon I found myself delivering the feminist message to big gatherings of students at colleges across the country.

At Mt. Holyoke, it was "Money is as Beautiful as Roses." Wellesley got the message as "Legal Tender Has No Gender." And in Green Bay, Wisconsin, albeit the home of the very masculine Green Bay Packers, they really took the point when I said, "Take Charge of Your Life - and You'll Never Look Back in Anger."

By the mid-1970s, the world at large wanted to know about the feminist viewpoint. Program Corporation booked me everywhere from Junior League meetings to the International Federation of Teachers and to self-improvement blow-outs with Wayne Dyer. To my surprise, it paid well. But I also brought the message to women at the Lexington Avenue YWCA in New York where lectures on women's changing role drew crowds and paid little.

Not all of the bookings were a pleasure. The prospect of freedom of choice for women worried some people, and no one made a career of this fear more aggressively than Phyllis Schlafly.

When Program Corporation asked me to debate her in Kansas City on the Equal Rights Amendment, I leaped at the opportunity. Frankly, she dominated the debate. But she had two things going for her. First, she stacked the audience with her followers who applauded on cue

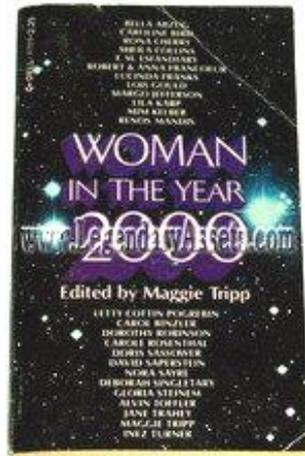
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and then seized the microphones for the Q. & A. Second, she tortured the truth, saying, in effect: "If you get a job, your husband will leave you." But, afterwards, in radio interviews, I beat her because the men who did the interviews gave me a clean shot at explaining what women really want. And the story in the next day's Kansas City Star was more than kind to me and to feminism.

Nowadays, it seems everybody writes a book. But back in the 1970s, it wasn't so easy for an unknown author to find a publisher.

I was blessed to know some authors in New York. Writer Leta Clark hooked me up with agent Elaine Markson who involved Don Fine, publisher of Arbor House Books, who loved my idea of asking each of the wonderful people who understood feminism to write a chapter on how they foresaw women's lives.

Who were the contributors? To name but a few, Letty Cottin Pogrebin, Alvin Toffler, Margo Jefferson, Nora Sayre, Lois Gould, and Lucinda Franks. The subjects ranged from women's impact on politics to a new balance of power in business to equal joy in sexual relations. And, of course, the introduction plus a chapter called The Free Married Woman plus editing it all were



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the work of one Maggie Tripp.

Don named the book, "Woman in the Year 2000." It was published in hardcover in 1974 and in paperback in 1976 and 1978. And it's still around on Amazon.

Speaking of books, during my teaching years I had accumulated many hundreds of volumes about women and, when I left New York in 1989, what was I to do with them? I had kept in close touch with Susan McGee Bailey and Jan Putnam at the Wellesley Centers for Women who not only welcomed the gift but created the Maggie Tripp Library - which I have happily supported ever since.

Besides teaching and writing I was on the Education Committee of NOW and active in the Political Caucus and represented WEAL at the Houston, TX convention. And I always paid my dues to all those organizations -- until I just plain retired. I am very pleased to be included in the encyclopedic volume, *Feminists Who Changed America*.

I'll celebrate my 91st birthday on July 7th. My husband is alive and well -- and writing this for me. I had two children; my son's a musical electronics whiz and I lost my daughter to cancer two years ago. My three grandchildren are, respectively, a male lawyer, a male engineer and a female doctor. My three great-grandchildren are two girls and one boy who, no doubt, will grow up to benefit from my efforts to achieve sexual equality.

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### **TINA VERCIGLIO SAVAS -**

I was born the youngest of four children in Birmingham, Alabama in 1955. My Sicilian father was a painting contractor and my Lebanese mother was a homemaker and part time bookkeeper for my father.



Whenever I think about my early years as a child, I recall the “foreigners’ way of life,” as my parents would say - pleasant yet firm, doing our best no matter what lay ahead. We were taught to depend upon no one but ourselves. I learned very early that my destiny was completely under my control. Work was a way of life and if it wasn’t good enough, it was up to us to change it.

Whatever we wanted out of life, we could get, as long as we worked for it. I never felt like being a girl would stop me from achieving my dreams. Of course, college was a foregone conclusion and the only road to sure success.

I can still visualize my parents going over the books of the family business and bidding on jobs. Sometimes, my father would pack us in his truck to go view a job, usually in the afternoons around dusk. At dinner, he would regale us with tales of his customers and their strange ways of doing business with him. The customer was

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always right, period. Those are such fond memories for me.

I also saw first-hand that a business could be run with the right set of people using their best resources correctly. That stuck like glue in my mind and would come in handy later in my life.

Our family was close. Large gatherings were the norm, where everyone would be talking at the same time, and the room got louder and louder. Our non-ethnic friends were called "American-eas," for lack of a better way to distinguish them from foreigners like us.

Early on, I experienced discrimination due to our ethnicity. Some of my best friends were African American. We were forced to live in the same neighborhood and got to know each other well. As a kid, I never dreamed they were different than I, even though I saw them treated differently. I rode buses to school and downtown to go shopping, but no one ever gave me a clear answer as to why whites got to sit up front, or why they drank from a different water fountain. It was just the way it was and "we shouldn't talk about it, or we would get into trouble too." My parents and teachers preached that we were all the same in God's eyes and I believed it, truly. I just didn't see it in action.

The world may know about Birmingham's civil rights struggles, but I lived right through it. It was painful to watch and to know that along with African Americans, my family wasn't welcomed into Birmingham's society either.

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My education began in a Catholic school in downtown Birmingham, with nuns and priests ruling over us every day. Then on to a suburban Catholic school when my parents moved away from our Lebanese and African American community.

I competed in track through President Kennedy's physical fitness program, becoming the fastest runner in the state of Alabama. I loved running. To this day, I treasure my medals and newspaper clippings. But since this was prior to Title IX, which gave girls their first legal rights in school sporting activities, I had nowhere to channel my talent. So I entered the cheerleading arena and my track days sadly came to an end. Once again I had felt the sting of discrimination. I didn't understand why I couldn't run track, yet my brother was able to participate in any sport he pleased. Yes, I've always wondered what *could have been*.

I graduated high school as a member of the National Honor Society, a Homecoming Queen runner-up, cheerleader and class officer, and set out for a small college in Jacksonville, Alabama. After one year, I transferred to the University of Alabama. My mother strongly suggested that I have a job upon graduation, i.e., "you won't be able to live back home." With that reality check, I discovered special education virtually guaranteed me a job...and it did. Of course, women were steered into teaching and secretarial positions then. Looking back, I wonder what would have happened if my counselor had presented other options...another *what could have been*.

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Wanting to understand the feminist movement better, I slipped into college courses about women's issues. There weren't many, but I did find one that altered my view of women's roles forever. Titled *Women's Evolution*, it was taught by the only college professor I can remember. She had a free spirit, even breastfeeding her baby while teaching. I suppose she was the first true feminist I had ever encountered. College women in Alabama were extremely sheltered from organizations like NOW, the National Organization for Women.

After graduating with honors I packed my life into a 16-ft trailer and moved to Tampa, Florida. I landed a job teaching emotionally disturbed children, then moved to Rhode Island to teach at the first hospital for emotionally disturbed children in the U.S. Continuing this career, I moved back to Birmingham and worked for three years before I was pink-slipped. This was prior to the law that made special education a requirement in education, and special education teachers were always the first to go. A real shame because I was a very good teacher and successfully touched many young lives. But I also realized that I didn't work well in the educational system. Women were very difficult to work with and my no nonsense style didn't mesh well with their age-old system of the *good girls club*.

I ended up producing a newspaper, even though I had little money. However, I had perfect credit, so the bank loaned me \$10,000 and off I went to produce the *Birmingham Business Journal*. For 20 years, I made it my mission to change the face of business in Birmingham. I created the *Top 40 Under 40*, which many newspapers and magazines have copied. I really should

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have trademarked it. I started many awards programs, including *Top Birmingham Women*. I've also been awarded many times along the way, and am featured in the book, *Italians in the Deep South*. My company expanded to other publications: *Alabama Construction News*, *Alabama Health News*, shoppers, and the *Birmingham Weekly*, an alternative newspaper.

