

Audio Recorded: October 31, 2017
Transcribed by: Jacqueline Feldman

(00:00:01:00)

JACQUELINE FELDMAN:

This is Jackie Feldman. I'm here with Margaret Flowing Johnson. Can you please say and spell your full name, first, last and nicknames for me?

MARGARET FLOWING JOHNSON:

Margaret M-a-r-g-a-r-e-t Katherine K-a-t-h-e-r-i-n-e Johnson J-o-h-n-s-o-n. My family nickname was Midge M-i-d-g-e and my taken name is Flowing F-l-o-w-i-n-g.

JACQUELINE FELDMAN:

Thank you. Today is October 31, 2017. We are in St. Louis, Missouri. Flowing, do I have your permission to record this interview?

MARGARET FLOWING JOHNSON:

Yes you do.

(00:00:36:00)

JACQUELINE FELDMAN:

Thank you, and thank you for participating. So to start off, could you tell me a little bit about where you're from?

MARGARET FLOWING JOHNSON:

Well I was born and raised in Des Moines, Iowa. I was there through high school; my father was in the military. I was born in 1940, my father was in the military before World War II started, and during World War II he was overseas the whole time. My mother was born in Des Moines also, she had polio as a child and so she was handicapped all of her life. And in 1958 when I was graduating from high school my father retired from the army and we moved to Joplin Missouri, which is where most of my family lives now. And then I came to St. Louis to teach in 1964 and I've been here ever since.

JACQUELINE FELDMAN:

Thank you. So could tell me a little bit about your experience of moving to St. Louis and that transition?

MARGARET FLOWING JOHNSON:

Sorry I didn't quite hear you.

(00:01:31:00)

JACQUELINE FELDMAN:

Oh sorry. Could you tell me a little about the experience of moving to St. Louis and the transition into a new city?

MARGARET FLOWING JOHNSON:

Oh sure. I was teaching, I got my degree, my master's degree in mathematics from Kansas State College in Pittsburgh, Kansas which used to be called the Normal School, basically trained teachers and agriculturalists. When I got my bachelor's degree they asked me to stay on as a teacher assistant, I got my master's degree and then they hired me on as a faculty member. So I was there, and I began to realize that I was always just going to be one of their students, that I was there. And so I had a friend in St. Louis, and when I came to St. Louis, her mother, who was a math teacher at a junior college [sic]¹ in Florissant told me that the community college was starting, St. Louis Community College was starting. And I was up here over Christmas holidays and I went and got interviewed during the break between Christmas and New Year's, and the president hired me on the spot.

So I moved to St. Louis in 1964 and it was one of the best moves I've ever made. It was just an incredibly creative place to be. I was hired during the second semester of classes on the temporary campus, temporary buildings on the campus at Meramec, so it was just wonderful. It was a great transition, moving to a big city, that's where I discovered I was a lesbian, and got away from my family and got away from a very insular faculty that I was with at Kansas State College. So, it was just a great move for me. [pause] Took me a while to get oriented, because when I first got here I didn't realize I was a lesbian and I was isolated most of the time and when I realized I was a lesbian, everything changed [laughs]. It was great.

(00:03:20:00)

JACQUELINE FELDMAN:

So, could you tell me a little bit about that process of realizing?

MARGARET FLOWING JOHNSON:

Well, I had been a Girl Scout counselor at the Girl Scout camp in Joplin, and when I moved here, I had a roommate who was a woman who got her master's degree at the same time as I had, we were roommates for like a year, and then she left St. Louis and I was rooming by myself. And then one of my friends who was a Girl Scout counselor in Joplin with me decided to come up here to teach—oh, she was a Girl Scout professional in Joplin—and she quit being a professional and I didn't know why at the time, but she did because she realized she was a lesbian. And she didn't want to run the risk of contaminating the Girl Scout Council in Joplin. So she came up here, and we decided to room together. And so we roomed together, and she kind of fell in love with me, and I decided to try it [laughs]. So that's kind of how it happened. My father also died in that same period, so I was very emotionally—disturbed at that time by his death because it was very unexpected. So we got very close during that time because she was so much support to me, and stuff, so that was when I realized I was a lesbian. I was twenty-eight at the time.

Because you know, back then, there was no, there was no—I mean, I didn't even—I guess I kind of knew about lesbians, I don't know, but I don't think I really understood about

¹ She was a math teacher at a junior high school.

lesbians at all. And when I look back on my college career, I spent a lot of time hanging out with lesbians, (00:05:00:00) but they were so in the closet they never said anything to me about it and I didn't realize what was going on, so. It was just a terrible time to figure that out, because, when we did, when my friend and I, my first partner and I, realized we were lesbians, we tried to do some research on lesbianism and all we could find was all this stuff about it being a mental disease, you know, and the only book we could find was The Well of Loneliness which was like a terrible book, so it was a difficult time to figure that out. But we came out into a really nice community in St. Louis that was mostly couples, both gay men and lesbians, who at the time, called themselves gay women, and most of the social activities we had were in people's basements so most of the couples had bought houses kind of in suburbia and they had a rec room in the basement and that's where we had most of our social events were at people's homes back then, you know. 'Til I caught feminism and got involved with a more radical political lesbian community and then everything changed again.

(00:06:12:00)

JACQUELINE FELDMAN:

So what changed when you got involved with the more radical community?

MARGARET FLOWING JOHNSON:

Well, what changed for me is I kind of caught feminism, I began to understand about the oppression of women, I began to understand about racism. In fact, I had quit—I had a pretty big fight with my first partner because we hung out with a lot of couples, gay couples, and at the time, the gay community was extremely racist. They were all white, they were very racist, they were very misogynist. Their humor was all based on insulting women and insulting people other than white men. And I finally told her, I can't be with this group anymore because I'm just mad all the time.

And then I went to my first women's concert, Meg Christian in the Women's Building at Wash U [Washington University in St. Louis]. I'll never forget it. Eighty-one women, I—I'll even remember the number, put on by Red Tomato Productions, and it was—it just changed my life because suddenly, here were all these lesbians and I'd never—didn't even know this community existed. They were the more politically active lesbians, and so I just changed my whole social outlook and I began to get active in that—with those women and my partner and I ended up splitting up over it because she didn't—she never adjusted to being a feminist, or not at all political, and that kind of stuff. So, we just split up. It was happening—that was during the time when lots of women were leaving partners. Straight women were leaving husbands, and lesbians were leaving partners, and it was during a real awakening during that second wave of the feminist movement in the early days and so it happened everywhere, including the lesbian community.

