



MAPPING
FEMINIST
CAMBRIDGE



CAMBRIDGE COMMISSION
ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

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INMAN SQUARE

1970s-1990s

The Cambridge Commission on the Status of Women (CCSW) works in an inclusive manner to promote equity for all women and girls and advocates on their behalf with other City departments and officials, local organizations, and state government to increase opportunities through policy recommendations, program development, and public awareness of key issues affecting women and girls.

The Cambridge Women's Commission recognizes, supports, and advocates for all who self-identify as women or with womanhood, including transgender, gender fluid, and non-binary persons. We stand with and for women and girls, of all sexuality, race, ethnicity, ability, immigration status, or religion.

For more on the Cambridge Commission on the Status of Women, visit our website at www.cambridgewomenscommission.org or contact:

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INTRODUCTION

The term *second wave feminism* refers to the feminist activity and thought that took root in the late 1960s and continued for approximately two decades primarily in industrialized nations in the West. As the women's movement sparked across the the United States, Cambridge became a center of revolution and organizing, much like New York, San Francisco, and other major U.S. cities twice its size. From a protest of Harvard University's 1970 commencement led by Sandra Graham insisting on low-income housing for the Riverside community to the famous 1971 takeover of a Harvard building by local women at 888 Memorial Drive, Cambridge activists were demanding changes locally that were similar to the national movement's call for greater access to health and child care, ending the Vietnam War, and condemning sexual violence.

In Inman Square, a feminist-owned bookstore, a credit union, restaurants, and shops became some of the new, essential meeting spaces of the movement. Women who had lived for years in different Cambridge neighborhoods were joined in the movement by an influx of women who found Cambridge to be a welcoming community.

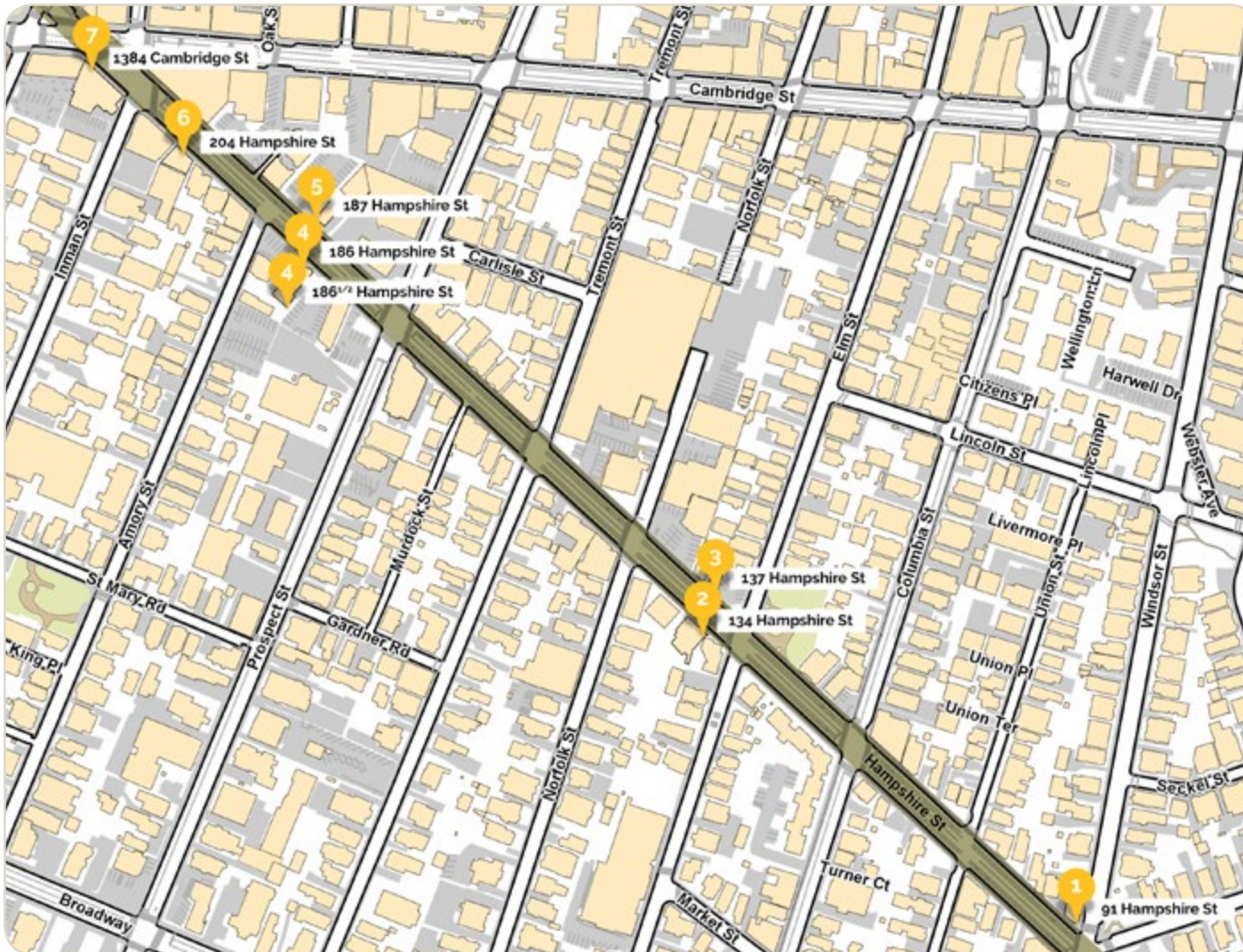
In this guide, we highlight feminist, socialist, and educational institutions that emerged and thrived in Inman Square from the 1970s through the 1990s and recognize the unique contributions they made to Cambridge feminist history.