As a woman business owner in a city famous for its discrimination and fire hoses and dogs, you can only imagine what it was like for a young ethnic "sweetie" like me. I could count on one hand the number of women business owners when I started my company. We weren't taken seriously and banks needed our husbands or fathers or any other male to co-sign. (My brother Michael co-signed my \$10,000 loan.)

I was not affected by landmark women's rights cases because, unlike those women, I owned my company. It was easier, but lonelier. No kindred spirit accompanied me...ever. To make matters worse, I was desperate to protect my company and believed that dressing and acting like a man and catering to their wishes would make sense. I hired guest speakers for my events like Vince Lombardi, Jr, Jim Valvano and Joe Theismann...all sports themes and all males. Every now and then, I would sneak in a woman speaker, but only for my designated women's events, which were not well received by the business community. I was threatened many times by men in power and was always on the brink of a lawsuit. But I stuck to my motto, "Do it for the Reader." It never failed me.

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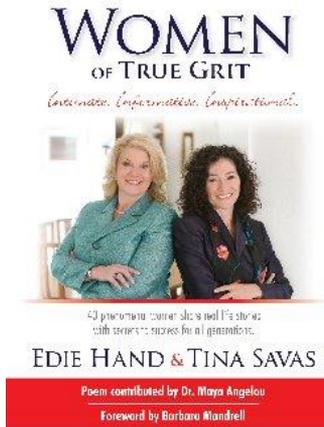
As the years wore on, I became a student of the women's movement, wishing I could speak out, but knowing I would lose my readership if I did. And strangely enough, no women in Alabama reached out to me for help, other than the League of Women Voters. I secretly assisted them in any way I could, becoming the first publisher in the state to print our legislators' voting records for the public to see in plain sight. I vividly recall the secretary of the Alabama Senate physically trying to prevent me from entering the floor during session one day. Of course, I got in anyway, by threatening him with press coverage that would be extremely unflattering for his hallowed group.

Breaking new ground was a common theme for my newspapers and I finally became firmly entrenched in local media. We were the first to print *Insider Trading*, noting shares bought and sold by company executives and large shareholders. The big banks and insurance companies who shunned me finally came around to the power of the subscriber base. I was vindicated in the end.

Then, two things simultaneously happened. I fell in love, got married and had a baby. *And* I was threatened by an out-of-town competitor, who went so far as to set up shop in Birmingham and give me a real scare. I felt that I had done so much for Birmingham and perhaps it was a sign for me to sell my company and spend time with my son. For two years, I watched my husband spend a majority of his time with my little son Alex, and I was jealous.

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I made up my mind and sold the business journal to a man who had run Dow Jones and owned fifty other business publications in the country. Many days I have wondered if this was the wisest move in my career. But since women business owners didn't have women mentors, we operated by the seat of our pants. We were so used to being alone in our decisions. There were a couple of women who had been successful and were retired, but they completely disappeared from public view.



After I sold my company and felt the stinging remorse, I took my hard won knowledge and applied it to a new path. In addition to non-profit work and other side business ventures with my husband, Paul, I wrote the book, *Women of True Grit*, about women across the country who were the first in their fields. I decided their stories needed to be told, about what they went through only “because they were women.”

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The time was right for all of us to speak out. I searched for women who had been successful and felt compelled to share their experiences, something none of us could have done during our careers. Countless women declined an interview, in fear of losing government and corporate pensions, or worse, their reputations. Even when I insisted no one would know their names, they still declined, convincing me that since their stories were unique, they would be known. But enough of them felt safe and free to speak out. Over and over, I heard from women everywhere that "it was about time someone did this." Spurred on by positive encouragement, the book took on a life of its own. What a wonderful journey it has been!

Each woman's submission is a chapter in the book, told in her own words and edited by me. I tried to keep each special voice intact, but in a way, the book became my personal expression, too. The best part of the writing experience was my liberation *through them*. Maya Angelou contributed her poem, *Phenomenal Woman*, to the book and was happy to support us. Some famous women like Phyllis Diller, Joann Carson and Meredith Vieira lent their voices and others, less well-known, who did phenomenal trailblazing. Their stories shock our younger women, who have no idea about their senior sisters' struggles. Not knowing whose shoulders they stand on or why, they need to know their history and lean on these women as mentors.

I went on the road speaking to educate people about women's issues and the work yet to be done. The book has been sold all over the world, written up in major newspapers, and blogged about. Most importantly, it has

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helped many people to understand our past: how women were treated like second class workers or the "delicate sex" who needed a recovery room at work when they had their time of the month. And how women weren't allowed to eat with the men in the company dining room, or even at a major department store's cafe in Miami.

The past isn't always pretty, but it needs to be told. And, as William Faulkner said, "The past is never dead. It's not even past."

I've had a lot of time to consider the past, observe the present and learn what we can do for a brighter future. We must continue our work to make a difference.

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## WINNIE WACKWITZ



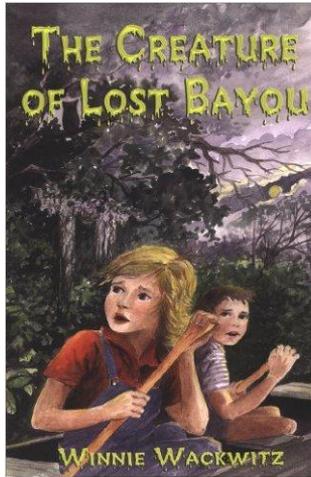
A lot of water has passed under the bridge since I was born almost 85 years ago in Grosse Tete, Louisiana, a small town in the bayou country. My mother seemed happy in her typical housewife role of cooking, cleaning and keeping my two older sisters and me in line, but I sensed a resentment in her. Maybe it was the scowl on her face whenever she observed my father raising me as the son he never had. I didn't mind. I learned survival skills from him that have served me well all my life. I grew up believing I could do anything—not just things considered proper for females.

My father took me to an air show in Baton Rouge when I was five years old. The large, beautiful birds that roared over our house had always fascinated me, and now I could actually touch those wonderful creations. I knew

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then that I would fly someday.

My only childhood playmates were three male cousins. We would roam the bayous in a pirogue, rehashing tales of a mysterious monster that supposedly lived in the bayou and attacked invisibly beneath the surface of the murky water. This monster would shred fishing nets and gobble up the catch of the local fishermen. I used that adventure as my story line in a children's book I wrote, *The Creature of the Lost Bayou*.



Having been raised as my father's son, when I reached high school I became keenly aware of the educational advantages given to the boys in my classes, who were steered toward careers such as engineering, chemistry and medicine. They always got extra help in math and science if needed, while we poor girls had to fend for ourselves. We were expected to choose between home economics and stenography for our careers. In spite of

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the feminist movement, things hadn't changed much in some areas. In the late 1970s, my daughter needed tutoring in math. I asked her teacher, who happened to be a man, for help. "She's a girl and doesn't need to learn math," he said. My husband agreed. "She'll find a man to support her."

I longed to go to college to study art and industrial design, but my father didn't place much importance on education for girls. Besides, he simply couldn't afford to send me. My sisters went to business school, but that wasn't for me. I found out that Boeing Aircraft was recruiting men and women to build B17s and B29 bombers in Seattle, and that was exciting, never mind getting paid for it. Finally, I could explore the world while pursuing my dream of one day flying an airplane. This child of the Great Depression would have the money she needed to turn this dream into a reality.

Thirty-five hours of logged flight training were required before I could join the Women's Air Force Pilot Training program -- I had heard about on the radio. By the time I logged the required training time at my own expense, atom bombs were dropped on Japan and WASP was disbanded. I got my private pilot's license, however, then my commercial license, and added a Flight Instructor's rating in the years that followed. As GI's returned from the war, they enrolled in colleges in droves. I took a job as Flight Instructor at Louisiana State University, which helped pay my way through college. Soon I, a 23-year-old freshman, was teaching battle-hardened ex-GI's to fly airplanes!

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Wartime society had become used to women doing all kinds of work once considered impossible for females. The veterans saw nothing unusual about a female flight instructor. My proudest accomplishment was taking over two problem students from a male instructor, soloing them and giving them their cross-country training.