(00:08:05:00)

JACQUELINE FELDMAN:

So what was that new community you found like?

MARGARET FLOWING JOHNSON:

Well, it was very boisterous, it was in the streets a lot about, we created the first women Take Back the Night march in St. Louis. Lesbian community was very involved in creating rape crisis lines and the women's self-help center. We were escorting at reproductive health services which is what became Planned Parenthood here in St. Louis, you know, we were just very very active in all kinds of stuff. Active in the labor movement, that was when the ERA, [Equal Rights Amendment] was being pushed, there was just lots of stuff going on. We had women bookstores, we had women coffee houses, we had a women's newspaper called Moonstorm. There were like women's dances a lot, at least one dance a month if not more, and they were held in church basements. There were a lot of lesbian bars at the time, of course the bar scene in St. Louis was still pretty seriously involved with a criminal element in St. Louis and East St. Louis particularly. They were raided a lot and stuff like that back then. The dances in church basements were awesome because they're be maybe 100, 150 of us and you'd be down there just sweating and dancing and carrying on, and looking at this group of women, most of whom at that time you knew, and it was just such a wonderful fun of community and home and you know, discussing or being lesbian to that point had been taboo, so it was just amazing to find that community of women, of all different ages and races. Mostly white, because St. Louis (0:10:00:00) was so segregated then, but there would be, you know, a fairly large number of African-American women and Asian women that would come to the dances, but they had their own places to party and stuff, so.

(00:10:15:00)

JACQUELINE FELDMAN:

So were those dances the main way you met other lesbians, or were there other community spaces that also?

MARGARET FLOWING JOHNSON:

Well no, I met most of the lesbians I met through political organizing, you know, you get involved in organizing something like a Take Back the Night march, or organizing with a self-help center, or working on Moonstorm, or helping out with the bookstore, because all those things were pretty much run by volunteer labor, and that's how I most met most of my lesbian friends, was mostly through organizing. Which is kind of still the case [laughs].

(00:11:09:00)

JACQUELINE FELDMAN:

Do you have any memories of specific people from that time that really stand out to you?

MARGARET FLOWING JOHNSON:

You said specific people?

JACQUELINE FELDMAN:

Yeah, like individuals that were important in your life.

MARGARET FLOWING JOHNSON:

Well, when we planned the first Take Back the Night march, which was a huge success, that was in like '79, we had over a thousand women come, it was women only. And we rented a stage and stuff and we started out in Forest Park and then came up out of Forest Park—at that time, there was a road that came out of Forest Park and crossed Kingshighway and went down Euclid so we came up the park and went down Euclid carrying candles and stuff. And when the concert I mentioned—Meg Christian talked about Take Back the Night, and she has a song called Fight Back, which was about taking back the night, and she talked about the marches that were happening around the country.

So I got real excited about it, and started talking about it, and somebody said that the woman who ran the newly created Women's Studies program at UMSL [University of Missouri—St. Louis] was talking about the same thing. I had never met her, so I called her on the phone, and I was teaching at Meramec Community College, she was a teacher there, so we kind of used our privilege as academics to help get the thing started, and get the kind of traction that we needed to get to be able to start raising the money to get the speakers and that kind of stuff. And so I met her, and then we started organizing, and then we organized it—there were about thirty women involved in organizing, and we met every Saturday for months and months and months to plan it, and that was—I'm trying to remember her name, Nancy something. She ended up moving to Providence and opening a bookstore [laughs]. So that was one of the women I met during those kind of early days and being a lesbian activist in St. Louis.

Kris Kliendienst, who is one of the co-owners of Left Bank was very involved, still is very involved, Rudy Nickens, who ran, an African-American gay man who ran Sunshine Inn, we had lots of meetings at his restaurant, he was technically closed on Monday nights, on Mondays, so Monday evenings were prime time for activists to have meetings at his place and he always fed us some. So there was just a really broad network of activists in St. Louis that were doing all kinds of stuff back then. That's still true, obviously. The focus is different now, of course, but it's the same things happening now with the current movement in St. Louis.

(00:14:02:00)

JACQUELINE FELDMAN:

So could you tell me more about some of the activist groups you've been involved in?

MARGARET FLOWING JOHNSON:

Well, a lot of things that I was involved in were one-offs or two-offs, so they didn't stay around long, but two organizations that I was involved in that stayed around for a while—one was Women Rising in Resistance. "Women" back then was a euphemism for lesbians. It was a small group of women, we had a—there was a group called—Women Rising in Resistance actually started in Champaign-Urbana by a woman named Mary Lee Sargent, who was a teacher at a community college there. She started it trying—if the state of Illinois would approve the Equal Rights Amendment, it would be law, so she started that group to try and use civil disobedience to push the legislature in Illinois to pass the Equal Rights Amendment. They did a lot of civil disobedience (00:15:00:00) and stuff.

And she was a friend of mine, I met her at Michigan, at the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival.

We talked about making Women Rising in Resistance be a network thing, kind of like ACT UP in terms of how it would have chapters all around the country and they would be pretty autonomous. So we decided so start one in St. Louis. So I had her come here to do a workshop at Wash U. on a Saturday morning about Women Rising in Resistance and direct action and that kind of stuff. And that morning, one of the women came with an article about a guy who had raped a niece of his over a period of years and was finally—the niece told the mother about it, he was arrested, he was charged, he was tried, he was convicted, and the judge gave him probation, because—the reason why the judge gave him probation is because he'd had the same job for ten years. We didn't know at the time it was a black on black crime. It infuriated us. And so we decided to do an action about it.

Right there on that spot, we started Women Rising in Resistance. Of course, there were a lot of women at that workshop—I don't know, maybe thirty. But it was also a weekend with a lot of lesbian—a lot of bar activity, and there was a lesbian dance that weekend, there was a lot of stuff happening on Saturday. So we right away decided to go to the judge's house and do an action at his home. The judge's name was Judge Koehr. We went and we leafletted all these different activities. And that Sunday night, we had over a hundred women there. We did a lot of press releases and stuff, but basically no press came, but everybody was really shocked that we were there. But we got some coverage from the Post-Dispatch. And to our shock, the Post-Dispatch publicized our next meeting, which was also at Wash U. And so when we had the next meeting, the place was mobbed with people, and a lot of African-Americans in the audience, because they that this crime had—they knew more about this crime than we did, because we just knew what we read in the Post-Dispatch.

