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## Overview: Herstory - Jacksonville Women's Movement

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HERSTORY - JACKSONVILLE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

1970-1975 in detail Prepared for 10/1/75 APM Subject, they decided to separate NOW & the Jacksonville Women's movement  
 1975-1978 some of it

Extended portion of interview at Request of B. Drake →

Aug. 13

In early 1970, Pat Russo Duggan, without support from anyone, took it upon herself to be a public speaker on Women's Liberation. Upon planning to leave the city for law school, she asked Vicki Wengrow to take her place as a public speaker and to maintain her list of people sympathetic to Women's Liberation. The 1st presentation Vicki gave was on a panel at the Unitarian Church, July, 1970. The audience, overall, seemed responsive. In the audience was Janet Brown, who had organized a New York Radical Feminist type consciousness raising group at J.U.

After the panel, Janet Brown and Vicki Wengrow organized the 1st demonstration for the 1st Women's Equality Day, August 26, 1970. Vicki contacted the people on Pat's list & others.

AUGUST 26, 1970

20 people, most of whom had never met before, demonstrated on the steps of the Jacksonville Federal Building (The platform area only holds around 20 people), in sympathy with the first national strike for Justice and Equality. As Betty Friedan had put it, "Don't iron while the strike is hot." We carried signs (done by Janet & her children); we wore "the uniform" (dresses & heels for women, shirts & ties for men); we had a legal permit to gather.

Ida Phillips (of Phillips vs. Martin Marietta sex discrimination suit) and her daughter demonstrated with us.

On that day, plans to organize a Jacksonville Women's Movement, including a NOW chapter, were made.

Desiring to develop a Jacksonville Women's Movement that had the support of feminists of every persuasion (i.e., conservative, liberal, radical, etc.), we developed a NOW chapter with a less bureaucratic hierarchy (For national record keeping, we did them a favor and had "paper" officers). The chapter had 4 rotating co-coordinators; since the press seems only able to relate to one "spokesperson," each coordinator was to serve a 3 month term as head coordinator, for the press. The 1st Coordinator was Lyn Horwitz. The other 3 were Vicki Wengrow, Janet Brown & Edna Saffy. Edna & Janet never served (Edna worked hard at FJC for Women's Rights). Vicki Wengrow served their terms and convened the NOW chapter (i.e., she was the 1st "paper" NOW president).

Within several months, a Board had been developed of feminists of all political, social, economic, race, age etc. backgrounds, so that decisions made by the Jax. Women's Movement reflected the wishes of the gamut of women, and communication & cooperation was happening between diverse people.

NOVEMBER, 1970

✓ First newsletter--called JACKSONVILLE NOW CALL TO ACTION. The first functions of the Jax. Women's Movement were: CR groups, questionnaires to candidates running for mayor, city council, school board, & the Fla. legislature; (We also had membership cards designed by Lyn Horwitz); research on women in Florida law; research on the day care situation for women in Jax, other political action, speaker's bureau, telephone answering service.

We did many things to get PR in the first years, did alot of TV, got coverage for panels and club appearances, etc.

A member of Women's Movement started going to CPC (4 C committee, Community Coordinated Childcare)

February, 1972

Feb. 12, we help Betty Teague (tireless & brave woman) with Jacksonville's one and only ABORTION RALLY IN HEMMING PARK (ZPG, Clergy Consultation Service worked with us.) The ceremony included 6 women carrying a coffin with a (symbolic) dead sister (as a result of backstreet abortion), black armbands, etc. Many speakers. Hundreds of people attended. TV and radio coverage.

March, 1972

Other Chirley Chisholm events--fundraising cocktail party (given by Peggy Graham) Ellen Schroer and Vicki Wengrow give presentation of feminism to Community Relations Commission  
 Women's Movement taught a course through FJC Adult Education, "Women in Man's Society." NOW members put together a varied 6 week course for the public.  
 12 feminists went to City Editor TIMES UNION & JOURNAL to protest poor coverage of Abortion rally.  
 NOW Education Committee put together a textbook evaluation guide--for detecting sexism in children's books (i.e., Mary Beth Koechlin)  
 Mixed Male-female CR group formed.

April, 1972

Lots of PR--Channel 17, 12 & 7; Anchor Club, Fletcher High, Englewood High, Mental Health Forum, Community Relations Commission, NAS Drug Control Center.

