

**CRENSHAW WOMEN'S CENTER**  
1025-1029 S. Crenshaw Boulevard  
CHC-2021-1448-HCM  
ENV-2021-1449-CE

Agenda packet includes:

1. [Final Determination Staff Recommendation Report](#)
2. [Commission/ Staff Site Inspection Photos—April 29, 2021](#)
3. [Categorical Exemption](#)
4. [Supplemental Materials from Applicant, Received April 29, 2021](#)
5. [Supplemental Materials from Owner's Representative, Received April 29, 2021](#)
6. [Under Consideration Staff Report](#)
7. [Historic-Cultural Monument Application](#)

Please click on each document to be directly taken to the corresponding page of the PDF.

# Los Angeles Department of City Planning

## RECOMMENDATION REPORT

CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSION

CASE NO.: CHC-2021-1448-HCM  
ENV-2021-1449-CE

**HEARING DATE:** June 17, 2021  
**TIME:** 10:00 AM  
**PLACE:** Teleconference (see agenda for login information)

**EXPIRATION DATE:** The original expiration date of July 31, 2021 is tolled, and a revised date will be determined pursuant to *the Mayor's March 21, 2020 Public Order Under City of Los Angeles Emergency Authority re: Tolling of Deadlines Prescribed in the Municipal Code and April 17, 2020 Public Order Under City of Los Angeles Emergency Authority re: Tolling HCIDLA Deadlines and Revising Expiration of Emergency Orders.*

The time to act on this item has been tolled for the duration of the local emergency period. Please note that other State law provisions may also apply.

Location: 1025-1029 S. Crenshaw Boulevard  
Council District: 10 – Ridley-Thomas  
Community Plan Area: Wilshire  
Land Use: Neighborhood Office Commercial  
Zoning: C2-1-O  
Area Planning Commission: Central  
Neighborhood Council: Olympic Park  
Legal Description: N.C. Kelley's Montview Tract, Lot 54

<b>PROJECT:</b>	Historic-Cultural Monument Application for the CRENSHAW WOMEN'S CENTER	
<b>REQUEST:</b>	Declare the property an Historic-Cultural Monument	
<b>OWNERS:</b>	1009 Crenshaw LP 1009 Crenshaw Boulevard Los Angeles, CA 90019	1009 Crenshaw LP 3470 Wilshire Boulevard, Ste 700 Los Angeles, CA 90010
	Urban Commons Crenshaw Blvd, LLC 10250 Constellation Blvd, #1750 Los Angeles, CA 90076	
<b>APPLICANTS:</b>	Kate Eggert and Krisy Gosney Gosney Eggert Historic Preservation Consultants 6444 Kraft Avenue North Hollywood, CA 91606	

### RECOMMENDATION

That the Cultural Heritage Commission:

1. **Declare the subject property** an Historic-Cultural Monument per Los Angeles Administrative Code Chapter 9, Division 22, Article 1, Section 22.171.7.
2. **Adopt** the staff report and findings.

VINCENT P. BERTONI, AICP  
Director of Planning

[SIGNED ORIGINAL IN FILE]

Ken Bernstein, AICP, Principal City Planner  
Office of Historic Resources

[SIGNED ORIGINAL IN FILE]

Lambert M. Giessinger, Preservation Architect  
Office of Historic Resources

[SIGNED ORIGINAL IN FILE]

**Shannon Ryan, Senior City Planner  
Office of Historic Resources**

[SIGNED ORIGINAL IN FILE]

**Melissa Jones, City Planning Associate  
Office of Historic Resources**

Attachments: Commission/Staff Site Inspection Photos—April 29, 2021  
Historic-Cultural Monument Application

## **FINDINGS**

- The Crenshaw Women's Center "exemplifies significant contributions to the broad cultural, economic or social history of the nation, state, city or community" as a pioneering venue for lesbian education, health, and empowerment in Los Angeles, and a rare example in the Wilshire area of institutional development associated with the Gay Liberation Movement. The subject property is also significant for its association with the Women's Liberation Movement in Los Angeles as a support center for women and women's rights.

## **CRITERIA**

The criterion is the Cultural Heritage Ordinance which defines a historical or cultural monument as any site (including significant trees or other plant life located thereon), building or structure of particular historic or cultural significance to the City of Los Angeles if it meets at least one of the following criteria:

1. Is identified with important events of national, state, or local history, or exemplifies significant contributions to the broad cultural, economic or social history of the nation, state, city or community;
2. Is associated with the lives of historic personages important to national, state, city, or local history; or
3. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction; or represents a notable work of a master designer, builder, or architect whose individual genius influenced his or her age.

## **SUMMARY**

The Crenshaw Women's Center is a one-story former duplex now used for commercial purposes located on S. Crenshaw Boulevard between W. Olympic Boulevard and W. Country Club Drive in the Oxford Square neighborhood of Los Angeles. Originally sited at 900 S. Norton Avenue, the subject property was constructed in 1920 in a vernacular architectural style for owner Burton Stevens. The structure was relocated to its current location in 1927 and converted from a residential duplex to office/retail use in 1987. From 1970 to 1972, the subject property served as the location for the Crenshaw Women's Center, a feminist rights organization that provided a meeting space for feminist groups, mental health, self-help guidance, and other services for women, as well as hosted support programs for gay women.

Amid the Women's Liberation Movement of the early 1960s through the 1980s, feminists Joan Ellen Hoffman Robbins, Dorothy Bricker, and Marianne Yatrovsky opened the Crenshaw Women's Center (a.k.a. Women's Liberation Center) in January 1970. Using other women's centers across the country as models, the Crenshaw Women's Center offered a speakers' bureau, bookstand, counseling, a volunteer switchboard, and a Women's Liberation School to teach women practical skills and encourage them to be more self-reliant. The Crenshaw Women's Center was also the site of Women's Self-Help One established by Carol Downer and Lorraine Rothman in 1971, which taught women about contraception, their bodies, and reproductive systems and became a model for the national Self-Help movement. In addition, the Crenshaw Women's Center was the weekly meeting place for Gay Women's Liberation, the first lesbian feminist group in Los Angeles. The Gay Women's Liberation (later called Lesbian Feminists) hosted a lesbian suicide hotline, supported the medical needs of lesbians, and generally sought to include lesbians in work surrounding women's health and well-being. Another program hosted

at the Center was the Anti-Rape Squad, which supported victims of sexual assault and worked to change public perception of violence against women. By August 1970, more than 1,500 women were affiliated with the Crenshaw Women's Center through its feminist groups, programming, or the Center's newsletter, which was essential to the organization's growth. By 1972, the year the center closed, that newsletter had the largest circulation and national readership of any feminist publication, with 2,700 subscribers.

Irregular in plan, the subject property is of wood-frame construction with textured stucco cladding and has a clipped gable roof with composition shingles. The primary, east-facing elevation has two concrete entry porches with stairs oriented toward each other that lead to single wooden doors. The door to the north has a steel security door. Fenestration includes multiple aluminum fixed and sliding windows, most of which are covered with security bars. There is a fixed awning and a long, light box commercial sign at the roof line. The interior consists of a single commercial space remodeled from a residential duplex layout. A wood-frame shed is located at the rear of the parcel, and a large billboard is located at the northern end of the primary elevation. The property is surrounded by asphalt parking lots.

The subject property has experienced multiple alterations that include the relocation of the structure in 1927; the replacement of the porch and stuccoing of the exterior in 1951; the addition of an entrance and steps to the rear and removal of an entrance and steps from the side in 1956; the removal of an interior partition wall in 1987; the addition of a commercial sign in 1994; the addition of a billboard in 1999; and the replacement of all of the windows, the addition of security bars and security doors, the installation of awnings, and a 17 by 20-foot addition to the rear of the southern half of the structure, all at unknown dates.

SurveyLA, the citywide historic resources survey, identified the subject property as individually eligible for listing under the state and local designation programs as a pioneering venue for lesbian education and empowerment, and as a rare example of institutional development associated with the LGBT community in the Wilshire area.

## **DISCUSSION**

The Crenshaw Women's Center meets one of the Historic-Cultural Monument criteria: it "exemplifies significant contributions to the broad cultural, economic or social history of the nation, state, city or community" as a pioneering venue for lesbian education, health, and empowerment in Los Angeles, and a rare example in the Wilshire area of institutional development associated with the Gay Liberation Movement. The subject property is also significant for its association with the Women's Liberation Movement in Los Angeles as a support center for women and women's rights.

SurveyLA's LGBT Historic Context Statement identifies eligibility standards for properties significant for their association with the gay liberation movement as being those that are directly associated with an event, organization, or institution that played an important role in the development of LGBT consciousness, community, or culture during the period of significance. Within the context of Women's Rights, SurveyLA identifies eligibility standards for significant properties as being associated with organizations and institutions that provided a wide range of services to support women and women's rights.

The Crenshaw Women's Center not only served as a centralized hub for the communication and organization of lesbian and feminist groups, but also provided critical services as the first women's center in Los Angeles. Additionally, it became one of the earliest institutions to support medical

and mental health needs for Los Angeles' lesbian community, and was progressive in bringing activism for women's liberation and gay liberation under a single roof. Though it only experienced a short tenure at the subject property, the Crenshaw Women's Center became a symbol of women's growing autonomy and liberation and provided an important framework for future women's centers. Furthermore, the Center's location within a duplex provided a familiar home-like environment for those who visited, and its proximity to transit lines and parking further ensured women could safely and easily access its services.

While most of the historic fabric on the interior of the subject property has been removed, the exterior retains a high level of integrity of location, setting, materials, design, feeling, and association from 1970-1972 to convey its significance. Based on a 1972 image, the primary facade of the building retains many features from the time the Crenshaw Women's Center occupied the building, including the porch entry, front stair orientation, window locations, and roof.

### **CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT ("CEQA") FINDINGS**

State of California CEQA Guidelines, Article 19, Section 15308, Class 8 "*consists of actions taken by regulatory agencies, as authorized by state or local ordinance, to assure the maintenance, restoration, enhancement, or protection of the environment where the regulatory process involves procedures for protection of the environment.*"

State of California CEQA Guidelines Article 19, Section 15331, Class 31 "*consists of projects limited to maintenance, repair, stabilization, rehabilitation, restoration, preservation, conservation or reconstruction of historical resources in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic buildings.*"

The designation of the Crenshaw Women's Center as an Historic-Cultural Monument in accordance with Chapter 9, Article 1, of The City of Los Angeles Administrative Code ("LAAC") will ensure that future construction activities involving the subject property are regulated in accordance with Section 22.171.14 of the LAAC. The purpose of the designation is to prevent significant impacts to a Historic-Cultural Monument through the application of the standards set forth in the LAAC. Without the regulation imposed by way of the pending designation, the historic significance and integrity of the subject property could be lost through incompatible alterations and new construction and the demolition of an irreplaceable historic site/open space. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation are expressly incorporated into the LAAC and provide standards concerning the historically appropriate construction activities which will ensure the continued preservation of the subject property.

The City of Los Angeles has determined based on the whole of the administrative record, that substantial evidence supports that the Project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section Article 19, Section 15308, Class 8 and Class 31, and none of the exceptions to a categorical exemption pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 applies. The project was found to be exempt based on the following:

The use of Categorical Exemption Class 8 in connection with the proposed designation is consistent with the goals of maintaining, restoring, enhancing, and protecting the environment through the imposition of regulations designed to prevent the degradation of Historic-Cultural Monuments.

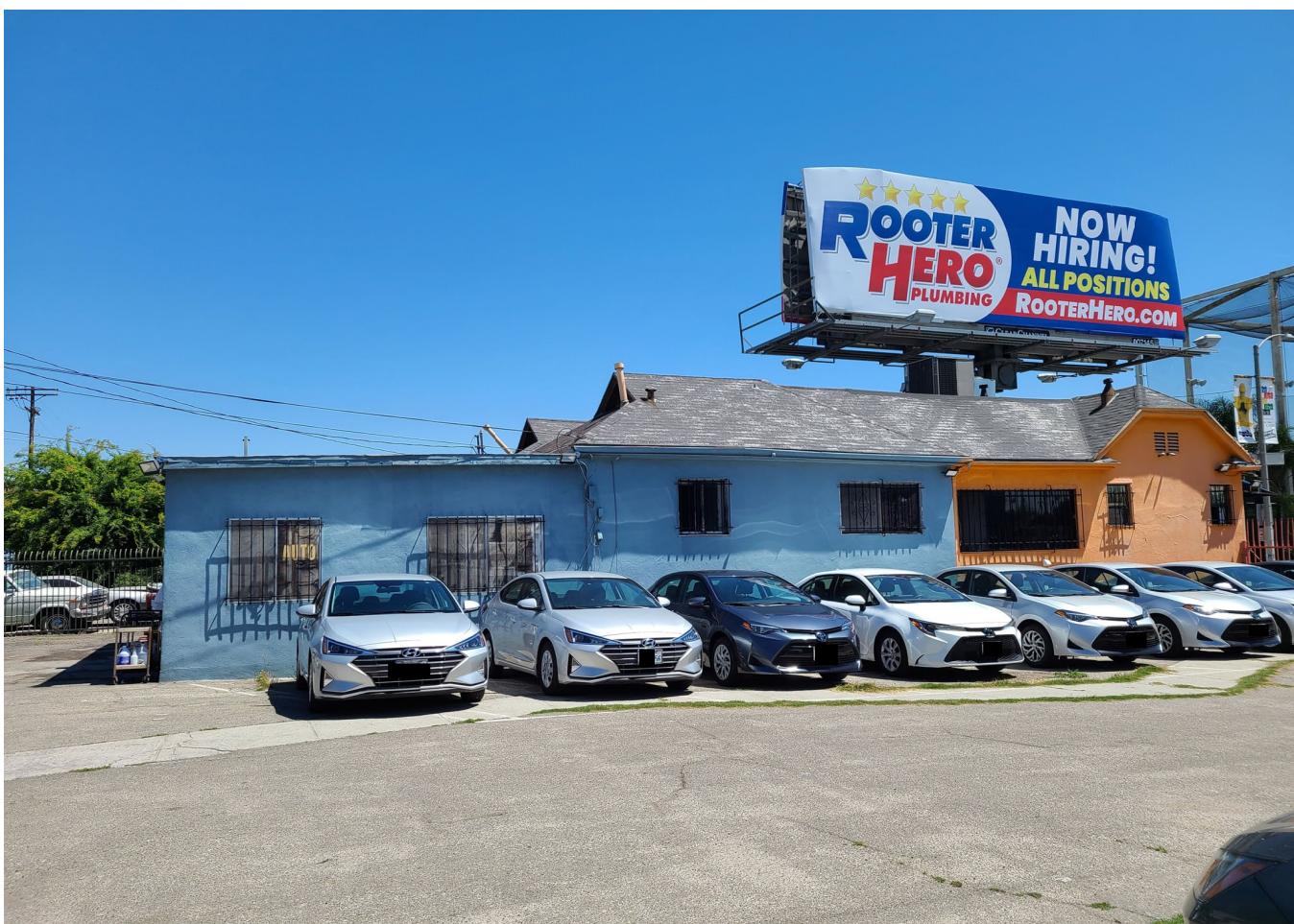
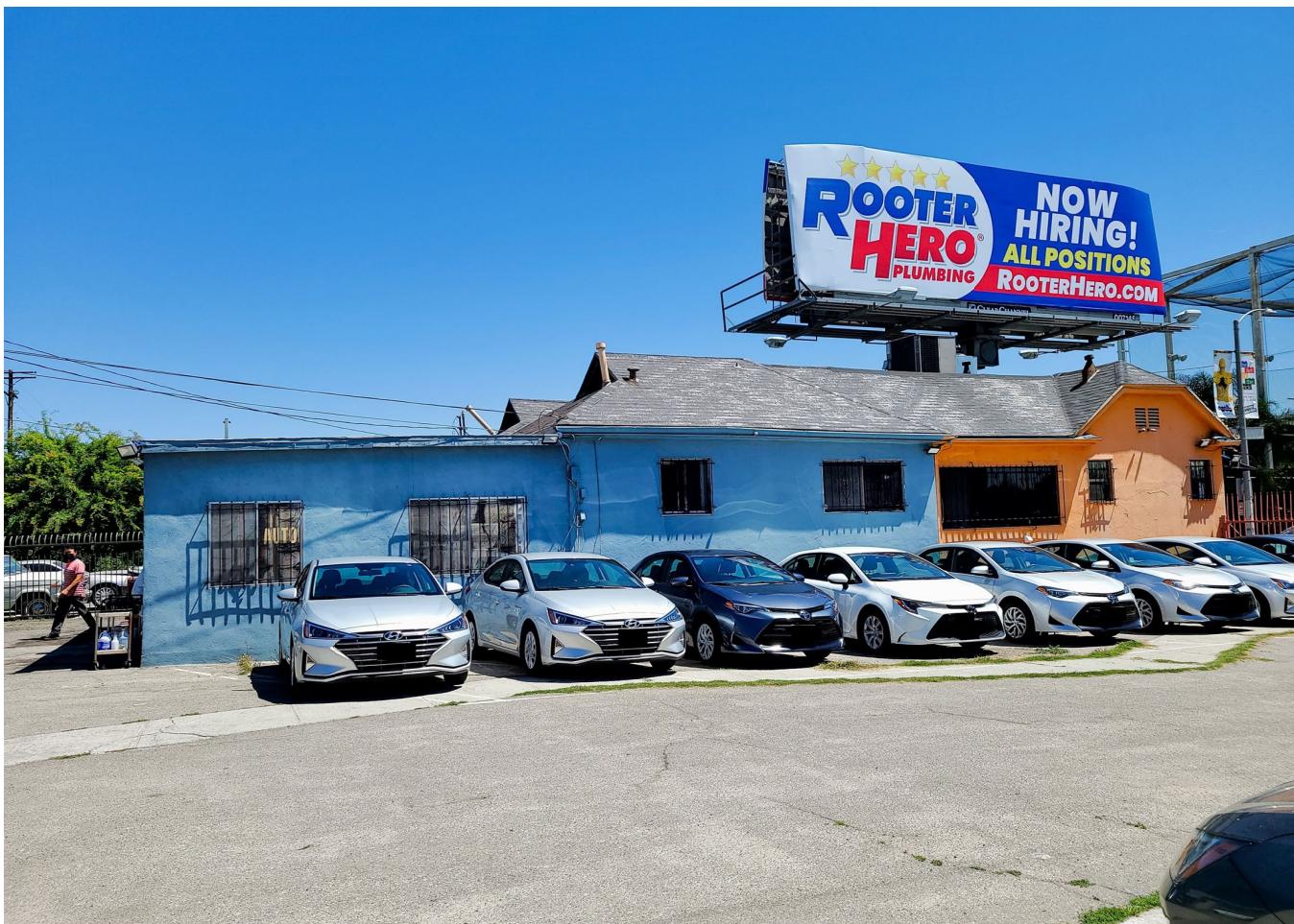
The use of Categorical Exemption Class 31 in connection with the proposed designation is consistent with the goals relating to the preservation, rehabilitation, restoration and reconstruction of historic buildings and sites in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

Categorical Exemption ENV-2021-1449-CE was prepared on April 30, 2021.

### **BACKGROUND**

On February 23, 2021, the Director of Planning determined that the application for the proposed designation of the subject property as Historic-Cultural Monument was complete. On March 18, 2021, the Cultural Heritage Commission voted to take the subject property under consideration. In accordance with Los Angeles Administrative Code Section 22.171.10, on March 16, 2021, the owner requested up to a 60-day extension to the time for the Commission to act. On April 29, 2021, a subcommittee of the Commission consisting of Commissioners Barron and Milofsky conducted a site inspection of the property, accompanied by staff from the Office of Historic Resources.