Jobs became scarce for women in 1952, the year I graduated college. I worked as a camp counselor in upstate New York and afterward on the assembly line at Emerson Electronics in New York City. Managing to save enough to travel a little, I joined a college friend who was returning to her home in Brazil and boarded a small Norwegian freighter in the Port of New Orleans that was bound for Rio de Janeiro. It took 18 days to get to Rio, but the cute Norwegian sailors helped to pass the time.

My friend, Luba, and I got jobs working for the Brazilian Air Force, she as a chemist and I as a draftsman. My main assignment consisted of drawing three-dimensional pictures from blueprints of a converter plane being developed for the purpose of opening up the interior of Brazil. These drawings are now in the Brazilian Air Force Museum.

Luba and I met our Dutch husbands in Brazil. In 1956 my husband and I returned to Baton Rouge where I supported him and our son while he studied engineering. After he graduated from LSU he worked for Texas Instruments in Plano, Texas, where our daughter was born in 1961. Now I was a full time suburban homemaker, wife and mother of two. My husband made it clear that he wanted a "stay at home wife," which was

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fine with me. I imagined unconventional projects where I could use my talents at carpentry to keep me interested. Was I ever naive! My husband considered that sort of work unsuitable for a mother and homemaker. Perhaps that explains why the first stirrings of rage against the patriarchal world entered my consciousness.

I had never heard the term "feminist," let alone knew what it meant. I was ironing when I heard the news about a new organization in Dallas called **Women for Change**. As I ironed and folded my 2,560th starched white shirt for my husband and planned my 3,160th evening meal—numbers based on ten years as a housewife—I wondered if there was anything I could do to alleviate my situation. And then one day my husband told me that every day was a holiday for me, that I was getting a "free ride through life." I didn't walk, but ran to the first meeting of **Women for Change**. Hundreds of women just like me were in the audience. It felt good to know that I was not alone.

This problem without a name was a taboo subject until Betty Friedan burst upon the scene with her earth-shaking *The Feminine Mystique*. As that book took off, so did a rush of others aimed to keeping women in their homes. **Fascinating Womanhood**, published by the Mormon Church, was designed as a course to teach women to use feminine wiles and make themselves sexually exciting to entice their husbands to grant their wishes. The classes were taught in public school facilities. Nothing I knew of was produced by anyone in the feminist movement to counteract these sexist books, so I decided to. I researched the influence of religious teachings and its oppressive effects upon secular laws

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affecting women. Using the same Mormon teaching methods to educate women about feminism—and to work out my own frustrations—I compiled and published a counter course entitled ***Fantastic Womanhood***. The course was offered primarily to women's social and church groups.

By this time the Plano NOW chapter I had helped organize was involved in many issues, such as working on ratification of the ERA in Texas. We also campaigned to get radio and TV networks, which considered female voices "too high pitched," to hire female announcers. Perhaps our greatest contribution was helping organize the critiquing of 400 textbooks and testifying before the state Textbook Commission. Changes were made in textbooks that improved the status of females as a result of our findings.

With the realization that more work was necessary if women expected real changes in their lives, in 1970 I collaborated with a friend in the production of a small newspaper, *The Feminist Echo*, which gave the news and activities of the Women's Movement in the Dallas area. Our newspaper also reviewed feminist books.

I found out that there was a Texas law requiring husbands to support their wives, but district attorneys never enforced it. To secure my future I filed for divorce. The law at the time required wives to be married to their husbands 25 years before qualifying for social security. (Thankfully, that law has changed!) I stayed married until my 25 years were served. Meanwhile, I drove a school bus and began to build houses on our four-acre property with the aim of renting them out for additional income.

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This proved to be a successful enterprise, especially since I did the upkeep myself.

Family responsibilities and lack of resources had grounded me from the air for over 20 years. I itched to get back to flying. I saved enough from bus driving to buy a vintage 35 years old two place Cessna 140. A friend from the National Flying Club and I left for the experience of a lifetime, each in our own Cessna 140. Two vintage grandmas flying side by side flew our puddle jumpers to Alaska, a 4000 mile trip over gorgeous rivers, valleys and mountains. I sold my Cessna in Alaska and returned to Texas to fly the little open cockpit Bower's Fly Baby I had devoted seven years to building, and I flew it until arthritis made it impossible to climb out of the cockpit.

Memories of my flying years are precious, but my fondest memories are of the years spent in the feminist movement. Many young women have no clue what we made possible for them and future generations, though much remains to be done. I feel gratified that I've contributed to the greatest movement of all time.

NOTE: Winnie Wackwitz has been an active member of VFA since 1994 and a board member for the past few years.

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### **VIRGINIA SMITH WATKINS**

I was born in 1939 in a small town in Iowa, about 60 miles from Des Moines.

I am officially Virginia Smith Watkins but they call me Ginny. My father, Ted Smith, owned and operated a hatchery (hatching chicken eggs).

My mother, Dorothy Dotts

Smith, had been a teacher with a Bachelor's Degree.

She became a homemaker upon marrying my father, and I must say a very good one. In addition, she was the bookkeeper for my dad's business.



Once my younger brother Stanley and I were in school, my mother became interested in possible employment in county human services, but my dad dissuaded her because he didn't know what he would do without her bookkeeping skills. I am sorry she didn't have much career fulfillment, but fortunately that was his only foray into sexism.

In fact, when Roxanne Barton Conlin, the acclaimed feminist attorney from Des Moines and current VFA Board Member, was running for governor, some of the men were saying they wouldn't vote for a woman. My father quite vocally stood up for her within his businessmen's coffee klatch and he, who hated confrontations, put them squarely in their place.

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Both my parents were at some time or other president of every organization they belonged to, therefore it was a natural for me to become a leader within NOW. They both agreed with the new and controversial issues of feminism, particularly the ERA and abortion rights, and pretty much treated my brother and me equally. They were very active in the United Methodist Church, which was a building block of my feminist attitudes as a child, when our local church had a woman pastor in the 1950's.



Virginia and husband Dave

Fast forward 20 years. My mother, whose church leadership went beyond the local, returned from a United Methodist Women convention wearing an ERA button. I definitely had feminist thoughts as a child, mostly centering around women, being more involved in business and having a greater public life. I owned at least a dozen dolls I seldom played with; I preferred my stamp collection. As a teenager, I was quite aware of what I would now call sexist attitudes that some, not all, boys had against girls. That awareness led me to make

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a good, albeit early by today's standards, choice of husband: David Watkins, who grew up in a neighboring town and worked most of his career for a medical supply company.

I had grown up with a feeling of entitlement. As a freshman at Drake University I was appalled by dorm hours (10:30 weeknights for girls, none for boys). Though I liked the friends I met, dorm life back then was pretty stultifying, so I was quite happy with my early marriage to Dave in 1959. I felt more adult and independent. Our first night cooking in our apartment, I started to clean up the dishes after dinner. "Sit down and talk to me," Dave said, "I'll help you later with the dishes." He has more than shared all housework and childcare ever since.

The subsequent births of our two children occurred before I achieved my degree. Dave and I decided we needed him to complete his degree first (as we understood that men could get far better jobs) and I would work as a caseworker for parents on Aid to Families with Dependent Children in order to support our beginning family (it was possible at the time with two years of college). The radicalization process clicked in there as I compared my temporary financial situation with the pervasive poverty of my clients.

When I became pregnant with our second child, my feeling of entitlement prevented me from realizing I wouldn't be granted what I envisioned as a maternity leave. What happened was even more shocking than that. The agency director, an unmarried man, took it upon himself to presume my stage of pregnancy and

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terminate me a full three months before I was due! (My immediate supervisor, a black woman, fought for me.)

Even my part-time endeavors to stick with college had interruptions, which to my good fortune had me still a student during the late 1960's. It was a heady time. I became involved in civil rights and peace movements and finally became part of a consciousness-raising group that included students, professor's wives and staff. Also, in 1967 I became a national member of NOW.

What I still didn't see before graduating was the need for more specified educational opportunity and career counseling. These were pretty much outside women's vision at the time--I couldn't have dreamed of all the possibilities that would open up. Betty Friedan's "The Feminine Mystique" guided me to conceptualize these fragmented thoughts about women that were swirling in my mind and soul.

