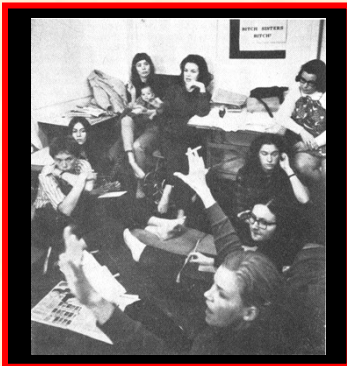


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## *THE REDSTOCKINGS' ORGANIZATIONAL COLLECTION, REDSTOCKINGS' WOMEN'S LIBERATION ARCHIVES FOR ACTION, 1940s-1991*

*The Redstockings' Organizational Collection, Redstockings' Women's Liberation Archives for Action, 1940s-1991 is a publication indispensable for the study of the origins and practice of 1960's and 1970's feminism. These archives are filled with first-hand description, commentary, critique, and debate about much of the theory, concepts, strategy and tactics that proved crucial to the meteoric rise of the Women's Liberation Movement--and later the struggle against its decline--all by women at its core. They are a rich source of the primary documents and discussions that were manifested by the slogans "Sisterhood Is Powerful," and "The Personal is Political." Debates regarding the practice of consciousness-raising, the "Pro-Woman Line," the Miss America Protest, and the first public abortion speak-out are amply recorded.*



### History

Redstockings was the name coined in 1969 by Shulamith Firestone and Ellen Willis for one of the earliest women's liberation groups of the second wave. The name represented the union of two traditions: the "bluestocking" label disparagingly pinned on feminists of earlier centuries--and "red" for revolution. Participants and associates of the group included pioneer second wave activists and theoreticians Kathie Amatriek Sarachild, Carol Hanisch, Pat Mainardi, and Judith Brown, each of whom would shape the group over the years. Included as well, are Carol Giardina and many others, whom these pioneers organized into the movement in the important centers of New York City and Gainesville, Florida.

The collaboration between activists working in the South and those working in the North lies at the heart of this collection. More than any other Women's Liberation archives available today, these papers demonstrate the link between the radical southern civil rights organizing of the Student Non-Violent Organizing Committee, the Congress of Racial Equality, and the Southern Conference Education Fund with the revolutionary project of Women's Liberation. The papers, article drafts, and speeches found here document the ways in which the Black Power movement nurtured these women's rebellion and shaped their political program and method.

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Six months before the formation of Redstockings, these women forged a close political working relationship at the early women's liberation conferences in Sandy Springs, Maryland, and Lake Villa, Illinois and some of the notes taken at these events are included in this collection. Two had been leaders of the first Women's Liberation action at the 1968 mobilization of the Jeanette Rankin Brigade and helped to systematically plan the expansion of the new movement. Kathie Amatniek Sarachild coined the slogan "Sisterhood is Powerful" and pioneered the literature and practice of conscious-raising as a foundational activity of Women's Liberation. Carol Hanisch initiated, and then critiqued, the historic protest at the Atlantic City Miss America Pageant. She also first wrote that "The Personal is Political." Patricia Mainardi penned "The Politics of Housework" and Judith Benninger Brown co-authored the incendiary pamphlet "Toward a Female Liberation Movement," a document that came to be known as "the Florida paper." Decades of passionate and fiery political correspondence between theoretician activists in New York City and Gainesville, Florida, record, in startling detail, all of the major developments in the Women's Liberation Movement.



### Memory and Action



Early Redstockings members and associates also distinguished themselves by their fierce efforts to resist the retreat from revolutionary perspectives by women's rights organizations, writing and publishing *Feminist Revolution* in 1975. The reactions to this project, pro and con, are documented here in letters from women all over the country. Materials from later decades testify to the efforts of a core group of Redstockings veterans to ensure an accurate historical record of the rise and fall of radical women's liberation, as well as the consequences of that trajectory today.

Researchers will especially value a "chronological bibliography" of historic articles and manifestos, separate versions annotated, which was assembled by these organizers with the help of Women's Liberation veterans from around the country. This segment of the collection includes the materials that they collected for their own education from the Old Left, the New Left, the Black Liberation struggle, and the anti-colonial revolutionary experience. Included, as well, are feminist statements from key early centers in the South. Minutes and notes record the activities of a number of related early groups and publications in New York, including New York Radical Women and *Woman's World*. Redstockings veterans hopefully define them as *Archives for Action*.

*This collection will interest students of:*

*Women's History; Women's Studies, Gender Studies, Gay and Lesbian Studies, African-American Studies; Southern Studies; American Studies, U.S. History; Sociology; Political Science; and Social Movement Studies.*

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