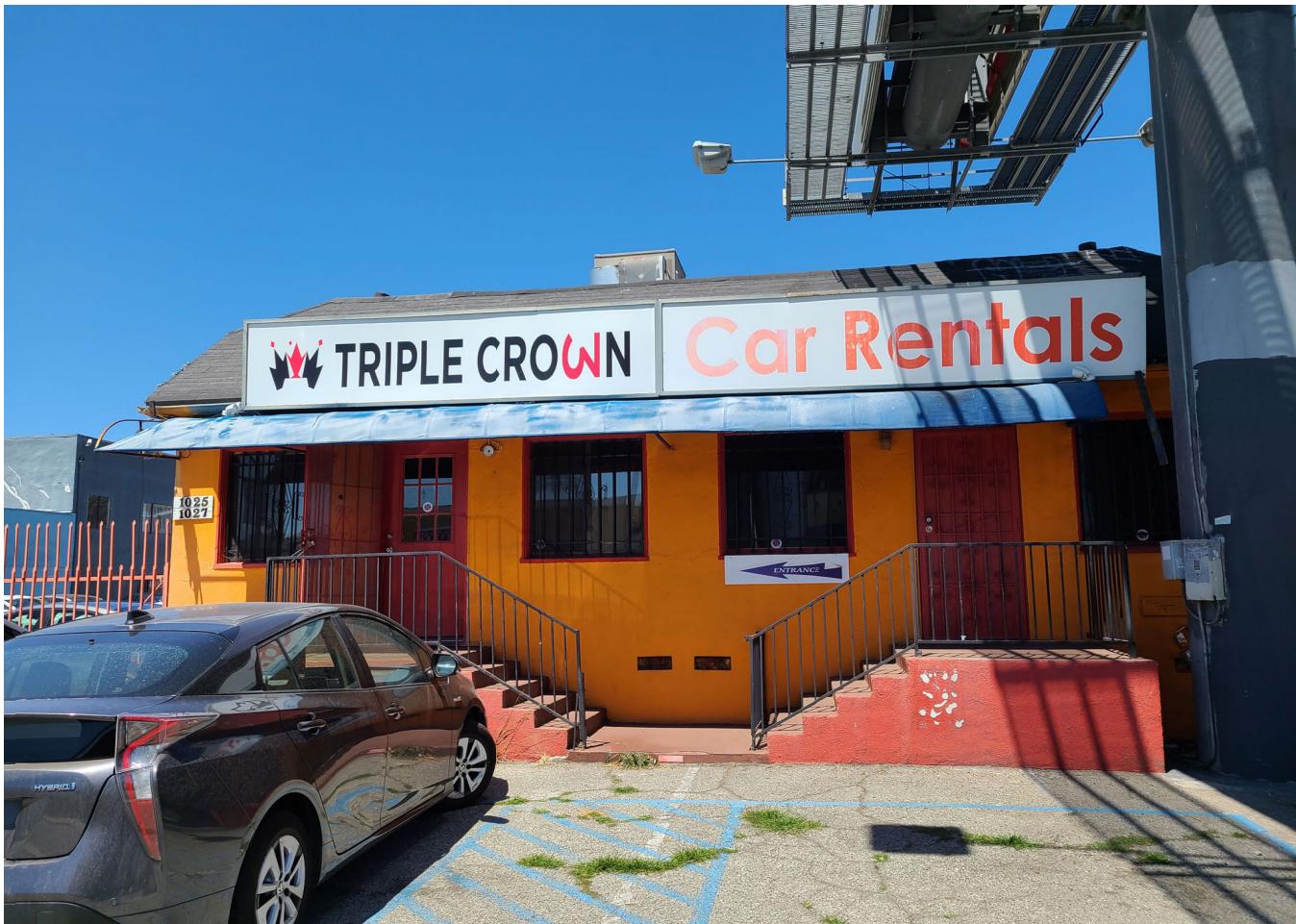
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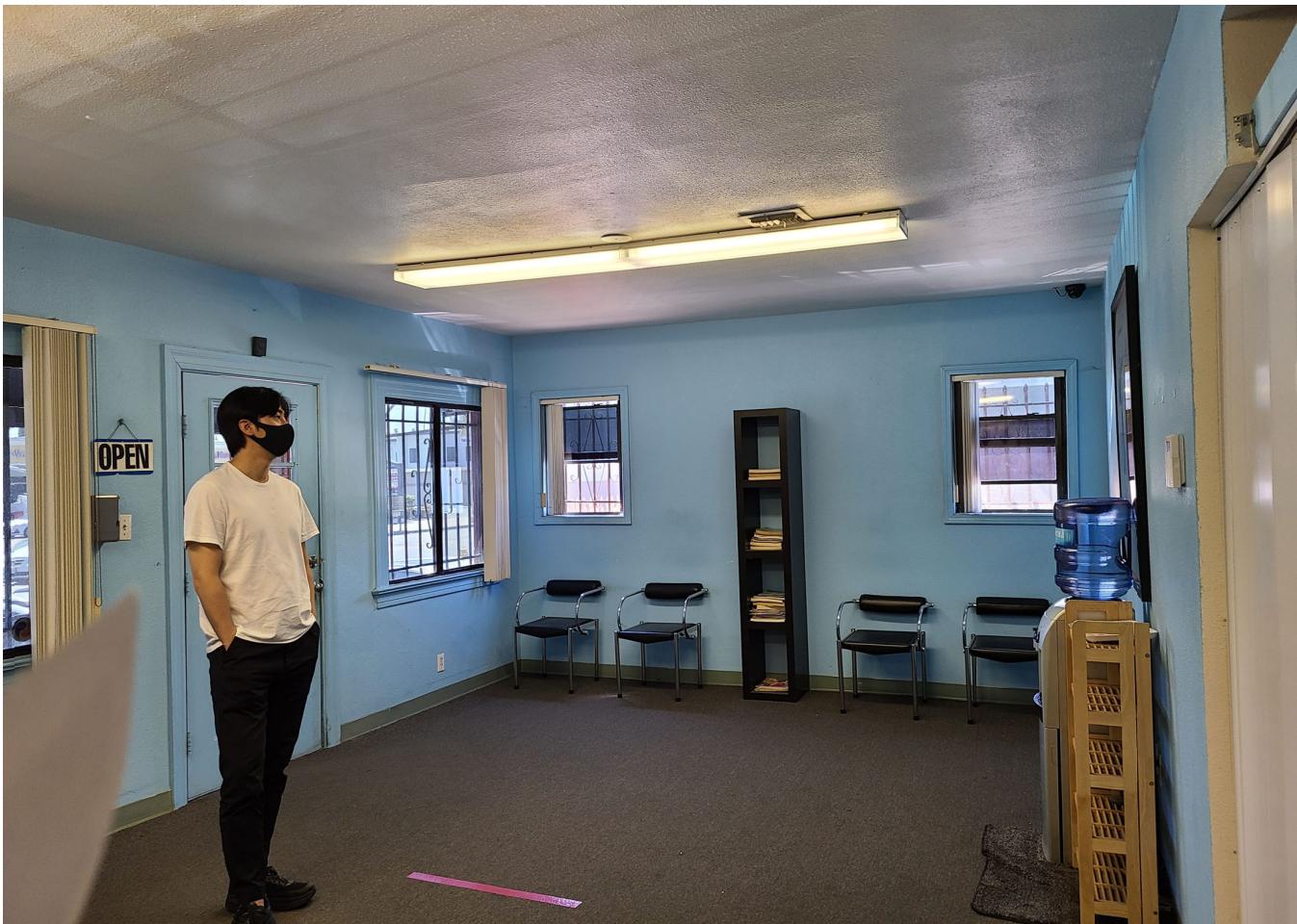
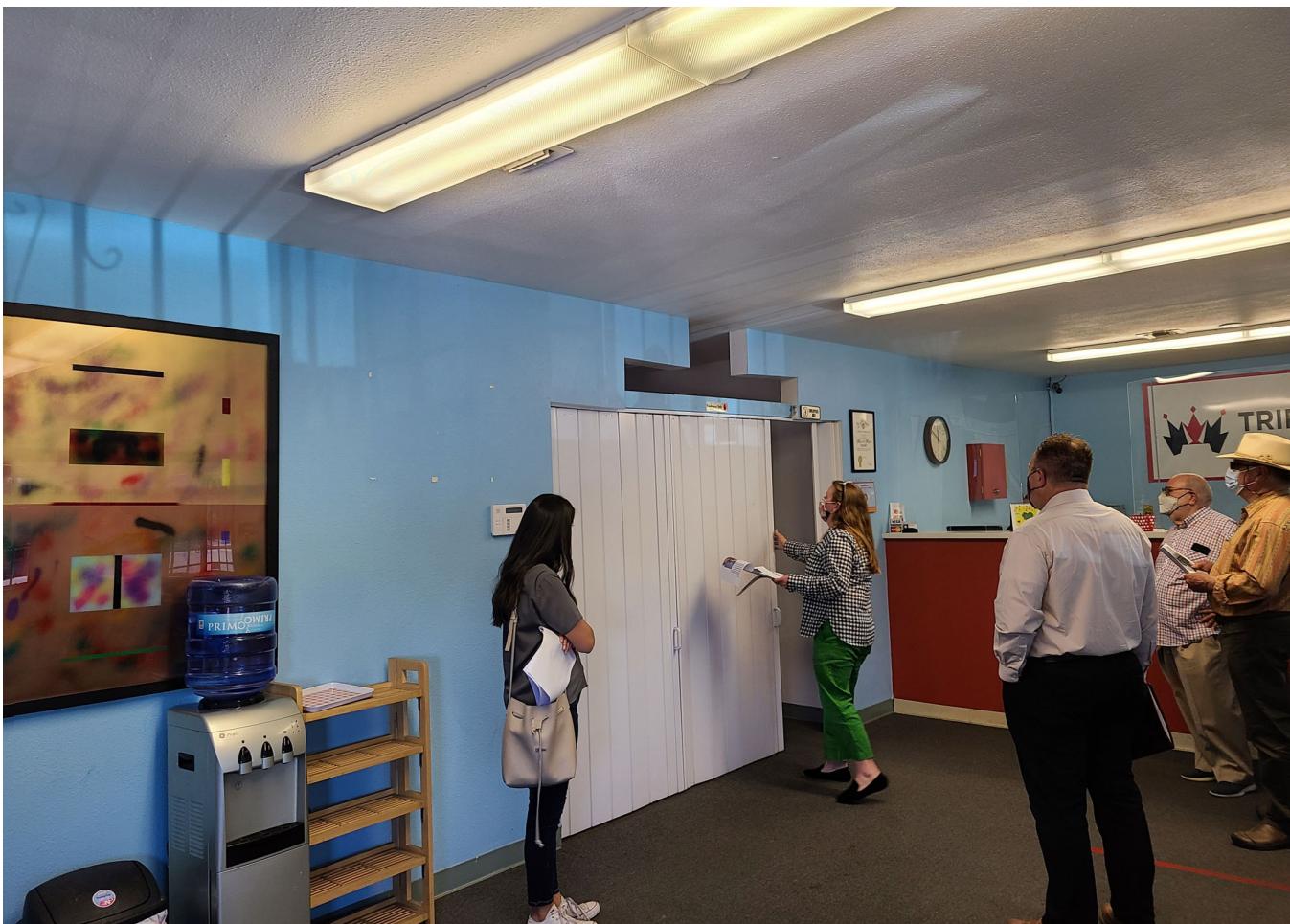
Commission/Staff Site Inspection Photos--April 29, 2021  
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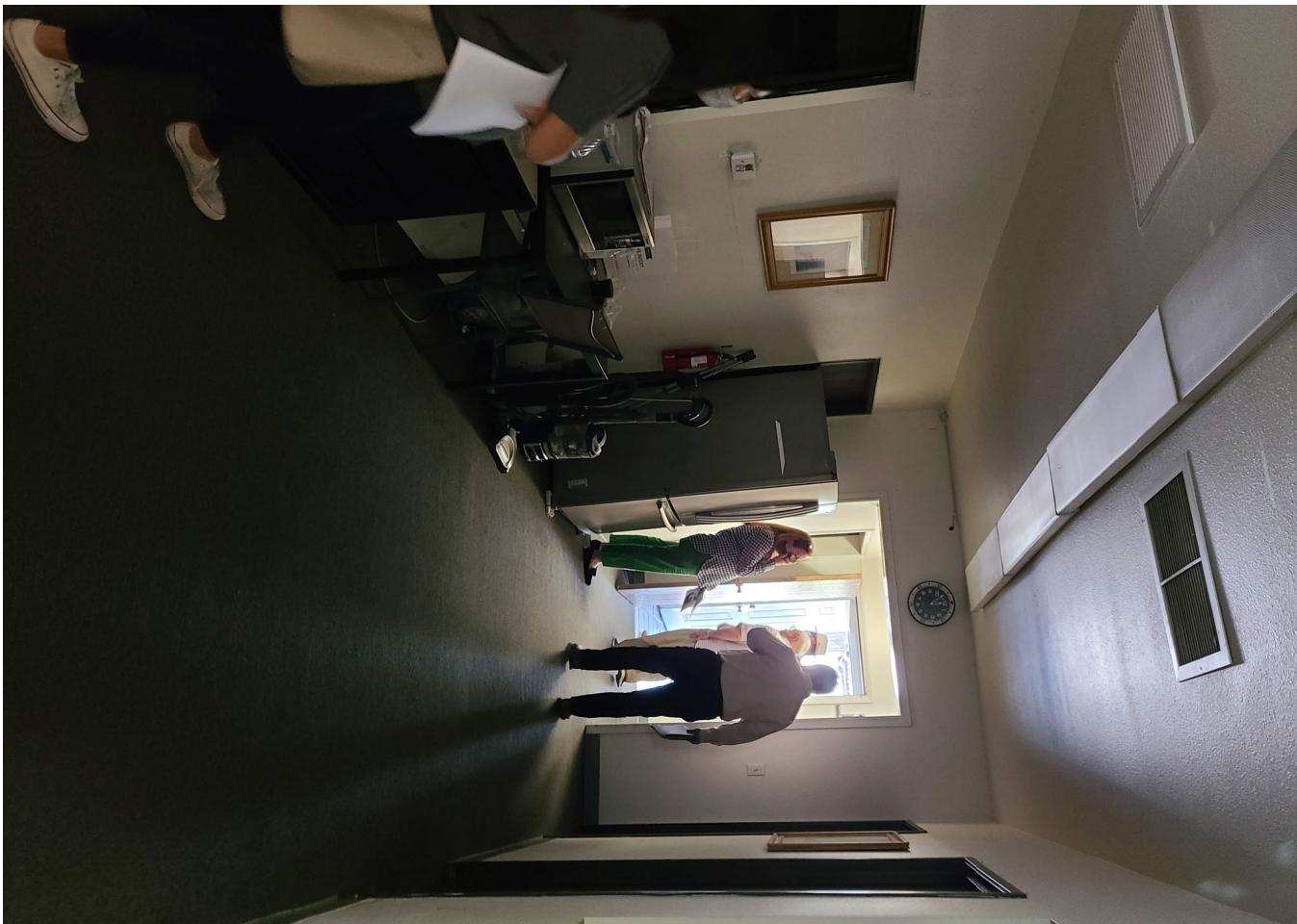
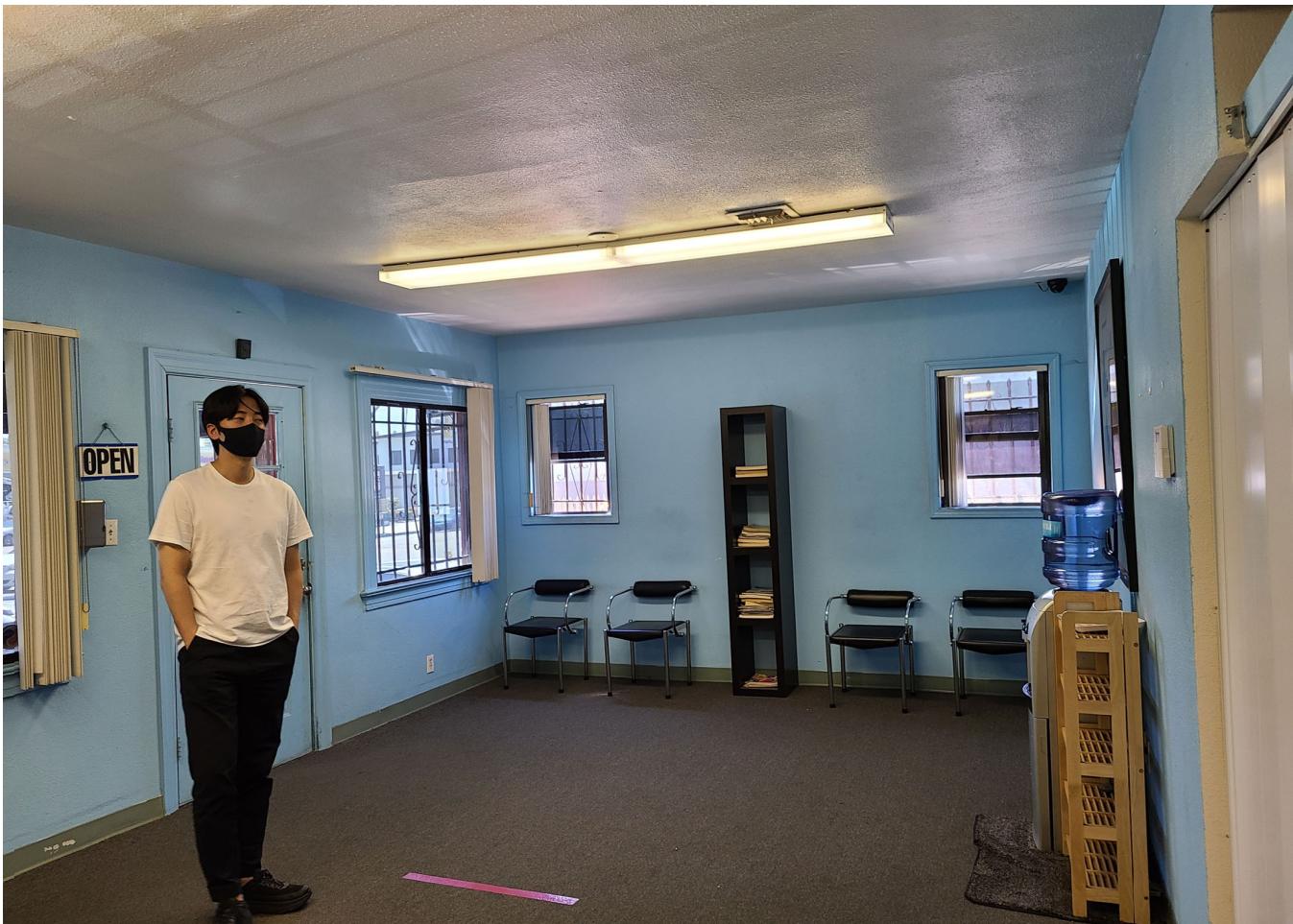
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Commission/Staff Site Inspection Photos--April 29, 2021  
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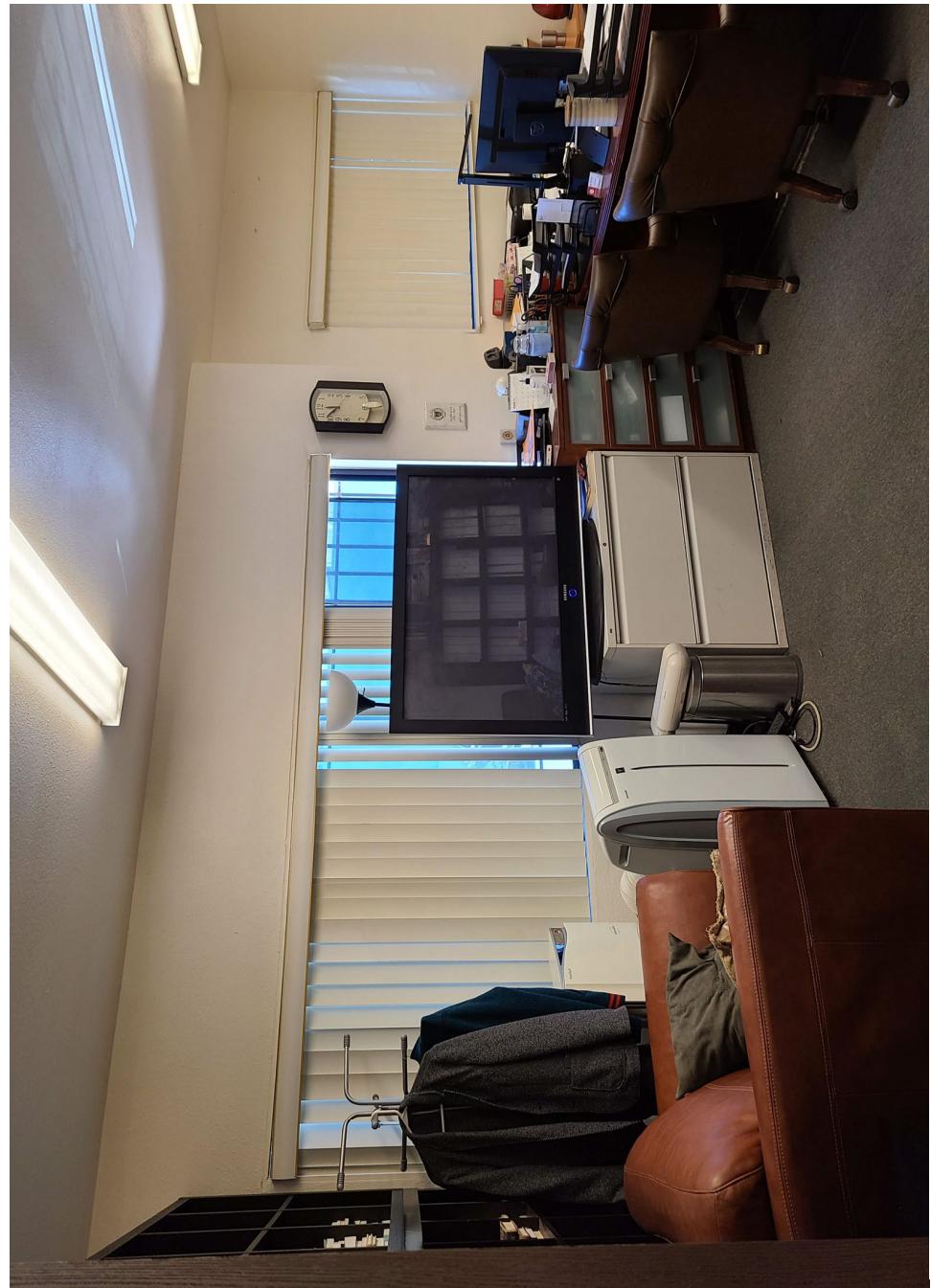
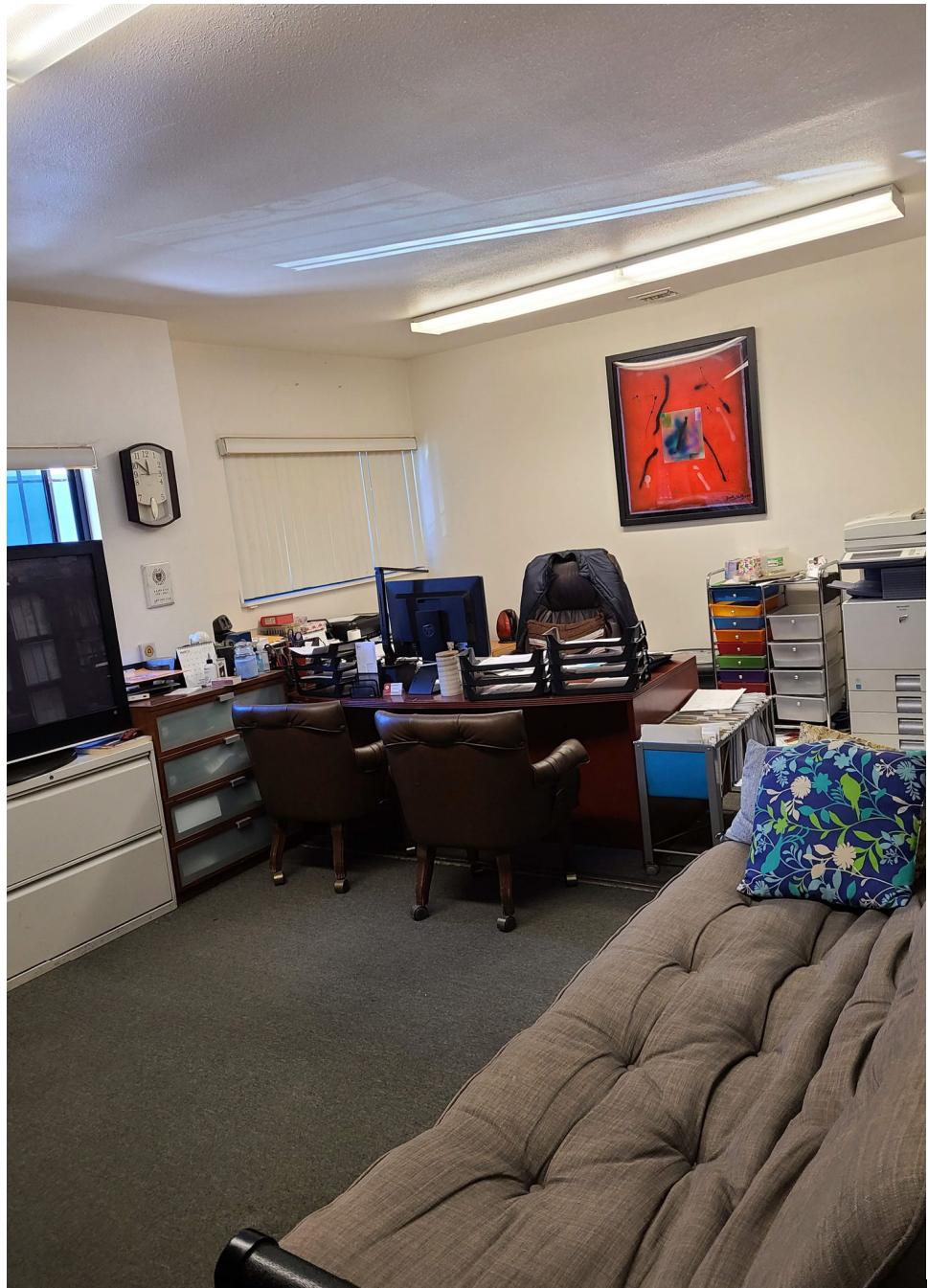
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Commission/Staff Site Inspection Photos--April 29, 2021  
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Commission/Staff Site Inspection Photos--April 29, 2021  
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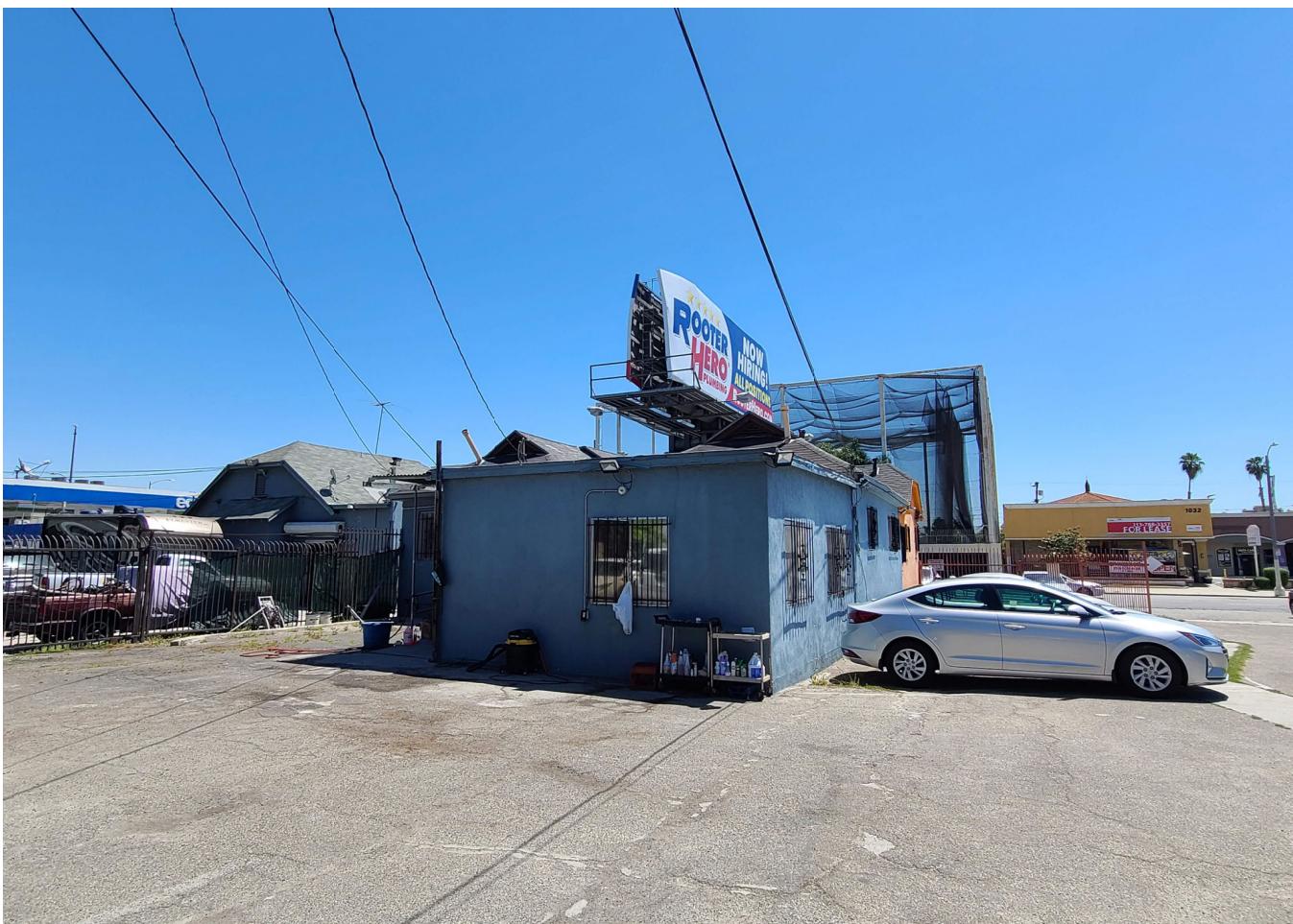
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Commission/Staff Site Inspection Photos--April 29, 2021  
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Commission/Staff Site Inspection Photos--April 29, 2021  
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**CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT****NOTICE OF EXEMPTION**