That propelled me to found the Des Moines chapter of NOW in 1970 and serve as its first president. But soon I moved with my family to Minneapolis, where I immediately became involved in NOW and also with organizing the Minnesota Women's Political Caucus. I served as president of Twin Cities NOW for three years, State Coordinator (president) of Minnesota NOW for two years, then six years on the NOW National Board, five of which I was Midwest Regional Director.

During the earlier part of my feminist career, I focused on organizing. That meant personally recruiting members and aiding in the formation of new chapters throughout the state of Minnesota, which would then

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recruit more people into NOW. I also worked a lot on structural organizing and decision-making processes. I felt a real mission to fill the nation's heartland with organized feminists ready to develop power relationships with business and legislative bodies so we could strengthen the Movement nationwide.

I put much personal effort into many feminist issues, particularly reproductive rights, the ERA, and childcare. My lobbying efforts secured passage of the first Child Care Sliding Fee legislation in Minnesota. I also have published feminist writing, among them such articles as "Can Moral Values Go Too Far?" (about pro-choice abortion) in Engage, a magazine of the United Methodist Church social concerns division; "Diagnosis Drives Women Crazy" New Directions for Women (Englewood, New Jersey) XVI No. 5 (1987). The issue of psychiatric labeling of women stirred a controversy within the psychiatric community when in 1986, the American Psychiatric Association began considering a diagnostic category which would involve emotional trauma preceding the menstrual period. The diagnosis, Late Luteal Phase Disorder, involved feelings of irritability or anger, tension or feelings of depression, feeling "on edge", and self-deprecating thoughts, as well as decreased interest in usual activities, fatigue and loss of energy, sense of difficulty concentrating and sleep disturbance.

In addition to several more feminist articles, I have published articles on travel, home decorating, and the settlement of Hmong immigrants (an Asian ethnic group from the mountainous regions of China, Vietnam, Laos, and Thailand) in St. Paul.

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Finally at age 40, employed part time as a community organizer in childcare, I realized I had to devote my time to my own career; I had no more time for devoting as much time to an avocation as paid work. I had to live what I had sought for women. I held the positions of lobbyist and executive director for Minnesota Social Service Association and went through a travel phase that absorbed much of my spare time.

The travel phase led me eventually to retire from social services and take up a travel career in customer relations with an affiliate of Northwest Airlines. In 2000 at age 60, I traveled to a Feminist Majority event in Baltimore, and there I became acquainted with Veteran Feminists of America. I became VFA's secretary, and worked with Barbara Love on "Feminists Who Changed America".

Sometime after the death of Betty Friedan, I became interested in memorializing her in a way that would be widely visible and permanent, such as statues and street names. The VFA Board authorized the Betty Friedan Permanent Memorial Committee, and I was appointed chair. An effort toward a U.S. postage stamp is in progress--our proposal was accepted for consideration by the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee of the USPS and we should learn in about a year about the outcome of a Betty Friedan stamp.

No, I don't get out in the winter tundra of Minnesota to go to feminist meetings anymore. I go to some Planned Parenthood fundraisers and feminist candidate events. I also work two part-time jobs that provide intellectual

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fulfillment and help fill our post-retirement coffers. That is important because of my preoccupation with the feminist movement, which earlier led to partial neglect of earning.

I'm proud and happy that I chose volunteer feminism. I feel fortunate to have been so immersed in such an historic movement, and I am content with our cyberspace technology that allows me to work with VFA from the comfort of my home.

My children, Kyle and Rhonda Watkins, are now middle aged and have brought me five grandchildren. Kyle and his wife Kathryn Hammond are both partners in their respective companies. Kathryn frequently tells me how much she appreciates our early work, as it has opened many doors for her. Daughter Rhonda, who has her own business as a prop stylist, feels the same way. She is married to Nik Wogstad. There is more information on my family on VFA's website under Mothers, Daughters and Granddaughters.)

In addition to feminism, I have a passion for classical music and play the piano. As a traveler, I have visited all 50 states and all seven continents. I am a provisional member of Travelers' Century Club as 100 countries is the full membership requirement. With about 94 achieved, I hope to make 100. Elder role models in VFA inspire me to keep living life big!

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### GRACE RIPA WELCH

I was sitting in the Graham Paige, Tony B's (our landlord) bootlegging car returning from an alcohol drop in the black section of Corona, Queens, in the time of speakeasies and the Roaring Twenties. He drives into the garage under the house, gets out of the car, goes to his wife, Mary, who is standing in the doorway to their basement kitchen, and without saying a word knocks her down, kicks her, beats her, her near-sighted glasses go flying.



I was cringing underneath the car like a small frightened animal. I didn't know the word "feminist," but I knew this was wrong. I was six years old.

I was born into a large immigrant Italian family, sixth child in a field of eight, four boys and four girls. Calvin Coolidge was President when I was born, November 14, 1924. At that time the Ripa family lived on East 50th St. between Second & Third Aves. I remember well the Second Avenue Elevated. My father, Antonio Ripa, was from a village, Divieto, near Messina, Sicily, and my mother, Grazia Caccioppoli, from a village in the mountains across from Mt. Vesuvius. She was 17 when she came through Ellis Island, accompanying her grandfather who wanted to see "gold in the streets of New York"! During the period of quarantine, her grandfather died. What happened after that is a story for another time.

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We moved to Elmhurst, Queens when I was 4. I followed three boys in the family hierarchy, so I grew up a tomboy, and ran with the pack, did boy things, played ringalevio, handball, stickball, stoopball in the streets of Queens, and came to realize very early that some boys and men can be violent, so I was always alert to any clues that triggered my antenna.

I was a good student, loved my teachers, played the lead in the opera Rapunzel at P.S. 127 Elementary; achieved the highest ever History Regents score of 98 at Newtown High School. I was tracked for a commercial degree, as college was not in the cards. My first job was as secretary to the V.P. Purchasing of Pepsi-Cola Company in Long Island City, from which I transferred to the Advertising Department, where I worked on Pepsi's first bottle-cap contest, and was able to travel to trade conventions in Chicago and New Orleans. I was with Pepsi-Cola for seven years, during which time I took advantage of their student assistance program and completed several creative writing courses at Columbia University. I used this talent to write for the "Pepsi World" house organ, a monthly interview column, a special article on military jargon, since World War II was raging, did on-site reports on Pepsi-Cola bottlers. I was also a volunteer behind the counter of the Pepsi-Cola Center in Times Square.

I met my husband, Frank, on a blind date; it was his first night in New York, having driven non-stop from Anderson, South Carolina, to Flushing, Queens, to take a machinist job with Ford Instrument Company, a division of Sperry Gyroscope, to make high precision parts for the war effort. I was sitting on a park bench at

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the 104 St. Corona station (#7 line for you New Yorkers) waiting for my girlfriend who came down the stairs with two young men with very heavy Southern accents. We paired off - I got Frank - he had never seen an Italian before. I was 16. (Who says they don't believe in Destiny?)

Eventually Frank's war work deferments ran out as the War ground on and he was drafted. He chose the Navy and was stationed at Camp Peary, Virginia, as Ships Company Photographer. Eighteen months later the war ended and he was discharged. He opened his own Photography Studio in Sunnyside, Queens, and ran it for 5 years, selling it at a profit, when again he was called to work at Ford Instrument for our next war. We were married in 1946, I was 21.

I continued working at Pepsi, which I felt was a very progressive company, but my first awareness of discrimination in the workplace was when I decided to conserve my two-week vacation time for when I was planning to leave work to have our first baby. During the exit interview, I asked that my two-week vacation pay be added to my final check, and was told by the female Personnel Manager that that was not possible, since I was leaving the company and the vacation pay was for those who were staying with the company. I did not feel this was fair.

Thinking back, I remembered that when I was 13 years old I took care of my oldest sister's infant during my summer vacation, when she went to work in the City. Each morning, before she left the apartment, she would take off her wedding ring, put it on a chain around her

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neck, then tuck the ring inside her blouse. I asked why she was doing that. She replied "Because I work for the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, and if they knew I was married, they would fire me." I didn't think that was fair.

With my high energy level, I went back to work when Michael was one year old, and hired my Mom to care for him while I worked at Equitable Paper Bag in Long Island City as secretary to a vice president. It was a good arrangement for me and my mother; only my conservative brothers were upset that I did not want to be a stay-at-home mom. Daughter Jean was born April 9, 1953.