Women's Movement circulated handout opposing the Mayor's racist, sexist bond issue. The Bond issue lost. The Mayor appeared on TV, upset by the bad taste of someone putting one of those handouts on his desk! (inspiration for opposing the bond issue was that newly formed Women's Political Caucus had sent Mayor a request that there be women in staff positions under the Mayor and waited for the response. When the press asked why no response, the Mayor's aid told them the Mayor was too busy with the more important bond issue to answer the Women's Political Caucus. We then knew where women and poor people stood in the hierarchy of "important" things.)

Mayor & City Council receive our letter stating why we had opposed the bond issue. We asked the Mayor to consult women in the future e.g., asked for a Commission on the Status of Women.

NOW members and children participate in the Welfare Rights children's march to the Federal Bldg.

around April, '72

Within the same period of time, feminists (initiated by Vicki Wengrow) in the League of Women Voters got the League to do a resolution asking the Mayor to have a Commission on the Status of Women (also, to endorse the ERA); NOW's letter to the Mayor taking credit for opposing the bond issue and asking that, in the future, women be consulted via a Commission on the Status of Women. Several months later, invitations went out to women in NOW, League, etc. to form the Mayor's Commission on the Status of Women (Naturally, the Women's Movement was never credited with being the inspiration for the formation of the Commission.)

FEBRUARY 3, 1971

✓ We were granted a NOW chapter charter from national NOW.

L) APRIL, 71

The Organizer, a Lesbian newsletter, from Lesbians in Keystone Heights, sent via New York. (Ask Cathy Crompp. She was involved with it).

AUGUST, 1971

✓ Week of activities for Aug. 26:

Sylvia Roberts, NOW Regional Dir. & attorney in herstoric Weeks vs. Southern Bell, spoke at NOW sponsored public meeting (good press)

✓ Open meeting at Unitarian Church on the Women's Movement; and to let people know about CR. About 150 people attended. CR groups for women, one for men.

✓ Publicity campaign; distributed cards all over the community (e.g., in libraries) raisins awareness. Cards said things like: "Feminists are all around you.";

"Do you resent being called, 'Just a Housewife' ""Did you know women earn 58 cents for every dollar earned by men?" etc. If you want to learn more or change this, call NOW etc..."

Lots of TV and radio coverage & newspaper coverage

✓ Opened an office with environmental groups at Environmental Coordinating Office (ECO)

✓ The emphasis this year was educating the public to the issues and that the Women's Movement is here working to make change...join us.

✓ As of this date, we have 140 members of Jax. Women's Movement.

November, 1971

With ZPG, circulated petitions for repeal of Florida anti-abortion law. (Thru June, 1972, we worked on this..coordinated by Sybil Eppler. We staffed tables at shopping centers,etc.).

✓ **Testified before state Judiciary Criminal Committee on abortion law at Courthouse.**  
✓ **Helped organize people to testify. (Thanks to our efforts, testimony for repeal was 3 to 1).**

✓ Sponsored a symposium on abortion; public invited.

Women's Movement became a member of the Jacksonville Area Conservation Council.

December, 1971

First "New Year's Eve Party for Feminists and their Friends". Everything shared: goodies, clean-up & childcare.

January, 1972

Shirley Chisholm, running for President. She came to town, and NOW was part of motorcade, rally,etc. NOW sponsored a coffee for her at Kennedy Center.

Letter writing parties on abortion law repeal.

Vicki Wengrow appointed to Florida Women's Political Caucus Policy Council; returns to convene the Duval County Women's Political Caucus (initially, co-directors, bi-racial, ca. 1/3 black membership).

Started teen CR group.

Lots of spin-off from the Women's Movement all the time

For example, Women's Movement recommended Liz Phillips to Community Relations Commission. She was appointed.  
Women's Movement recommended Ellen Spangler to Probationer's Residence Board. She was accepted.

May 10, 1972

Eliza Paschall, Voluntary Program Officer, Southern Region EEOC came to Jax. Had an evening meeting, open to the public, at which she spoke. (We also met with her privately to learn. She's an active NOW member too).

J.C. Penney's national office asked them to meet with local NOW reps. Linda Menke & Mary Beth Koechlin meet with them in Jax

All the time --lots of letter writing on issues affecting women  
--lots of support for whatever other women were doing.  
Always, a lot happening behind the scenes!

Summer, 1972

Pressure from NOW to rid Times Union Journal ads of sex discrimination.

Evolving- By this time, newsletter told people, "Every NOW member is a board member. We do whatever action those attending feel is important."

May 30, 1972

First meeting of the Mayor's Commission on the Status of Women. Attended by 11 women, most of whom didn't know why they were there, what to do, wanted to be called, "Mrs. Man's Name, etc." and didn't want to chair the commission. Linda Menke, of the Women's Movement, took the leadership as "Chairperson" of the Commission.