(PRC Section 21152; CEQA Guidelines Section 15062)

Filing of this form is optional. If filed, the form shall be filed with the County Clerk, 12400 E. Imperial Highway, Norwalk, CA 90650, pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21152(b) and CEQA Guidelines Section 15062. Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21167 (d), the posting of this notice starts a 35-day statute of limitations on court challenges to reliance on an exemption for the project. Failure to file this notice as provided above, results in the statute of limitations being extended to 180 days.

## PARENT CASE NUMBER(S) / REQUESTED ENTITLEMENTS

CHC-2021-1448-HCM

LEAD CITY AGENCY <b>City of Los Angeles (Department of City Planning)</b>	CASE NUMBER ENV-2021-1449-CE
PROJECT TITLE Crenshaw Women's Center	COUNCIL DISTRICT 10
PROJECT LOCATION (Street Address and Cross Streets and/or Attached Map) <b>1025-1029 S. Crenshaw Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90019</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Map attached.
PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Designation of the Crenshaw Women's Center as an Historic-Cultural Monument.	<input type="checkbox"/> Additional page(s) attached.
NAME OF APPLICANT / OWNER: <b>N/A</b>	
CONTACT PERSON (If different from Applicant/Owner above) <b>Melissa Jones</b>	(AREA CODE) TELEPHONE NUMBER 213-847-3679

EXEMPT STATUS: (Check all boxes, and include all exemptions, that apply and provide relevant citations.)

## STATE CEQA STATUTE &amp; GUIDELINES

- STATUTORY EXEMPTION(S)  
Public Resources Code Section(s) \_\_\_\_\_
- CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION(S) (State CEQA Guidelines Sec. 15301-15333 / Class 1-Class 33)  
CEQA Guideline Section(s) / Class(es) 8 and 31
- OTHER BASIS FOR EXEMPTION (E.g., CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) or (b)(4) or Section 15378(b) )

JUSTIFICATION FOR PROJECT EXEMPTION: Article 19, Section 15308, Class 8 of the State's Guidelines applies to where project's consists of "actions taken by regulatory agencies, as authorized by state or local ordinance, to assure the maintenance, restoration, enhancement, or protection of the environment where the regulatory process involves procedures for protection of the environment." Class 31 applies "to maintenance, repair, stabilization, rehabilitation, restoration, preservation, or reconstruction of historical resources in a manner consistent with the Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Buildings." Designation of the <b>Crenshaw Women's Center</b> as an Historic-Cultural Monument will assure the protection of the environment by the enactment of project review regulations based on the Secretary of Interior's Standards to maintain and preserve the historic site.	<input type="checkbox"/> Additional page(s) attached
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- None of the exceptions in CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 to the categorical exemption(s) apply to the Project.  
 The project is identified in one or more of the list of activities in the City of Los Angeles CEQA Guidelines as cited in the justification.

IF FILED BY APPLICANT, ATTACH CERTIFIED DOCUMENT ISSUED BY THE CITY PLANNING DEPARTMENT STATING THAT THE DEPARTMENT HAS FOUND THE PROJECT TO BE EXEMPT.

If different from the applicant, the identity of the person undertaking the project.

**CITY STAFF USE ONLY:**

CITY STAFF NAME AND SIGNATURE Melissa Jones	[SIGNED COPY IN FILE]	STAFF TITLE City Planning Associate
ENTITLEMENTS APPROVED N/A		
FEE: N/A	RECEIPT NO. N/A	REC'D. BY (DCP DSC STAFF NAME) N/A

DISTRIBUTION: County Clerk, Agency Record

Rev. 3-27-2019

**CRENSHAW WOMEN'S CENTER**  
1025-1029 S. Crenshaw Boulevard  
CHC-2021-1448-HCM  
ENV-2021-1449-CE

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS FROM APPLICANT, RECEIVED APRIL 29, 2021

Crenshaw Women's Center

circa 1972

1/2



noname

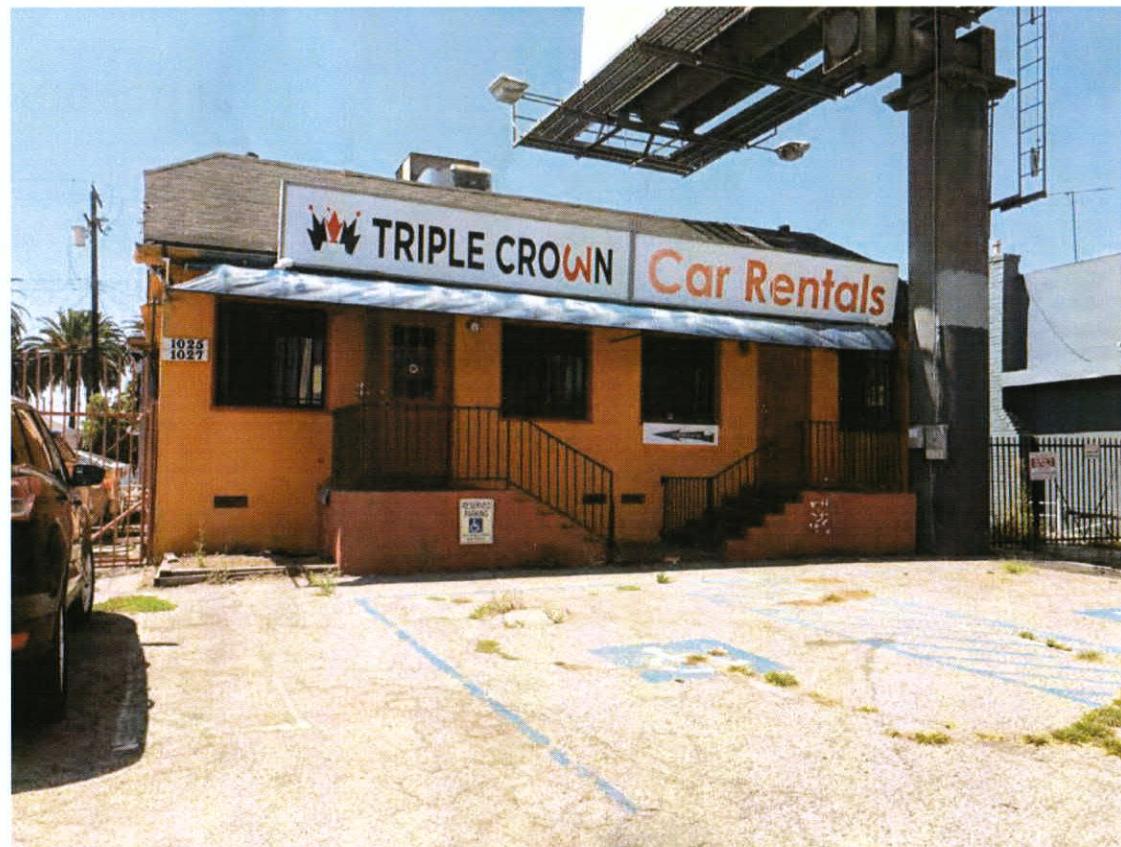
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<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/?ogbl#inbox?projector=1>

**CRENSHAW WOMEN'S CENTER**  
1025-1029 S. Crenshaw Boulevard  
CHC-2021-1448-HCM  
ENV-2021-1449-CE

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS FROM OWNER'S REPRESENTATIVE,  
RECEIVED APRIL 29, 2021

1025–1027 S. Crenshaw Blvd.



# Facts

- Constructed in 1920. Originally a shot gun-style Craftsman duplex residence
- Moved to current site in 1927
- Exterior additions in 1956
- Converted to commercial use
- Women's Liberation Front occupied the building from January 1970 to 1973
- Interior partition wall removed in 1987



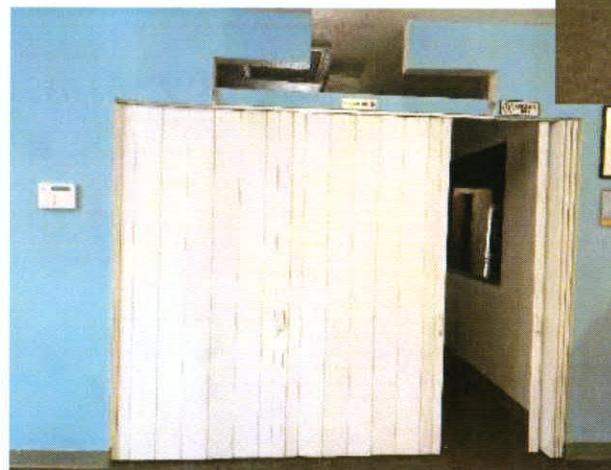
# Historic Interior Photographs

- Character-Defining Features
  - Crown molding
  - Wood door and window surrounds
  - Fireplace



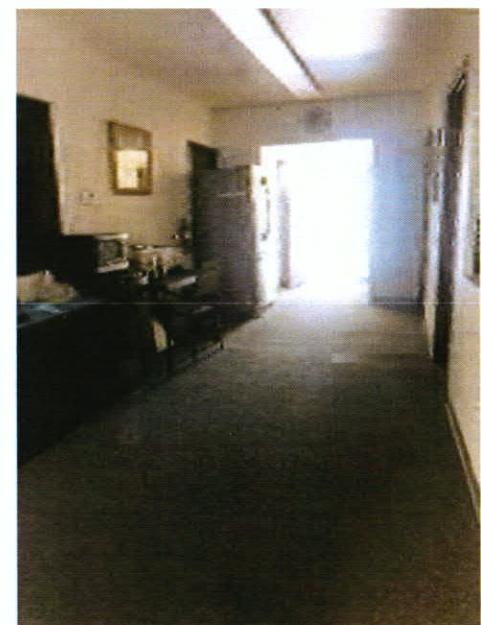
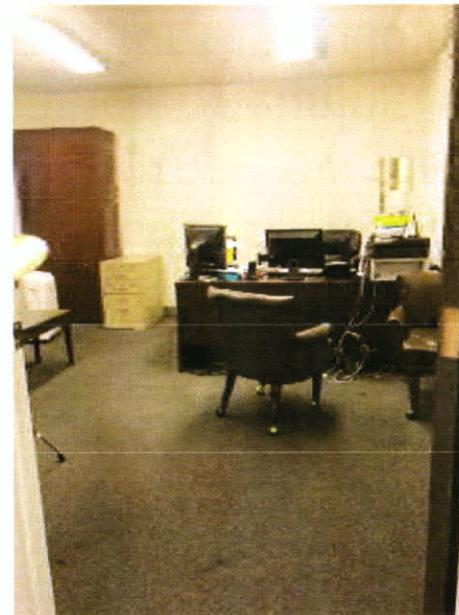
# Contemporary Interior Photographs

- Front Lobby
  - Same space the historic photographs were taken
  - Gutted including fireplace
  - Window replacements



# Contemporary Interior Photographs

“Back of House”



## Conclusion

- We recognize the importance of LGBTQ history but this building lacks integrity.
- Given all of these alterations, if the Commission ultimately recommends designation, the owner will request a specific identification of the character-defining features of the building to consider in any future plans for the building.

# Thank You

# Los Angeles Department of City Planning

## RECOMMENDATION REPORT

CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSION

CASE NO.: CHC-2021-1448-HCM  
ENV-2021-1449-CE

**HEARING DATE:** March 18, 2021  
**TIME:** 10:00 AM  
**PLACE:** Teleconference (see agenda for login information)

Location: 1025-1029 S. Crenshaw Boulevard  
Council District: 10 – Ridley-Thomas  
Community Plan Area: Wilshire  
Area Planning Commission: Central  
Neighborhood Council: Olympic Park  
Legal Description: N.C. Kelley's Montview Tract, Lot 54

**EXPIRATION DATE:** The original 30-day expiration date of March 25, 2021 per Los Angeles Administrative Code Section 22.171.10(e)1 is tolled, and a revised date will be determined pursuant to *the Mayor's March 21, 2020 Public Order Under City of Los Angeles Emergency Authority re: Tolling of Deadlines Prescribed in the Municipal Code and April 17, 2020 Public Order Under City of Los Angeles Emergency Authority re: Tolling HCIDLA Deadlines and Revising Expiration of Emergency Orders*

**PROJECT:** Historic-Cultural Monument Application for the CRENSHAW WOMEN'S CENTER

**REQUEST:** Declare the property an Historic-Cultural Monument

**OWNERS:** 1009 Crenshaw LP    1009 Crenshaw LP  
1009 Crenshaw Boulevard    3470 Wilshire Boulevard, Ste 700  
Los Angeles, CA 90019    Los Angeles, CA 90010  
  
Urban Commons Crenshaw Blvd, LLC  
10250 Constellation Blvd, #1750  
Los Angeles, CA 90076

**APPLICANTS:** Kate Eggert and Krisy Gosney  
Gosney Eggert Historic Preservation Consultants  
6444 Kraft Avenue  
North Hollywood, CA 91606

**RECOMMENDATION**    **That the Cultural Heritage Commission:**

1. **Take the property under consideration** as an Historic-Cultural Monument per Los Angeles Administrative Code Chapter 9, Division 22, Article 1, Section 22.171.10 because the application and accompanying photo documentation suggest the submittal warrants further investigation.
2. **Adopt** the report findings.

**CHC-2021-1448-HCM**  
**1025-1029 S. Crenshaw Boulevard**  
**Page 2 of 4**

VINCENT P. BERTONI, AICP  
Director of Planning

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Ken Bernstein, AICP, Principal City Planner  
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**[SIGNED ORIGINAL IN FILE]**

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Shannon Ryan, Senior City Planner  
Office of Historic Resources

**[SIGNED ORIGINAL IN FILE]**

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Melissa Jones, City Planning Associate  
Office of Historic Resources

Attachment:              Historic-Cultural Monument Application

## **SUMMARY**

The Crenshaw Women's Center is a one-story duplex used for commercial purposes located on S. Crenshaw Boulevard between W. Olympic Boulevard and W. Country Club Drive in the Oxford Square neighborhood of Los Angeles. Originally sited at 900 S. Norton Avenue, the subject property was constructed in 1920 in a vernacular architectural style for owner Burton Stevens. The structure was relocated to its current location in 1927 and converted from a residential duplex to office/retail use in 1987. From 1970 to 1972, the subject property served as the location for the Crenshaw Women's Center, a feminist rights organization that provided a meeting space for feminist groups, mental health, self-help guidance, and other services for women, as well as hosted support programs for gay women.

Amid the Women's Liberation Movement of the early 1960s through the 1980s, feminists Joan Ellen Hoffman Robins, Dorothy Bricker, and Marianne Yatrovsky opened the Women's Center (a.k.a. Women's Liberation Center) in January 1970. Using other women's centers across the country as models, the Women's Center offered a speakers' bureau, bookstand, counseling, a volunteer switchboard, and a Women's Liberation School to teach women practical skills and encourage them to be more self-reliant. The Women's Center was also the site of Women's Self-Help One, which taught women about contraception, their bodies, and reproductive systems and became a model for the national Self-Help movement. In addition, the Women's Center was the weekly meeting place for Gay Women's Liberation, the first lesbian feminist group in Los Angeles. The Gay Women's Liberation (later called Lesbian Feminists) hosted a lesbian suicide hotline, supported the medical needs of lesbians, and generally sought to include lesbians in work surrounding women's health and well-being. Another program hosted at the Center was the Anti-Rape Squad, which supported victims of sexual assault and worked to change public perception of violence against women. By August 1970, more than 1,500 women were affiliated with the Women's Center through its feminist groups, programming, or the Center's newsletter, which was essential to the organization's growth. By 1972, the year the center closed, that newsletter had the largest circulation and national readership of any feminist publication, with 2,700 subscribers.