> I again re-entered the work force outside the home when Jean was one year old, working as Administrative Assistant to Presidents of various firms. The Korean War was in progress, so my federal security clearance came in handy working for a microwave guidance firm, and then at an advertising agency in the Chanin Building, Grand Central.

When Michael was 7 and Jean was 5, I planned a 3-1/2 month vacation in Italy, bringing my Mom, who was born in a little village in the mountains above Sorrento, Preazzano. I studied conversational Italian for two years at night at New York University in preparation for the trip. I wanted to be completely autonomous, renting a Fiat sedan, making the grand tour. The top song around the world at that time was "Volare" indeed!

Our third child, Lisa Grace, was born on Flag Day 1959 and our Queens one-bedroom apartment was getting

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crowded. Frank got a job at Brookhaven National Laboratories, Upton, Suffolk County, Long Island, and we moved to the suburbs.

I circulated my resume when Lisa was about three, and landed a job in the Advertising-Public Relations Department of Potter Instrument Company, Syosset. Jack Potter, founder and president, saw me dictating to my secretary, and went to my boss and said "What do we have now, girls dictating to girls" Put a stop to it!? So poor Don Hawes, my boss, had to tell me to please do my dictation in a private office behind closed doors. The crowning shot was when I was up for review, was told that I could not get a raise because I had a working husband. I didn't think that was fair.

The next job I applied for was as Assistant Advertising Manager for Chemco Photoproducts in Glen Cove, and I got the interview by sending a Western Union telegram (remember telegrams? How quaint.) in response to an ad in NEWSDAY and signed it G. Welch. When the call came, the caller was surprised to learn I was a woman, he was looking for George! I became Advertising-Public Relations Manager within three years, had a secretary (not behind closed doors!) and a small staff. I could share many ?light bulb moments??too many to recount here?but the 1970 Women?s Strike March down Fifth Avenue was the trigger that launched my full-fledged feminist activism, the day I joined NOW.

It was during this 7-year period with Chemco that I was a member of the Executive Board of the Long Island Advertising Club, serving as chair of women's issues in advertising. When I joined Nassau NOW in 1970, I was

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publicity director and member of the executive committee. In 1972 I was a convener of the Long Island Feminist Coalition and coordinated its first press conference at Hofstra University. The event included an action against the Colonie Hill Convention Center, Hauppauge, and the American Red Cross for sex discrimination in their annual fundraiser. We threatened to picket the event (Bob Hope was the featured speaker) and from that day forward American Red Cross could not bar women from fundraising events.

My husband, Frank, and I joined with eight others and started the South Shore NOW chapter. I served two terms as president, during which time we held the first Human Sexuality Conference on Long Island (Dowling College



1974); the first assertiveness training classes at the Women's Center in Oakdale; the first masculine mystique committee; the first co-ed CR groups. During that period, because of demeaning coverage by NEWSDAY of a women's conference we held at SUNY Farmingdale College, we requested a meeting with Suffolk Editor, Robert Greene and held the first C-R meeting of NEWSDAY editors.

Because I served as Women's Issues Chair of the L.I. Advertising Club, I facilitated a program covering Women's Image in Advertising, and broke all attendance records -- 300! with full back page coverage in NEWSDAY. (Friday, March 2, 1973). I recruited Joyce Snyder, New York City NOW to show her powerful slide

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presentation, which almost resulted in a riot!

I ran for the Central Islip school board in 1976 (as a write-in candidate!), campaigning for equal funds for girls in education and sports as directed by Title IX -- I had found out that the sports budget for male students was \$43,000, while the girls received only \$300.

Believing that women's economic survival is key to their full self-expression, I co-chaired the employment committee of South Shore NOW. In 1984 I planned and coordinated the 7th annual Women & Careers Conference for New Directions Resource Center at Southampton College, and in 1985 planned and coordinated Hauppauge High School's Adult Education Conference for Working Women, Sandy Chapin was our luncheon speaker.

Business Professional Women's organization voted me Woman of the Year in 1986, and in 2004 I was elected President of Mid-Suffolk NOW to revive the moribund Stony Brook chapter. We are still going strong.

I shared a panel with Linda Stein and Carole DeSaram representing Veteran Feminists of America in Sacha Baron Cohen's film "BORAT: Cultural Learnings of America For Make Benefit Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan" (2006).

During all this time, my family grew and prospered. I am now a grandmother with two wonderful granddaughters who will benefit from the work of dedicated feminists. Son Michael graduated from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, was a Lt. in the Navy, serving on the U.S.

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Aircraft Carrier Kitty Hawk, in the Pacific Theatre during the Vietnam War. Michael has assisted in several VFA fundraising events. He is a writer living in the Bronx.

Daughter Jean is a Teacher of Transcendental Meditation, living in Fairfield, Iowa, the headquarters of the TM Movement and the Mahareeshi University. She is currently studying and reporting on the effects of environmental pollution on pregnant women and their offspring.

Daughter Lisa Grace has two girls, and is a Teacher's Aide in the Bayport School District. Her daughter, Kimberly Grace is graduating from SUNY New Paltz as a Speech Pathologist, and has been accepted at Brooklyn College for her graduate studies. Lisa Marie is nine years old in fourth grade.

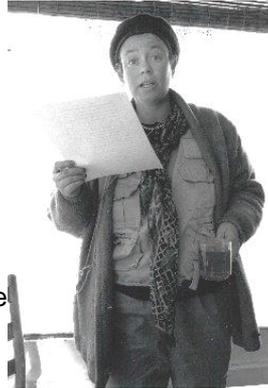
Currently I am President Emerita of Mid-Suffolk NOW, Stony Brook, Long Island, New York, as well as a Yoga Teacher in the Sivananda classical Hatha Yoga tradition, with a private practice in Islandia, NY and New York City. For the last seven years I have been the Yoga Teacher for the National NOW conferences. I volunteer teach to the homeless of New York, through the Renewal Project organization, and to incarcerated women preparing for re-entry into society My late husband Frank's bio is listed in Barbara Love's Book, "Feminists Who Changed America 1963-1975" pp 486-7.

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### **BATYA WEINBAUM**

I was born in Ann Arbor Michigan in 1952. My mother had grown up in Baltimore, Maryland, and my father, Jack Gerald Weinbaum, was from Brooklyn. They met at a fraternity house in Johns Hopkins - he was there on a date with someone else, she was in the kitchen doing the dishes--he came in to help her.. and the rest is history.



When I was three the family trekked in our station wagon to Terre Haute, Indiana, where I spent my childhood. Always into something dangerous, I recall climbing an apple tree in the backyard of our home and running off on a horse with a girlfriend. We went off on the country roads and ran wild, eventually riding our horse to a drive-in in the city, where we ordered hamburgers and milkshakes and a carrot for our horse. We got back after dark to find our parents and police had been frantically looking for us.

This and other of my unusual escapades was conducive to my being shipped off to Kingswood School Cranbrook boarding school at age sixteen. There I studied sculpture, made a metal horse and discovered my artistic talent and passion for art.

From Kingswood I went to Hampshire College to study photography, then to Boston where I worked in the Ferranti Dege photography store and earned a Leica. I

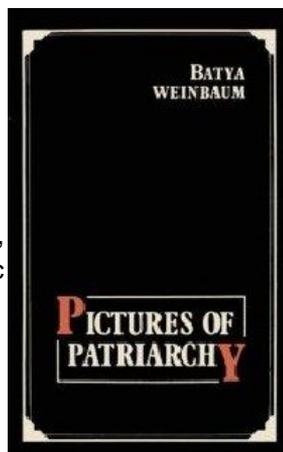
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then traveled through Latin America as a documentary photographer. My first photographs appeared in the magazine, *Second Wave*.

After I experienced Salvador Allende's Unidad Popular socialist movement in Chile I returned to the States, where I wrote my first book, *The Curious Courtship of Women's Liberation and Socialism*.

In New York City I had fabulous jobs, including being secretary to Gael Greene, the New York Magazine's food critic; to Phyllis Chesler, author of *Women and Madness*, and as an organizer for the Political Education and Action Committee of the Union of Radical Political Economics.

Around this time my orthodox Jewish grandfather in Brooklyn became ill and, while working at Brooklyn College for Project Chance, a return-to-college program of the Women's Center and the Women's Studies Program, I took care of him. I did much public speaking, putting together economic consciousness-raising discussions for connections at the National Council of Churches and the Grail women of the Catholic women's community, a sort of counterpart of the Jesuits, with whom I clicked tremendously. I also developed a theory of \*kin categories in the economy and published another book, *Pictures of Patriarchy*.