Women's Movement supported the formation of St. Johns' County NOW; chapter organized by Peggy Caraway

June, 1972

Women's Movement began dreaming and planning to have our own women's center.

Always, lots of speaking at groups, radio & tv, press; ongoing CR groups.

August, 1972--Weeks' activities

Organized the CR groups to eliminate so much flux in groups--so many new people in and out. Open CR group on Wednesdays for new people initiated. Other groups are closed. (We had been having 30-40 people in one night, splitting off into 2, 3 or 4 groups) This year, at any one time, 3 or more CR groups were going on weekly in different parts of the city.

Friday, August 18, 1972... Women's Movement handed out more than 2000 leaflets to women leaving work, at large insurance companies, announcing Aug. 26 week activities.  
Aug. 19--Garage sale to raise funds  
Aug. 23--Open to public CR--reached about 50 new people.

Aug. 24--CR especially for older women.

From this, older women's group meets for 6 weeks.

Fri., Aug. 25--Presented Barefoot & Pregnant Awards and Good awards to selected persons & businessess. Stirred up much attention & variety of feelings in community--anger & praise. e.g., we got to see the Mayor on TV receive his award and then childishly throw it on the ground.

14 awards given: Barefoot & Pregnant Awards to: Sen. Dan Scarborough, Se. Lew Brantley, Sheriff Dale Carson, Blue Cross & Blue Shield, The Duval County School Board, McCall's Pest Control, Folgers Coffee Co., Pres. Nixon.

GOOD Awards to: Lois Graessle, Councilwoman Sallye Mathis, Councilwoman Mary Singleton, Walt Friend, Pampers Diaper Co.

Fri. ev., Aug. 25, CR open to public at Unitarian Church

Sa., Aug. 26..Liberation School

all day workshop of women teaching skills to women e.g., rewiring a lamp, changing a tire , stitchery,etc.

Sat., Aug. 26--celebration party for feminists & their friends.

This was a really great week--lots of involvement, many dif. people, alot of risk.

We learned that the Women's Editors weren't our friends.

### Summer, 1972

NOW babysitting COOP formed.

NOW members boycott non-union lettuce.

Women's Movement member kit (for new people) put together.

### Sept., 1972

The summer months of pressuring the newspapers to stop advertising jobs as "Help Wanted Male,etc." produces results, although, as usual, the powers that be preferred not to credit the Women's Movement with the change. Discrimination Task Force had written & visited the Chamber of Commerce & the newspapers pointing out they were breaking the law by listing job openings according to sex and announcing a deadline by which time we planned to file discrimination charges with EEOC. We also phoned employment agencies & some businesses. On September 27, 1972, THE TIMES UNION JOURNAL CHANGED THEIR FORMAT IN WANT ADS TO ELIMINATE DIFFERENT SECTIONS FOR MALE & FOR FEMALE.

### October, 1972

Women's Movement members & others help form a Free School for children.

Our Newsletter renamed "Call to Action"

### November, 1972

Alliance for Ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment formed. (Lots of publicity and hard work. Again, mainly us...between us, we represented or had direct input into about a dozen organizations.)

Nov. 18, 1972 , Silent Auction at Boone Park--fundraising and publicity.

Membership drive among feminists to join NAACP to vote for Eddie Mae Stewart for President (Note: Eddie Mae Stewart won the election by one vote.)

Nov. 13, 1972 Rap session with Springfield Welfare Mothers Organization

### Jan., 1973

Newletter no longer put out by NOW, but by the Jacksonville Women's Movement (primarily in order not to endanger tax exempt status of NOW).

Legislative hearings on the ERA. Many people testify.

Leafleted Southern Bell, as part of National project. Women's Movement

largely responsible for Bell & AT&T affirmative action that changed from paying women slave wages & treating them as slaves (stories emerged , like, they had to ask to go to the bathroom & it was often refused!) to good jobs & pay...that men want too.

Feb., 1973

Joan Edelson becomes State Coordinator for Self-Help Clinics.

Feb. 24, 1973

Workshop at YWCA, covered by press, sharing of information & experiences by women who attended NOW D.C. national convention & Tampa Radical Feminist Conference.  
*we were active in all feminist perspectives*

March, 1973

March 7, 1973 Feminists Odile Maher, Ellen Spangler, Charlotte Larsen demonstrate with umbrellas saying, "Pass the ERA NOW" while Senate Pres.. Mallory Horne meets locally with business leaders.