Irregular in plan, the subject property is of wood-frame construction with wood siding covered in textured stucco and has a clipped gable roof with composition shingles. The primary, east-facing elevation has two concrete entry porches with stairs oriented toward each other that lead to single wooden doors. The door to the north has a steel security door. Fenestration includes multiple aluminum fixed and sliding windows, most of which are covered with security bars. There is a fixed awning and a long, light box commercial sign at the roof line. The interior consists of a single commercial space remodeled from a residential duplex layout. A wood-frame shed is located at the rear of the parcel, and a large billboard is located at the northern end of the primary elevation. The property is surrounded by asphalt parking lots.

The subject property has experienced multiple alterations that include the relocation of the structure in 1927; the replacement of the porch and stuccoing of the exterior in 1951; the addition of an entrance and steps to the rear and removal of an entrance and steps from the side in 1956; the removal of an interior partition wall in 1987; the addition of a commercial sign in 1994; the addition of a billboard in 1999; and the replacement of all of the windows, the addition of security bars and security doors, the installation of awnings, and a 17 by 20-foot addition to the rear of the southern half of the structure, all at unknown dates.

SurveyLA, the citywide historic resources survey, identified the subject property as individually eligible for listing under the state and local designation programs as a pioneering venue for lesbian education and empowerment, and as a rare example of institutional development associated with the LGBT community in the Wilshire area.

## **CRITERIA**

The criterion is the Cultural Heritage Ordinance which defines a historical or cultural monument as any site (including significant trees or other plant life located thereon), building or structure of particular historic or cultural significance to the City of Los Angeles if it meets at least one of the following criteria:

1. Is identified with important events of national, state, or local history, or exemplifies significant contributions to the broad cultural, economic or social history of the nation, state, city or community;
2. Is associated with the lives of historic personages important to national, state, city, or local history; or
3. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction; or represents a notable work of a master designer, builder, or architect whose individual genius influenced his or her age.

## **FINDINGS**

Based on the facts set forth in the summary and application, the Commission determines that the application is complete and that the property may be significant enough to warrant further investigation as a potential Historic-Cultural Monument.

## **BACKGROUND**

On February 23, 2021, the Director of Planning determined that the application for the proposed designation of the subject property as an Historic-Cultural Monument was complete. The original 30-day expiration date of March 25, 2021 per Los Angeles Administrative Code Section 22.171.10(e)1 is tolled, and a revised date will be determined pursuant to *the Mayor's March 21, 2020 Public Order Under City of Los Angeles Emergency Authority re: Tolling of Deadlines Prescribed in the Municipal Code and April 17, 2020 Public Order Under City of Los Angeles Emergency Authority re: Tolling HCIDLA Deadlines and Revising Expiration of Emergency Orders*.



# HISTORIC-CULTURAL MONUMENT NOMINATION FORM

## 1. PROPERTY IDENTIFICATION

Proposed Monument Name:				
Other Associated Names:				
Street Address:		Zip:	Council District:	
Range of Addresses on Property:		Community Name:		
Assessor Parcel Number:	Tract:		Block:	Lot:
Identification cont'd:				
Proposed Monument Property Type:	Building	Structure	Object	Site/Open Space
Describe any additional resources located on the property to be included in the nomination, here:				

## 2. CONSTRUCTION HISTORY & CURRENT STATUS

Year built:	Factual	Estimated	Threatened?
Architect/Designer:	Contractor:		
Original Use:	Present Use:		
Is the Proposed Monument on its Original Site?	Yes	No (explain in section 7)	Unknown (explain in section 7)

## 3. STYLE & MATERIALS

Architectural Style:		Stories:	Plan Shape:
FEATURE	PRIMARY	SECONDARY	
CONSTRUCTION	Type:	Type:	
CLADDING	Material:	Material:	
ROOF	Type:	Type:	
	Material:	Material:	
WINDOWS	Type:	Type:	
	Material:	Material:	
ENTRY	Style:	Style:	
DOOR	Type:	Type:	



# HISTORIC-CULTURAL MONUMENT NOMINATION FORM

## 4. ALTERATION HISTORY

List date and write a brief description of any major alterations or additions. This section may also be completed on a separate document. Include copies of permits in the nomination packet. Make sure to list any major alterations for which there are no permits, as well.

## **5. EXISTING HISTORIC RESOURCE IDENTIFICATION (if known)**

Listed in the National Register of Historic Places	
Listed in the California Register of Historical Resources	
Formally determined eligible for the National and/or California Registers	
Located in an Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (HPOZ)	Contributing feature Non-contributing feature
Determined eligible for national, state, or local landmark status by an historic resources survey(s)	Survey Name(s):
Other historical or cultural resource designations:	

## **6. APPLICABLE HISTORIC-CULTURAL MONUMENT CRITERIA**

The proposed monument exemplifies the following Cultural Heritage Ordinance Criteria (Section 22.171.7):

1. Is identified with important events of national, state, or local history, or exemplifies significant contributions to the broad cultural, economic or social history of the nation, state, city or community.
2. Is associated with the lives of historic personages important to national, state, city, or local history.
3. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction; or represents a notable work of a master designer, builder, or architect whose individual genius influenced his or her age.



# HISTORIC-CULTURAL MONUMENT NOMINATION FORM

## 7. WRITTEN STATEMENTS

*This section allows you to discuss at length the significance of the proposed monument and why it should be designated an Historic-Cultural Monument. Type your response on separate documents and attach them to this form.*

**A. Proposed Monument Description** - Describe the proposed monument's physical characteristics and relationship to its surrounding environment. Expand on sections 2 and 3 with a more detailed description of the site. Expand on section 4 and discuss the construction/alteration history in detail if that is necessary to explain the proposed monument's current form. Identify and describe any character-defining elements, structures, interior spaces, or landscape features.

**B. Statement of Significance** - Address the proposed monument's historic, cultural, and/or architectural significance by discussing how it satisfies the HCM criteria you selected in Section 6. You must support your argument with substantial evidence and analysis. The Statement of Significance is your main argument for designation so it is important to substantiate any claims you make with supporting documentation and research.

## 8. CONTACT INFORMATION

### *Applicant*

Name:		Company:	
Street Address:		City:	State:
Zip:	Phone Number:	Email:	

<i>Property Owner</i>		Is the owner in support of the nomination?	Yes	No	Unknown
Name:		Company:			
Street Address:		City:		State:	
Zip:	Phone Number:	Email:			

### *Nomination Preparer/Applicant's Representative*

Name:		Company:		
Street Address:		City:		State:
Zip:	Phone Number:	Email:		



# HISTORIC-CULTURAL MONUMENT NOMINATION FORM

## 9. SUBMITTAL

When you have completed preparing your nomination, compile all materials in the order specified below. Although the entire packet must not exceed 100 pages, you may send additional material on a CD or flash drive.

### APPLICATION CHECKLIST

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Nomination Form  | 5. Copies of Primary/Secondary Documentation  |
| 2. Written Statements A and B   | 6. Copies of Building Permits for Major Alterations<br>(include first construction permits) |
| 3. Bibliography   | 7. Additional, Contemporary Photos  |
| 4. Two Primary Photos of Exterior/Main Facade<br>(8x10, the main photo of the proposed monument. Also<br>email a digital copy of the main photo to:<br>planning.ohr@lacity.org) | 8. Historical Photos  |
|   | 9. Zimas Parcel Report for all Nominated Parcels<br>(including map)                         |

## 10. RELEASE

Please read each statement and check the corresponding boxes to indicate that you agree with the statement, then sign below in the provided space. Either the applicant or preparer may sign.

<input type="checkbox"/> I acknowledge that all documents submitted will become public records under the California Public Records Act, and understand that the documents will be made available upon request to members of the public for inspection and copying.
<input type="checkbox"/> I acknowledge that all photographs and images submitted as part of this application will become the property of the City of Los Angeles, and understand that permission is granted for use of the photographs and images by the City without any expectation of compensation.
<input type="checkbox"/> I acknowledge that I have the right to submit or have obtained the appropriate permission to submit all information contained in this application.

*Kate Eggert*

Name:

2-23-2021

Date:

*Kate Eggert*

Signature:

Mail your Historic-Cultural Monument Submittal to the Office of Historic Resources.

Office of Historic Resources  
Department of City Planning  
221 N. Figueroa St., Ste. 1350  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Phone: 213-874-3679  
Website: [preservation.lacity.org](http://preservation.lacity.org)



1025-1027 South Crenshaw Boulevard – Women's Center

Main east elevation

Photograph taken: February 18, 2021

## **7A. Proposed Monument Description**

### **Summary Paragraph**

Located at 1027 South Crenshaw Boulevard, The Women's Center is located in the Wilshire Mid-Town area of Los Angeles, California, situated between West Olympic Boulevard and Country Club Drive. The structure is a single story, residential duplex currently used for commercial purposes. It was constructed in 1920. The structure is irregular in shape and faces east. It sits at the middle-right of a flat, rectangular lot in the N.C. Kelley's Mountview Tract. The driveway and lot surrounding the structure is of asphalt and concrete; there are five delineated parking spaces directly in the front of the structure, a small parking lot next to the structure and a small area behind the structure containing a small shed. The structure was moved to this location in 1927.

### **Narrative Description**

The structure was moved several blocks from the Wilshire Park neighborhood (permit dated March 28, 1927) to what is now a commercial segment of Crenshaw Boulevard that is immediately surrounded by four residential HPOZ's- Oxford Square to the west, Country Club Park to the east, Windsor Village to the north-west and Wilshire Park to the north-east.

The subject property has an irregularly shaped floorplan, is of wood-frame construction and wood siding which was covered in textured stucco in 1951 with a high foundation. The property is in the Vernacular Bungalow style and has a normal-pitched, hip on gable roof with composite shingles and a slight eave overhang on all elevations. The subject property is 1,771 square feet, measuring 38 feet wide by 51 feet deep with a 17 feet wide by 20 feet deep addition added to the rear of the southern half of the bungalow. Fenestration includes multiple aluminum fixed and sliding windows. A wood-frame shed is located at the rear of the parcel, and a large billboard was added to the property in 1999 at the northern end of the primary façade.

### **East, Primary, Façade**

The primary façade has two concrete entry porches with stairs oriented toward each other and accessed at the center of the building. The current porches are from 1951. According a sketch of the building in *Constructive Feminism*<sup>1</sup> it appears the building at its current location originally had two concrete front porches in the same locations. The porches lead to two front entrance doors, both of wood and the northern-most door also has a steel security door. Four single-pane aluminum windows on the façade form a pattern that reflects the original side-by-side bungalow of window, door, window, window, door window. The windows and doors have been replaced; the placement and frames appear to be original. The windows are covered with security bars. There is a fixed awning and a long, light box, marque-style, commercial sign added in 1994 to just at and above the roof line

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<sup>1</sup> Spain, 56.

## **South elevation**

The south elevation contains several windows covered with security bars. The placement and size of the two small, eastern-most windows appear to be original with the windows replaced. The large, fixed window is an alteration. The two western-most windows of the original structure's placement and size appear to be original with the windows replaced. The addition has a shed roof with minimal eave overhang and two windows, single pane windows that appear to be original to the addition.

## **West, rear, elevation**

The west elevation has a side-by-side, gable-on-hip roof. The south-most half of the rear elevation contains the rectangular, shed-roofed addition with a small window facing west and a door with security door facing north. A concrete ramp runs up the north side of the addition to another door. It is covered by a metal and wood awning attached to the addition and supported by metal poles. The north-most half of the rear elevation contains two windows and another opening with unknown originality.

## **North elevation**

There are no window openings on this elevation. There are outlines of the original window openings but the openings have been filled.

## **Interior**

The subject property was constructed as a residential duplex. The original interior was evenly split with both sides having identical layouts of living room followed by dining area, kitchen, bedroom and bathroom.

The interior currently has been remodeled/ altered to serve as a single tenant commercial business space.

## **Shed**

A small, modern shed sits at the north-most, rear of the lot. It has a slightly sloped, shed roof and is clad with vertical, siding panels with a small single paned window and door on its east elevation.

## **California Historical Resource Status Codes**

The Crenshaw Women's Center at 1027 South Crenshaw Boulevard was surveyed by the City of Los Angeles in 2015 as part of SurveyLA and was given the California Historical Resource Status Codes of 3CS and 5S3. Both status codes indicate the subject property appears to be individually eligible for local listing.

## **Surveys**

The Crenshaw Women's Center at 1027 South Crenshaw Boulevard has been mentioned in two Ethnic Cultural Contexts- Women's Right's in Los Angeles, 1850-1980 and the LGBT Historic Context Statement.

## **7B. Written Statement – Statement of Significance**

### **Summary Paragraph**

The Crenshaw Women's Center located at 1027 South Crenshaw Boulevard is associated with the Women's Rights Movement in Los Angeles, California and is eligible under Criterion 1. According to SurveyLA's Women's Rights in Los Angeles Context Statement, the property is eligible under Criteria A for being the first women's center in Los Angeles. It functioned as a "safe space" for nurturing the autonomy of women and organizing for the second wave of feminism and the Women's Liberation Movement. Founded by Joan Robbins, The Crenshaw Women's Center became the heart of the feminist movement and provided the foundation and framework for other women's centers. At its core, the Crenshaw Women's Center provided psychological, job, abortion, and rape counseling; consciousness raising "rap" sessions; women's liberation classes; a volunteer switchboard; and small bookstore. It also provided the brick-and-mortar base for the first women's health clinic (Women's Self-Help One), and the Anti-Rape Squad.<sup>2</sup> According to SurveyLA's LGBT Historic Context Statement, the Crenshaw Women's Center had a suicide hotline for lesbians and was the meeting place for the Gay Women's Liberation group, which was founded by lesbians from the Gay Liberation Front.<sup>3</sup> The Crenshaw Women's Center was also identified as significant in the Wilshire Community Plan Area report as a pioneering venue for lesbian education and empowerment and a rare example of institutional development associated with the LGBT community in the Wilshire area.<sup>4</sup> The period of significance is from 1970 to 1972.

**Criterion 1: Is identified with important events of national, state, or local history, or exemplifies significant contributions to the broad cultural, economic or social history of the nation, state, city, or community**

### *Second Wave Feminism*

Feminists in the 1960s, like women's suffrage activists before them, revived the battle for legal equality and expanded it to include sexuality, gender power dynamics, financial independence, reproductive rights, and violence against women.<sup>5</sup>

Betty Friedan's book, *The Feminine Mystique*, articulated the underlying discontents among many American women – in particular, white middle-class women. Friedan suggested that women needed a purpose in life in addition to their roles as wives and mothers. The book appeared at a moment when the country was poised on the verge of profound social transformation – in race relations as well as in changing gender roles. The social movement that emerged after the publication of her book in 1963 became known as "second wave" feminism, which roughly spanned 1960-1980.<sup>6</sup> In addition to Friedan's book, a confluence of events,

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<sup>2</sup> Historic Resources Group, "SurveyLA: Women's Rights in Los Angeles," 124.

<sup>3</sup> GPA, "SurveyLA: LGBT Context Statement," 71.

<sup>4</sup> Architectural Resources Group, "SurveyLA: Wilshire Community Plan Area: Individual Resources," 60.

<sup>5</sup> Historic Resources Group, 59.

<sup>6</sup> Levine, Susan, "The Feminine Mystique at Fifty," 41-2.

including the 1960 FDA approval of birth control, the steady rise of women in the labor force, President Kennedy's Commission on the Status of Women which pointed to the significant inequality between men and women, and the passage of the Higher Education Act of 1965 marked not only the beginning of second wave feminism but also the foundation for the next phase of the movement.<sup>7</sup>

The Crenshaw Women's Center (often called the Woman's Liberation Center) influence came at a time when the Women's Rights Movement had divided into two directions – the first was an outgrowth of the women's networks of World War II and labor unions of the early 1960s, the second was a more radical network of women who were involved in the Civil Rights Movement and the New Left.<sup>8</sup> (The New Left was a new type of Democrat soon to be elected to office who campaigned for civil and political rights, LGBT rights, women's rights, union rights, affordable housing, and privacy rights. In California, and Los Angeles in particular, names like Ed Edelman, Tom Bradley, and Jerry Brown were synonymous with the New Left.)<sup>9</sup>

The radical direction of the Women's Rights Movement was more interested in controversial issues like reproductive rights, health and wellness, and lesbian oppression, which was seen as disruptive and potentially alienating to a broader public support.<sup>10</sup> Together though, the two directions of the movement carried and delivered enormous change for women and left a platform for which modern women and girls continue to stand on to further their rights.

### *The Crenshaw Women's Center*

The idea of the center came from meeting with fellow feminists in the fall of 1969 about the future of the movement. Feminist, anarchist, and member of the New Left, Joan Robins, looked to a woman's center in New York City, which provided crisis counseling, abortion referrals, shelter, and consciousness raising (C-R) groups. Robins saw that the movement needed a brick-and-mortar space to provide "an umbrella" for existing and future feminist groups. Robins believed that a centralized center would facilitate communication among the groups. Her vision was structured but nonhierarchical, wherein each of the groups and community members would have an equal voice in the running of the center.

The Crenshaw Women's Center would be "visible evidence that 'something is being done,'" bringing more legitimacy to the feminist movement, and be a symbol for women in Los Angeles that feminist goals and woman autonomy could be achieved under this single roof.<sup>11</sup> According to Daphne Spain in her *Constructive Feminism*, Robbins and this founding group all believed that there was –

a great need for a visible, concrete *place* for women to go to, a place for women could meet and talk – even late at night, a place where books and literature on women would be

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<sup>7</sup> Historic Resources Group, 58.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, 59.

<sup>9</sup> Bell, Jonathan, *Beyond the Politics of the Closet*, 77.

<sup>10</sup> Historic Resources Group, 59.

<sup>11</sup> Spain, Daphne, *Constructive Feminism*, 54-5.

available to borrow and read, a place where sound, professional advice and counseling on *all* women's problems could be provided, a place for central communication – a kind of 'nerve center' – to serve and inform all persons in the Los Angeles area who are involved in a woman's struggle to become full, human, and free.<sup>12</sup>

Other names associated with the early founding of the Crenshaw were Ann Forfreedom (née Herschfang) who had established a women's liberation group that met at UCLA's Powell Library in 1968; and Dorothy Bricker and Marianne Yatrovsky who had established (with Robins) one of the first consciousness raising groups in Los Angeles.

It was agreed that beginning funding was needed, that the building must be easily accessible by public transportation and be a large enough space to hold a main office, meeting rooms, and a library. A colleague of Robins secured funding from UCLA, and in Robins' words "a duplex behind an ice machine on South Crenshaw Boulevard fit the bill."<sup>13</sup>

The Crenshaw Women's Center was a duplex, comprised of approximately 1200 square feet in the Wilshire neighborhood just north of the Oxford Square HPOZ and west of Koreatown. Sue Rodman, who had secured funding from UCLA lived on one side of the duplex with her children; staff fenced in part of the parking area in the back for a children's playground. The parking in front of the duplex was ample parking. Visible from the street was a small, painted sign that announced the "Crenshaw Women's Center."<sup>14</sup>

The duplex provided a space that was familiar to most women – a home. Its layout was in the shotgun fashion – the living room at the front, which directly led to the dining room, kitchen, and bathroom, with the bedroom in the back. Soon, two rooms worth of hand-me-down furniture were moved into the Crenshaw Women's Center – the living room (which became the main meeting room) was outfitted with couches and chairs; the kitchen got a small refrigerator and large coffee pot; and the back bedroom was dressed with area rugs, bean bag chairs, and an overflowing bookcase with pamphlets and books about women's liberation.<sup>15</sup>

An open house for the Crenshaw Women's Center was announced in the Los Angeles Times on January 9, 1970; it drew about fifty women.<sup>16</sup> The center immediately started providing lectures, abortion counseling, and consciousness-raising (C-R) "rap" group discussions in the subjects of legal, psychological, vocational, medical referral, and counseling services. The center also had a film series and a feminist theater group.

Most programming during the weekdays was during the evening hours so women who had to tend to their children or jobs could attend; the weekends were more fluid. The neighborhood felt safe, "neither fancy nor run down," making women feel comfortable to go to the center at all

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid, 50.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, 56.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, 57.

<sup>16</sup> Los Angeles Times, "Open House to Inaugurate Women's Center," January 9, 1970: 68; Spain, 57.

hours. The door even remained unlocked as long as someone was there. Transportation and parking were ideal with its proximity to bus routes and ample parking.<sup>17</sup>

Some of the groups meeting at the center were National Organization for Women (NOW), Women's Liberation One, Socialist Women's Organization Project, Sisters in Struggle, Union for Women's International Liberation, Wom's Lib UCLA, and Wom's Lib Cal State L.A. In 1971, however, the Southern California NOW chapter withdrew its support for the Crenshaw Women's Center because it was seen as too leftist.<sup>18</sup>

By August of 1970, more than 1,500 women were affiliated with the center through its programming, their feminist groups, or subscriptions to the center's newsletter. The duplex which housed the Crenshaw Women's Center became a "structure transformed into a symbol of women's liberation through the actions of its founders, the materials they assembled, and the women who visited."<sup>19</sup>

In only three years, the Crenshaw Women's Center created an enormous amount of energy and pivotal change in the Women's Rights movement and second wave feminism in Los Angeles and the nation. By 1975, there were more than one hundred women's centers across the nation; their presence was the ultimate political statement.

#### *The First Women's Clinic – Women's Self-Help One, Women's Choice Clinic*

From the initial opening of the Crenshaw Women's Center in January of 1970, abortion and contraception counseling were the most in demand.<sup>20</sup> A statistic showed that by 1965, illegal abortions made up one-sixth of all pregnancy deaths in the United States. The illegality of abortion was felt especially hard by women of color California law prohibited abortion except in cases of rape, incest, or permanent disability of the woman. The opening of the Crenshaw Women's Center was before the landmark Supreme Court trial of Roe v. Wade in 1973, which made abortion legal in all fifty states.<sup>21</sup>

In 1971, Carol Downer and Lorraine Rothman founded a women's clinic at the Crenshaw Women's Center. The clinic was the first in the nation and consequently placed the Crenshaw Women's Center at the beginning of the women's self-help movement, making it a model for the national movement.<sup>22</sup> The clinic was aptly named Women's Self-Help One; it was located in the back bedroom of the Crenshaw Women's Center. Some scholars call what Downer and Rothman started was the "women's health movement," which follows the same radical direction out of second wave feminism.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Spain, 57.