And that kind of launched us on a trajectory that lasted for I guess about a year and a half, and we mostly worked on issues of violence against women. There were, there still are, lots of women being murdered by partners in town, and the restraining order system wasn't very good, and we discovered that when a woman tried to get a restraining order against her husband or her partner or whoever, if she lived in the city, she'd have to go to the city courts to get a restraining order, and if he—but if she worked in the county she'd have to go to the county to get a restr—it was just a complete mess. And then we're talking about a lot of times, poor women that have to use mass transit, so we got—and we got enough traction with the actions we were doing that we got the city and the county to work together to figure out a way to have women get restraining orders without having to run all over town to get them.

And this particular group lasted about a year and half, and then the Hardwick decision happened, which is the decision about sodomy that happened in Texas, and it was a Supreme Court decision. And I was coming home from somewhere, I don't remember where, and heard it on the radio—that the Supreme Court had made—it was a Friday night, of course—heard it on the radio that the Supreme Court had made this decision about Hardwick. And I didn't even know they'd heard the case. That says something about

where the lesbian and gay movement and community was back then, that a case that was about criminalizing, about the criminalization of same-sex sex—I didn't even know they'd heard the case. And I was so furious when I got home, Marcia and I were partners at that time, that I ranted and raved and we decided to contact our, to start our phone tree to get an action about this. And I contacted Jim Thomas, who was the editor of the Gay News Telegraph, and he activated the male community and the next night, on Saturday night, we had an action at the Old Courthouse², about comparing this decision to the decision that was in the Dred Scott decision—about saying it was OK for people to own people if they were African-American—this decision about sex between same-sex couples.

And then, all hell broke loose with Women Rising in Resistance, because we hadn't—we used consensus as a decision-making process—(00:20:00:00) and we hadn't taken the time to go through the consensus process, because I was just so furious, it was a mistake for sure, but we changed the name of the sponsoring organization to Lesbians Rising in Resistance for the purpose of the action. But when the press came to the action they said who're you trying to kid, we know who you are, and they used Women Rising in Resistance in the newspaper. So there were women in the group that were in the closet, for various reasons, and they were so furious that they might be associated with an action about lesbian rights that they basically—basically, the decision that we made was that, well OK, so you decide the next time what decision to make and call the group together. You decide what action you want to do next. And we were basing our actions from the newspapers and from stuff like that. And we never had another action. So that broke that group up.

And then the second group I helped form, which I helped form with my partner Marcia Levin, and a bisexual man, Jon Cohen was St. Louis Queer Nation. And it lasted for a long time, several years. We did a lot of actions. We were very active around the Cracker Barrel actions, that was a national movement. We did a stop the church action, which had over a hundred people on Easter Sunday at the cathedral on Lindell.³ And the three prongs of that action were reproductive rights, homosexuality, and AIDS. The church's attitude towards homosexuals, women, and AIDS. So it was a three-pronged action, it was a very exciting action, we planned it for maybe, I don't know, seven or eight months. We had a city-wide planning group do it. We hung around for a long time, and we finally just kind of decided that we'd done our duty and we were beginning to get a lot of traction and people were coming out of the closet so the need for visibility actions for lesbians and gay people seemed to be lessened at that point so we stopped the organization at that point.

(00:22:30:00)

JACQUELINE FELDMAN:

So how did you and Marcia meet?

² The Dred Scott case was heard in the St. Louis Old Courthouse.

³ Cathedral Basilica of Saint Louis.

MARGARET FLOWING JOHNSON:

We met at one of the actions! We met at the Judge Koehr action, the first action I spoke about. She was working in Victim Services Council in St. Louis County, and then she came to one of the planning meetings, and we fell in love and we've been together ever since. Thirty-two years, now. So that's how I met her. At an action [laughs]. And we still are in the streets together periodically.

JACQUELINE FELDMAN:

So you mentioned bars and dances as a place that you spread the word about some of these actions.

MARGARET FLOWING JOHNSON:

Um-hm.

JACQUELINE FELDMAN:

How do you view the role of things like bars and dances in your experience of St. Louis?

MARGARET FLOWING JOHNSON:

I'm sorry, I can't hear you.

(00:23:34:00)

JACQUELINE FELDMAN:

Sorry. How do you—I can hear myself really loud [gestures to headphones] how do you view the role of spaces like bars and dances, just in your experience?

MARGARET FLOWING JOHNSON:

Well, in my experience, I never was much for bars. I did go to bars, sometimes. I did a lot of dancing in the East Side, so we—my first partner and I—went to dances on the East Side a lot, there was a bar over there that was owned by a lesbian who was a fantastic singer. She'd been a singer at—hopefully I'll remember her name—she'd been a singer at Lake of the Ozarks, and I don't think she exactly opened the bar in East St. Louis, but she started doing shows there, a couple of shows a night, and we went there a lot to hear her sing. And then we would dance there, we always went with a group of people. But I never was too interested in bars themselves.

And then a woman named Mac, I can't think of her last name, Mac, anyways, she owned several bars. She owned a bar called Bottom of the Pot, she owned the bar called Mor or Les, and the Bottom of the Pot was below—there was a gay bar, this was on Euclid Street, a gay male bar called Potpourri. And the lesbian bar was in the basement, that's why it's called the Bottom of the Pot. At that point, there were a lot of lesbian (00:25:00:00) and gay clubs on Euclid until the city wiped 'em out very intentionally, moved them out of there during gentrification. But the bar called Mor or Les was on Newstead, just north of Manchester, kind of where the Grove is now. It was a very small bar, in what at the time was a pretty run-down part of town. We started doing a lot of organizing out of there, she had a back room where we had meetings a lot.

At one point, she wanted to buy a piano. There was this purple upright piano she wanted to buy, and she wanted money for it, so a bunch of us got together and did a gong show, you know what a gong show is? [Interviewer shakes head no.] A gong show is where you have a really bad talent come out, and if they're really bad they get the gong and they have to leave. So we decided to do a talent show, we called it the gong show, and I did a strip tease in it [laughs] and I practiced and practiced and practiced and practiced to do this thing. And wore a wig and makeup and the whole thing, and a lot of people came to the show because they heard that Midge was going to do a strip tease. And the funny thing about it is, when I came out, they didn't recognize me [laughs]. So we raised money for her to buy the piano. So that's the only bar that I really had a relationship with. And she was open for several years.

