

**S0213 Metro St. Louis Now (National Organization For Women)
Records, 1971-1980
32 Folders, 3 Tapes**

This collection is available at The State Historical Society of Missouri. If you would like more information, please contact us at shsresearch@umsystem.edu.

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.

NOW promotes its views through research, litigation, and political action.

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. By October 1972, eleven task forces and a speakers' bureau had been established. In addition, chapter members developed temporary alliances with one-issue oriented groups. Metro NOW supported its activities by selling posters, buttons and publications, as well as holding fund raising dinners.

Metro NOW worked especially hard to secure state ratification of the ERA and to protect abortion rights. The group held yearly rallies for ERA on August 25, the anniversary of women's suffrage, and in 1978 conducted a 77-day vigil at the state capitol to obtain an extension of the ratification deadline. The abortion task force joined with other St. Louis organizations in pro-abortion rallies and in picketing on behalf of the issue.

Members of 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.

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.

SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

Series 1, Administrative Files: This series consists of reports, circular, questionnaires, correspondence, agendas, newsletters, and any information pertaining to conferences held within the midwest region's boundaries. Dates range from 1970 to 1980. Folders 1 through 33.

Series 2, Tapes: This series consists of three cassette tapes. Two of the tapes are 60 second radio spots supporting the passage of ERA. The third tape is a recording of the National's meeting where a state of emergency was declared to support and force passage of ERA. No date.

FOLDER LISTING

Series 1

Administrative Files

BOX 1

1. Midwest Regional Conference, 1971
2. Midwest Regional Conference, 1972 Report
3. Midwest Regional Conference, 1972 Questionnaire
4. Midwest Regional Conference, 1972 Circular & Materials
5. Midwest Regional Conference, 1972 Finances
6. Midwest Regional Conference, 1973 Correspondence
7. Midwest Regional Conference, 1973 Questionnaires
8. Midwest Regional Conference, 1973 Report
9. Midwest Regional Conference, 1973 Materials, Agendas & Circular
10. Midwest Regional Conference, 1974 Correspondence
11. Midwest Regional Conference, 1974 Candidates for Midwest Regional Director
12. Midwest Regional Conference, 1974 Report
13. Midwest Regional Conference, 1974 Resolutions
14. Midwest Regional Conference, 1974 Workshop Invitations & Replies
15. Midwest Regional Conference, 1974 Questionnaires
16. Midwest Regional Conference, 1974 Materials, Arrangements, and Circular

BOX 2

17. 1970-71 General Correspondence

18. 1972 Midwest Region Report
19. 1972-74 General Correspondence
20. 1974-76 General Correspondence
21. April 1975, Training session for Chapter presidents and state coordinators
22. January 1976, meeting of Midwest State Coordinators
23. Midwest Regional Director, Finances, nd
24. Midwest Region, Chapter Status Reports and lists, nd
25. Chapter Charters, nd
26. National By-Laws and Guidelines for State Structure, nd
27. Leadership Lists, nd
28. Chapter Convenor Kit, nd
29. Brochures, Information, nd
30. Organizations that will not hold conventions in unratified states, July 1979

BOX 3

31. Missouri Statewide Newsletters, 1974-79
32. Missouri Statewide Newsletters, 1980-

Series 2: Tapes

213.1 through 213.2: Radio spots supporting the passage of ERA sponsored by NOW, St. Louis Chapter, nd

213.3: National meeting declaring a state of emergency concerning the passage of ERA, 2/26/?