<sup>18</sup> Historic Resources Group, 64.

<sup>19</sup> Spain, 57.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, 58.

<sup>21</sup> Planned Parenthood, "Roe v. Wade: The Constitutional Right to Safe, Legal Abortion." Accessed January 12, 2021.

<https://www.plannedparenthoodaction.org/issues/abortion/roe-v-wade>.

<sup>22</sup> Historic Resources Group, 65.

<sup>23</sup> Bernhard, Linda A, "Women's Health Nurse Practitioners, Feminism, and Women's Studies," 78.

Downer explained the philosophy in the Woman's Center publication *Sister* – “The goal of the Self-Help Clinic is to take women’s medicine back into our own hands. The strategy is to take back the power over our own bodies.”<sup>24</sup> Downer and Rothman believed that control over reproductive rights with access to safe abortions and contraception was central to women gaining their freedom.

After a National Organization of Women conference in August 1971 where Women’s Self-Help One demonstrated and discussed their practices, health centers like it sprang up all over the country.<sup>25</sup> Historian Daphne Spain wrote that “feminist health clinics around the country used the Los Angeles ‘famous Self-Help Clinic #1’ as their model.”<sup>26</sup> By 1975, there were 40 Self-Help clinics nationwide.<sup>27</sup> Women’s Self-Help One was constantly under police surveillance. Downer and staff member, Colleen Wilson, were arrested for practicing medicine without a license. News of the raid spread immediately through the feminist media. Downer “relished” the trial and used the publicity to spread a strong message of solidarity in the feminist community. In Downer’s closing statement during her trial, she said “this trial is a direct threat to our rights to know our own bodies. We not only expect to win, but we also want to give emphatic notice to all who would deny us this right that *we will control our own bodies!*” Downer was acquitted of the charges, while Wilson plead guilty.<sup>28</sup>

Women’s Self-Help One grew from a single back room in the Crenshaw Women’s Center to the entire side of the duplex. The front room on the south side of the duplex was used on Tuesdays for the Women’s Abortion Referral Service (WARS). Staff members performed uterine checks and counseled women about the upcoming procedure, then accompanied them to San Vicente Hospital where doctors would perform the abortions.<sup>29</sup>

When the Crenshaw Women’s Center closed in 1972, the clinic remained and was renamed the Feminist Women’s Health Center (FWHC), taking over both sides of the duplex. Soon the FWHC expanded into a two-story house at 746 South Crenshaw.<sup>30</sup> FWHC’s were soon in Oakland, California; Orange County, California; Salt Lake City, Utah; Detroit, Michigan; Boston, Massachusetts; and Tallahassee, Florida. FWHCs were anti-professional; however, more specifically anti-physician. The women believed that medical control (perceived as largely male) could only be achieved *outside* the medical system, and with only women serving other women. They argued that women could describe and manage health, and examine their own bodies, seeking health.<sup>31</sup>

Within two months of the 1973 Roe v. Wade U.S. Supreme Court decision, the FWHC opened Women’s Choice Clinic at its existing centers located at 1027 South Crenshaw and 748 South Crenshaw. There they created a homey atmosphere for women getting abortions – serene posters

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<sup>24</sup> Spain, 111.

<sup>25</sup> Bernhard, 78.

<sup>26</sup> Spain, 129.

<sup>27</sup> Historic Resources Group, 65.

<sup>28</sup> Valley News, “Carol Downer Cleared of Practicing Medicine,” 84; Spain, 127.

<sup>29</sup> Spain, 123.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, 112-113.

<sup>31</sup> Bernhard, 79.

on the wall, rugs on the floor, plants and comfortable chairs arranged in a way to facilitate discussion.<sup>32</sup> Women's Choice Clinic remained at 1027 South Crenshaw until at least 1974.<sup>33</sup>

### *Gay Women's Liberation, Lesbian Feminists*

Gay Women's Liberation (later called Lesbian Feminists) was formed by gay liberation leader, Del Wahn. Wahn was one of the founding members of the Gay Liberation Front (GLF) and later on the Board of Directors of the Gay Community Services Center (GCSC). Whan also founded the Gay Women's Services Center, which in its year of being open had an enormous impact on social service ideas and solutions that would be implemented at the Gay Community Services Center.

In 1971, Whan and other women GLF members ran an advertisement in the *Los Angeles Free Press* announcing the formation of a "Woman's Caucus." They were frustrated by the male-dominance and male chauvinism in the GLF. The Woman's Caucus met once a week and was comprised of a dozen women. When the Woman's Caucus learned of gay women attending classes and rap groups at the Crenshaw Women's Center, the two bonded over male chauvinism rampant in their lives. The two groups merged together to create the group, "Gay Women's Liberation," and began meeting at the Crenshaw Women's Center. Gay Women's Liberation was the first feminist lesbian group in Los Angeles.<sup>34</sup> Founder and editor of the magazine *Lesbian Tide*, Jeanne Córdova visited the Crenshaw Women's Center to meet other lesbians. She was not yet a feminist but her visits inspired her to join the women's movement.<sup>35</sup>

Although the 1970s saw an increase of tolerance toward lesbian and gay persons by mainstream society, this did not translate into acceptance. Lesbians and gays experienced a void of social services to address homelessness, suicides, and health risks associated to sexual activity. Among the earliest organizations to support medical and mental health needs for lesbians was the Woman's Center on Crenshaw. The Woman's Center being a part of the radical arm of second wave feminism, supported lesbians specifically in having a suicide hotline for lesbians, being a meeting place and springboard for the Lesbian Feminists, and most of all including lesbians in women's health and well-being.<sup>36</sup>

The act of feminists and lesbians working together for a common goal was extremely profound for the time. The Women's Rights movement and second wave feminism largely dismissed lesbian rights from their platform for fear that it might discredit and distract their ability to achieve social and political change.<sup>37</sup> An organization that was especially intolerant of lesbians was the National Organization for Women (N.O.W). GLF members and members of the Gay Women's Liberation group, Brenda and Carolyn Weathers and Sharon Lily, were especially vocal in not associating with the organization. For lesbians to be accepted into the Women's

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<sup>32</sup> Spain, 123.

<sup>33</sup> Los Angeles Times, "Directory of Feminist Resources," E6.

<sup>34</sup> Spain, 63-4; Historic Resources Group, 64.

<sup>35</sup> Spain, 65.

<sup>36</sup> GPA, 70-1.

<sup>37</sup> Historic Resources Group, 66.

Rights movement via the Crenshaw Women's Center was a watershed moment in history. The group changed their name to "Lesbian Feminists;" the name was a nod to an exchange between a N.O.W member and lesbians – the N.O.W member saw lesbians stage a kiss-in and remarked "Oh, you lesbian feminists!"<sup>38</sup>

The Lesbian Feminists "invaded" a Los Angeles Chapter N.O.W. meeting and invited them to "confront their low level of consciousness." After a rap session between N.O.W. L.A. Chapter, Lesbian Feminists, Daughters of Bilitis, and the Gay Women's Service Center, a resolution was passed wherin the Los Angeles Chapter acknowledged the oppression of lesbians "as a legitimate concern of feminism." The position paper that was later crafted by rap sessions was a "consciousness-raiser" in that it served as "a pointed reminder to anti-lesbian N.O.W members that they have fallen short of the goal of sisterhood." Ultimately, the rap sessions and its participants overhauled the National N.O.W. policy. By the end of 1971, a lawyer on behalf of N.O.W. was representing a lesbian in a custody battle for her child in San Francisco, California.<sup>39</sup>

The Lesbian Feminists stated their purpose in the *Lesbian Tide* as a women's liberation group with an emphasis on lesbian oppression. Utilizing the women who went to the Crenshaw Women's Center, the Lesbian Feminists initiated gay-straight dialogues to promote understanding in the women's movement. Lesbian Feminists also spoke at colleges and other organizations to promote education between gay and straight communities.<sup>40</sup>

Individual members were also active in assisting with various programs at the Crenshaw Women's Center, including the Anti-Rape Squad, rap groups, weekly meetings, and running the Sisters Coffeehouse every Saturday night. From 8pm to 2am, the coffeehouse served beer, wine, soft drinks, dancing and talking. The coffeehouse was intended to be an alternative space to bars since alcohol and substance abuse was prevalent in the gay and lesbian community.

### *Anti-Rape Squad*

Los Angeles, along with Washington, D.C. and Detroit, were on the forefront of the anti-rape movement. Its efforts began the change of public perception of looking at a rape victim as a victim of assault, rather than complicit in the act.<sup>41</sup>

One of the most important issues for feminists during the 1970s was violence against women. Whether domestic, physical, mental, or rape, crimes of violence against women remained under wraps for decades as they were seen by law enforcement as family issues not prosecutable under the law. Violence against women was an example of an issue that surfaced during consciousness raising sessions offered at the Crenshaw Women's Center (and future women's centers) and other support groups. Women had nowhere to go to escape abuse; there were no battered-

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<sup>38</sup> Spain, 64.

<sup>39</sup> *Lesbian Tide*, "N.O.W. Votes Yes on Lesbians," 6-7.

<sup>40</sup> *Lesbian Tide*, "Lesbian Feminists," 11.

<sup>41</sup> Spain, 63.

women's shelters available in Los Angeles County until 1978, and only thirty beds were reported as available.<sup>42</sup>

The Anti-Rape Squad was formed after a friend of Joan Robins had been raped while hitchhiking; she and others formed the squad in an attempt to prevent violent crimes against women and change social attitudes which were believed to foster and protect the rapist. The squad came up with practical actions; their first action was to print bumper stickers, reading "Sisters give rides to sisters" to encourage women to pick up female hitchhikers.<sup>43</sup> The squad also aired public service announcements on the radio to increase awareness of the political implications of rape and to encourage women who had been raped to call or visit the Crenshaw Women's Center.

It was believed that rape was a consequence of society's belief in the "sacred" nature of masculinity. It was generally thought that women were at fault for being raped because they brought it on by being attractive or acting promiscuous.<sup>44</sup> It was through these beginning Anti-Rape Squads that women could take their power back and work to change the system of abuse.

An extraordinary and dramatic act of the Anti-Rape Squad was to get a physical description and if they actually got the rapist's identity, the squad would spray-paint his name and the words "THIS MAN ASSAULTS WOMEN" on the Venice Beach Pier. The squad would also get a physical description of the man and make/model of their car and post these details at the Westside Women's Center and telephone poles along the Venice beachfront. These guerilla tactics were necessary in a time when police and most citizens did not take the act of rape seriously.<sup>45</sup>

The Anti-Rape Squad out of the Crenshaw Women's Center worked with the Westside Women's Center at 218 East Venice Boulevard, which opened in 1972.<sup>46</sup> Members from the squad would accompany a woman to the police station if she wished to report a rape; the squad also provided an attorney to come along if it was possible. Squad members researched laws on rape in order to help women better understand their rights.<sup>47</sup>

The Anti-Rape Squad moved to the Westside Women's Center in Venice when the Crenshaw Women's Center closed. Anti-Rape Squads spread across the country in the early 1970s and became an influential and educational tactic for educating women on rape statistics, providing counseling, legal help, a rape hotline, and offering self-defense classes.<sup>48</sup> When the Anti-Rape Squad moved to Venice, it morphed into the Los Angeles Commission on Assaults Against Women. The commission ran Los Angeles' first rape crisis hotline; Robins became their Director of Education and spokeswoman on the topic.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Historic Resources Group, 78.

<sup>43</sup> Spain, 62; Riker, Barbara, "Anti-Rape Squad Goal: Curb Crimes and Change Attitudes," WS9.

<sup>44</sup> Riker, WS9.

<sup>45</sup> Spain, 62-3; Riker, WS9.

<sup>46</sup> Historic Resources Group, Appendix B, 4.

<sup>47</sup> Riker, WS9.

<sup>48</sup> Feminist Voice, 17.

<sup>49</sup> Historic Resources Group, 78.

### *Women's Liberation School: Lectures and Lecture Series*

The Crenshaw Women's Center offered lectures, lecture series' and classes through the Women's Liberation School "to help women function autonomously and understand the nature of their oppression" and achieve true liberation.<sup>50</sup> The school and its lectures educated women about feminism and trained them in practical skills to become self-sufficient.<sup>51</sup> The topics ranged from feminist history, topical financial and law issues, and hands-on experience in carpentry and automobile repair. Teachers included Ann ForFreedom, Hannah Lerman, Judy Freespirit, Joan Hoffman, Avril Adams, and Regina Barton. Women could make a small donation to the center or volunteer their time to attend the lectures. The school was modeled later by other women centers, including the Westside Women's Center.

Women and the Law lecture series was especially important because it was the catalyst for founding the Women's Center Legal Program at the Crenshaw Women's Center. Names of the lectures, included "Sexual Role Playing and the Law," "Family Law," "Welfare Law," "California Divorce Law", and "Government Programs and Their Impact on Women."<sup>52</sup> This series was taught by working women lawyers. District Counsel for the federal Equal Employment Opportunities Commission and attorney Barbara Schlei recruited many women from the center to research for litigation against job discrimination based on sex.<sup>53</sup> Other lectures included, "Conspiracy Against Her Story in History and Literature," The Meaning of Female," "We Got the Vote, Now How Do We Get the Power?"<sup>54</sup>

Saturday afternoons were reserved for Harriet Whitehead and Cheri Maynard's "Volkswagen clinic." The two women started the clinic in February of 1971 in an effort make women more self-sufficient in the area of car maintenance. The women who attended the classes spoke of being "exhilarated" and "powerful" in learning the mechanics of how a car works, an area that women generally felt powerless over.<sup>55</sup>

### *Rap Sessions/Rap Group, Consciousness Raising (C-R)*

The radical direction of second wave feminism adopted the "rap session" or "rap group." The Crenshaw Women's Center conducted countless rap sessions and it became an integral part of every future women's center. The rap session was an important and pivotal educational technique – a group of women would share their personal stories of oppression. Up to this point, women were largely deprived of intimate interaction with other women and were kept isolated in their individual homes, relating more and tending to the needs of men rather than women. The act of sharing and comparing common concerns was the act of "consciousness raising" and it was continually acted upon when women sought out another rap session to explore again. It

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid, 64.

<sup>51</sup> Spain, 61.

<sup>52</sup> Los Angeles Times, various from January 1971 to August 1972.

<sup>53</sup> Murphy, Jean, "Legal Team Will Offer Help for Woman's Lib Court Case," Los Angeles Times, February 9, 1971: 45.

<sup>54</sup> Los Angeles Times, various from January 1971 to August 1972.

<sup>55</sup> Murphy, Jean, "Fixing Own Car: That's Liberation," Los Angeles Times, July 29, 1971: E3.

engendered a feeling of solidarity, imperative for a social movement, and most importantly sisterhood.

The act of it was simple – a group of five to twelve women came together to talk about personal problems, experiences, feelings and concerns. This “rap group” would meet once a week for about three hours, new members would be discouraged from joined due to the eventual bond that would happen in the rap group.<sup>56</sup> From listening to other women’s stories, women learned to see how social structures and attitudes have molded them from birth and limited their opportunities.<sup>57</sup> The collected experiences became the basis of what the major issues were for women as an oppressed group. As a result, the importance of gendered spaces increased as safe spaces where women could discuss, explore, learn together, also known as “consciousness raising.”<sup>58</sup>

Consciousness raising (C-R) was the cornerstone for political work in the Crenshaw Women’s Center. C-R groups were designed to turn the “personal into political.” It was stressed that C-R groups were not therapy but instead a “free space to talk about yourself as a woman.” In a lot of cases, this was the first time a woman expressed their dissatisfaction and anger, ultimately discovering the nature of their oppression.<sup>59</sup>

### *Sister newsletter*

Communication and print media were essential to the growth of second wave feminism. Feminists replaced the suffrage movement flyers and handbills with newsletters, magazines, and resource directories. Much of the local feminist print media was simply-designed, grassroots materials produced in the homes of individual editors or at women’s centers. One of the earliest feminist newspapers in Los Angeles was *Everywoman*; it was considered so “radical” that many requested it be wrapped in brown paper when mailing. Ann Forfreedom (one of the founders of the Crenshaw Women’s Center) was the only paid staff member.<sup>60</sup>

The Crenshaw Women’s Center started their newsletter in 1970. Like feminist print media at the time, its content was grass roots and also provided a detailed calendar section of events and meetings at the center. By 1972, the newsletter had 2700 subscribers; it was the largest circulation and had the largest national readership of any feminist publication. A year later, it became the *Sister* newspaper.<sup>61</sup>

It should be noted here that the Crenshaw Women’s Center was also the “birthplace” of the Sisterhood Bookstore. Feminist bookstores often found their start at the libraries in women’s centers. The founders of the Sisterhood frequented the Crenshaw Women’s Center’s library located in the back bedroom of the duplex. They were amazed at the constant accumulation of

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<sup>56</sup> Spain, 52.

<sup>57</sup> Freeman, Jo, “The Women’s Liberation Movement: Its Origins, Structures and Ideas.” Accessed January 17, 2021. <https://www.jofreeman.com/feminism/liberationmov.html>.

<sup>58</sup> Historic Resources Group, 63.

<sup>59</sup> Spain, 52.

<sup>60</sup> Historic Resources Group, 79.

<sup>61</sup> Historic Resources Group, 79.

books, magazines, and ephemera. When the Crenshaw Women's Center closed in 1972, Simone Gold, Grahan Kelley, and Adele Wallace filled the void of not having access to that library by opening Sisterhood Bookstore on 1915 Westwood Boulevard.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Spain, 84.

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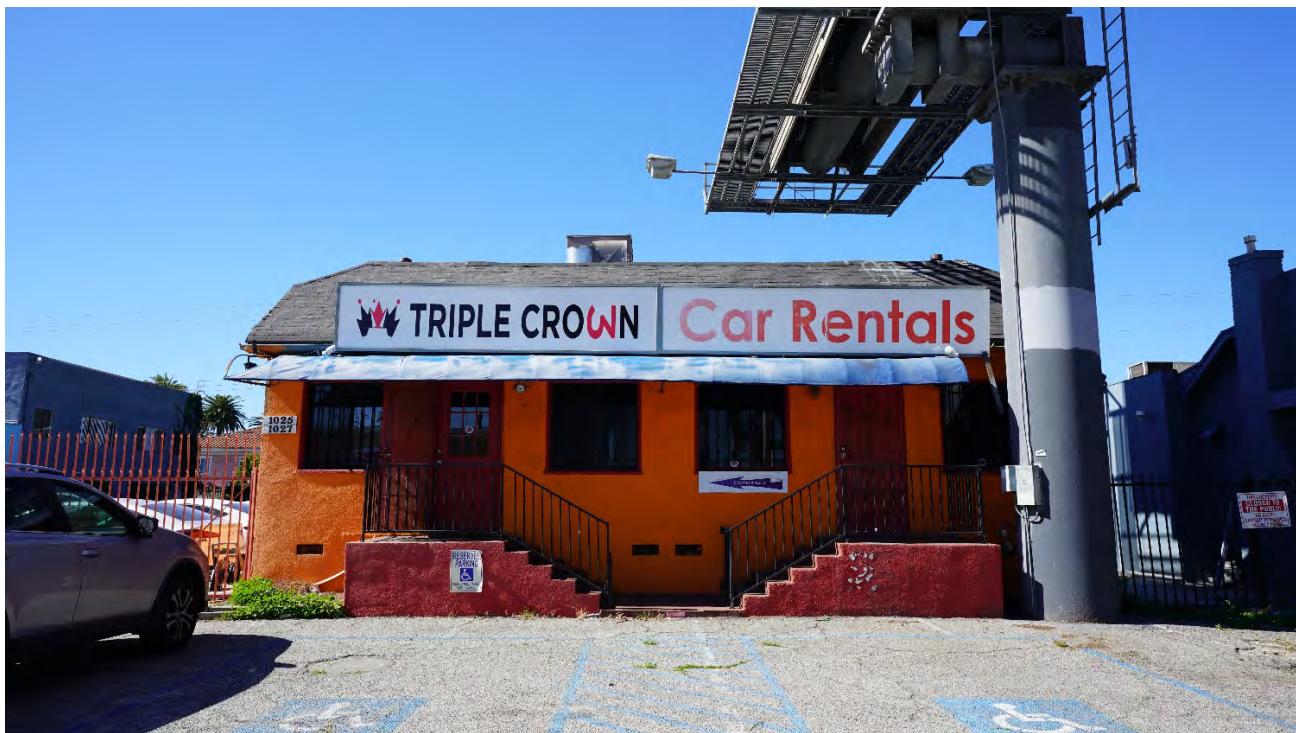
Riker, Barbara. "Anti-Rape Squad Goal: Curb Crimes and Change Attitudes." *Los Angeles Times* (August 20, 1972): WS9.

Ruffalo, Virginia, Jeanne Cordova, et al. *The Lesbian Tide* 1, no. 3 (1971). Accessed February 20, 2021. doi:10.2307/community.28039238.