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In NYC I studied writing with Alix Kates Shulman and Marguerite Young, and began publishing fiction and poetry. My first fiction was *Story of the Incested Daughter*, an unpublished 1,200 page novel, in John Crawford's *West End Review*.

I frequented the Women's Salon, and published in *Heresies*, and later in the *Education and the Community Arts* issues. A monthly discussion and support group grew out of my participation in MFII, looking for connections between Marxism and feminism. I performed poetry and was filmed in the Women's Café by Lizzie Borden for *Born in Flames*, theorizing about revolution from the tower of the Daughters of Jacob geriatric home in Coney Island. My father had lived there as a child when it was the Half Moon Hotel.

I then left New York and lived in cabins in the woods in the Woodstock area and in Vermont. There I wrote *Bapka in Brooklyn*. Susanna Sturgis published this novella in *Tales in a Minor Key: Magical Realism by Women*, and later *The Island of Floating Women: A Collection of Stories*.

At SUNY Buffalo in the 80's I studied music and ethnomusicology and that took me to Hawaii, where I lived on the beach in Maui and began painting from myths. I would use the paintings, mostly done on beaches or by waterfalls, as musical scores to compose music.

I later recorded that and other music during a performance at SUNY on an 18-foot concert grand piano, intent on trying to discover the exact note to bring

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down the patriarchy. With a piano in the back of my truck I'd go to nature spots, compose music, and then drive to strategic intersections to play the music, hopefully to disrupt patriarchy.

This led to an extended performance of what I called Earth Wheels, from the Seneca Women's Peace Encampment. Someone would drive the truck around the military encampment seven times while in the back, I played the music. We'd stop in front of the gate, get out bamboo sticks and other natural instruments and dance the ancient hula -- trying to break the gate through dance and song. Some of the women would jump the gate and get arrested.

At that time I was also doing house concerts and workshops of matriarchal music. I would bring instruments and invite women to play and direct sound through visualization of their favorite places in the world. They would discover they had the ability to make sound, and to direct and compose music. I also did concerts with instruments from the house -- vacuum cleaners, blenders, mixers.

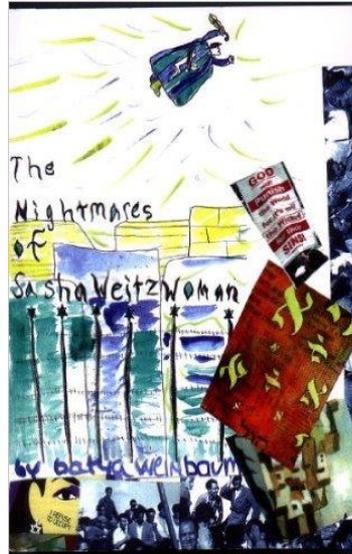
As a member of the Vermont Composers Consortium my music would be performed regularly. My theories about matriarchal music were published in a book about contemporary composers by Autonomedia called Sounding Off! For the book opening, I drove to the third floor loft in Williamsburg with a truckload of leaves and played my The Earth She is Rocking Us, leading everyone in the chant. I was an artist in residence at University of Illinois Champaign Urbana at the same time as the great composer, John Cage, and we struck up a

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correspondence. He was very supportive of my intermixing of music and color as I used paintings for scores.

Alas, my father died and I decided at the age of 35 I'd better get my life together. I wanted to have a child and get a doctorate. I went to Israel to see if I could get pregnant with a mango picker on a kibbutz (or get into a kibbutz to raise a kid communally), but the intifada (a period of unrest between Jews and Muslims) was going on.

This led to my spending many years researching and writing about the Palestinian/Israeli situation. Much was published, most recently the novel *The Nightmares of Sasha Weitzwoman*, which took 20 years to complete, largely because I actually had the child I set out to have -- which took me down another road...writing books of poetry called *Down the Birth Canal* and *Fragments of Motherhood*, a collection of fiction titled *Post Modern Motherhood*, and founding the Feminist Mothers and Their Allies Task Force (which became a caucus) in National Women's Studies Association.



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Homeschooling became worldschooling as I lost my job and began traveling the world with my daughter, writing a doctoral thesis *Islands of Women and Amazons: Representations and Realities* which explored the history of the myth of the Amazons.

In graduate school in the 80's I studied with Ann Hidalgo, an artist from Chile who worked in the Women's Studies Program at SUNY Buffalo. She introduced me to the Women of Mithila, a city in Ancient India, the capital of the Videha Kingdom, where women made art as a way to propose marriage to men -- making designs in the courtyard of the man to whom they wished to propose. After the proposal, the women swept the courtyard, destroying their art. I began painting from myths, connecting with images of Divine feminine or those made by goddess cultures.

From time to time I sell paintings, and now, I also sell silver jewelry -- as I have turned images from ancient myth from crafts people in Taxco, Mexico into pendants. I also paint on denim jackets and T-shirts, on my walls, on my van. I have an ongoing van painting project where I put out paints wherever I am and let anyone paint what they want -- a collective art project that allows expression and brings smiles to people's faces in the somberness of Cleveland where I currently live.

After getting my doctorate I began to paint seriously again. And in 1998 I got what I still refer to as my first tenure track job at a Midwestern university as assistant professor of English. Later I sued the University for Sex Discrimination because of my treatment and the university's decision to terminate me, which was in

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violation of the state laws.

There I went through weeks of termination hearings. I was silenced, unable to speak as testimony of untruths piled up around me. As I listened, to keep quiet, I began to draw, and then to paint. Then gradually, I cleaned out my garage and it became my art studio.

I filed my case in the state Court of Claims in 2004. The case was settled in January 2006 and a judge approved the confidential settlement the university and I reached.

I've published at least seven books, including one on palmistry, and am now working with the image of Asherah, (Asherah , mentioned in early Jewish writings, was a powerful fertility goddess who may have been God's wife.) I'm hoping to to lead a study tour to Jerusalem to vis it sites of this goddess.

Check the web to read more about Batya's fascinating life. Just google Batya Weinbaum... and voila!

\* Kin types refer to the basic uncategorized relationships that anthropologist use to describe the actual contents of kinship categories.

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### JUDITH S (JUDY) WEIS

I was born in 1941 in New York City. Although I grew up in the city, my parents rented places in the country during the summers. When I was seven we were at the seashore, and I loved looking at shells and other things on the beach. One day I found a hermit crab crawling around in a whelk shell covered with barnacles, seaweed and boat shells; I thought it was a marvelous thing, though my mother and cousin did not share my enthusiasm. Another summer we lived near a pond, and I collected and raised tadpoles to watch them metamorphose into frogs.



My parents, Saul and Pearl Shulman, a lab technician and a housewife, encouraged my scientific interests and put no limitations on my goals. This was rather unusual in the 1950s, when so many girls were told they should become nurses, schoolteachers, or housewives, and it was probably due to my being an only child. I think if I had a brother, it would have been very different. My scientific interests were fostered by frequent visits to the American Museum of Natural History, and later by attending the Bronx High School of Science, where it became clear that my major interest was biology.

The school offered many advanced courses in the sciences, though most students there attended because of the general high quality of the school, rather than a

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strong interest in science. Having an atmosphere where the other students are bright and interested in learning was very important to me.

Speaking now with contemporary female graduates, none of us can remember any incidents of put-downs of female students or any disparaging remarks by teachers or guidance counselors that were very common back then in other schools. I think I was non-perceptive and oblivious (in a good way) and managed to be somehow unaware of societal pressures and expectations for women's roles; I just barreled ahead doing what I was interested in.

I attended Cornell University 1958-1962 where the freshman Zoology course seemed designed to "turn off" as many students as possible, and where female scientists were non-existent. I, nevertheless, persisted in my interests. After my sophomore year, I planned to volunteer at the AMNH doing research and found myself being interviewed by a female (!! ) scientist who would be spending the summer at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution in Cape Cod MA, and needed a part time lab assistant and part time baby sitter.

So I didn't spend my summer in the city after all. I studied fish schooling in the mornings and babysat at the beach in the afternoons. And I saw that women could indeed be biologists, although my mentor, Dr. Evelyn Shaw, was from a generation that had faced even more barriers entering science and was a rather tough cookie, not an ideal role model. I hoped I would not have to become exactly like her. I spent the following summer at Woods Hole also, taking the Marine Ecology course.