And then she moved to a place on South Grand, this was when I was starting to travel, she moved to a place on South Grand and the place got firebombed. And they arrested her for it, but of course they never convicted her because she didn't do it. She said she didn't do it, I believed her. She moved her bar to a neighborhood that didn't want a lesbian bar, and they, you know, they burned it down. I'm not much of a bar fan. Coffeeshouses are more my speed [laughs]. And like I said in the early days, it was people's basements. During the height of that lesbian feminist movement in St. Louis, there were lots and lots of house parties. There were lots of lesbian houses in town that had various names. They would have a party, there would usually be at least one party at one of the lesbian houses at least once a month, that you would go to, and there'd be maybe fifty or sixty of them in there partying. So, it was good.

(00:27:53:00)

JACQUELINE FELDMAN:

Was it ever challenging, for lesbians to own homes, in St. Louis?

MARGARET FLOWING JOHNSON:

To own homes?

JACQUELINE FELDMAN:

Yeah, or to be able to rent or buy a house.

MARGARET FLOWING JOHNSON:

Well yeah, when my first partner and I, we decided to own a home, and we had a lot of trouble getting a loan. We went to several mortgage brokers, and we actually bought some land in the country and wanted to build a home actually, and we finally went—the one guy in, I can't remember even what bank it was, now this has been so long ago, and we went in and were being interviewed by the banker, and he says, well I'll tell you what. You remind me of my daughter. She's a teacher—we were both teachers—she's a teacher. I'll give you a loan. It was like, yeah, right, OK. But it was just really difficult to get a loan if you were a woman, difficult to get lots of things then if you were a woman. We wanted, we decided since we were going to be living isolated in the country we needed a weapon. So we decided to buy a shotgun, and a shotgun that would hold three shells and so we'd keep the shells, but they weren't in the firing chamber and stuff. So we figured

out what we wanted to get and stuff, and we couldn't buy it in St. Louis County, because we had to have the permission of either a husband or a father to buy a weapon. so we went out to Jefferson County and bought a weapon no trouble. It's just all those weird stuff that women had trouble doing back then.

I taught at, like I said, I taught at Meramec Community College, I was there when I realized I was a lesbian, and I remember I was elected faculty president and I remember standing giving my first speech to the faculty and stuff, and I'm thinking, I wish I could just tell you that I'm a lesbian [laughs]. Of course I didn't. And then later, I was asked to run for president of the union, and I went to the people wanting me to run, and I said, you know, I don't know if this is ever going to come up, but I am a lesbian. (00:30:00:00) And they said, oh, well everybody knows that [laughs]. I said, well, good [laughs].

And then when I quit my job, I got full professorship and quit my job, and traveled for a couple of years, and came back as a very radical lesbian, a very out lesbian at that point, there was no way I could be in the closet anymore. And I had trouble—I had a hard time getting another job. I got a part-time job very easily, but I had trouble getting hired back on full time. And I heard through the grapevine at Forest Park Community College, where I was trying to get hired on, that the problem was that—the problem wasn't that I was a lesbian, it's a problem that I was being on TV about it. That's during the height of Queer Nation. So that was when I was having trouble getting hired back on. And my students would sometimes say, I saw you on TV! And then they would get really embarrassed [laughs]. They were very cute about it.

(00:31:12:00)

JACQUELINE FELDMAN:

So what are some other ways that not wanting to be closeted, and wanting to be out, has shaped different experiences for you?

MARGARET FLOWING JOHNSON:

Well the thing about being out is that you're always coming out. Because the assumption of course, it's not as big an assumption as it used to be, but the assumption is that everybody's straight. So every time you meet somebody new, and I don't just automatically say, "Hi, I'm Margaret, I'm a lesbian," I don't do that, but anytime something comes up that it makes sense for me to say that I'm a lesbian, I will do it. Like I take courses at Lifelong Learning Institute, and often something will come up in a discussion in one of the classes that the fact that I'm a lesbian informs some information I have that may be different than the information everybody else in the class has. So I'll preface it by saying, first of all, you need to know that I'm a lesbian, and second of all, whatever the topic was I'll talk about. But it's no longer—people are no longer surprised.

I'm seventy-seven. So a lot of women my age never really knew a lesbian until recently. Well, they didn't know they knew a lesbian until recently, I suppose I should say. And a lot of lesbians my age are still in the closet. The reality of that is that, the chances are pretty good that they're—and a lot of them of course were married, and have children, and have grandchildren, and have great-grandchildren now, because back then most

everybody got married even though they were lesbians, or not, or they didn't know they were lesbians. Like I didn't know I was a lesbian until I was in my late twenties. These days, their great-grandkids are going to know they're lesbians, if they have a partner, if they've had a partner. It's just sad to me, that there are still people my age in the closet. And I know they are. And of course, a lot of them are in nursing homes, and that's why they're in the closet, because they don't want to—or retirement homes, or something. And they just don't know how they can—how they would be dealt with by the people around them, if they knew that they were lesbian or gay. So, it's old habits. Hard to break.

(00:33:52:00)

JACQUELINE FELDMAN:

So you talked about this a little, but do you have any other ideas of reasons why you think people around your age might still want to stay in the closet?

MARGARET FLOWING JOHNSON:

Well, part of it's habit. A part of it is internalized homophobia. Some people have been ashamed of being a lesbian or a gay man all their life and that's really hard to shuck that. They haven't found a community, some of them, so they don't feel safe. I went to a, there's a group called OLOC, Old Lesbians Organized for Change, and they're a national organization. And the national organization is pretty radical, really. But the local chapter's not. I went to a couple of meetings, and I never went back because it was just so boring. But I went to one of them, and they were having a, they were kind of introducing one another, to one another.

(00:35:00:00) And this couple that was there, I don't know how old they were, but I think they were probably about my age, maybe even a little bit older, they'd gone to a concert at the Pageant, I guess the weekend before, at least recently. And they go into the concert at the Pageant, and it was an entertainer who draws lesbians. It might have been k.d. lang, I don't know who it was. And they were interviewed by a Post-Dispatch writer, because they were in line waiting to get in, and they were interviewed, and they were so excited about her being there, and you know, all this stuff, and so they were interviewed by the Post-Dispatch author and writer and gave them their names and everything. And they overhead the woman behind them saying that she was there with a group of lesbians. And lesbians were so excited about this singer and da da da da da da da. So they immediately had a conversation and tracked down the reporter and told the reporter to please take their names and what they said out of the article. Because they didn't want to be associated with, in any way, with anything that drew lesbians.