We acknowledge that most feminist organizing has experienced and experiences exclusions of race, class, gender identity, religion, and disability. As you'll learn here, a need still remains to address the intersections of all identity groups and their contributions to the feminist movement.

Learn more about women's contributions to Cambridge by visiting the Cambridge Women's Heritage Project database at www2.cambridgema.gov/Historic/CWHP



INMAN SQUARE | HAMPSHIRE STREET



- 1 **91 HAMPSHIRE ST**
Clayground | 1976–2001
- 2 **134 HAMPSHIRE ST**
Bread and Roses Restaurant
1974–1978
- 3 **137 HAMPSHIRE ST**
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Center | 1974–1981
- 4 **186 & 186 ½ HAMPSHIRE ST**
New Words Bookstore
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Child Care Resource Center
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- 6 **204 HAMPSHIRE ST**
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- 7 **1384 CAMBRIDGE ST**
Mural by Ellary Eddy | 1976

CONTEXTUALIZING THE FEMINIST MOVEMENT

- 1969** The Women's Liberation Conference. Six hundred women meet at Emmanuel College in Boston where groups like Cell 16 (Female Liberation) and Bread and Roses began organizing.
- 1970** The Women's Strike for Equality March in Washington takes place.
- 1970** *Women and Their Bodies*, a 193-page booklet, later known as *Our Bodies, Ourselves* is published.
- 1971** The takeover of a Harvard building at 888 Memorial Drive by local women to protest the lack of affordable housing in Cambridge and the need for a women's center leads to the purchase of 46 Pleasant Street which becomes the Cambridge Women's Center.
- 1973** Boston Area Rape Crisis Center (BARCC) was founded by a group of volunteers and survivors who created and staffed a hotline to answer calls from rape survivors. BARCC helped organize some of the first *Take Back The Night* marches in Boston, along with local students.
- 1976** Transition House, the first domestic violence shelter on the east coast, is born after two women opened their apartment in Cambridge as a refuge for other women fleeing abusive relationships.
- 1977** The Cambridge Commission on the Status of Women is established as a department of the city.
- 1988** Project 10 East forms at the Cambridge Rindge & Latin School, becoming one of the first Gay-Straight Alliances in the country.
- 1989** The Women's Civil Rights Rally in Boston acknowledges "women who have been victims of male violence."
- 1990** Emory University offers the first Ph.D. program in Women's Studies.
- 1991** Cambridge's first Pride Brunch takes place at City Hall, organized by the Cambridge Lavender Alliance with support from Mayor Alice Wolf.
- 1993** The March on Washington for Lesbian, Gay, and Bi-Equal Rights and Liberation takes place.
- 1995** The Fourth U.N. World Conferences on Women is hosted in Beijing; in Mexico City (1975), Copenhagen (1980), and Nairobi (1985).

91 HAMPSHIRE STREET

Clayground | 1976–2001



Clayground was co-owned and created by Annie Hoffman and Carole Ann Fer as a "socialistic" pottery business. The collective offered pottery at lower prices, had flexible hours, and connected with other women's organizations in the neighborhood by creating commemorative platters and pottery, like anniversary pottery for New Words Bookstore. It also offered workshops and apprenticeships to women and became involved in the wider Cambridge community by creating banners for the AIDS quilt and Mel King, a well-known Boston politician and community organizer.



Annie Hoffman (L) and Carole Ann Fer (R)

Annie and Carole met at *Mudflat* (a woman-owned pottery studio now located in Somerville) in 1970 and began selling pottery on the streets until they had the idea to open a storefront. In 1976, they rented 97 Hampshire Street until they purchased their permanent home at 91 Hampshire Street in 1991. Women did all of the renovations, including electrical and plumbing. Now a yoga instructor, Annie Hoffman, reflects on the experience as deeply formative. "We were making vessels. The body is a vessel, and a house is an outer vessel, so learning how to renovate a space was essential and empowering for us as women."

The space is still owned by Annie Hoffman and is now a yoga and expressive arts studio named *Art & Soul*.

