S0828 NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR WOMEN, METRO ST. LOUIS CHAPTER, ADDENDA, 1970-1984
80 FOLDERS, 1 ARTIFACT, 1 BOOK, 3 PHOTOGRAPHS, 20 NEGATIVES

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Related Collections: S0175, S0213, and S0708

HISTORY

Betty Friedan, the author of The Feminine Mystique, founded the National Organization for Women (NOW) in 1966 and served as the first national president. By 1984 there were 260,000 individual members, 9 regional organizers, 50 state groups, and 800 local chapters. The organization's goal is to end all forms of prejudice and discrimination against women. The group continues to support passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, enforcement of federal legislation prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex, social innovations to enable women to work while rearing a family, and a re-examination of laws and more governing marriages and divorce. The organization promoted its views through litigation, political action and research.

The Metro St. Louis NOW Chapter received its charter in February 1971. Mary Ann Sedey was the first president. By October 1972, there were 50 paid members, with many more people regularly attending the chapter's programs. The Metro St. Louis NOW Chapter often created temporary alliances with one-issue orientated groups in conjunction with its regular committees and task forces. The group supported its activities by selling posters, buttons and publications, as well as holding fundraisers.

Metro St. Louis NOW was interested in a wide range of issues: child care, consciousness-raising, early childhood development, economic justice, education discrimination, homemakers' rights, labor unions, and on-site organizing, lesbian rights, the problems of disabled and minority women, physical and mental health, violence against women, and women and religion.

The Media Committee monitored television news programs, wrote letters to offensive advertisers and urged a boycott of their products. The Education Committee reviewed public school text books for sex stereotyping. The Marriage and Family Committee worked towards the successful passage of the no-fault divorce law. The Library Task Force checked on the extent of collections dealing with women. The Compliance in Business and Industry Committee supported women who felt discriminated against in employment and counseled them on sex-decision laws, how and where to file a complaint, and how to deal with an employer personally. They worked to eliminate the segregation of job want ads. This committee monitored business and industry affirmative action plans and assisted in finding jobs for women that were usually held by men.
SCOPE AND CONTENT

The St. Louis Metro NOW records contain materials collected by Paula Geiss when she worked with the Squirrel Hill, Pennsylvania NOW chapter and the Metro St. Louis NOW Chapter.

The records have been organized into four areas: political, NOW organization and chapters, newsletters and news clippings, and personal. Records received in folders and notebooks were kept together and in original order.

Political: This consists of political and legislative efforts, including voter registration campaigns, Senate hearing transcripts, public opinion messages, and proposed bills affecting women. (Folders 1-17)

NOW organization and chapters: This contains records from Missouri and Pennsylvania (Pittsburgh area) Chapters, including chapter development, meeting notes, fundraising activities, flyers, state NOW conferences and state campaigns. Also contains letters from NOW president Ellie Smeal, National Conference materials, NOW policy manuals and postcards and pamphlets. (Folders 18-53)

Newsletters and news clippings: Records include National NOW Times, Missouri Chapter NOW newsletters, Pittsburgh area NOW newsletters, news clippings collected by Paula Geiss on ERA sit-ins, fasts, general ERA topics and congressional elections. (Folders 54-74)

Personal: This includes notes and letters as well as feminist songs, cartoons and NOW memorabilia. (Folders 75-80)

NOTE:
Several news clippings within collection are undated or lack newspaper name and page.

Portions of the collection were affected by water damage prior to their donation requiring several original documents to be photo-copied. Some of these pages, including a significant portion of two notebooks are not fully legible due to this damage.

FOLDER LIST

BOX 1 (048521)
2. Missouri ERA Legislative History and Intent, 1977
3. Missouri Senate Hearings on ERA, 1980
7. Congressional Record, 1981
11. ERA Political Action Committee, n.d.
15. NOW Voter Registration Campaign, 1984
17. Political Issue Letters, n.d.
20. NOW Chapter Directories, 1979, 1981
23. NOW Guidelines for Feminist Consciousness Raising, 1983
24. NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund, New Leadership in the Public Interest, 1981
25. NOW National Conference, 1981
26. NOW National Conference, Paula Geiss Notes, 1981
27. NOW National Conference, 1982
28. NOW National Officers Campaigns, 1982
29. ERA Message Brigade, 1982
30. NOW Pamphlets and Postcards, n.d.
31. NOW Chapter Development materials, n.d.
32. NOW Membership Drive and Activity Cards, 1983
33. NOW Chapter Press Releases, Maryland and Missouri, 1981
34. Flyers, NOW Rallies, Marches and Conferences, 1980-1982
37. Squirrel Hill, PA NOW Chapter Documents and Events, 1980
38. NOW Pennsylvania Conference, 1980
40. Paula Geiss Notebook #1, Pennsylvania NOW Chapter, Notes, n.d.

BOX 2 (048522)
42. Missouri NOW Conference, 1982
43. Missouri NOW Leadership List, 1983-84
44. NOW Countdown Campaign, Missouri, Articles and Reports, 1981
45. NOW Message Brigades, St. Louis, Articles, Templates and Notes, 1982
46. NOW Message Brigades, St. Louis, Meeting and Planning Notes, 1982
47. Missouri NOW Chapter Fundraisers, Planning, 1984
48. Missouri NOW Benefit, Phone Bank, 1984
49. Paula Geiss Notebook #2, Missouri NOW Chapter, Notes, n.d.
50. NOW Movie and Music Benefit Programs, Missouri and Pennsylvania, 1981-1982
52. Lesbian Rights and Education Work Session, n.d.
56. ERA related to Science and Religion, Articles, 1980-1982
57. ERA Facts, News Clippings, Articles and Handouts, 1975-1981
58. NOW National Times, 1979-1980
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