



Mary B. Stinson Collection

1974-1981

2 boxes (1.25 linear ft.)

Call no.: MS 824

Collection overview

Throughout the 1970s, Mary B. Stinson (formerly Lindblom) was an active member of the National Organization for Women (NOW) in California and served as a delegate to the First National Women's Conference in Houston.

The collection includes several ephemeral objects reflecting Stinson's activism including IWY pendant necklaces and an ERA license plate frame, along with published reports and articles relating to the IWY and a 1979 NOW conference in California.

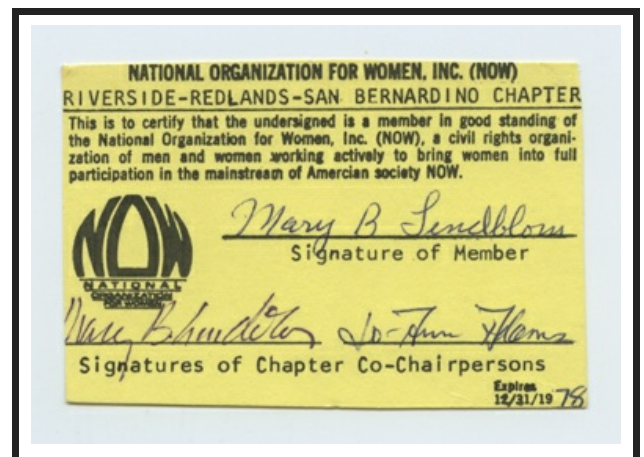
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Background on Mary B. Stinson

Mary B. Stinson (formerly Lindblom) was an activist involved with the National Organization for Women (NOW) in California. She served as a delegate from California at the First National Women's Conference in Houston and attended the 1979 NOW conference in California.

The National Women's Conference (NWC) was a result of a series of actions in observance of International Women's Year (IWY) in 1975. On January 9th, 1975, President Ford issued Executive Order No. 11832, establishing the National Commission on the Observance of International Women's Year with the objectives of recognizing the contributions of women and promoting equality of the sexes. The Commission was responsible for orchestrating events in celebration of IWY, as well as investigating discrimination and other issues affecting women and submitting recommendations for action to the President and Congress. Originally intended to dissolve at the end of 1975, the Commission was extended for a second year by President Ford.



NOW membership card

In 1975, a bill proposing the National Women's Conference was passed by Congress. When it was finally held in 1977, it was the first federally commissioned and funded event of its kind. The conference was an opportunity for leaders, delegates and guests to come together from all over the country, from different socio-economic, racial and ethnic backgrounds, of all ages and political views alike. The three day event was a venue for speeches from speakers such as Gloria Scott, Bella Abzug, Rosalynn Carter, Betty Ford, Liz Carpenter and Barbara Jordan, as well as lectures and workshops on topics such as business, law, and history.

In addition to being a platform for bringing the nation's women together, one of the main goals of the conference was the creation and ratification of a National Plan of Action. The National Plan of Action was a set of recommendations for combatting inequality, handed off to the President and Congress. It consisted of 26 planks, core areas or issues affecting women in the United States which were agreed upon by delegates of the convention: arts and humanities, battered women, business, child abuse, child care, credit, disabled women, education, elective and appointive office, employment, Equal Rights Amendment, health, homemakers, insurance, international affairs, media, minority women, offenders, older women, rape, reproductive freedom, rural women, sexual preference, statistics, welfare and poverty and the committee of the conference. Each of these topics was researched and outlined in the official report.

A central issue to the NWC and the women's movement during the 1970s was the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment. The ERA was proposed to constitutionally guarantee equality of the sexes under U.S. law, protecting against discrimination and insuring equal opportunities and benefits. Opponents of the amendment believed it would be used to legalize gay marriage and abortion, remove legal protections for women from law, subject women to military draft, force religious bodies to disobey the laws of their religions, and prohibit unisex bathrooms, clubs or sports teams. The ERA was passed by both the House and the Senate with votes of 354 to 23 and 84 to 8, respectively, however it was only ratified by 35 of the necessary 38 states for it to be passed into law.

Besides being a conference delegate, Stinson also served as coordinator for her local National Organization for Women chapter. NOW was founded in 1966 in response to the growing women's rights movement and is still active to this day.

Scope of collection

The Stinson collection consists of documents and articles related to the women's movement in the 1970s, including the final report from the IWY California Conference, a copy of the proposed National Plan of Action, a program from the 1979 NOW Conference in California, an issue of the NOW Times newsletter and an assortment of newspaper clippings and magazines. The collection also contains memorabilia such as NOW membership cards, pro-ERA and women's rights stickers, a signed banner, IWY and ERA pendants and an "ERA NOW" license plate frame.

Inventory

ERA NOW license plate frame	ca. 1975	Box 2
ERA pendant necklace	ca. 1975	Box 2
IWY California Conference Final Report	1977 June	Box 1: 1
International Women's Year Dove pendant necklace	ca. 1977	Box 2
IWY Dove pendant necklace	ca. 1977	Box 2
IWY Dove pendant necklace	ca. 1977	Box 2
IWY Dove pin	ca. 1977	Box 2
<i>Ms. Magazine</i> : The Ultimate Invasion of Privacy	1981 Feb	Box 1: 2
News Clippings	1977-1978	Box 1: 3
NOW Membership Cards	1978	Box 1: 4
Now more than ever: 1979 NOW conference program	1979	Box 1: 5
<i>NOW Times</i> : Sentinels for Extention	1978 Apr	Box 1: 6
Poster: American Women on the Move (IWY, Houston, Tex.)	1977 Nov 18-21	Map case 4
Pro-ERA, Women's rights stickers	ca. 1975	Box 1: 7
Proposed National Plan of Action	1977	Box 1: 8
Signed banner from ERA Walkathon	1978 Aug 26	Box 2
<i>Time Magazine</i> : The Ordeal of Political Wives	1974 Oct 7	Box 1: 9
<i>Time Magazine</i> : After Houston	1977 Dec 5	Box 1: 10

Administrative information

Access

The collection is open for research.

Provenance

Acquired from Mary B. Stinson, May 2014.

Processing Information

Processed by Catie Heitz, July 2014.

Related Material

For materials related to the International Women's Year (IWY), see:

- Diana Mara Henry Collection (PH 51)
- International Women's Year Conference Collection (MS 510)

Language:

English

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Search terms

Subjects

- Equal rights amendments
- Feminism--United States
- International Women's Year Conference
- National Organization for Women
- Women's rights--United States

Contributors

- Stinson, Mary B. **[main entry]**
- Stinson, Mary B.

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