And at the OLOC meeting, they just got all this, you know, you did the right thing, da da da da da da da. I just bit my tongue, and didn't say anything. But then when it came my turn to introduce myself, of course I talked about being out and all this stuff. But I just never went back. Because it was like, I don't want to be around women who are still in the closet. It's just too, it's too, [pause] I don't know what word I'm looking for. Being around people that are in the closet makes me uncomfortable because it's like, they're uncomfortable with their sexuality, then they must be uncomfortable with mine. And it just doesn't feel good to me.

At your age, you probably wonder about this, right? Are lesbians your age in the closet?

JACQUELINE FELDMAN:
I think it depends on who.

MARGARET FLOWING JOHNSON:
Depends on who it is,

JACQUELINE FELDMAN:
Yeah.

MARGARET FLOWING JOHNSON:
Maybe with their family, and not with their friends, or something, yeah. And of course, if they come from a very right-wing conservative religious background, they're probably having to protect themselves from their family.

JACQUELINE FELDMAN:
Yeah, I think you've definitely summed up a lot of the attitudes I've seen.

MARGARET FLOWING JOHNSON:
I'm not judging people for being in the closet, I just don't want to be in an organization which I think is political with them [laughs]. I mean, look at what happened to Women Rising in Resistance, right?

(00:37:41:00)

JACQUELINE FELDMAN:
Um-hm. [Pause]. So, when we talked a few days ago, you mentioned how much fun it was, to be a lesbian in the '70s and '80s in St. Louis. So I guess I just want to hear more about what your life was like, kind of the day-to-day, what were the fun things about it.

MARGARET FLOWING JOHNSON:
It was just fun. It was kind of like, in a way, that the young people and the current movement in St. Louis, the Black Lives Matter movement, for lack of a better term for it, in St. Louis, because it's in their mind all the time. Like what's happening today, what's happening tomorrow, what's the action today, where's the party tomorrow. And of course, it's partly age, too, in terms of energy. But there was just so much going on, that there was always some place to go, there was always something to do, there was always a dance coming up, you know.

And we were just convinced that we were going to—and we did change things. We were convinced that we were the revolution, that we were going to really make this country a better place for everybody, not just for lesbians, but for everybody. That we felt like lesbians were somehow chosen, to confront some of the problems in our culture. We had a class analysis, we had a race analysis, we had a gender analysis, although we didn't call it that.

We had all these political discussions going on, all the time. We created the sliding scale, so that if there was some kind of an event happening, the price would be like five dollars, more if you can, less if you can't. We didn't care whether or not anybody had any money to pay a fee to get into something, if they came, they came. And women that had more financial discretionary income would pay more, and then women who were poor would pay less or none. It was the whole, it was like we were really in this thing together.

And it was just [pause] (00:40:00:00) you know, I was admittedly very naïve, for a long time. There was this idea that if you were a lesbian you were somehow—you couldn't be a thief, and you wouldn't be a liar and you wouldn't be a cheat and you wouldn't be a batterer and all this stuff, and finally we, the women—and there was battering in the lesbian community—and finally we did have a series of four women Take Back the Night series of public meetings. And one of them focused on battering in the lesbian community. I was one of the facilitators of that.

But yeah, it was just, it was like we'd been living in black and white, and all of the sudden, everything was in color. It was just an astonishing time to be alive, and to be involved in that, in the lesbian community. This was of course pre-AIDS. And then when AIDS happened, it changed everything in the lesbian community too. But we were pretty much, we weren't paying much attention to gay men, until AIDS happened. Except not wanting to be around them because they were so racist and sexist [laughs]. And like I say, we were really actively working on anti-racist issues and talking about it a lot, and talking about class a lot, in ways that the men were not. And I'm not sure they ever really have. Most of the men don't seem to have much class analysis or gender analysis. The ones that do are really good, but the community doesn't seem to have really stepped up to that like the lesbians did.

(00:41:53:00)

JACQUELINE FELDMAN:

Why do you feel like lesbians were the chosen ones?

MARGARET FLOWING JOHNSON:

Oh, I don't know, that was just part of being a part of that community, and you know, just feeling like—partly because we were looking at everything. We were outsiders, right, and we were able to look in. We were on the outside looking in and we could see a lot of the flaws in our, in the United States culture, we could see the racism, we could see the sexism, we could see the violence against women. We could see at least partly the injustice of the justice system when we started dealing with some of the issues, particularly when we got involved in black on black crime, and began to see that the justice system worked really different for that than white on white crime. So we just felt like we had a clearer vision of what the problems were, and beginning to get a handle on how to attack them.

And of course, this is at the time when women's studies was just starting too. So we suddenly had all these academics who were, you know, talking to us, and being with us.

And at that point, in the early days of women's studies, women's studies was an activist thing. It was like if your study wasn't attached to social change, it wasn't truly women's studies at that time. It was really a social change—women's studies was in many ways a social change movement. It's been taken over, pretty much by people that don't necessarily see it that way anymore, but clearly from your class there's some people that still see it that way. But you know, when the name started changing to gender studies, then whatever, a lot of the activist arm of the women's studies movement seemed to be diminished over time as suddenly women and men that were actually in another area realized that they could get a job by being in women's studies and history, or women's studies and whatever. So the passion of the women's studies departments started to be a little less passionate. At least that's my experience.

(00:44:24:00)

JACQUELINE FELDMAN:

So when women's studies departments first started, how do you think they impacted activist groups or movements?

MARGARET FLOWING JOHNSON:

Well, I think that it was helpful, because they had some information that—the faculty in women's studies were academics, right? Of course, I'm an academic too. And so they had more, they had information and analysis that we didn't necessarily have. You can't really (00:45:00:00) have social change and policy change, which means legislative change, you can't really have social change, and policy change, unless you have an analysis of what you have now and how it needs to change. And that takes some kind of intellectual effort to understand that kind of stuff. I think it was helpful, it also helped—for a while the lesbian community was very anti-intellectual. And I think that the advent of women's studies helped get rid of some of that anti-intellectual attitude that was in the lesbian community.

(00:45:50:00)

JACQUELINE FELDMAN:

So to backtrack a little bit, how do you think the lesbian community changed with AIDS coming to the forefront?