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I met many other young people with a similar passion for marine biology, including Pete Weis who eventually became my husband and frequent collaborator. We got married right after my graduation in 1962, so rather than attending graduate school at Yale, I settled for NYU so as not to have a commuting marriage. The NYU Biology Dept. had one "fish guy" who was the only suitable mentor for someone with my interests. He had never had a woman student in his lab before and didn't know what to do with me—he apparently thought I'd melt if I got wet or pulled nets in the water. Not being able to confront him on this, I agreed to do lab-based research, and since the lab was full of fish that were breeding, got interested in fish embryology. So I ended up with a dissertation on fish development with most coursework in ecology, oceanography, marine biology, and fisheries. I defended my dissertation while seven months pregnant, and our daughter Jennifer was born the day after graduation - planned parenthood in action!

I had been job-hunting that semester, and in 1967 interviewing while obviously pregnant was not an advantage. Nevertheless, I was hired at Rutgers Newark as a developmental biologist, given a salary that turned out to be far lower than others, a lab that was far smaller than others, a small startup package, and told "Welcome to Rutgers. Publish or perish." Nevertheless, I was happy, used my time efficiently, published and succeeded. There were already three women in the department, all supportive.

A couple of years later we had our second child, Eric, who was planned to come during intersession, although

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he came early during final exams. Being able to balance work and family was due to my husband Pete playing an equal role at home, and having a wonderful nanny.

In the early 1970s I got involved in the women's movement at school, and in the outside world through NOW. I had not previously been aware of women's issues and had felt that since I had a career, the women's movement was not important to me.

I had a conversation with a contemporary male colleague in my department, who expressed the opinion that women faculty should not coordinate a large freshman course because they could not get the respect of all the graduate students who would be teaching assistants, and they could not do the administrative work needed to run a large course. This was the "click experience" that instantly raised my consciousness and sent me to NOW.

I attended a meeting that weekend in NYC, picked up hundreds of flyers, bought a lot of books and suddenly my life was changed. Finding no NOW chapter in Essex County NJ where I lived, I started one, recruiting women friends and acquaintances. We filed lots of complaints about the segregated help wanted ads, filed some of the early Title IX complaints about the tracking of boys to shop classes and girls to home economics.

Before the government could get involved, just about all the school systems in the county made both classes mandatory for all students. Our action that got the most press attention was the Little League case that

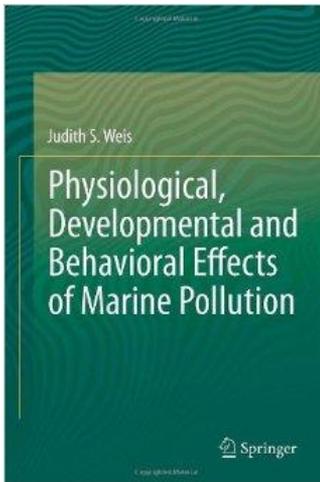
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eventually won the right of girls to play in the Little League; this was my 15 minutes of fame in the women's movement. The presiding officer in the case was the late Sylvia Pressler, whose quote that the Little League is as American as apple pie and motherhood and should not be denied to girls - was the quote of the day in the NY Times.

At Rutgers, a women's faculty organization at Newark obtained data from the Dean showing that women were getting lower salaries and slower promotions than men with comparable seniority, productivity, etc. The group filed charges, using the names only of tenured women in public documents. This protective action, led by the late Professors Helen Strausser (Zoology) and Dorothy Dinnerstein (Psychology) probably saved the jobs of those who were untenured; women at other universities involved in similar activities often found themselves out of a job later. Eventually, we won the case that was not a lawsuit but a complaint to the then-Dept. of Health Education and Welfare. We got salary increases plus back pay.

After a few years, my research moved back into a more environmental direction. Learning about harmful effects of contaminants, I became interested in policy, particularly after seeing the distressing environmental policies of the Reagan administration.

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I spent a year in Washington as a Congressional Science Fellow sponsored by the American Association for the Advancement of Science and American Society of Zoologists, working for the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee on issues including drinking water, pesticides, and hazardous wastes. That experience opened my eyes to the fact that science is only a small part of what goes into decision-making. Since then, I have spent additional years in Washington at the National Science Foundation and Environmental Protection Agency.

I thought briefly about a career switch, but opted to stay in academia and influence policy through advisory committees. I have served on many advisory committees to EPA, to National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, NJ Department of Environmental Protection, and the National Research Council. I also became involved in professional organizations, and was president of American Institute of Biological Sciences in 2001. I initiated efforts to combat the increasing influence of creationists in the schools.

I have also been active in the Association for Women in Science and served on their board. At Rutgers I particularly enjoy mentoring graduate students; in the

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early years, mostly men, but in the later years mostly women. I am the Newark co-coordinator of a university-wide NSF "Advance" grant for supporting women in science. In this project, we are focusing most of the attention on junior women science faculty who have not yet gotten tenure. Our children did not become scientists, although they appreciate science; they became a travel writer and a trail planner.

Science, feminism, and the environment are not my whole life. I am also very interested in music and participate in choral societies and light opera groups. I also love swimming and traveling. I am particularly happy spending time with our three granddaughters, two of whom live in California and one in Rhode Island. It distresses me to see that the aisles in toy stores are still labeled "girls toys" and "boys toys." There has been a fair amount of backsliding since the 70s - something I didn't think would be possible at that time. But certain important things that we accomplished are irreversible and have greatly improved women's lives and status in our society. But there is still an enormous amount of work to be done before we achieve true equality.

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# Veteran Feminists of America's Fabulous Feminists

## NAOMI WEISSTEIN -



Photo: Virginia Blaisdell, 1972

**September 20, 2015**  
**1:30 p.m.**

**The New School**  
**Theresa Lang Center**  
55 W. 13th Street, Manhattan  
(East of 6th Avenue)

**Open to the Public**  
Please RSVP:  
[jesse.lemisch@verizon.net](mailto:jesse.lemisch@verizon.net)

**Naomi Weisstein**

**October 16, 1939 -March 26, 2015**

**Neuroscientist:**

"Neural Symbolic Activity,"  
"An Object-Superiority Effect,"  
"What the Frog's Eye Tells the Human Brain"

**Feminist, comedian, performer:**

Founder, Chicago Women's Liberation Rock Band  
"Kinder, Küche Kirche as Scientific Law:  
Psychology Constructs the Female,"  
"Adventures of a Woman in Science"

**Remembrances:**

Heather Booth, Patrick Cavanaugh, Martin Duberman,  
Amy Kesselman, Jesse Lemisch, Vivian Rothstein,  
Alix Kates Shulman, Gloria Steinem & others.

Plus: tapes, clips of the Chicago Women's Liberation  
Rock Band, Naomi's speeches, her comedy on rape,  
and more.

Sponsored by The New School's Humanities Action Lab, Gender Studies and History Departments

One of the most brilliant and fascinating of the early radical feminists is Naomi Weisstein, probably best known for her pioneering 1967 essay, *Kinder, Küche, Kirche* ( Children, Kitchen, Church ), which started the discipline of the psychology of women, and has been reprinted over 42 times in six different languages.

Besides her scholarly talents and achievements Naomi is an actor with a great sense of humor. She was one of the early feminist stand-up comedians, and in the 1970 s took part in Eve Merriam s Off Broadway One Woman

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Show. Also musically gifted, she organized the Chicago Woman s Liberation Rock Band in 1970 "to shake up the sexist world of pop music." (Her story of that experience is included below). She has been ill for many years with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome and is bedridden, so was unable to write her bio. However there is much about her on the web, which we have excerpted here. But in no way can it describe the impact she s had on the new feminist movement.

Naomi was born in New York City in 1939 to Mary Menk and Samuel Weisstein. She graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Wellesley College in 1961 and by 1963 was a socialist, a civil-rights activist and a member of the New Haven Congress of Racial Equality. From there she went to Harvard to earn her Ph.D.

Naomi says she encountered sexism at every turn, as a student and when she applied for teaching positions. While at Harvard her feminist militancy was sharpened by experiences in male-dominated science and by the treatment of women students. One day she was denied entrance to the library because, she was told, women distracted serious scholarship. That evening she and friends, dressed in skin-tight leotards, met in front of the library and with clarinet, two tambourines and an old trumpet serenaded the scholars and shouted, You want distraction, we'll show you distraction! The library changed its policy immediately.