134 HAMPSHIRE STREET

Bread and Roses Restaurant | 1974-1978



A gourmet vegetarian restaurant and a center for feminist culture, Bread and Roses was co-founded by Pat Hynes and Gill Gane. It opened its doors as a woman-owned business for “women and their friends” after five months of renovating a “dank, dismal” neighborhood bar. Except for the plumbing, women did all of the architectural design, electrical, carpentry, sheet rocking, plastering, and painting, with a backdrop of feminist and lesbian singers/songwriters playing at full-volume.

The name Bread and Roses was adopted from the demand of the women-led textile strikers in Lawrence, MA in 1912: “We want bread and roses, too.” The statement was a reflection that the goal of the strike was to ensure that workers could do more than meet basic needs.

The project was launched by selling shares of stock to 100 women investors, with the Women’s Law Collective providing legal support. Instead of tips, Bread and Roses paid above minimum wage and chose to donate to a feminist cause each week, such as Rosie’s Place, the first shelter in the country specifically for poor and homeless women. Every Sunday evening, leftover meals were given to the newly opened domestic violence shelter in Cambridge, Transition House.

**Bread is life’s prose
Poetry, the rose.
Bread and Roses**

The women’s restaurant,
cultural center, and softball team
1974-1978

Twice a month, individual women artists, many who had never shown their art publicly, were invited to exhibit their artwork. Radical feminist speakers and performers, like Andrea Dworkin and Mary Daly, novelists Tillie Olsen and Alice Walker, musicians Alix Dobkin and Willie Tyson electrified the space, as did scientists, and athletes.

Once, a woman rushed in, saying, “I just arrived from Ireland, and this is the first place I wanted to visit!” Before the internet, how did she find out?

In 1978 the restaurant sold to young feminists who in turn opened another one named, Amaranth, which when sold again became Daddio’s restaurant (to which a Cambridge city councilwoman quipped, “Given its history, do you have to name it Daddio’s?”).

Stories for Bread and Roses provided by Pat Hynes. Archive is housed at Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute.

Today, *Oleana*, a woman-owned restaurant, occupies the space.



Entrance to Bread and Roses.

137 HAMPSHIRE STREET

Women's Community Health Center | 1974-1981



Conceived in 1973, the same year of the landmark Supreme Court decision affirming a women's right to an abortion, the Women's Community Health Center was organized by Cookie Avrin, Jennifer Burgess, and Terry Plumb, along with many others. In 1974, WCHC acquired a physical space at 137 Hampshire Street and incorporated as a non-profit. The goal was to offer a woman-controlled and owned health center for education, prevention, and health services. For seven years, WCHC gave women tools to gain control of their health, health care, and lives.

The organizers believed that health care should not be provided for a profit. Rather than a predetermined sliding scale, there was a suggested fee system. Funding came from community support, including performances with local poets and singers, a \$5000 grant from the Boston Women's Health Book Collective (which authored *Our Bodies, Ourselves*), and the sale of speculums to the general public.

WCHC translated all literature into Spanish and Portuguese and offered Spanish-speaking and lesbian self-help and groups. From 1975-76, members of the collective instructed Harvard Medical School students on the pelvic exam after "local women medical students requested the program to change the inadequate and oppressive methods usually employed in pelvic instruction." (Women's Community Health Center Second Annual Report).

WCHC provided essential services to women, including abortions and gynecological care. It operated with a physician's license and employed women doctors. In March of 1975, the center began a frustrating process of applying for a clinic license, which wouldn't be granted until January of 1981, only months before WCHC had to close its doors. Fenway Community Health Center provided follow-up care to WCHC patients.

Becoming the only women-owned licensed clinic in the state was a success but came with staff burnout and public criticism. The work of WCHC lived on through the community members engaged with the center.

The Women's Community Health Center archive is housed at Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute.

Upon arriving at the WCHC, people completed a "herstory" form to share information about family medical history, current needs, and preferences for care. They'd meet a health worker who was committed to incorporating health education into every step of medical care, primarily through demonstration ("self-help").

For a breast or cervical exam, health workers first demonstrated on themselves. Patients, in front of the health worker, could practice what they learned to make sure they got it right. They could opt to have a doctor perform the exam.

The Impact of Roe v. Wade

In January 1973, in the Roe v. Wade case, the Supreme Court affirmed the legal right to abortion, declaring that existing state laws restricting access to abortion were unconstitutional. The historic court decision followed years of activism for the right to legal abortion. This decision, however, did not create widespread access to abortion. Many of the abortion services were developed at women-owned clinics created to provide holistic women's health care. Women across the country, worked together to create safe and affordable feminist options for abortions. The Women's Community Health Center in Cambridge, the Vermont Women's Health Center, and New Hampshire Women's Health Services were some of the first clinics created to provide healthcare for and by women as alternatives to the traditional medical system.

186 & 186^{1/2} HAMPSHIRE STREET



From 1970 to 1990, several feminist-minded groups rented space in the building, including New Words Bookstore, Goddard-Cambridge Graduate Program in Feminist Studies, Massachusetts Feminist Credit Union, and Focus: A Women's Counseling Center. Mel Chalfen & Judy Chalfen inherited the property and their hospitable and conscious style made it possible for many organizations to thrive sustainably in the space. They later passed the venue to Rob Chalfen, who now runs Outpost 186, an art and music space in the building.