MARGARET FLOWING JOHNSON:

Well, [pause]. It's really hard to go back there. People were dying, and they were dying everywhere. I mean, I didn't have a lot of close friends in the gay community at the time, I have close friends now, and I had some friends there, and I had worked actively with some friends, obviously, in the gay community in some of my activism work. But they were, you know, there was a whole generation of gay men that were just dying. And at the time, at the beginning we didn't know what it was. I started reading about it in the gay press, about this strange disease that was happening, and that there were swollen lymph nodes were involved in it, because you know, it's an immune disease. And I went to my doctor, I had really swollen lymph nodes, and said this to my doctor about it, and my doctor never heard of it.

And then the complete immorality of the government, and then the—you know, they called it the gay disease, and of course the Christian right wing came out and said well, this is god, trying to get rid of all the homosexuals, and stuff. It took us a while to understand that lesbians weren't at much risk for AIDS. And of course it took a while to figure out this is a sexually transmitted disease, and it just had appeared in the gay community first. Of course, now the people most in danger of getting AIDS right now are African-American women, straight women. It was just horrifying, and so not only did they need help, they needed a lot of support from the community. The fundraising for it, you know, they were sick. They were sick, their lovers were sick, they were scared, they were traumatized, we had to help. So we did.

We in fact, one of the things that happened, I helped with the civil disobedience at the Supreme Court, I can't remember what date it was, I can never remember dates, but it was attached to a march on Washington, lesbian and gay march on Washington, the name of the civil disobedience was Out and Outraged, and we worked with gay men to plan it. And this was before the cocktail had been created. And so, a lot of the gay men helping plan it had AIDS. And so we had, every one of the gay men that had AIDS, that was helping planning it, had a back-up in case they died. And they kept dying. During the planning of the AIDS⁴—of the—they would die. It was awful. [pause]. So yeah, we helped.

And then at the march, it was really nice, because I was able to give the welcome to the—when the people, thousands of people came to a big church in D.C. the night before the civil disobedience. The march was on Monday [sic]⁵ and the civil disobedience was on Tuesday, and Monday we did a lot of training and stuff. And we had affinity groups come from all over the country that had been trained in non-violence in their community. And they came. And one of the gay men stood up and said, we want to thank the lesbians because without the lesbians we wouldn't know how to do this. And they were right, because we'd been, lesbians had been doing civil disobedience (00:50:00:00), intense civil disobedience, for a long long time. We had Seneca Peace Encampment, was all lesb—was mostly lesbians, and they'd been doing civil disobedience about nuclear weapons and stuff, for, you know, I don't know how many years, at least a decade. And so lesbians were the ones that knew how to do civil disobedience, and how to organize that stuff, and we were of course healthier than the gay men were, so all our energy turned toward that. And it really—somebody's going to write this someday, and do some research, but I really think that that's part of what happened in the second wave of feminism. That it got, that when lesbians left that and went mostly into working with AIDS and gay men and stuff, that second wave of feminism kind of went down. It completely distracted us, as it should have.

(00:51:04:00)

JACQUELINE FELDMAN:

Thank you for sharing that. I guess I'm also wondering, about what you see as changes between your experience in the pre-2000s St. Louis, whatever period of time you'd like to focus on, and today, what you've noticed.

⁴ During the planning of the AIDS action.

⁵ The march was on Sunday.

MARGARET FLOWING JOHNSON:

Oh, well, [laughs] a lot of difference. For one thing, the current movement is being led by young people. A lot of our movement was led by young women too, of course. At the time, I guess I was a young woman. But this movement is specifically being led by young people, African-American people, at least people of color, and much of the leadership is women. And Marcia and I went to a meeting, right after Michael Brown was killed. I was at the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival when he was killed, so I missed the initial part of that movement. But when I came back to town, we went to a meeting down on Cherokee somewhere. There was a meeting held for queer people about what was going on with the Michael Brown movement. And the panel was African-American young women, young men and young women. We didn't know anybody in the room, well I guess we knew one person in the room. But we didn't know anybody in the room which surprised me. And of course, we were the oldsters there.

And the gay man and the lesbian woman, again, both African-American—I ended up having tears in my eyes, when the woman spoke particularly, because it was like in fifteen minutes, she did a women's studies 101. I was just blown away, by her analysis and how clear she was. And I turned to Marcia, and I said, my god, they got it. Because I had just given up, I had thought that the whole thing about feminism, and analysis, and stuff had just gone right by a generation and they had no clue [laughs]. And here she was, like, oh my god! And then the gay man, he was not—he was way talkier than she was, but he also understood it. They both talked about patriarchy, they talked about misogyny, they talked about—it was like, OK, then! [laughs]. And intersectionality had become kind of a buzzword, but I realized that from their perspective, they really got the whole thing about no oppression—you shouldn't rank oppressions, you know, we all have privilege here, and not privilege there, and we're a target in one area, and have privilege in another area, and how complicated the whole thing is. And they really, I mean, they totally got it! I was floored. So that's one thing about this movement.

And another thing about the movement, which is they call people out all the time. I think that there's a little bit too much of that sometimes, that they call people out and stop the conversation. But they are trying really hard to be honest with one another, and not let stuff fester. And of course, their energy, my god, their energy [laughs] is so incredible, and they're so committed. I mean, there's been a—there's not an action every day, because usually once a week, there's a no action day, a rest day, what they call a self-care day, but I mean, their stamina is just amazing. Their commitment, their stamina, and they understand it's—they're in it for the long—they understand it's a long, slow—it takes a long time to change policy (00:55:00:00) and to change legislation and to upend the—you know, we have to get ahold of all different people in positions of power in this country. The right wing is just taking over just way too much. It's not at all balanced anymore. So, I'm just floored by it. I'm very proud of them too. They're clear about people that went before them too, they're not pretending that they've created this for the very first time, they understand that they're in this river of social change and that they've just stepped in the current.

(00:55:47:00)

JACQUELINE FELDMAN:

So you mentioned that at one specific meeting, you were one of the older people in the room. Do you find that a lot of people who maybe are your age, or who were involved with radical lesbian feminism with you, are still engaged in activism the way you are?