March 11-16 Several feminists attend conference on "Power & Conflict", St. Simons Island. The results have had a greater effect in this community than many will ever know. (much learned and it's being used.)

On opening day of the State Legislature, 6 Jacksonville NOW women dressed in long black robes with black veils, carried a coffin through legislature, with sign "Resurrect the ERA". Got statewide publicity, let the legislature know women are getting angry. Sparked alot of controversy. We weren't "ladylike." (Again, spearheaded by Ellen Spangler).

April 7 & 8, 1973

20 NOW Jacksonville women attended Cocoa Beach, Fla. Women's Political Caucus Convention to help vote for people who would represent & include all women (i.e., including poor & with children).

Ongoing--Women's Movement supports other venture e.g., Women's Commission's April seminar,

The Vital Woman

Support Clergy Consultation Services abortion clinic

Support NAACP

Attend City Affirmative Action plan hearings

May, 1973

First Self-Help clinics held in Jacksonville, organized by Joan Edelson. Joan Edelson arranges for women from the California Feminist Women's Health Center to visit feminist groups in Florida & teach us.

May 4, 1973 Joan Edelson has benefit dinner to meet Feminist Women's Health Center women. Benefits go to Springfield Welfare Rights Organization.  
*As feminists we could about + supported all the women we could*

NOTE: Mixed male-female CR has been meeting on Friday nights all this time. Men's CR too.

OPTIONS, INC., a for profit corporation, is formed & leases the building at 1825 Hendricks Ave. as a women's center for our Movement and a store selling books & crafts made by women. The place is a terrible hole when we find it, but women (esp. Ellen Spangler) repaired & decorated it and made it a nice place.

Community Liaison Consultants, feminist management consultants, formed (Linda Menke & Vicki Wengrow. Among other projects, submitted a proposal to City of Jacksonville to help city implement its affirmative action program for its 10,000 employees.)

June, 1973

(L) June 16 & 17 Women's camp-out--workshops on sexuality.  
Attended by women & children from Jax, Gainesville & Tampa.

June, 1973 cont'd

Women's Movement began organizing an abortion counseling service. Later, we offered this feminist expertise to The Women's Center for Reproductive Health, were turned down. Once again, women's expert services are ok so long as they are for free.

July, 1973

(L) First Open CR on the Lesbian issue.

The open CR the week before on Children resulted in providing childcare for all Movement activities.

(L) CR group for Lesbians starts.

Week of Aug26, 1973

Aug. 20, 1973 GRAND OPENING OPTIONS WOMEN'S CENTER

No ribbon cutting ceremony, but a ribbon tying ceremony, symbolizing the uniting of women. When the ribbon was tied, it spelled WOMEN.

Aug. 22, 1973 Panel on Sex Discrimination in employment open to public. Panel: Carolyn Zisser, attorney; Vicki Wengrow, Community Liaison Consultants; Donna Taylor, Employment Counselor; Eddie Mae Steward, Pres. NAACP.

Aug. 23, 1973 Self-Help Clinic at Center. Two week course for \$2. which includes speculum.

Aug. 24, 1973 Open CR at YWCA

Aug. 25, 1973 Celebration of NOW, Jax's 3rd year.

August 26, 1973 Suffragist March for ERA. Women & children meet at Center wearing long dresses & skirts (1920's look) and march distributing ERA materials.

September, 1973

Alot of activity: Active ERA Task Force  
Active Job Discrimination TF  
Name Change TF  
Options holds classes: Auto Mechanics for Women  
Origins of Male Supremist Culture  
Female Psychology  
Self-Defense for Women  
Women in Poverty  
Grantsmanship

Rape Task Force Formed

Jacksonville NOW ran 3 workshops at Sept. State NOW meeting.

October 25, 1973

Mayor's Commission on the Status of Women has televised hearings on sex discrimination in City Council chambers. Heavy attendance & testimony by many women, many feminists.

Over the summer, 3 Jacksonville women trained at California Feminist Women's Health Centers. They returned, bringing another person with them. Began to organize a Feminist Women's Health Center here.

Starting to discuss & testify (esp. Ellen Spangler, when others wouldn't touch it) on Rape & Sexual Abuse of Children.



Same ongoing active task forces, plus--

Abortion TF

Staffing the Women's Center

Active Speakers Bureau; as usual, very time-consuming activity.

Nov., 1973

CR for Women RELating Closely to a Man (probably, in self-defense because of the strong Lesbian presence in the leadership of the local Movement).