New Words Bookstore | 1976-2002

In January 1976, New Words, A Women's Bookstore, moved from Somerville to the first floor of 186 Hampshire Street. The generous owners of the three-story building made it possible for the bookstore, as well as other feminist and progressive groups, to call Inman Square their home.

New Words began with pooled resources of \$15,000 from its four founders, Rita Arditti, Gilda Bruckman, Mary Lowry, and Jean MacRae. The bookstore was a pioneer in a flourishing feminist "women in print" cultural revolution. Women were producing groundbreaking books, newspapers, and journals, re-discovering classics

by women authors, opening publishing houses and forging national and international networks. Although Harvard Square bookstore owners claimed that New Words would "never find enough titles to fill the shelves of something called a 'women's bookstore,'" there were never enough shelves to house their books and music. Loyal customers were a source of wonder to the collective, which by the mid-80s included Madge Kaplan, Kate Rushin, Laura Zimmerman, Doris Reisig, and Joni Seager.

New Words featured hard-to-find nonsexist children's books, hundreds of titles of lesbian fiction, journals and texts by

international feminists, and a selection of writings on domestic violence. It featured African American literature, including the writings from the Combahee River Collective and Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press. By the mid-1980s, the bookstore became a bridge between activists and women's studies programs, supplying titles for new women's studies courses. The bookstore also sold tickets for local events.

By the late 1990s, after 28 years in business, the emergence of online bookstores and growth of large chain bookstores had taken its toll. By 1998, all other feminist establishments in Inman Square had closed, except Focus Counseling, which resulted in a diminished customer presence. In 2002, the bookstore moved its mission to the newly-created Center for New Words (CNW), housed in the Cambridge YWCA. Then in 2010, CNW channeled all its resources to support the Women, Action, & the Media (WAM), an online network of feminist journalists, authors, and

activists, that continues to thrive today. Thanks to New Words, feminist and multicultural writings are finally a part of most bookstores' inventories.

Both New Words Bookstore and the Center for New Words archive is housed at Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute.

Stories for New Words provided by Laura Zimmerman, Gilda Bruckman, and Jean MacRae.



Photo by Ellen Shub

186 & 186^{1/2} HAMPSHIRE STREET

New Words Bookstore | 1976-2002 (continued)

Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press

New Words hosted readings for authors from Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press, a publication led by Black feminists of the Combahee River Collective, which was founded in the 70s by women of color for women of color. Barbara Smith, Demita Frazier, and Beverly Smith co-founded the collective. To solidify the politics of an anti-racist feminist movement, inclusive of lesbian and trans women, the group published The Combahee River Collective Statement (see the excerpt on page 19).

Women of Color Press emerged and flourished through Barbara Smith's leadership and published books exclusively by women of color, including Audre Lorde, Gloria Anzaldúa, and Angela Davis. Smith was a regular visitor at New Words and was involved with several Cambridge-based organizations, including Transition House, where she trained staff on anti-racism.

Artemis Productions

Founded by five women; Emily Culpepper, Linda Barufaldi, Andrea Gillespie, Jean MacRae (a New Words founder), and Betsy York. Artemis organized the first Boston Women's Music Festival in October 1974. Performers at the festival included The New Harmony Sisterhood Band (comprised of students from Goddard-Cambridge), Holly Near, Meg Christian, Chris Williamson, Margie Adam, and others. The group went on to produce other concerts, including the Second Boston Women's Music Festival at Sanders Theater in 1976.



Audre Lorde, Kitchen Table Press
Photo by Robert Alexander/Getty Images



Barbara Smith



New Harmony Sisterhood Band - 1974

186 & 186^{1/2} HAMPSHIRE STREET

Goddard-Cambridge Graduate Program
in Social Change | 1970-1979



Goddard-Cambridge, an extension of the parent program of Goddard College in Vermont, had several locations throughout Cambridge and eventually found its home at 186 Hampshire Street. Throughout Goddard-Cambridge's history, programs offered included: Feminist Studies, Imperial U.S. at home and abroad, Third World Studies, and U.S. Social & Cultural Studies. Students participated in both faculty-led and student-developed research and earned a Masters in Arts within one year for between \$1500 - \$2500. The "People's Council" made up of faculty and students, governed the school and decided on internal policy issues.

In 1970 the school hosted its first women's history ovular* taught by Linda Gordon, who became a nationally recognized historian. The group met twice a week for 3-5 hours and held the motto "make the invisible visible." The program officially recognized feminist studies as a

graduate program in the fall of 1972. From 1974-78 the program was led by Rochelle Ruthchild and by 1976, two-thirds of the student population had enrolled in the Feminist Studies program.