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## Additional Contemporary Photos



1025-1027 South Crenshaw Boulevard – CrenshawWomen’s Center

Main east elevation

Photograph taken: February 18, 2021



1025-1027 South Crenshaw Boulevard – Crenshaw Women’s Center

South elevation

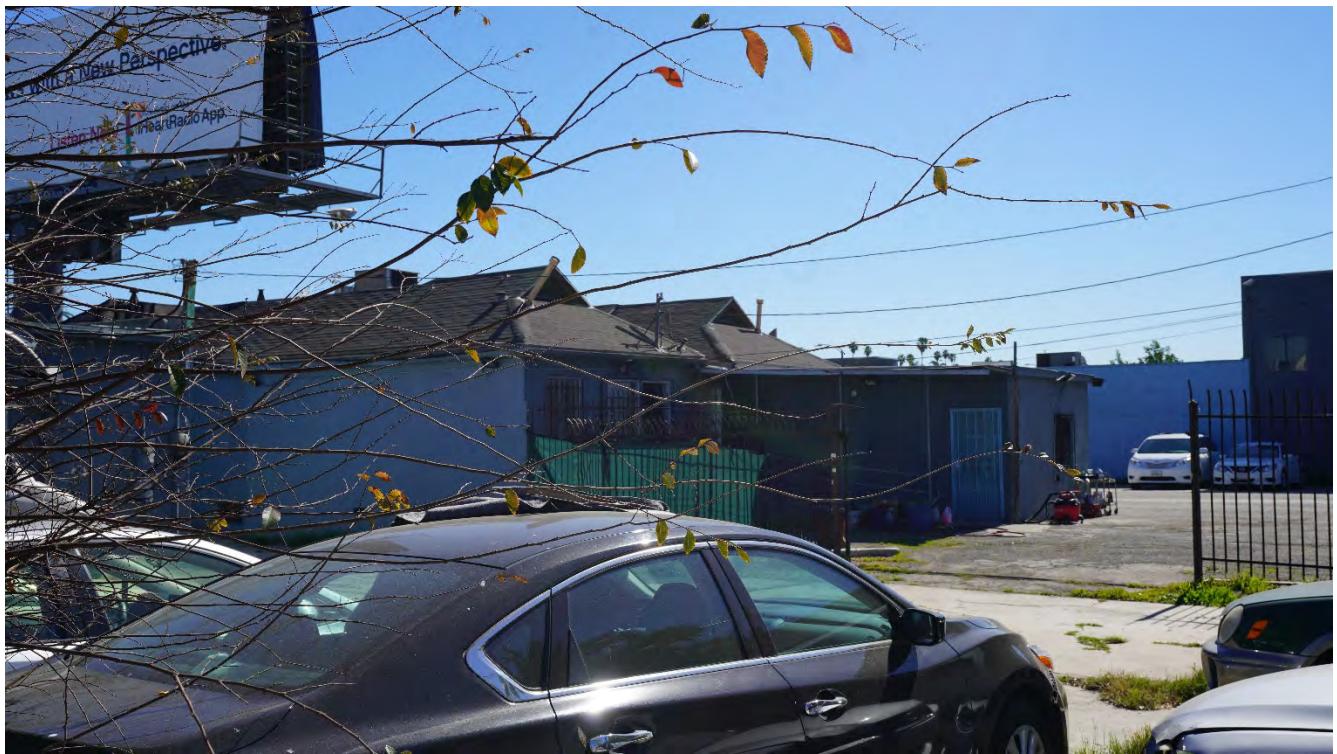
Photograph taken: February 18, 2021



1025-1027 South Crenshaw Boulevard – Crenshaw Women’s Center

North elevation

Photograph taken: February 18, 2021



1025-1027 South Crenshaw Boulevard – Crenshaw Women’s Center

West elevation

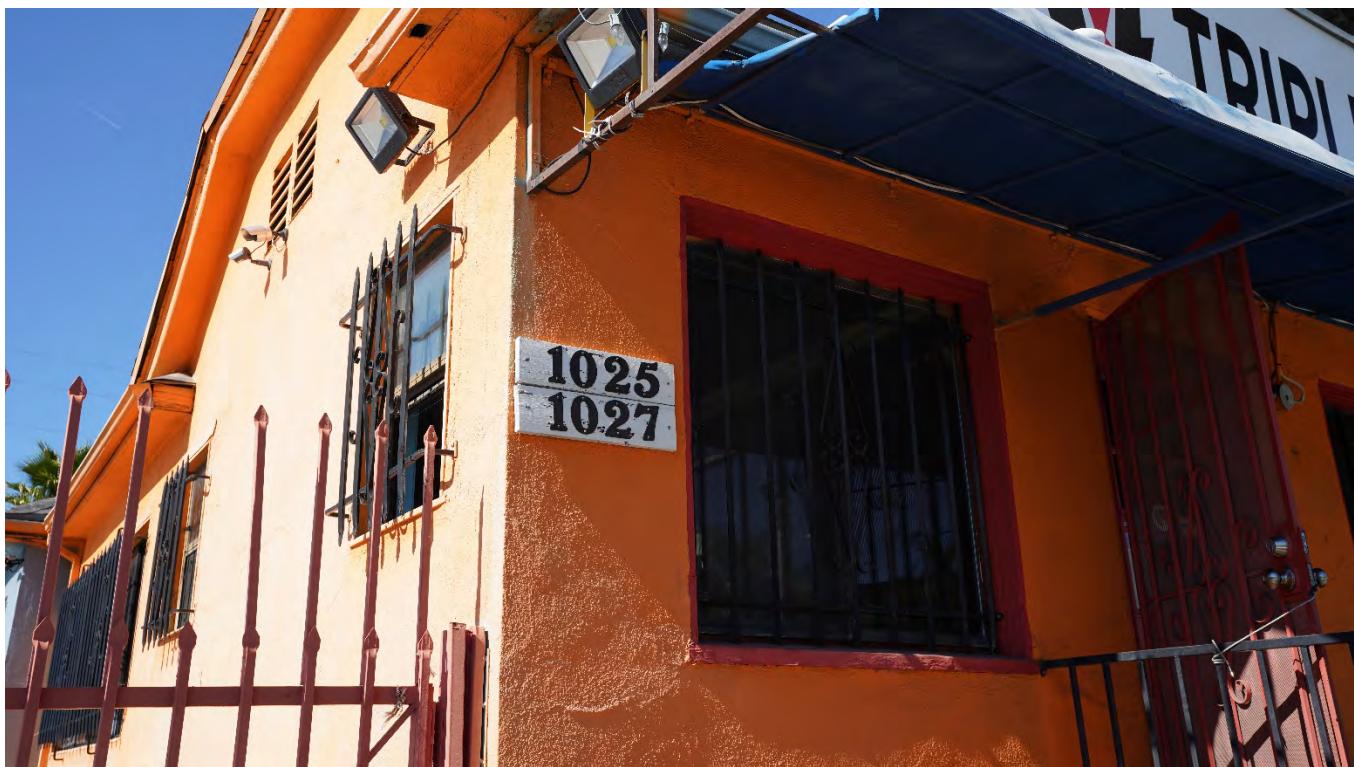
Photograph taken: February 18, 2021



1025-1027 South Crenshaw Boulevard – Crenshaw Women’s Center

Main east elevation, south elevation, and surrounding parking

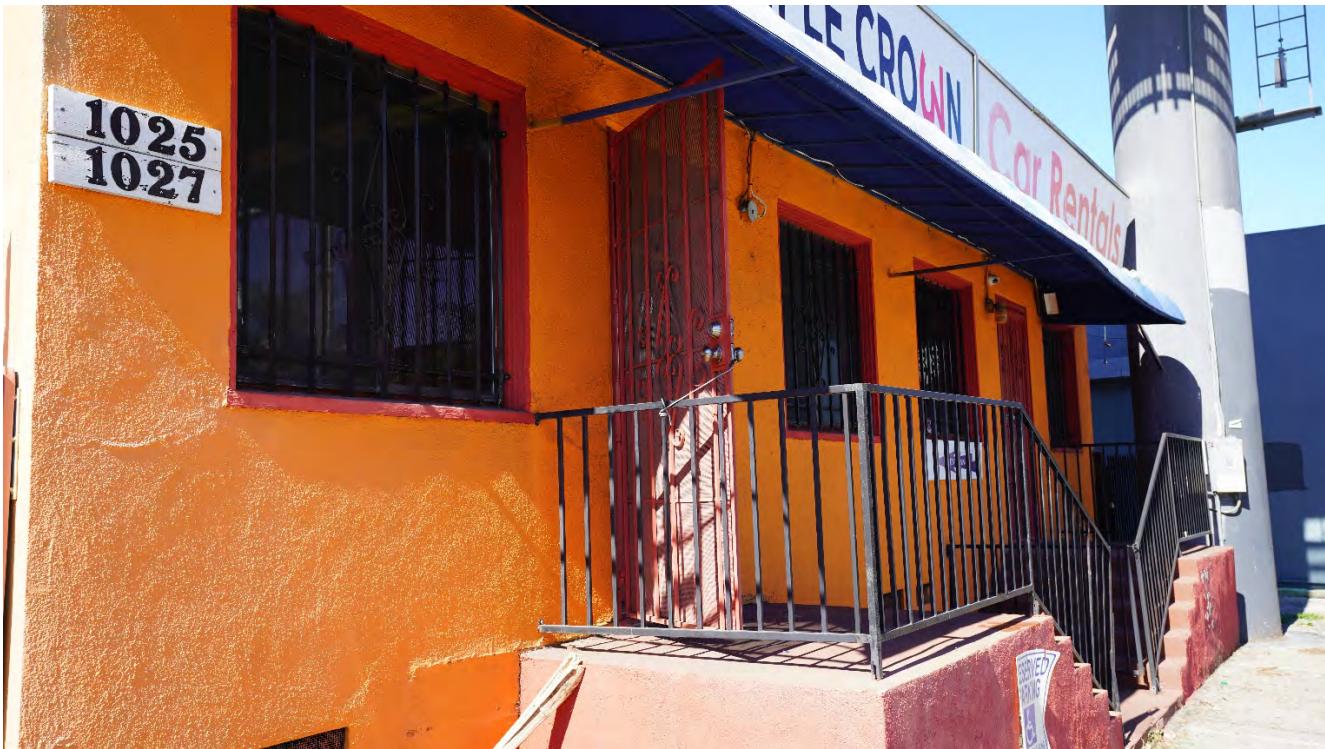
Photograph taken: February 18, 2021



1025-1027 South Crenshaw Boulevard – Crenshaw Women’s Center

Detail of fenestration on main east elevation and south elevation

Photograph taken: February 18, 2021



1025-1027 South Crenshaw Boulevard – Crenshaw Women’s Center

Detail of fenestration on main east elevation

Photograph taken: February 18, 2021



1025-1027 South Crenshaw Boulevard – Crenshaw Women’s Center

Detail of main east elevation of 1027 South Crenshaw Boulevard

Photograph taken: February 18, 2021



1025-1027 South Crenshaw Boulevard – Crenshaw Women’s Center

Detail of main east elevation of 1025 South Crenshaw Boulevard

Photograph taken: February 18, 2021

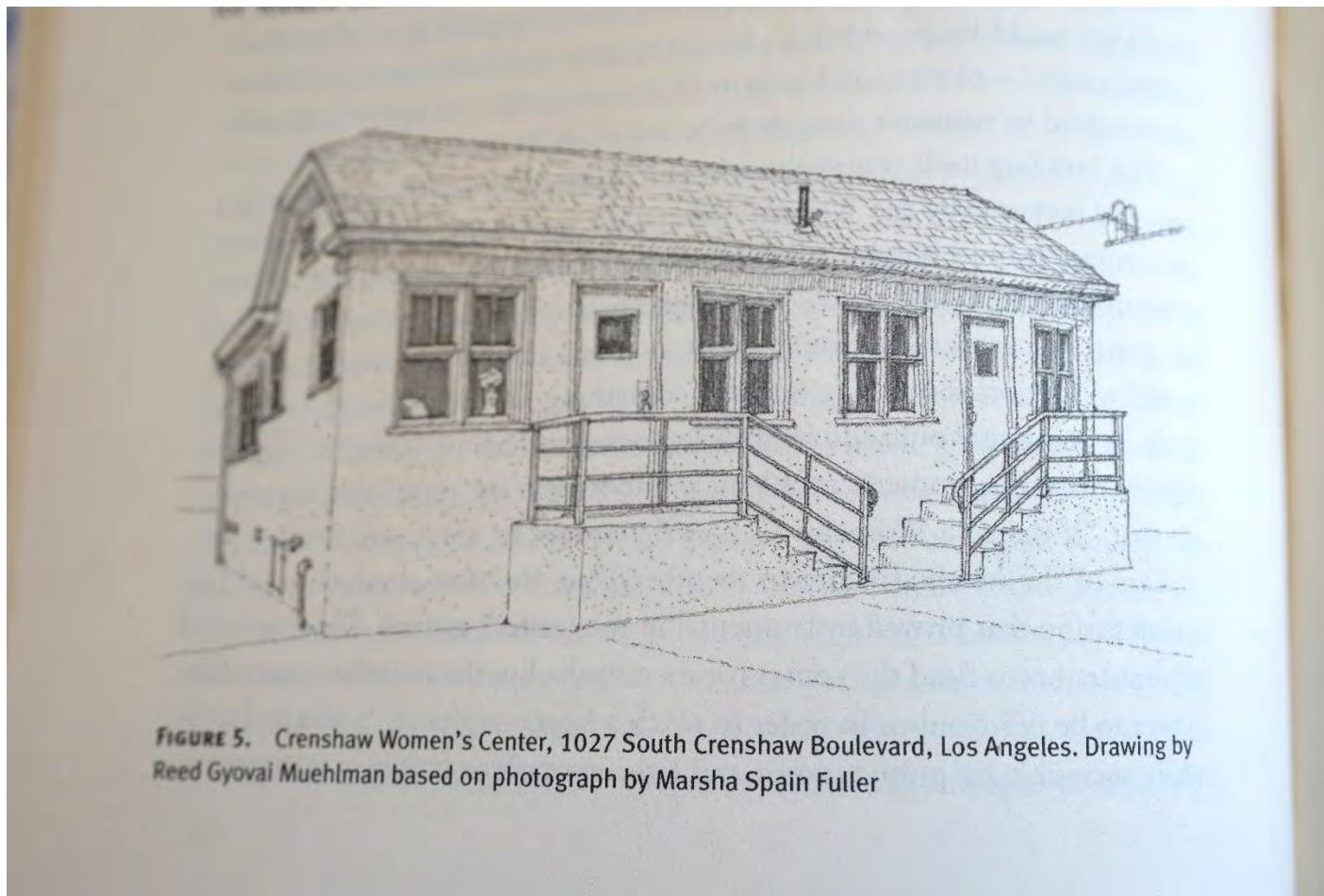


1025-1027 South Crenshaw Boulevard – Crenshaw Women’s Center

Detail of porch on main east elevation

Photograph taken: February 18, 2021

## Historical Photos



**FIGURE 5.** Crenshaw Women's Center, 1027 South Crenshaw Boulevard, Los Angeles. Drawing by Reed Gyovai Muehlman based on photograph by Marsha Spain Fuller

Drawing of the Crenshaw Women's Center, n.d.

Source: Book – Constructive Feminism: Women's Spaces and Women's Rights in the American City by Daphne Spain



**WHEEL-WISE**—Harriet Whitehead, left, and Donna Cassyd change oil in 1963 bug during Volkswagen clinic at the Women's Liberation Center.  
Times photo by Larry Bessel

Volkswagen Clinic at the Crenshaw Women's Center, 1971

Source: Los Angeles Times

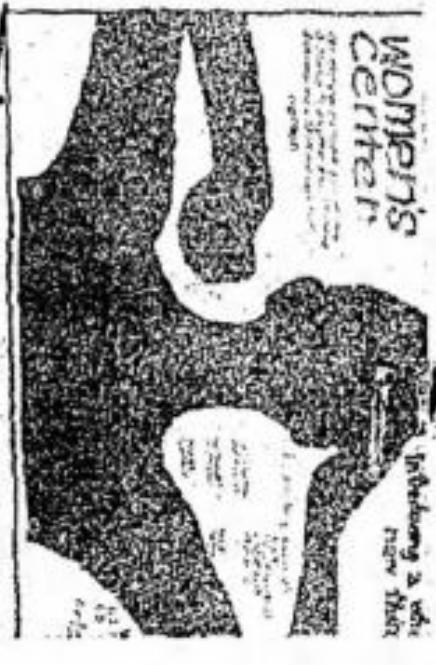
# WOMEN'S CENTER LA

1027 So. Crenshaw Blvd.

Los Angeles, 90019

937-3964 937-3965

open Mon-Sat



Crenshaw Women's Center ephemera, 1971

Source: Los Angeles Times



Women at the Crenshaw Women's Center, 1971

Source: University of Southern California Libraries, ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives

<http://digitallibrary.usc.edu/cdm/ref/collection/p15799coll4/id/5961>



Women at the Crenshaw Women's Center, 1971

Source: University of Southern California Libraries, ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives

<http://digitallibrary.usc.edu/cdm/ref/collection/p15799coll4/id/5958>

# Clearing House for L.A. Women's Lib



Forum Attempts  
to Coordinate  
Splinter Groups



Even revolutions have their quiet moments. Activists in feminist liberation movement talk peacefully at the Women's Center where Ellie Stein, left, cheers an unhappy housewife and Deanna Nordquist, right, explains womlib purposes.

Times photo by Mary Frampton

Women at the Crenshaw Women's Center, 1971

Source: Los Angeles Times

# CALENDAR

## NOVEMBER

- Tues, 2      7:30 Lesbian Feminists Mtg. 1027 S. Crenshaw  
Wed, 3      6:30 Officers Mtg., 8:30 Encounter Group DOB Cen.  
Thurs, 4      8:00 Community Dinner GWSC 1542 N. Glendale Blvd.  
Fri, 5      8:00 Cards, 12-4:00 Afterhours DOB Center  
Sat, 6      "Sisters" Coffeehouse 1027 S. Crenshaw  
Sun, 7      Task Force Mtg. 1-3:00, Intergroup Council Mtg.  
                3-5:00 DOB Center  
Mon, 8      7:30 DCB Business Mtg., Task Force- UCLA 8:00am  
                further info- 934-6593  
Tues, 9      8:00 Rap- "Metaphysics", Lesbian Feminists Mtg.  
                7:30 1027 S. Crenshaw  
Wed, 10     7:30 Officers Mtg., 8:30 Group, further info-  
                479-6349 DOB Center  
Fri, 12     7:30 General Mtg (elections), 12-4 Afterhours  
                DOB Center, KMET (94.7) every Fri. Gay News 5:30  
Sat, 13     "Sisters" Coffeehouse- dancing, beer  
Sun, 14     12 noon Picnic and Softball at Griffith Park  
Tues, 16     7:30 Lesbian Feminists Mtg. 1027 S. Crenshaw  
Wed, 17     7:30 Officers Mtg., 8:30 Group  
Fri, 19     8:00 Thanksgiving Dance "Free Turkey"  
Sat, 20     "Sisters" Coffeehouse - dancing, beer  
Tues, 23     7:30 Lesbian Feminist Mtg. 1027 S. Crenshaw  
Fri, 26     7:30 General Mtg., 12-4:00 Afterhours DOB Center  
Tues, 30     7:30 Lesbian Feminists Mtg. 1027 S. Crenshaw

Calender of events of various groups at the Crenshaw Women's Center, including the Lesbian Feminists, Sisters Coffeehouse, and Margaret Wright's Intergroup Council Meeting  
Source: Lesbian Tide, November 1971, p17



Crenshaw Women's Center, 2015

Source: SurveyLA Wilshire Community Planning Area: Individual Resources

## CHAPTER 2

### Women's Centers

#### *Nurturing Autonomy*

The Everywoman's Center at the University of Massachusetts Amherst opened in September 1972, the same month I arrived for graduate studies in sociology. The center consisted of a small room in Munson Hall, a two-story brick building constructed in 1898. Architect Emory Ellsworth had incorporated a hodgepodge of design elements that made the building's style difficult to classify. A porch with classical columns was flanked by semicircular bays and ornamented with wood and brownstone trim. The exterior combined Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, and Gothic features that stood out among all the modernist buildings added to campus during the boom years of the 1960s.<sup>1</sup>

Its name proclaimed the center's intent to serve all women. When they walked in the door, women saw other like-minded women milling about one of the information tables or relaxing on the couch in the middle of the room. A telephone and a sign-up sheet for the mailing list were available at the table, and notices of local resources were posted on a bulletin board.<sup>2</sup> The center was where one could find C-R groups, and, like women's centers elsewhere, it was a safe place for lesbians to come out. Volunteers distributed a mimeographed newsletter with coverage of feminist events and causes. Women's music was especially important to the community. The all-female Deadly Nightshade was popular with feminist and lesbian groupies who showed up every time the band played at a local club.

The center occupied a niche in the cultural landscape of this large state university. It was "discourse materialized," a symbol of the theories and practices associated with the emerging feminist movement.<sup>3</sup> The center was connected—by newsletters, correspondence, and visits—to women's centers at other campuses and in other cities. In fact, its inspiration came from a founder's visit to the Berkeley Women's Center.<sup>4</sup>

Today we might classify the Everywoman's Center as a "third place," like bars or coffee shops: crucial settings for the informal public life that creates a sense of community. Neither home nor work, they are neutral ground where people can comfortably gather for conversation or just to enjoy seeing and being seen. According to the sociologist Ray Oldenburg, the best third places are in nondescript buildings that fade into the streetscape. They attract regulars who provide continuity throughout the week and year. With the exception of its high visibility, the Everywoman's Center met Oldenburg's criteria.<sup>5</sup>

Such places flourished in the feminist community during the 1970s. Since the majority of women had yet to enter the labor force, though, they were not "third" but "second places," an alternative to the home. Unlike the neutral ground of Oldenburg's third places, feminist places were politically charged. They promoted power for women while celebrating their liberation from traditional sex roles. The slogan "Sisterhood is Powerful" was apt: these places built the feminist movement.<sup>6</sup>

Of all feminist places, women's centers were the most important for both the women and the movement. A completely new use of space, they nurtured the formation of yet more places. Women went to centers to find out what a feminist was and figure out whether they qualified. They carried on serious conversations about sexism, racism, and homophobia with other women, or joined a C-R group to explore the relationship between their personal lives and the political economy in which they were enmeshed. Centers were also clearinghouses for finding a doctor, a roommate, a job, or other resources.