Sexism in her own department made it necessary to spend a year at Yale to complete her doctoral research because the psychology department at Harvard would not let her use the tachistoscope, which was essential for

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her research. During this time she met and later married the radical historian, Jesse Lemisch, currently professor emeritus at John Jay College of Criminal Justice.

In 1965 she took a post-doctoral fellowship at the Committee on Mathematical Biology at the University of Chicago. In 1967 she was a founding member of the Chicago Women's Liberation Union and American Women in Psychology, now Division 35 of the American Psychological Association.

Naomi taught at Loyola University in Chicago, and at the State University of New York at Buffalo until the early 1980s. She has been a pioneer in Vision Research, writing over 60 articles that were published in *Science*, *Vision Research*, *Psychological Review* and *Journal of Experimental Psychology*. She has served on the boards of *Cognitive Psychology* and *Spatial Vision* and has held fellowships with the Guggenheim; the American Association for the Advancement of Science; and the American Psychological Society.

*We include Naomi's Statement and Quotes, you can see both on the web.*

### **STATEMENT**

In Chicago, one cold and sunny day in March of 1970, I was lying on the sofa listening to the radio. First, Mick Jagger crowed that his once feisty girlfriend was now under his thumb. Then Janis Joplin moaned with thrilled resignation that love was like a ball and chain. I somersaulted off the sofa, leapt up into the air, and came down howling at the radio:

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Rock is the insurgent culture of the era! How criminal to make the subjugation and suffering of women so sexy! We've got to do something about this! We'll organize our own rock band! Why not see what would happen if we created visionary, feminist rock? Not only did every 14-year-old girl in the city listen to rock, but also every feminist did. We all identified with the counter-culture; rock was considered Our Music dangerous, sexy, and our harbinger of the social changes to come.



No matter that rock assaulted women more savagely than anything in popular culture before it. The task would be to change the politics while retaining the impact. And so I organized the Chicago Woman s Liberation Rock Band (CWLRB). My goals were much too ambitious a common problem at the time but the band turned out to be remarkably successful in achieving many of the goals.

We grew into a distinctive group of hip, talented, if inexperienced musicians. We were explicitly, self-consciously political about our performances, while

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avoiding leaden sloganeering. We were an image of feminist solidarity, resistance, and power, and audiences loved us. Everywhere we went, we would be mobbed at the end of a performance, with the audience hugging the band and other members of the audience.

The band lasted three years and then broke up, reflecting all the problems that were at the same time devastating the radical women's movement. Conflicts that once seemed easy to resolve, such as those of lesbians versus straights, began to feel insurmountable, and we started arguing too much and rehearsing too little.

The movement's utopianism included the belief that there should be no leaders. We soon learned this ideal was untenable, but we persisted in thinking that if we were good enough feminists, we could function without any hierarchy.

Amidst the appearance of structurelessness and leaderlessness, however, I was clearly the theatrical director, theoretician, healer of wounds, spiritual leader, and, if only by dint of a slight chronological advantage, mother to the band. When the women's movement started trashing its leaders, the band turned on me for all the roles I had played. And three months after I left Chicago, the band dissolved.

Despite the CWLRB's flaws, the band succeeded in conveying celebration and resistance. Its performances deliberately set up a politics of strong, defiant women, absolute democracy, and an intense desire for audience participation.

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Through the intensity of the medium, through our bad-ass revolutionary poetry, we shouted the news: we can have a new world, a just and generous world, a world without female suffering or degradation. It is an irony that the utopianism that had destroyed us was the same ingredient that made our performances so powerful.

She has received a Guggenheim fellowship and has been a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the American Psychological Society.

"Psychology has nothing to say about what women are really like, what they need and what they want, essentially, because psychology does not know."

One of the most brilliant and fascinating of the early radical feminists is Naomi Weisstein, probably best known for her pioneering 1967 essay, *Kinder, Küche, Kirche* ( Children, Kitchen, Church ), which started the discipline of the psychology of women, and has been reprinted over 42 times in six different languages.

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### DELL WILLIAMS

Dell Williams (née Zetlin; August 5, 1922 – March 11, 2015) was an American businesswoman. In 1945, she enlisted in the Women's Army Corps. Decades later, she founded the first feminist sex toy business in the United States, Eve's Garden, in New York City in 1974. Eve's Garden was the first woman-owned and woman-operated sex toy business in America.[4] As Williams put it, "Eve represented all women and the Garden was symbolic of women taking responsibility for their 'own' sexuality."



She was inspired to found the business after she took a "Body/Sex Workshop" by Betty Dodson in New York and afterwards went to buy a vibrator, but found that the salesboy at Macy's asked her nosy questions about it.

Williams was an actress for a time, and appeared in productions of The Vagina Monologues.[7] Her most notable role may have been in a 1962 film, The Cliff Dwellers, a film which was nominated for an Academy Award. In addition to this, she was a singer, artists' model, and writer during the 1930s and 1940s, and was later one of the first successful female advertising executives in New York City.

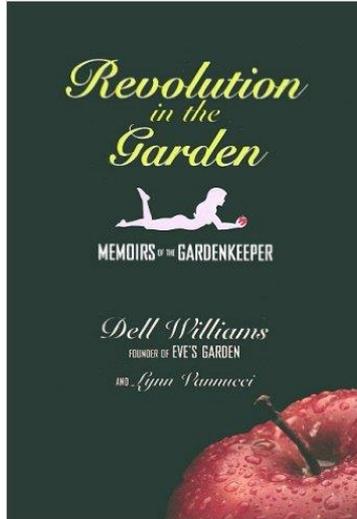
#### About Dell Williams

***In 1974, inspired by Betty Dodson and my political commitment to further women's sexual liberation, I created EVE'S GARDEN, a women's sexuality boutique and mail-order business to help women to "define, explore and celebrate" their sexuality...***

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I stepped into the Women's March for Equality in 1970 like a lamb and I walked out like a lion. I suddenly "got it" when I realized that growing up female in our male-dominated culture had truly limited me financially, psychologically and emotionally. It was an instant transformation. I joined the New York Chapter of NOW and another chapter in my life began at 52. Inspired in my new cause for freedom and the undaunted leadership of Jacqui Ceballos, who was the then President of NOW, I was plunged into various activities, participating in "zap" actions (which attracted the media like flies and brought our cause to the notice of the nation) to planning conference and creating many fund-raising events for the chapter.

In 1972, Judy Wenning, the then president of the chapter, handed me an outline of a sexuality conference she wanted me to coordinate for the chapter. Together with Laura Scharf and a terrific group of passionate women we launched an event which had never been done before... a forum where women could get together and talk about SEX. It was a rousing success. THE WOMEN'S SEXUALITY CONFERENCE took place in a New York City High School attended by over 1400 women. We opened with a "SPEAK OUT" with women speaking from every lifestyle, opening with Betty Dodson's declaration that masturbation was her primary sexual activity. Her forthright talk transformed women from body-shy to



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body-proud as women shared their different sexual lives from straight to gay and everything in between. We convened into various workshops for smaller gatherings on every subject related to sexuality which occurred over a two-day period. On Sunday Betty Dodson presented her slide show "Creating an Aesthetic for the Female Genitals", which showed the tremendous variety of shapes, forms and colors of women's genitals.

When the show ended, I thought the walls would topple from the vibrations of the thunderous applause. It was as if thousands of years of guilt, shame and sexual repression came tumbling down with the walls. Many women told me later that this conference changed their lives, and for some, their lifestyles. In 1974, inspired by Betty Dodson and my political commitment to further women's sexual liberation, I created EVE'S GARDEN, a women's sexuality boutique and mail-order business to help women to "define, explore and celebrate" their sexuality, which was the theme of the conference. "EVE" represented all women and the "GARDEN" was symbolic of women taking responsibility for their OWN sexuality.

Presently, I am studying to be an Interfaith Minister, and, Goddess willing, look forward to creating a ministry that seeks to unite sexuality with spirituality; a ministry that honors the regenerative power of the life force which is contained in women's sacred sexual nature.

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# OUR FABULOUS FEMINISTS

Editors: Jacqui Ceballos and Joan Michel

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