An ovular on lesbian culture, possibly the first in the country, was offered to students in 1976. Leaflets for the course traveled by mail across the country and caused controversy that led to calls to the Massachusetts



Board of Education. Faculty members recall that the evaluation of Goddard-Cambridge included questions suggesting that the school was trying to convince students to become lesbians and Marxists. The idea of sexual orientation as a lifestyle choice was, and still is, prevalent in society.

The Goddard-Cambridge Graduate Program in Social Change archive has been deposited at the University of Massachusetts, Boston.

*Goddard's feminist word for seminar.

Goddard's Mission

"It will provide the training and certification for those interested in combining the theory and practice of social change; for those whose educational goals cannot be pursued in the established universities and conventional graduate programs; and for those presently engaged in social action who desire to deepen their intellectual resources."

SAMPLE OF FEMINIST STUDIES PROJECTS

- Black Women & American Society
- Corporate Power & The Issues of Women
- Design for a Community Mental Health Course
- Feminist Writing Workshop
- Lesbian Culture
- Media: The Information Industry
- Pawnee Women: Speaking for Ourselves
- Prostitution As A Form of Female Labor
- Study of Menopause
- Theory and Practice of Feminist Journalism
- Towards a Feminist Theory of Sexuality
- Women & Therapy
- Women & Traditional Music

186 & 186^{1/2} HAMPSHIRE STREET

Goddard-Cambridge Graduate Program
in Social Change | 1970-1979 (continued)

The Emergence of Women's Studies

In 1990 the first Women's Studies Ph.D. degree was offered at Emory University thanks in part to the work of feminist and women's studies programs in the 70s and 80s. Today, women's studies are viewed as essential learning to many sociology, psychology, and history programs. Cambridge housed one of the first feminist studies programs in the country at the Goddard-Cambridge Graduate Program in Social Change.

Alliance Against Sexual Coercion

The demands and concerns of the present day #MeToo movement have long been present in feminist writing, organizing, and services. Freada Klein, a faculty member at Goddard-Cambridge and a Cambridge resident, received funding for her research on sexual harassment in the workplace. In 1976 along with Elizabeth Cohn-Stuntz and Lynn Wehrli, she founded the Alliance Against Sexual Coercion, which referred women to legal, vocational, and emotional counseling resources, in addition to helping determine their eligibility for unemployment compensation. Other groups provided domestic violence support and rape crisis interventions. Each of the founders was involved in education, both locally and nationally. Lynn co-taught a course titled "Rape and U.S. Institutions" at the Women's School, located at the Cambridge Women's Center. Elizabeth and Freada collaborated with the Feminist Alliance Against Rape which published national bi-monthly newsletters.

Combahee River Collective | 1977 - 1980

"Above all else, our politics initially sprang from the shared belief that Black women are inherently valuable, that our liberation is a necessity not as an adjunct to somebody else's but because of our need as human persons for autonomy. This may seem so obvious as to sound simplistic, but it is apparent that no other ostensibly progressive movement has ever considered our specific oppression as a priority or worked seriously for the ending of that oppression.

our lives during four centuries of bondage in the Western hemisphere.

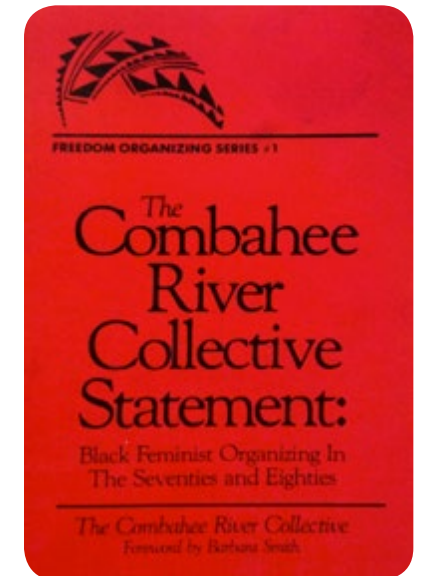
We realize that the only people who care enough about us to work consistently for our liberation are us. Our politics evolve from a healthy love for ourselves, our sisters and our community which allows us to continue our struggle and work."

— Excerpt from "The Combahee River Collective Statement,"

Merely naming the pejorative stereotypes attributed to Black women (e.g. mammy, matriarch, Sapphire, whore, bulldagger), let alone cataloguing the cruel, often murderous, treatment we receive, indicates how little value has been placed upon



Black Feminist Organizing in the 70s & 80s



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Massachusetts

Feminist Federal Credit Union | 1975

In the year following the Equal Credit Opportunity Act, the non-profit Massachusetts Feminist Federal Credit Union (MFFCU) opened in January as one of seventeen feminist credit unions across the country. The Credit Union hosted educational events, including "The Language of Money and Investing: A Primer for Women," co-hosted with Harvard Women's Law Association in 1980. Loans were made to members based on their need and ability to repay, and members had to be involved with one of five selected women's organizations in the area. Deposits to MFFCU were insured for up to \$40,000 by the National Credit Union Administration.