January 21, 1974

A coalition of women's organizations: The Feminist Women's Health Center, NOW, Jacksonville Women's Movement, in order to celebrate the anniversary of Jan 22, 1973, Supreme Court decision on abortion, hold a public meeting to give the Carol Downer award for outstanding contributions in the field of women's health care in Jax. Awards went to Betty Teague & Joan Edelson. Public meeting: excellent press & execution. Invited guests included reps. from ZPG, Welfare Rights Org., Clergy Consultation Service, Jacksonville Catholics for Freedom of Conscience, Planned Parenthood, NAACP, Jacksonville Women's Political Caucus, Mayor's Commission on the Status of Women.

Feb., 1974

Men for the ERA formed.

March 1, 1974 Start Women's Rape Crisis Center 24 Hour Rape Hotline. Organized & functioning, media coverage, etc.

May, 1974

Community Schools sponsor several women's studies classes taught by feminists. (Sheila Penney & Sara Bowers, Options for Women: Vicki Wengrow, Contemporary Women & Our Role Conflicts).

NOW legislative TF re-activates. Develop & distribute candidates' questionnaire.

Mary Beth Koechlin, Jax. Feminist, becomes President of the Florida Women's Political Caucus.

June, 1974 Lois Robinson circulates petition to get self-defense for girls taught in Duval County Schools.

The Feminist Women's Health Center moves to Tallahassee.

Jacksonville Coalition for the Equal Rights Amendment formed--Rachel Aides Golieb leadership.

Week of Aug 26, 1974

Aug. 22 Open CR at Options

Aug. 26 OPEN HOUSE

Aug. 26 Film, NOW history

Aug. 27 Self-Help workshop

Aug. 28 Woman artists' films (Arian Sanz)

Aug. 29 Open CR, public invited

Aug. 30 Party for Feminists & their Friends

Sept., 1974

Divorce TF formed

Feminist Poetry workshop organized by Diane O'Donnell

Credit TF formed

Sept. 21, 1974, Candidates Night -co-sponsored by Duval County Women's Political Caucus, FEW, League of Women's Voters, NOW, Women Involved in Community Action, YWCA

Sept. 21, 1974 The Women's Movement re-organized.  
"Vagilante" group formed, anonymous membership.

December, 1974  
We lose OPTIONS WOMEN'S CENTER.

April 14, 1975  
(L) Tallahassee ERA Parade for ERA. Some Jax. women wear lavender armbands and march behind the Lesbian banner.

Fall of 1975  
NOW and Jax Women's Movement separated. (October, '75)  
Jacksonville Women's Movement Incorporated (Ask Cathy Drompp re: incorp. & its maintenance)  
Plans started by Jacksonville women's Movement for a Women's House of REfuge.  
Note: All this time Divorce TF and Rosemary Furman, esp., helping people self-file divorces.

December, 1975 Rosemary Fuhrman organizes a program on self-filed Divorce, 7 speakers & tv. coverage.

January, 1976 Celebration of Womankind.. 1st. Bicentennial event in Jacksonville in 1976- songs, poetry , costumes --inspiring event.

Feb., 1976 Rape Crisis Center & Jacksonville Women's Movement TF on Battered Women join forces--put a binder down on a house on Hubbard Street for a refuge for women.

April, 1976 the first issue of THE MONTHLY PAUSE (newsletter so renamed--concept & artwork by Carolyn Henry)

April 12, 1976  
(L) Lesbian TF meeting

June 14, 1976  
(L) Lesbian TF offers presentation to the Jacksonville Women's Movement, ~~"Myths & Realities of Lesbianism"~~  
"Myths & REalities of Lesbianism"

(L) June (I think)'76 We lost the 1st HUD grant to Hubbard House because of the visible Lesbian presence in organizing HH (The Board had a copy of THE MONTHLY PAUSE at the meeting) After this, alot of pressure to low-key the lesbian participation in HH in order to get better public acceptance

July 4, 1977 Womancraft Meeting, Adrian Ruth

(L) July, 1977 - Ellen Spangler, Sherry Kliegman, Pat Crouse, Vicki Wengrow, a Lesbian Feminist SEparatist Collective, invited other Lesbians to Potluck. The idea & energy were Ellen Spangler's. Thus, the first POT LUCK was born. When Ellen left town, Audrey Flynn insured the Pot Lucks' continuation for 9 years by finding hostesses, making maps, etc.

(L) When? Fall, 1977--Much of the money and energy for the full purchase and organization of the Pagoda (In St. Augustine) were Jacksonville Lesbians...in the 1st year.

(L) 1978 ? Alot of us from Jax. went to the D.C. 1st National Lesbian & Gay March (300,000 participants)

(L) Dates ? The Archives