Women's centers' very structure was a political statement. Since masculine hierarchy was anathema to feminists, most centers were run collectively. In places as distant as Iowa City and San Diego, the same words appeared repeatedly in organizational documents: *collective spirit, collective responsibility, noncompetitiveness*.<sup>7</sup> Despite the attempt to avoid bureaucracy, though, informal structures inevitably developed; there was a constant tension between the desire to replace existing institutional models and the need to function as a group. Informality typically worked for small groups if participants wanted only to talk, but larger groups pursuing political action required greater organization.<sup>8</sup>

C-R groups, which began in individual's homes, became an integral part of every women's center. In 1972 the New York Radical Feminists issued instructions for organizing a small C-R group, recommending that the size be limited to eight to twelve women to allow everyone a chance to speak. A group would meet once a week for about three hours; including new members after the third or fourth meeting was discouraged, in order to preserve the bonds established among existing members. C-R was *not* therapy, but a "free space to talk about yourself as a woman." Groups talked about memories of childhood activities and toys that differed from those of boys. They shared experiences of puberty and physical development, or analyzed current issues of wage discrimination and sexual harassment. Interrupting was forbidden, as was challenging another woman's experience or offering advice about how to solve individual problems. The meeting would end with a summary of the issues women shared, through which members would "begin to discover the nature of our oppression."<sup>10</sup>

C-R was the cornerstone for all other political work in women's centers. C-R groups were designed to turn the personal into the political. That process allowed women to bond in sisterhood; it also taught them to recognize power inequalities both inside and outside the home. Women who had spent a lifetime as "nice girls" often learned for the first time how to express their legitimate anger. The C-R groups were transformative; few women left them with the same mind-set they had on joining.

By 1975 more than one hundred women's centers had sprung up independently across the country (see figure 4 and appendix B). That same year, New York City's Women's Action Alliance issued its guide "How to Organize a Multi-Service Women's Center." Section 1 of the sixty-page typewritten pamphlet included information on organizational structure, the legalities of incorporation, and how to raise money. It also advised readers to give serious consideration to the location of the center. The first step was to look for free space. As examples, the guide cited YWCAs in Honolulu, Minneapolis, and Lincoln, Nebraska, that donated space. Universities also provided free space, as did some churches. The most important considerations in choosing a location were access to public transportation, safety at night, parking, and proximity to the women who would visit the center. Section 2 described fourteen projects that women's centers had sponsored. Some, like rape crisis centers and women's health centers, would eventually spin off into their own organizations. Others, like C-R and information and referral, would remain core features of the women's centers themselves. Section 3 of the guide listed all the known women's centers at the time of publication. Thirty-nine states had at least one center; California, Massachusetts, and New York reported the highest numbers.<sup>11</sup>

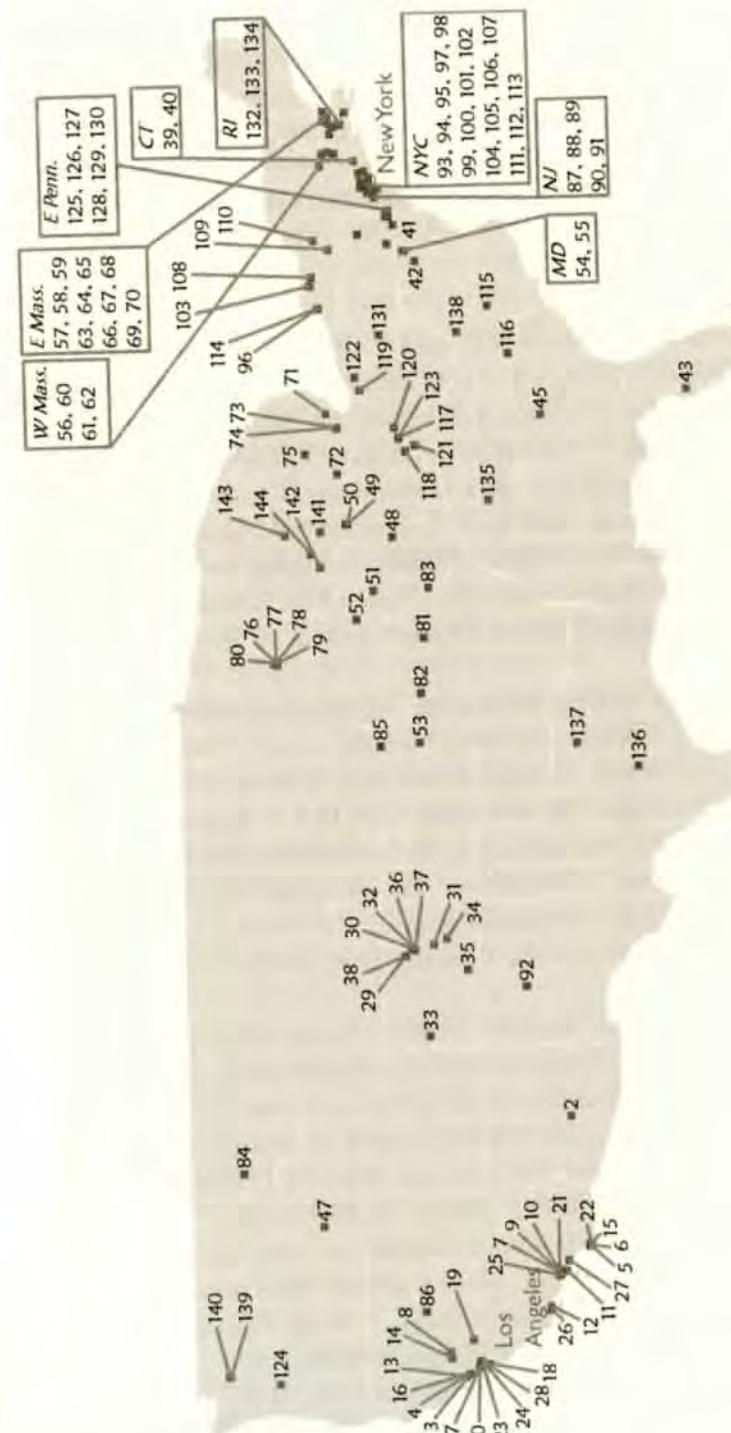


FIGURE 4. Women's centers in the continental United States, ca. 1973. Map created by Lucas Lyons. Source: Appendix B

Two of the centers in the Alliance guide were in Los Angeles. The one on Crenshaw Boulevard, founded in 1970, was known variously as the Women's Center, the Women's Liberation Center, or the Crenshaw Women's Center. The second was Westside Women's Center, formed in 1972 as a spin-off from the Crenshaw Center. Members of the Crenshaw and Westside Centers often cooperated, and sometimes competed, in providing services.<sup>11</sup>

## Los Angeles

Ann ForFreedom (née Herschfang) was a student at the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) in 1968 when she attended a Women's Liberation conference in Chicago, making her the "Joanie Appleseed" who brought the feminist movement to Los Angeles.<sup>12</sup> There, she established a women's liberation group that met at the university. The self-identified anarchist/leftist Joan Robins, a freelance reporter for the alternative *Los Angeles Free Press*, learned about ForFreedom's group and started attending its meetings. Eventually dissatisfied with its academic focus, Robins and her friend Dorothy Bricker founded Women's Liberation One to promote an activist agenda.<sup>13</sup>

Robins came up with the idea for the first women's center in the fall of 1969 when she met with about twenty women to discuss the future of the local feminist movement. Robins had read about a women's center in New York City and thought the idea could work in Los Angeles. The New York center provided crisis counseling, abortion referrals, shelter, a place for women to socialize, and C-R groups.<sup>14</sup> The gathering Robins attended had been organized by radical Methodist women; other women from the political Left joined them to form the founding group that proposed L.A.'s first women's center.<sup>15</sup>

Robins envisioned the women's center as an umbrella organization for nine feminist groups already in existence: Haymarket Liberation, New Adult Community Women, National Organization for Women (NOW), Socialist Women's Organizing Project (SWOP), Union of Women's International Liberation (UWIL), Venice-Santa Monica Women's Liberation, Women's Liberation Front-UCLA (WLF), Women's Liberation One, and Working Women's Group.<sup>16</sup> A center would facilitate communication among the groups, provide services women needed, educate them about female liberation, and organize them for social change.<sup>17</sup> In her *Handbook of Women's Liberation* (1970), Robins proposed an organizational structure that included "External Radicalizing Activities Coordinators who would facilitate localized (block) organizing."<sup>18</sup> It is unclear how Robins thought coordinators

would radicalize citizens, but her vision evokes an image of individual Wonder Women conquering territory block-by-block until the entire city is a feminist utopia.

The center would be set up as a nonprofit corporation with a board of directors composed of one representative from each of the nine original organizations and five at-large members from the community. An executive committee of officers would coordinate activities among divisions dedicated to education, services, communications, and operations. The social change division would coordinate activities of the original feminist organizations. Robins's plan was quite structured, although nonhierarchical. Each of the existing feminist groups would have an equal voice in running the center, as would community members. The inclusion of local women signaled the founders' intent to respond to community concerns and become good neighbors.<sup>19</sup>

Everyone in the founding group agreed on the concept of the women's center, but they disagreed on its implementation. Some wanted the center to have the informal atmosphere of a coffeehouse, some thought it should be an office, and some thought it should be a large mansion where staff lived (much like the Progressive Era settlement houses).<sup>20</sup> Whatever its form, they believed there was "a great need for a visible, concrete *place* for women to go to, a place where women could meet and talk—even late at night, a place where books and literature on women would be available to borrow and read, a place where sound, professional advice and counseling on *all* women's problems could be provided, a place of central communication—a kind of 'nerve center'—to serve and inform all persons in the Los Angeles area who are involved in woman's struggle to become full, human, and free."<sup>21</sup>

The building itself was also meant to have symbolic value. According to a proposal prepared by the Women's Liberation One member Sylvia Hartman, the center "would be visible evidence that 'something is being done' about women's problems and needs." Organizers believed that once they established an actual place, women would "start to crawl out from under the wood-work" to support something tangible, something more than abstract feminist goals. A building would add legitimacy to the movement. It might "have the effect of making women's problems *real* to society for once," making people see that "if there's a Women's Center there must be a real *need* for it."<sup>22</sup>

One of the Methodist group members, Sue Rodman, worked at UCLA, a connection that proved instrumental in the center's genesis. She convinced administrators to fund the center for six months, but the founders wanted the center to be off-campus in order to reach a larger audience. It also had to be easily accessible by public transit and large enough to partition into separate

spaces for the main office, library, and counseling.<sup>23</sup> A duplex behind an ice machine on South Crenshaw Boulevard fit the bill.<sup>24</sup>

### The Crenshaw Women's Center

The Crenshaw Women's Center was located in a twelve-hundred-square-foot brick duplex at 1027 South Crenshaw Boulevard in midtown Los Angeles (see figure 5). The area had good bus service and was near both the Santa Monica Freeway on the south and the upscale Wilshire Boulevard corridor on the north. Sue Rodman lived on one side of the duplex with her children; the other side became the Women's Center.<sup>25</sup> It had four newly painted rooms arranged in shotgun style: the living room was at the front, which led directly into the dining room, kitchen, and bathroom; one bedroom occupied the back. The front yard was paved over for parking, so staff fenced off part of the rear parking lot to build a playground. The small painted sign announcing the Crenshaw Women's Center was visible from the street. All of this was theirs for one hundred fifty dollars a month.<sup>26</sup>

The Crenshaw Center was a feminist place in a particular cultural landscape, which the geographer Pierce Lewis defines as "nearly everything that we can see when we go outdoors," an "unwitting autobiography" that reveals our tastes, aspirations, and fears in tangible form.<sup>27</sup> When women at the center walked out the door, they saw a neighborhood in transition from lower



FIGURE 5. Crenshaw Women's Center, 1027 South Crenshaw Boulevard, Los Angeles. Drawing by Reed Gyovai Muehlman based on photograph by Marsha Spain Fuller

middle-class white and African American to middle-class Korean. Across the street was a supermarket, other retail establishments, and single-family detached housing that was being converted to apartments. It was a safe neighborhood, neither fancy nor run down, and women felt comfortable going to the center at all hours. The door remained unlocked when women were there, and several trusted regular volunteers had keys to open or close the center. Carol Downer, who started a health clinic at the center with Lorraine Rothman (see chapter 4), remembers taking cash to the night deposit slot at a nearby bank without any incidents.<sup>28</sup> The center contributed to the change in the South Crenshaw landscape, its constant process of "becoming."<sup>29</sup>

Founders wanted to be ready by mid-December 1969 for a formal opening in January 1970. They asked for donations of a wide range of items, including playground equipment and children's games. From the beginning, they expected that women staffers and clients would bring their children to the center. They needed office equipment like desks and typewriters, but they also wanted to make it a comfortable place to gather. So they asked for a couch, chairs, lamp, and area rugs in addition to a small refrigerator and large coffee pot. It took a while for gifts to arrive. (Women attending a counselor training session on December 13 were advised to bring their own pillows to sit on.<sup>30</sup>) Eventually the founders collected two rooms of hand-me-down furniture. The front meeting room had couches and chairs, while the larger former bedroom in the back had rugs and beanbag chairs. The back room also contained a wide wooden bookcase overflowing with pamphlets and books from around the country.<sup>31</sup>

According to the architectural historian Abigail Van Slyck, buildings are products of the people who use and modify the structure to fit their needs. Feminists did that with their side of the duplex. They set up a main office as a place to plan programs, and they appealed for household items to make the center welcoming. The playground was the biggest change to the landscape surrounding the building. The center was thus more than a nondescript building; it was a structure transformed into a symbol of women's liberation through the actions of its founders, the materials they assembled, and the women who visited.<sup>32</sup>

The Open House on January 11, 1970, drew about fifty women.<sup>33</sup> An ad in the *Los Angeles Times* for free abortion referrals, and a request for volunteers that ran in the UCLA *Daily Bruin*, attracted the crowd. C-R sessions, a film series, and a feminist theater group all started operating out of the center. In May 1970 Jean Murphy of the *Los Angeles Times* wrote a story about the center that ran on the front page of the View section. Under the

headline "Clearing House for L.A. Women's Lib" with the subhead "Forum Attempts to Coordinate Splinter Groups," the article featured pictures of staff members helping "an unhappy housewife" and explaining "womlib [sic] purposes." A hand-drawn poster with the center's address and phone number was in the body of the article.<sup>34</sup>

Much of the center's activity occurred in the evenings; hours during the day were sporadic and dependent on the availability of volunteers from the nine groups participating in the center, in addition to Women's Lib UCLA and Cal State. By August 1970 more than fifteen hundred women were affiliated with the center through their feminist groups or subscriptions to the center's newsletter.<sup>35</sup> Despite the center's primary purpose, men sometimes visited. Simone Wallace remembers that many of the women active in progressive causes wanted the Left to recognize women's struggles, so they occasionally welcomed men to political meetings.<sup>36</sup>

One of the early volunteers was Zsuzsanna Budapest. Born in 1940 in Budapest, Z. (as she was known) immigrated to the United States in 1959 as a refugee from the Hungarian Revolution. After attending the University of Chicago, she moved to Los Angeles, found an affinity with radical feminist politics, and became a volunteer at the Crenshaw Women's Center. Budapest believed that "in 1971, the Women's Movement was the first women's centers. [They were] the first visible manifestation of a political movement that gave room to grow to many projects. [They were] a place to meet and plot the downfall of patriarchy . . . When I staffed there, I felt I was sitting close to the heartbeat of history."<sup>37</sup>

Budapest was a flamboyant woman. A disciple of Paganism and Goddess worship and a practitioner of spiritual healing for victims of rape and abuse, she founded the Susan B. Anthony Coven Number 1 that became the model for thousands of other Wiccan ('witches') covens around the country. Budapest opened a feminist Wicca store on Lincoln Boulevard in Venice that sold tarot cards and other psychic paraphernalia. In 1975 she was arrested after reading tarot cards for an undercover policewoman. Her crime? Practicing witchcraft without a license. Budapest lost her case, but it helped abolish state laws against psychics nine years later.<sup>38</sup>

Within a year of opening, the Crenshaw Center had generated immense energy. Abortion and contraceptive counseling were in greatest demand,<sup>39</sup> followed by personal and vocational counseling; there was also a suicide hotline for lesbians. The center's newsletter, the *Women's Center News*, had the largest circulation nationally of any feminist publication: twenty-seven hundred copies of the January 1972 issue were distributed. (A year later the newsletter became *Sister* newspaper.) The center's library offered mimeographed

pamphlets and articles of key feminist writings, including Margaret Benston's "The Political Economy of Women's Liberation," Ann Koedt's "The Myth of the Vaginal Orgasm," and Pat Maimardi's "The Politics of Housework."<sup>40</sup> Its publications reflected the center's leftist politics. Members talked about revolution and some considered themselves Maoists or Trotskyites.<sup>41</sup>

Suspecting the media of bias against feminists, the center established a speaker's bureau to deliver its message directly. Committees researched issues of relevance to women's rights, such as child care, women in the labor force, and abortion law repeal. The center taught classes on self-defense and sponsored a "Women and the Law" lecture series.<sup>42</sup> Speakers in that series included attorneys who explained California's new divorce law, one who discussed welfare rights, and Barbara Schlei, the district counsel for the federal EEOC in Los Angeles. Schlei was there to recruit volunteers for paralegal training. She argued that employment discrimination against women had to be legally challenged; fourteen women signed up to learn how to initiate legal proceedings.<sup>43</sup>

Expanded programs and multiple successful events hid schisms that began to sap energy from the Crenshaw Center during its second year. First, the local chapter of NOW withdrew its support and opened its own Center for Women's Studies at 8864 West Pico Boulevard. Its open house was on December 5, 1970, less than a year after the Crenshaw Center opened. The first center in the country opened by a NOW chapter, it differed in two significant ways from the Crenshaw Center. First, its opening was limited to members and their guests, while the Crenshaw Center welcomed all women. Second, the NOW Center invited men to all its activities, while it was understood that the Crenshaw Center was predominantly a female-only space.<sup>44</sup>

The NOW center offered a set of services almost identical to those at Crenshaw.<sup>45</sup> The month it opened, a karate expert gave a self-defense demonstration, and the NOW newsletter for December 1970 promised members they could take a course with the instructor, who taught local police officers. UCLA contacted the center with an offer to hold a class on the psychology of women, and NOW members volunteered to teach seminars on debating techniques and women's legal issues. Sundays were reserved for shows featuring art by members of NOW.<sup>46</sup>

According to the Crenshaw Center founder Joan Robins and member Sherma Berger Gluck, NOW fled because its officers considered the Crenshaw Center too leftist. Robins and Gluck thought NOW was too eager to take credit for everything feminists accomplished. NOW had three core goals: equal pay and equal job opportunities, abortion on demand, and

comprehensive child care programs. These changes would be good, Gluck admitted, but were too limited; the Crenshaw Center, she declared, wanted total change.<sup>57</sup>

A second crack in the Crenshaw Center's foundation appeared when disagreements erupted over organizational structure—or lack thereof—and leadership issues. Radical feminists rejected hierarchical structure, which they saw as a male concept, in favor of collective leadership. Positions would rotate and everyone would have an equal say in group decisions. While that model reflected democratic ideals, it was an organizational disaster. No one gained enough experience to establish institutional memory, nor did anyone accept responsibility for a particular function. The departments Robins proposed in her 1970 *Handbook* never materialized, and the clerical tasks necessary to keep an organization going were considered "shit work" by radical women who refused to do it. Internal dissent had become so overwhelming by March 1971 that a steering committee was formed to run the center. Carol Downer was a member of the steering committee; she remembered weekly meetings in which little was accomplished. The center was understaffed and disorganized just as demand for it was increasing dramatically.<sup>58</sup>

The third blow was delivered in February 1972, when a group of women from the Venice–Santa Monica area created the Westside Women's Center. Santa Monica was already a hotbed of feminism. By 1971 a large house on Third Street had become a women's collective where weekly C-R groups were attended by as many as sixty women. Residents were evicted at the end of the year but continued to hold C-R meetings at a nearby church in Ocean Park. This group formed the core of the Westside Women's Center, which offered services similar to those at Crenshaw and the NOW center.<sup>59</sup>

Cofounder Sherma Berger Gluck remembered the original Westside Center at 219 S. Venice Boulevard as a ground-floor apartment with two or three bedrooms and a front porch. Despite its location in a residential neighborhood, it experienced no challenges from the city regarding appropriate zoning.<sup>60</sup> In an April 1972 *Los Angeles Times* article announcing the center's opening, the member Debby Rosenfelt described the Westside Center as "affiliated with" the Crenshaw Center. According to Rosenfelt, feminists who had been traveling to Crenshaw believed they needed to address Westside women's special needs: welfare rights counseling, drug abuse, and self-defense. The Westside Center, she noted, was within walking distance of a bus stop so that welfare recipients could reach it easily.<sup>61</sup> Since the Crenshaw Center was also near a bus stop, this rationale was less convincing than the fact that many of the activists living near Santa Monica were tired of the long commute to the original center.<sup>62</sup>

The Crenshaw Center could not withstand the cumulative effects of the departure of NOW, internal organizational difficulties, and the loss of members to the Westside Center. The entire enterprise finally collapsed: the Crenshaw Center closed its doors on New Year's Eve, 1972. During its two years, it inspired five volunteers to establish their own places: Downer founded the first Feminist Women's Health Center (that would soon be replicated in other cities across the country); Simone Gold (who would soon return to her birth name, Wallace), Gahan Kelley, and Adele Wallace opened Sisterhood Bookstore; and Budapest opened her Wicca shop.<sup>63</sup>

The Westside Center closed in 1974. After a hiatus, it reopened on Hill Street with an explicitly radical feminist mission. But the Westside and Hill Street Centers, like the Crenshaw Center, were underfunded. The Hill Street Center survived on pledges, and as membership declined, so did revenues; it closed in 1975.<sup>64</sup>

### Center Programs

During their brief existence, the Crenshaw and Westside Centers were home bases for a resilient network of activists who launched multiple programs to promote women's rights. The Women's Liberation School taught women to stand up for themselves, the Anti-Rape Squad mobilized women to take an active role in removing predators from the streets, and the Gay Women's Service Center provided a safe place for lesbians to express their sexuality.