In 1975, the feminist credit unions met to found the Feminist Economic Network and the Feminist Economic Alliance, which represented thousands of credit union members across the country. Contention among the groups which reflected issues of the feminist movement at the time;

while some groups wanted to make decisions based on leadership, others wanted full consensus from every member of the group.

By 1976, MFFCU had 850 local members and had granted \$258,000. The credit union eventually disbanded (date not available.)

"The problem, of course, is that it is hard to run a business built on consensus, especially when the process takes so much time. But many white middle-class feminists did have time to devote to the process, which was as important as results in many of their organizations. Working-class women and mothers could resent the assumption that everyone had free time." (Spain, 2011)

Economic Independence

Groups like the Massachusetts Feminist Federal Credit Union helped women to obtain loans and financial education. The Boston Women's Fund, which still provides grants to community-based organizations, started at 186 Hampshire and supported many local feminists.

In 1968 job advertisements specifying gender became illegal. Before then, it was common to see ads titled "Help Wanted - Female." In 1974 the Equal Credit Opportunity Act passed, which made it possible for single, widowed, divorced women to take out a loan without needing a man to cosign. Even so, women still faced many challenges in gaining economic independence.



Bay State Junior College Ad, 1973

186 & 186^{1/2} HAMPSHIRE STREET



Focus Counseling and Consultation, Inc.
1973–2013

Focus Counseling for Women and Their Friends, founded by Bonnie Engelhardt, Sarah Greenberg, Beverly Sclar, and Libby Zimmerman, started with a mission to offer a feminist approach for clients seeking counseling, and provide a feminist community for the staff. Focus welcomed clients of all sexual orientations and gender identities. It wasn't until 1973, the year Focus was established, that homosexuality was removed from the Diagnostic & Statistical Manual (DSM) as a pathological diagnosis.

During the 1970s collectives were a common approach to organizations involved in feminist work, and Focus was no exception. The practice started as an economic collective where each therapist was paid an equal hourly wage regardless of academic or clinical degree. Sliding scale fees were offered to ensure that clients would not be turned away due to financial constraints.

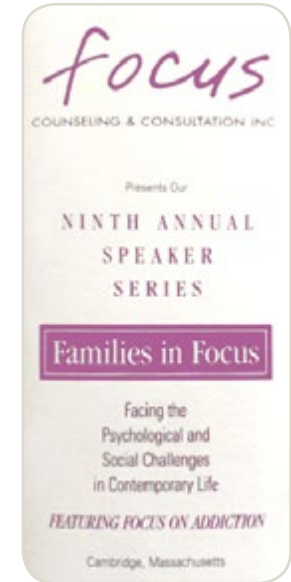
In the mid-1970s, Focus collaborated with other mental health organizations to form a larger collective. With several therapy practices emerging at the time, the goal of this "Collective of Collectives" was to be supportive rather than competitive. Organizations included the Somerville Women's Mental Health Collective, the Women's Center in Cambridge, Tapestry, Libra, and others.

From 1985-1995 Focus created and hosted a speaker series, "Families in Focus," that touched on topics of feminist thinking and relational perspectives. CEU's were offered to practitioners.

As members joined and left the practice, a core group emerged who offered general psychotherapy and support on issues that were often marginalized or stigmatized, such as infertility and adoption,

lesbian and gay support, grief and bereavement after suicide, sexual addiction, and early childhood emotional development.

In the 1990s, Focus moved away from an economic collective to a group practice model but stayed in community with one another through supervision meetings, shared office space, business meetings, and a shared commitment to provide quality psychotherapy services within a feminist perspective.



Shifts in Theory & Practice

Throughout history, women have been pathologized and sent to psychiatric hospitals at significantly higher rates than men. Women's emotions were often seen as deficits rather than strengths; a pathology rather than a reaction to oppression. During the 1970s, new theories and perspectives emerged, which worked to validate women's psychology and brought about a shift in therapeutic practices, particularly for women. Feminist Theory was being integrated into psychotherapy practices. These once radical theories conceptually termed, "Relational or Self-in-Relation Theory" by Jean Baker Miller and her colleagues at the Wellesley College Stone Center, are now integrated into mainstream psychology practice.

186 & 186^{1/2} HAMPSHIRE STREET

Oral History Center | 1980–1992



The Oral History Center emerged in 1980, envisioned by oral historian Cindy Cohen, as a collaboration between the Cambridge Arts Council and the Cambridge Social History Resource Center. The goal was to build stronger communities not only by documenting oral histories but by bringing people together, in one-on-one interviews, to overcome stereotypes and prejudices, believing that *"...the lives of regular people are important and deserve to be documented."*

Examples of interview pairs from Cambridge, Roxbury, Lawrence, and Central America included: High school girls and older women; Spanish-speaking and English-speaking youth; Jewish and Palestinian women; Public and parochial students; and Mayan, Creole, and Garifuna women.

One of the Center's first projects of the Oral History Center was the Cambridge Women's Quilt. Sixty women and girls, ages 8 to 80, sewed quilt patches together to document their individual lives.