MARGARET FLOWING JOHNSON:

Well, yes, there are some. The thing is that the energy in this movement is so energetic that we can't keep up with them. So we, Marcia and I, started out going to a lot of the actions and stuff, and literally, I couldn't keep up with them. It's like, they would start a march and they would be gone, you know? And I don't want to slow them down. So I've found, we've found other ways to be involved besides actually being at the actions. I've also had some health issues that are clearing up now, so hopefully I'll be able to go to more of them. But you know, these long mile, two-mile-long hikes through the city streets is not something I'm doing right now [laughs]. So we take them pizzas, sometimes, and do help with bail fund and do other things other than do street actions. And the Black Lives Matter signs around St. Louis is something I've been involved in since we—I'm in the group that started having those signs made. So I still deliver those signs to MoKaBe's, and to Left Bank, and that kind of stuff. In fact, my car's full of them right now. So, there are other ways to get involved. But from what I can tell from my Facebook friends that are more or less my age is that they're still involved intellectually for sure, and I suspect actively too. I do see them at things. I saw them at the Women's March, and I see them around at some of the Black Lives Matter actions too.

(00:57:53:00)

JACQUELINE FELDMAN:

Do you think community spaces like Left Bank and MoKaBe's have stayed relatively consistent in their purpose in the community, or have they changed over time?

MARGARET FLOWING JOHNSON:

No, they've stayed very consistent. Left Bank has expanded its purpose. It has just incredible programs now, and authors coming, and they have this Ferguson reading club now, which they started right after Michael Brown was killed. And MoKaBe's is just totally expanded what she does, she's become certainly a center of the movement in St. Louis. She's just, they're both, Kris and Jay⁶, and Mo⁷ are just jewels in the community, totally.

(00:58:45:00)

JACQUELINE FELDMAN:

So you talked a little about how activism has changed, how do you think the lives of lesbians specifically have changed?

⁶ Kris Kleindienst and Jarek Steele, co-owners of Left Bank books.

⁷ Mo Costello, owner of MoKaBe's.

MARGARET FLOWING JOHNSON:

Oh, well, lots of ways. The closet, I suspect for this new generation, which you're a member of, the closet is—except for—the closet is no longer essential. I mean, look what happened when Indiana passed that law about being able to discriminate at lesbians and gay people, I mean the Fortune 500 companies went crazy. So, there's still churches obviously that are very homophobic, there's still families that are very homophobic, there's still pockets of this country where it's dangerous to be out as a lesbian and gay or a transgender person, clearly. But in so many ways, it's so different.

I think one of the main things that different is that people know about lesbians now. I mean, it's not a mystery [laughs] you know? I mean, the young women growing up, (01:00:00:00) if they have feelings towards, sexual feelings, towards other girls or other women, they gotta go, oh, maybe I'm a lesbian. And you know, when I was growing up, you'd go, oh, that's weird, because you didn't even know the word lesbian. Or didn't even know it existed. So, I mean, it was taboo. Talking about being a lesbian or talking about lesbianism at all was taboo. Talking about being gay, homosexual was taboo. So the general information about that possibility for a lifestyle was not there. So it was a mystery. So that's a big change. I always thank, um, Bryant, the orange juice lady, what was her name, somebody Bryant.

JACQUELINE FELDMAN:

Anita Bryant, I think.

MARGARET FLOWING JOHNSON:

Because she was the one that—I mean, the right wing broke the taboo, the right wing started talking about homosexuality. And it was like, well thank you. Because now we can talk about it [laughs]. You know, you know? They say, you're rubbing my face in it. Well, no, I'm not rubbing your face in it, I'm responding to Anita, Anita Bryant, so yes, she brought the topic up, and yes, I'm talking about it, you know, it's like. My stepmother said that to me once. You're rubbing my face in it. So, anyway, that's the biggest difference, I think.

And the recognition that lesbians, that all lesbians aren't butch, [laughs] you know? It's just a different, a completely different way to be a lesbian. Used to be, you know, in fact, we were all kind of in uniform for a while back in the '70s. We were all wearing jeans and flannel shirts.⁸ Yeah, right [laughs]. But it's not a uniform anymore [laughs]. I wear flannel shirts a lot too. So yeah, it's very different. And I think that's, you know, you got that- we're watching this program on Netflix called "One Mississippi." It's a great show, and the main character is a butch lesbian, and she's just a wonderful actress and the actress herself is a lesbian. So it's just, it's just wonderful to have that kind of stuff happening these days. Of course there's a lot more programs with gay men in them than lesbians, but oh well. That's sexism for you.

⁸ Interviewer was wearing jeans and a flannel shirt.

(01:02:44:00)

JACQUELINE FELDMAN:

So you mentioned your stepmother, what are some ways your family responded to you being a lesbian?

MARGARET FLOWING JOHNSON:

Well, my mother died when I was fourteen, and my father died before I realized I was a lesbian, my biological mother and biological father, so I don't know how they would respond. I think they would be really good with it. My stepmother was not good about it at all. I was clearly a lesbian because I'd had partners for a while, and I took a leave of absence from my job and decided to travel, and at the time my partner, Judy Thursby, was my partner, and we had done this dream about oh, let's get a van, and let's travel around the country, it will be wonderful, we can live in lesbian communities, stuff like that. We'll start at the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival. And you know, it was one of those things where you're talking about it and all of the sudden you realize you're going to make it happen.

So I took a year's leave of absence, I got full professorship, and I took a year's leave of absence. We bought a van, I painted it, had it painted purple, and I wanted to start my trip by going down to Joplin and spending some time with my family, so I went down to Joplin, and my stepmother was being very weird. I had a niece, have a niece, at the time she was I guess five, and we were decorating the inside of the van. We had had a carpenter fix the van up so we had a bed in it and stuff, and we were, Odysea [sic]⁹ was a seamstress and stuff, so she was making curtains and stuff to put in it and to be able to pull across the windows when we slept in it and stuff like that. And we wanted to go to the store to get some material, and Kelli was there, and I said—she wanted to go with me, and I said OK fine, and mom says, no you can't take Kelli with you. I said why not. Well her mother might come over for her. I said even if she does, no problem, I can take her home later. No, you can't. And I had a fight wither her about taking Kelli with me, if I took Kelli with me. But she was really upset about it. And then it dawned on me later on, that she didn't want Kelli to go with me because I'm a lesbian, right (01:05:00:00). I thought, that is just weird.