They interviewed each other about their quilt and a group of youths worked with singer and songwriter Betsy Rose to compose a ballad about the quilt. In 1985, the quilt was exhibited in Nairobi, Kenya at the World Conference to review and appraise the Achievements of the UN Decade for Women.

Eventually, the Center's work evolved into a curriculum that could be used in classrooms and other community settings. Workshops were provided to 6th, 7th, and 8th-grade teachers of Cambridge Public Schools to incorporate oral history into the social studies curriculum.

This project lasted for five years, documenting 80 stories that were compiled into a book, "The Mango Tree." A partnership with Northeastern University's Center for Innovation in Urban Education (where the Oral History Center would move to in 1995) led to professional development workshops for Boston Public Schools teachers. By 1990, a curriculum guide was developed for national distribution.

The Oral History Center cared deeply about community accountability, and it involved community members in the design and evaluation of each program.

The Center hosted folk art exhibits and educational events which grew beyond Cambridge into Boston and around the world. Several projects arose out of the Center, such as "A Passion for Life: Stories and Folk Arts of Palestinian and Jewish Women," and The "Griots of Roxbury," a publication that explored violence in the lives of five generations of Roxbury residents.



Cambridge Women's Quilt Project

The Oral History Center archive is housed at Northeastern University.

Black Women's Oral History Project

"Differences are used to create separations and fear because it is differences which are used to legitimize the unequal distribution of resources." (Oral History Center, 1990). Beginning in the 1970s in Cambridge, oral histories became a community organizing tool. The Oral History Center and the Black Women's Oral History Project highlighted the importance of communicating across identities and documenting everyday people. The Black Women's Oral History Project included interviews with 72 African-American women from Cambridge. Transcripts and audio files are available through the Schlesinger Library.

187 HAMPSHIRE STREET

Child Care Resource Center | 1971-2012



Founded in 1972 by Mav Pardee, Quaker Case, Maggie Sears, and Heidi Urich, the Child Care Resource Center (CCRC) started in response to families' pressing needs for affordable childcare options. Their mission was "dedicated to the expansion of parent and worker-controlled daycare, and to working with staff and parents in ways that support its commitment to child care services that are non-sexist, non-racist, and economically mixed." CCRC published "A Study of Family Day Care Systems in MA," proposing solutions to issues families faced in accessing childcare.

CCRC was one of the first R&R (resource and referral) organizations in the country.

By 1976, the center referred an average of 100 people each week, which meant matching families based on cost, location, cultural responsiveness, and other factors using the first database of child care providers maintained on index cards.



CCRC Staff

The center expanded to manage voucher subsidies and work directly with employers. As the cost of child care increased, more businesses needed to invest in support of employee-childcare costs.

Mav Pardee, an experienced business consultant, encouraged businesses to offer child care options and tax exemptions to reduce employee turnover. In the 1980s, CCRC became the first R&R in the state to use computers to run voucher programs and their providers' database.

The Child Care Resource Center archive is housed at Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute.

CCRC SERVICES

- Locate programs based on family needs
- Arrange playgroups and childcare exchanges
- Financial assistance
- Services for children with special needs
- Workshops and support groups for providers
- Job board for providers
- Licensing support for providers
- Monthly newsletter
- Partnered with Community Schools programs

The Cost of Childcare

In 1983 in Massachusetts, it cost \$110 a week for infant child care and \$80 a week for toddler child care. At the time, the minimum wage was \$135 a week, which meant that nearly all of a caretaker's income could be spent on childcare. With more women entering the workforce and seeking outside childcare since the mid-1960s, the disparity presented a significant challenge for institutions and families. In 2019, Massachusetts is still the 2nd most expensive state for childcare with an average cost of \$1,422 a month and a roughly \$500 weekly minimum wage. Organizations like the Child Care Resource Center created the first database with childcare options, allowing families to research all options before committing to a single provider.



CCRC Workshop Brochure

187 HAMPSHIRE STREET

Women's Law Collective | 1970s



The Women's Law Collective started at 678 Massachusetts Avenue and relocated to Hampshire Street in 1982. It was one of many law collectives in Cambridge and Boston at the time, but the only one led entirely by women. The collective started as a course, "Women and the Law," with law students as founding members. Their goal was to raise women's awareness about laws related to their everyday lives. They provided representation for cases such as divorce, abortion, workers' rights, and welfare.

While several iterations of the group existed over the years, Holly Ladd led the Hampshire Street collective in the early 1980s. The Women's Law Collective's work addressed legal issues which impact women and families today. Notably, it co-drafted the Abuse Prevention Act, which allows domestic violence survivors

access to restraining orders and other supports. Lawyers in the collective represented Our Bodies Ourselves, workers' unions, and same-gender couples before the marriage equality act.

The collective contributed to the revival of the National Lawyers Guild in Massachusetts, which now supports local activists and works to eradicate racism and other forms of discrimination. The Women's Law Collective eventually dissolved (date not available).



Holly Ladd

Law Communes

"These communes practiced law in a new way, involving themselves directly in anti-war and community work as participants on the front lines. They rejected all hierarchy – especially distinctions between lawyers and non-lawyers. They functioned as the groups they served: egalitarian collectives making decisions by consensus. The lawyers rejected class distinctions, taking turns answering the phones while sharing desks and administrative tasks."

Students from Harvard and Boston University started the first law communes in Central Square, Cambridge, later joined by The Women's Law Collective. Radical Boston College law students met informally in a church in Boston's South End while another law collective was formed in Dorchester."

— *A history of 1970s law collectives from the National Lawyers Guild Massachusetts Chapter*: www.nlgmass.org/nlg-mass-history

The first women's
suffrage office in
Cambridge was located
at 177 Hampshire St.

2020 marks the
100th anniversary of
women's suffrage
in the United States.

204 HAMPSHIRE STREET



Gypsy Wagon Collective | 1974-1979

Gypsy Wagon, a craft collective that operated on consignment, was led by Diane Walbridge, Diane Bellamy, and Karen Copeland. Aside from selling crafts, Gypsy Wagon offered classes including macramé, knitting, crochet, loom weaving, basket weaving, lampshade workshops, as well as voice and music lessons. As in other collectives, the people involved were volunteers. The shop employed one paid staff person. Sadly, the collective's inventory was robbed within its first year of operation.

In 1979, the owners changed the business to Dirtworks, a cleaning company.



Gypsy Wagon Collective

City Girl Café | 1997-2019

City Girl Cafe was a favorite gathering place for local feminists. The restaurant, which opened in Inman Square in 1997, offered Italian lunch, dinner, and catering. Merry Moscato and Cheryl Schwartz started it as a catering service, 'City Girl Gourmet Cafe,' in 1993. Merry Moscato (nicknamed "city girl" by her brothers)

graduated from the Cambridge School of Culinary Arts and partnered with Schwartz. In 2008, the cafe was purchased by Khavala Macken-Fraizer (also the head chef) with her friend, Lauren Anderson. Khavala and Lauren maintained the restaurant's original name and much of the menu.

1384 CAMBRIDGE STREET



Mural by Ellary Eddy | 1974-1979

As you reach the intersection of Hampshire Street and Cambridge Street, you will find the Inman Square Fire House with a mural painted on its side. In 1976, Ellary Eddy (a woman artist), painted the 40-foot mural of Engine Company 5, in celebration of the nation's bicentennial.

The mural includes George Washington and Benjamin Franklin, who served as volunteer firefighters in their lifetimes. The mural was refurbished in 2002. Ellary continues to create art and has recently published a collection of essays, titled "Her Argument." (See photo page 32.)

Lesbian Avengers and LGBTQ+ Seniors Group

Until 1998, the Lesbian Avengers had weekly poetry slams and other events at Ryle's Jazz Club, the oldest jazz club in Cambridge and the second oldest in the Greater Boston area (closed in 2018). The group was focused on lesbian visibility and they were known for their spontaneous public skits such as passing out Hershey Kisses on the subway for Valentine's Day while wearing Lesbian Avengers shirts. After 1998, they rented meeting space at Boston GLASS, an organization that still provides mentorship programs to LGBTQ+ youth of color. Lesbian Avengers was involved in the founding of Dyke March in Boston beginning in 1996 which still happens every year on the

Friday before Boston's pride parade.

Across the street at S&S, another Cambridge restaurant staple, a LGBTQ+ seniors group meets weekly sponsored by the Cambridge Somerville Elder Services.

The Lesbian Avengers archive is housed at The History Project.





Mural by Ellary Eddy — Photo by Carl Calabria, intersection of Hampshire & Cambridge Streets

LEARN MORE

PUBLICATIONS

Devin, T. (2017). **Mapping out utopia: 1970's Boston-area counterculture** (book 1: Cambridge). Free the Future Press, Somerville, MA.

Feminist Footsteps Around Cambridge. Ribe, Cambridge, MA.

Hogan, K. (2016). **The feminist bookstore movement: Lesbian antiracism and feminist accountability**. Duke University Press, Durham, and London.

Morgen, S. (2002). **Into our own hands: The women's health movement in the United States, 1969-1990**. Rutgers University Press, Piscataway, NJ.

Smith, B. **Ain't nobody gonna turn me around: Forty years of movement building with Barbara Smith**. Jones, A. and Eubanks, A. (Eds.). State University of New York Press, Albany, NY.

Spain, D. (2011). **Gender and the city: The awful being of invisibility**. *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies*, 32(1), pp. 152-178.

WEBSITES

Cambridge Women's Heritage Project
www2.cambridgema.gov/Historic/CWHP

The History Project
www.historyproject.org

FILMS

Left on Pearl
www.leftonpearl.org

Taking Our Bodies Back: The Women's Health Movement
www.cambridgedocumentaryfilms.org/filmsPages/taking.html

A Moment in Herstory
www.catherinerussodocumentaries.com