So then we had a fight about that, and then I, we, Judy and I left to start on our trip. And she said, I can't believe you're leaving with so much anger between you and Pearl. Pearl's the name of my stepmother. So I turn around and went back. And I went into the back yard and mother was sitting in the back yard, and she was crying. And I said, what is going on, Pearl? She says, well you've never rubbed my nose in it before. And I said, Pearl, I'm the same woman you've known since I was, I guess I was fourteen or fifteen when she married my dad. I'm the same person you've known for all this time. You know who I am. What's—what is the deal? And that's when she said well you've never rubbed my face in it before. And so I just left and then I wrote her a letter and said—and then she said I don't ever want you to bring any woman friend home with you again. So I wrote her a letter when I was on the road and told her, well you know, when you change

⁹ Odysea is Judy Thursby's taken name. At this point, she had not taken the name yet.

your mind, then I can bring a woman friend home with me. I'll come see you. Until then I won't see you again.

And then out of the blue one year, I got a phone call from her when Marcia and I had been together for a while, I got a phone call from her out of the blue, and she invited Marcia home, Marcia and me home for Thanksgiving. So that was her form of apology. And my brothers, basically were OK with it as far as I could tell, my sister claims to be OK with it but she's one of those people that says so often that she's OK with it I suspect she's not [laughs]. My nieces and nephews all seem fine. They're of course the next generation, so.

JACQUELINE FELDMAN:

And just to clarify, Kelli is the name of your niece?

MARGARET FLOWING JOHNSON:

Pardon?

(01:06:57:00)

JACQUELINE FELDMAN:

Kelli is the name of your niece in this story?

MARGARET FLOWING JOHNSON:

Kelli's my niece, yeah. She's I guess fifty now, got two kids, still lives in Joplin. We talk on the phone all the time. I never talk to my stepsister, we almost never talk, so. We're just too different.

(01:07:20:00)

JACQUELINE FELDMAN:

How are you different?

MARGARET FLOWING JOHNSON:

Well, she was—I was just looking to see, the cat feeder goes off soon¹⁰—she was—my dad married Pearl, her mother when I was in high school, and she was, she's, I don't know, maybe three or four years younger than me. So we were in high school at the same time. And she was always a party girl, she was always drinking, and she was always dating, she was crazy about boys, just like. And then you know I got into college and I was a serious student, because I majored in math which took a lot of time, you know, and she was just always partying, and dating, and carrying on. We just had nothing in common, nothing in common at all. And we still don't, so. She's—I know she voted for Trump. And her husband died and she married this right-wing idiot that—just something else. So, anyway. It's—we're just very different, we don't have anything to talk about [laughs].

(01:08:50:00)

JACQUELINE FELDMAN:

So that trip that you mentioned a little earlier—

¹⁰ Flowing was concerned about an automatic cat feeder in the room making noise on the recording.

MARGARET FLOWING JOHNSON:

Um-hm.

JACQUELINE FELDMAN:

After going to Joplin, did you complete that trip for the year?

MARGARET FLOWING JOHNSON:

Yeah, we went to start out by going to the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival, we got a lot of contacts there, and then we just drove around the country, from town to town, staying with lesbians, staying on lesbian land, staying in communities. We felt like troubadours we were carrying information from one lesbian community to the next. It was so much fun. And then we ended up coming back to Michigan at the end of the trip, and I ended up resigning from my job, and then I went and lived in Scotland for a while in a community in Scotland. I was very surprised because I—we'd looking for a—my partner and I broke up, and we were looking for a lesbian community to live in and I never really found one, they were all, at the time, very poor—this was during the anti-intellectual (01:10:00:00) part of the lesbian movement, of the lesbian community. They were all poor, a lot of them were living on welfare, and lying about why they needed it. It just felt—I just never found a community that I felt like I could really fit into or that I was interested in. And I wanted one that would be working to make things happen and do things.

So I quit traveling and came back to the St. Louis area, and discovered that the community Findhorn in Scotland was starting a gardening school. So I wrote to them and got welcomed by them and I went and lived there for a while. And I ended up back in St. Louis after I guess about two and a half or three years. And that's when I got back to St. Louis, and got a part-time job at Forest Park, and started Women Rising in Resistance, and met Marcia. Yep, here I am again [laughs]. Traveled the world and ended up back in St. Louis.

(01:11:08:00)

JACQUELINE FELDMAN:

OK, thank you so much. Do you have any final thoughts or stories you'd like to share?

MARGARET FLOWING JOHNSON:

I don't think so, I think that—I'm really happy that you're doing this project, because I think that's really important that the stories of women that, lesbians that lived through the transition from basically everybody in the closet to today is important to follow that, to have stories of that transition happening.

JACQUELINE FELDMAN:

Great, thank you so much for participating.

MARGARET FLOWING JOHNSON:

You're welcome, my pleasure.

[end of interview]

Word List

ACT UP
AIDS
Anita Bryant
Black Lives Matter
Bottom of the Pot
Champaign-Urbana
Christianity
Cracker Barrel
Des Moines, Iowa
Dred Scott Decision
East St. Louis
Equal Rights Amendment
Euclid
Ferguson, Missouri
Fight Back- Meg Christian
Findhorn
Florissant, Missouri
Forest Park
Fortune 500
Gay News Telegraph
Girl Scouts
Hardwick decision
Indiana
Jarek Steele (Jay)
Jefferson County
Jim Thomas
Jon Cohen
Joplin, Missouri
Judge Jack Koehr
Judy Thursby
k.d. lang
Kansas State College/the Normal School
Kelli Newman
Kingshighway
Kris Kliendienst
Lake of the Ozarks
Left Bank Books
Lifelong Learning Institute
Lindell
Mac
Manchester
Marcia Levin
Margaret Flowing Johnson
Mary Lee Sargent

May Christian
Meramec Community College
Michael Brown
Michigan Womyn's Music Festival
Mo Costello
MoKaBe's
Moonstorm
Mor or Les
Netflix
Newstead
Old Courthouse
Old Lesbians Organized for Change (OLOC)
One Mississippi
Out and Outraged
Pearl Johnson
Pittsburgh, Kansas
Planned Parenthood
Potpourri
Red Tomato Productions
Rudy Nickens
Scotland
Second Wave Feminism
Seneca Peace Encampment
South Grand
St. Louis Community College
St. Louis County
St. Louis Post-Dispatch
St. Louis Queer Nation
St. Louis, Missouri
Sunshine Inn
Supreme Court
Take Back the Night
The Grove
The Pageant
The Well of Loneliness
Trump
UMSL [University of Missouri–St. Louis]
Washington D.C.
Washington University
Women Rising in Resistance
Women's March
Women's Studies
World War II