The Women's Liberation School educated women about feminism and trained them in practical skills with which they could become self-sufficient. The school started at the Crenshaw Center in October 1971 with fifteen classes. The flyer announcing the school began with a passage describing the need for the school:

In this society, women are taught that they are passive, illogical, impulsive, and emotionally unstable. They are taught that they are inferior and subordinate to men. Education, religion, law, the media, and other environmental influences cast them in roles as sex object, housewife and mother, servant and emotional comforter of men. Women are rarely directed toward skills and information which would help them recognize their capabilities and realize their potentials. They are rarely given the opportunity to develop the critical skills necessary for them to function autonomously.

The Women's Liberation School is designed to correct some of the distortions of traditional education; and to help women understand

themselves, realize the nature of their oppression, and do what is necessary to achieve true liberation.<sup>55</sup>

Classes met at the center in the evenings and on weekends for eight weeks. The cost was two dollars per class or five dollars for an unlimited number of classes; those who could not afford to pay could donate their time to the center.<sup>56</sup> Half of the fees went to the center and the rest was distributed evenly among the teachers. Recruiting instructors was a time-consuming job. A guide titled *How to Start a Women's Liberation School* recommended contacting women who had spoken at the center, advertising in the feminist media, and approaching professors at UCLA's women's studies program. Arranging the timing and content of courses demanded the full-time attention of at least one person.<sup>57</sup>

Women were the vast majority of those asked to teach liberal arts courses, but two men were drafted to teach auto mechanics. Two skills courses, though, carpentry and "Electricity and You," were taught by women.<sup>58</sup> Courses were offered throughout 1972 and were advertised in the *Los Angeles Times* and the Los Angeles chapter's *NOW News*. The August 1972 issue of the *NOW News* explained that the school was "designed to enrich women to understand their position in society, recognize their capabilities and potentials, and develop the skills necessary for them to function autonomously."<sup>59</sup> The selection of courses varied slightly from term to term, sometimes including Tai Chi or money management, and almost always self-defense, women in history, and practical skills.<sup>60</sup> In October 1972 the *NOW News* listed classes being offered, for three dollars each, at both the Crenshaw and Westside Centers.<sup>61</sup>

By holding classes at the centers, feminists were infusing the spaces with knowledge produced and consumed by women. With the liberation school, women gained an appreciation for the accomplishments of women throughout history, which they may have been reading about for the first time. They also acquired the power to modify their surroundings through carpentry, or at the very least to rewire a lamp and fix their own cars.

The crime of rape was of the utmost importance to feminists in 1971. When Joan Robins learned that a friend had been raped while hitchhiking, she and others at the Crenshaw Center mobilized the Anti-Rape Squad. Their first action was to produce a bumper sticker proclaiming "Sisters give rides to sisters" to encourage women to pick up female hitchhikers. They also aired public service announcements on the radio to increase awareness of the political implications of rape and to encourage women who had been raped to call or visit the center. The squad used dramatic means to publicize

the problem and protect women. If women who had been raped could describe the rapist, the squad would post his description on the Venice Beach Boardwalk. If they discovered the rapist's identity, they would spray-paint his name on the Pier. A member of the center once took a picture of a man who had been punching out women on the beach and posted it with the warning "THIS MAN ASSAULTS WOMEN."<sup>62</sup> In an era when neither the police nor many citizens took the crime of rape seriously, such guerrilla actions were meant to force the issue into the public consciousness.<sup>63</sup>

The Anti-Rape Squad moved to the Westside Center when the Crenshaw Center closed. It continued its vigilante approach until 1973, when it became formalized as the Los Angeles Commission on Assaults Against Women (LACAAW). The LACAAW got a financial boost when Councilwoman Pat Russell gave the Westside Women's Center fifty dollars a month to run the city's first rape crisis hotline. Counselors did more than take phone calls. They would also go with victims to the police station, the hospital, and sometimes to court.<sup>64</sup> The LACAAW was modeled on the Rape Crisis Center of Washington, DC. Opened in 1972, the Washington center is believed to be the first in the nation to take emergency calls from victims. Its publication *How to Start a Rape Crisis Center* helped establish groups in major cities and college towns.<sup>65</sup>

It is worth noting that the Washington and Los Angeles anti-rape movements gained momentum before Susan Brownmiller published the definitive feminist treatise on rape, *Against Our Will: Men, Women, and Rape* (1975). Brownmiller labeled rape a crime of power, not passion, and claimed that all men used its threat to subjugate all women. It was the beginning of efforts to change the public perception of rape from one in which the woman was complicit to one in which she was a victim of assault.

Both straight and gay women worked on anti-rape squads, but gay women (the term they used then) searched for places where they could focus on their emerging sexual identities as well. In 1971 Del Whan provided such a place when she founded the Gay Women's Service Center. Energized by the Stonewall Riots of 1969 and ready to come out of the closet, Whan became active in the (mostly male) Los Angeles Gay Liberation Front (GLF). In 1970 Whan and the one or two other women in GLF ran an ad in the *Los Angeles Free Press* announcing the formation of a "Women's Caucus." Soon five to fifteen women were attending Tuesday evening meetings. They learned of gay women at the Crenshaw Center, and the two groups began to socialize, engaging in intense discussion about the "male chauvinism" rampant in GLF.<sup>66</sup> The GLF member Brenda Weathers cited as an example the gay pride parade in 1971, when lesbians had to "march . . . together with the guys

who were dragging a twenty-foot papier-mâché penis down Hollywood Boulevard.<sup>70</sup>

When the Crenshaw lesbians invited GLF women to join them, the two groups merged to become Gay Women's Liberation. Brenda and Carolyn Weathers and Sharon Lilly, also of GLF, chose to affiliate with the Crenshaw Center because they did not want to work with NOW; its membership was too blatantly heterosexual. Gay Women's Liberation changed its name to Lesbian Feminists in February 1971 when, as the story goes, a straight woman from NOW saw lesbians staging a kiss-in and said "Oh, you lesbian feminists!" They liked the name and it became a favorite term among radical lesbians.<sup>71</sup>

As a recovering alcoholic, Whan wanted to establish a place outside the bar scene where lesbians could gather without encountering drugs or alcohol. Toward the end of 1970 she found a storefront at 1542 Glendale Avenue in Echo Park for one hundred fifty dollars per month. On impulse, and without consulting members of the Lesbian Feminists, she rented the building. She had unwittingly committed a major feminist sin by taking a leadership role. She was accused of being "male identified," "elitist," and of "dividing the movement." Remembering her expulsion, Whan wrote that it was a "deeply shaming event to be trashed by my erstwhile 'sisters.'" She left the Lesbian Feminists, taking eighteen-year-old Virginia Hoeffding with her, and turned the empty building into the Gay Women's Service Center. They installed a pay phone, and Whan learned later that it may have been the first time the word *gay* appeared in the Los Angeles telephone book.<sup>72</sup>

The gay women who visited the center lacked a political agenda and did not call themselves feminists. Rather, they sought respite from the heterosexual world while they sorted out who they were. Some had been kicked out of their homes by their parents or had been in jail and needed a place to stay. Many had alcohol and drug abuse problems, and Whan and Hoeffding reasoned it was better for them to sleep on the floor at the center than on the street. Whan considered herself to be a feminist but believed that helping lesbians overcome their oppression was more important than helping them develop a feminist identity. "That was the whole purpose," she said, "of starting a service center as differentiated from a political action group."<sup>73</sup>

Throughout 1971 the center held meetings, dinners, and dances. Lesbians marched in the second gay pride Christopher Street West Parade in Los Angeles. Ads in the *Free Press* attracted plenty of volunteers. Always struggling to pay the bills, the center moved up the street to a place with cheaper rent. Whan was beginning to burn out. Her fatigue was compounded by the fact that GLF established its own Gay Community Service Center and

challenged Whan's territory by scheduling women's events on the same nights as dinners at the Gay Women's Service Center. After Whan's departure in late 1971, Mina Robinson Meyer and Sharott Raphael took over management of the center. They organized free spaghetti dinners on Tuesday nights, discussion groups on Thursday nights, and dances on Friday nights.<sup>74</sup>

Soon after Whan left, the very group that had purged her showed up to instill some feminist consciousness at the center. The Lesbian Feminists, who had condemned Whan and the center for dividing the movement, taught women not to use the word *chick*, and to call themselves *lesbians*, not *gay*. As feminism became more widespread, so did places for lesbians to gather. Fewer women came to the center, and fewer still volunteered to help keep the doors open. By the end of 1972 Meyer and Raphael closed the center and joined the thriving Gay Community Services Center.<sup>75</sup>

The Gay Women's Service Center became the first lesbian space in Los Angeles established during the 1970s, but it was not the city's first. That designation belonged to the local chapter of Daughters of Bilitis (DOB), begun in 1955 by San Francisco middle-class lesbians searching for alternatives to lesbian bars. By the 1960s there were enough Los Angeles members to sponsor several social events.<sup>76</sup> Los Angeles became the epicenter of lesbian activism in the 1970s, and Jeanne Córdova supplied much of its energy. Córdova, the founder and editor of the news magazine *Lesbian Tide*, was serving as the president of DOB in 1971 when the organization opened a lesbian center at 1910 South Vermont Avenue with "lesbian" printed on the glass front door.<sup>77</sup> Córdova was not yet a feminist, but when members of the Crenshaw Center sent announcements of its activities to *Lesbian Tide*, Córdova visited the center in search of other lesbians. Her visits inspired her to join the women's movement.<sup>78</sup>

In 1971 Córdova organized the Gay Women's West Coast Conference, which attracted conservative, older "gay women" and radical, younger "lesbian feminists" (as they identified themselves) from the East Coast, South, and Midwest. Elated by the success of the first conference, Córdova staged the West Coast Lesbian Conference in 1973. This one drew nearly two thousand women from across the country and overseas to the UCLA campus. The "largest single gathering of lesbians known in history" generated camaraderie and conflict. A Lesbian Mothers' Union was formed, but there was also a raucous protest over whether Beth Elliot, a male-to-female transsexual musician, should be allowed to perform. This conference was a reminder that sexual politics could play out between women as intensely as between women and men.<sup>79</sup>

By 1973 Córdova and others had formed the Tide Collective to take over publication of the magazine. They felt that the former publishing group had become too bureaucratic and hierarchical, and they wanted to experiment with a more egalitarian structure. Acknowledging that money, time pressures, and feminism were difficult to integrate, they made an effort to listen to each other, seek and extend personal support, and do away with voting. They also fought the urge to compete with other feminist publications, struggling to be "sisterly and non-competitive." The Collective's decision to subtitle the magazine *A [not The] Voice of the Lesbian/Feminist Community* is indicative of their effort.<sup>77</sup>

A variety of spatial institutions emerged to serve lesbians in Los Angeles. The Woman's Building, one of whose founders (Arlene Raven) was a lesbian, had a distinctly "lesbian energy." This energy took its most visible form in the 1977 Lesbian Art Project (LAP), an attempt to rescue lesbian culture from an "oppression mentality." Members of LAP used performance art, dances, and collaborative projects to add glamour to lesbian identity.<sup>78</sup> The L.A. Women's Saloon and Parlour was another place popular among activists, although it was open for only about one year. Córdova remembers it as a big, cavernous space with about fifty tables that served meals and drinks. It was a de facto women's center for women looking for places to hang out; men were excluded, and it was acceptable to wear sloppy clothes.<sup>79</sup> The October 1973 issue of the *Lesbian Tide* listed ten bars in Los Angeles that served only women. One of them, Butterfly West at 5617½ Melrose Avenue, advertised itself as "A New Women's Bar" where food, drinks, and coffee were served. Dancing, chess, and pool were available, and the Last Woman's Rock and Roll Band often performed there.<sup>80</sup>

Created by radical activists, the Crenshaw and Westside Women's Centers took inspiration from women's liberation groups throughout the country. Just as UCLA was a crucible for feminist activism in Los Angeles, Harvard served a similar purpose in Boston. But whereas the Crenshaw Center was modeled on a women's center in New York City, the Women's Educational Center in Boston borrowed its structure from centers in London and Chicago.

### Boston

The Cambridge Center, also known as the Cambridge Women's Educational Center, opened in 1972 after members of Bread and Roses collective and other feminist groups used unconventional methods to demand new space for women.<sup>81</sup>

### The Cambridge Women's Educational Center

"Women's Group Seizes Harvard Building; Demand Low-Income Housing and Permanent Women's Center." This headline appeared in the March 8, 1971, issue of the *Harvard Crimson*, the student-run daily newspaper of Harvard University.<sup>82</sup> Two days earlier about one hundred fifty women had gathered at the Boston Common to celebrate International Women's Day. They marched past sites of women's oppression, including the Playboy Club, and headed across the Charles River on Massachusetts Avenue into Cambridge. The demonstrators took a left on Pearl Street to 888 Memorial Drive, where Harvard's Graduate School of Design held architectural technology workshops. Barely habitable, the building had been slated for demolition to prepare for construction of graduate student and faculty housing. When they arrived around 3:30 that afternoon, the women were let in by a prearranged "welcoming committee." There they stayed for ten days.<sup>83</sup>

The low-income housing to which the headline referred was for the nearby Riverside area. The community-led Riverside Planning Team had been negotiating with Harvard for two years about building low-income housing on the site, and members of the largely black neighborhood resented the occupiers' involvement. Saundra Graham, the president of the Riverside Planning Team, had initially denied any connection with the group that occupied the building. But after she met with them to explain her concern about losing leverage with Harvard, the occupiers modified their demands to emphasize that any talks about low-income housing should take place only between Harvard and the Riverside community.<sup>84</sup>

The occupation of the Harvard building had been well orchestrated. In the summer of 1970 Bread and Roses members decided to create a women's center where existing women's groups could get together and offer services for women. Throughout that year women in various organizations coalesced around the idea of seizing a building. In addition to Bread and Roses, others involved were Boston's Gay Women's Liberation, the Old Mole Women's Caucus, a group called Hysteria, the Women and Imperialism Group, and the Women's Law Commune. Occupier Marsha Steinberg remembered the actors as about evenly split between the socialist-feminist Bread and Roses with its mixed straight and lesbian membership and an "action faction" of radical activists (some former Weathermen<sup>85</sup>) skilled in street demonstrations and "getting into places."<sup>86</sup> About three weeks before the march they held a meeting to review their strategy. Not everyone knew each other, but they all shared the goal of taking over a building. They believed that the take-over would make the women's movement more unified and powerful.<sup>87</sup>

## CHAPTER 3

### Feminist Bookstores

#### *Building Identity*

Feminist bookstores were often an outgrowth of women's center libraries. The libraries' collections grew as mimeographed copies of movement articles were brought back from conferences, and through subscriptions to national newsletters like *No More Fun and Games* and *off our backs*. Eventually women's centers sold these materials to pay the rent. An independent bookstore might follow, which would carry with it the mission to serve the women's community.<sup>1</sup> This was the case with Sisterhood Bookstore in Los Angeles. Its founders spent time at the Crenshaw Women's Center and were drawn to the literature accumulating in the back room. If women wanted to take an article or book, they would leave money in a metal box on the bottom shelf of a large bookcase. When the center closed in 1972, Simone Gold (her married name), Gahan Kelley, and Adele Wallace stepped in to fill the void by opening Sisterhood in a small shop set back from the street at 1915 Westwood Boulevard.<sup>2</sup>

On the East Coast, four Boston feminists had a similar idea. Rita Arditti, Gilda Bruckman, Mary Lowry, and Jean MacRae joined forces in 1974 for the explicit purpose of creating a women's bookstore. They met through radical theologian Mary Daly. On November 14, 1971, Daly became the first woman to preach at Harvard's Memorial Church. Instead of delivering a sermon, however, Daly descended from the pulpit and invited other women to walk out of the church to protest its patriarchal ideology.<sup>3</sup> Daly was teaching

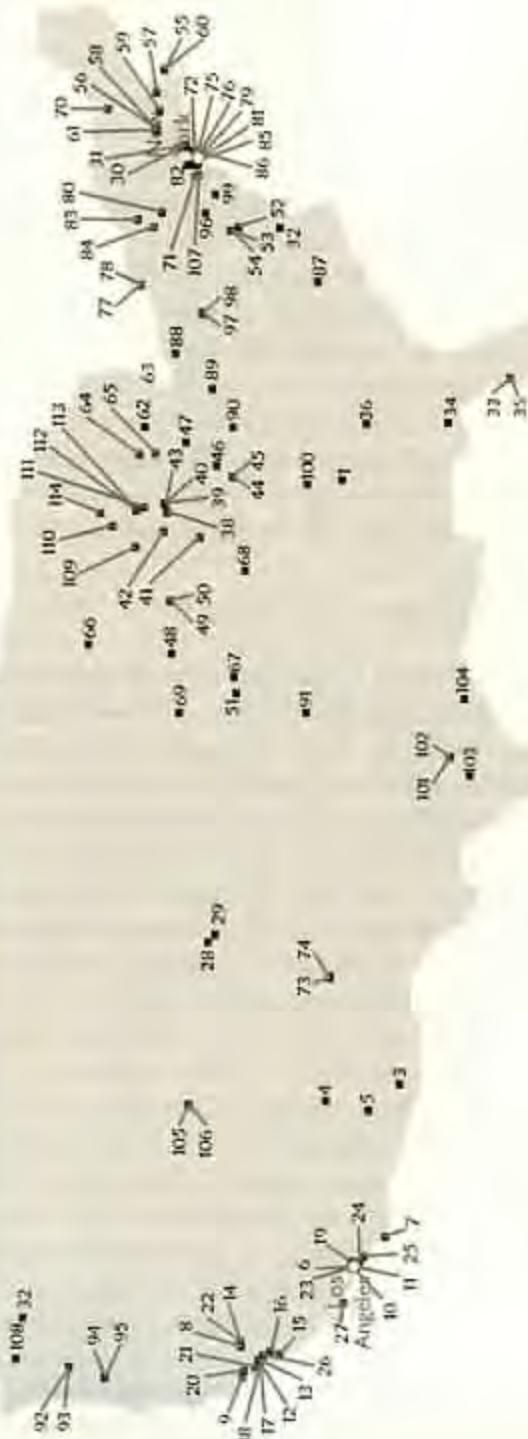


FIGURE 7. Feminist bookstores in the continental United States, ca. 1980. Map by Lucas Lyons. Source: Appendix C.

Most important was the sense of community they cultivated. Women who visited feminist bookstores knew they were with others like themselves, even if they were not yet clear about who they were or who they were becoming. Some apolitical women might be discovering that they were feminists and some straight women that they were lesbians; when the two occurred simultaneously it was a dramatic experience. Despite the schisms that plagued (or energized, depending on one's perspective) the movement, feminist bookstores welcomed women of all persuasions under one roof. These were the glory days of feminist community-building, and it happened in bookstores. Simone Wallace laments the loss of a women's community today. How, she asks, do we make places like that again? And how do the pioneering founders find anything equally as fulfilling as operating a feminist bookstore? The bookstores did more than transform the lives of readers; they also gave enormous meaning to their founders' lives.<sup>121</sup>

## CHAPTER 4

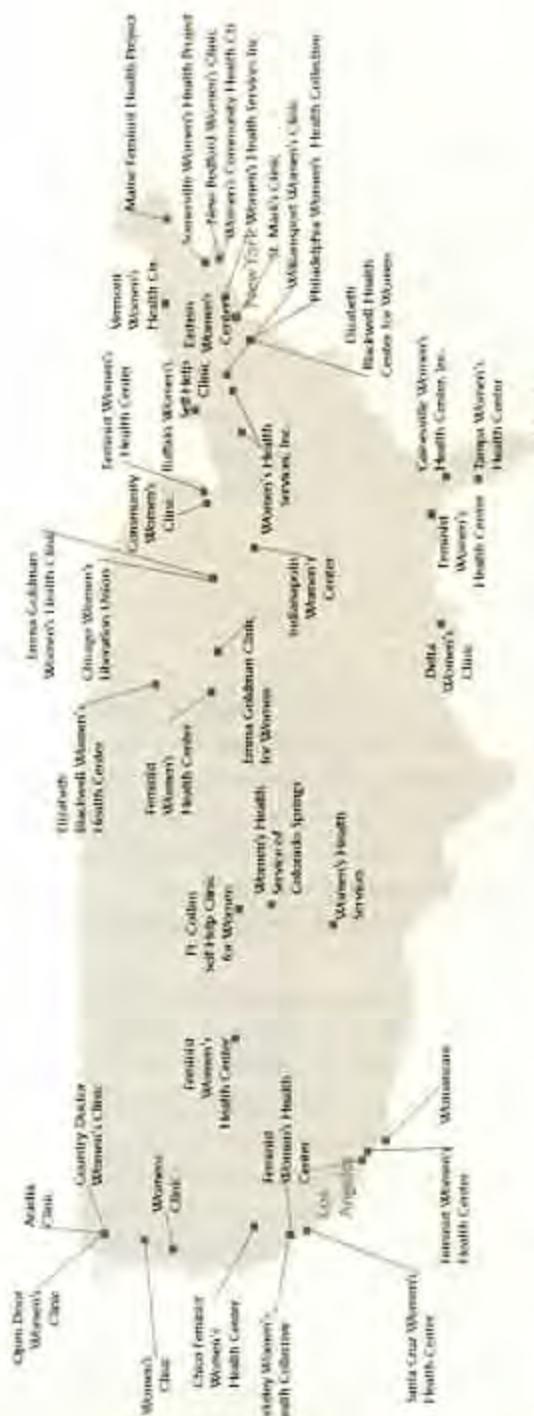
### Feminist Health Clinics

#### *Promoting Reproductive Rights*

The cornerstones of reproductive rights are access to safe abortions and birth control methods and the ability to reject forced sterilization. According to the philosopher David Held, reproductive rights signify "the very basis of the possibility of effective participation of women in both civil society and the polity."<sup>122</sup> Women's opportunities in the public realm are directly correlated with their ability to control their own fertility. The activists who opened the first feminist health clinics understood that vital connection.

In 1971 Carol Downer and Lorraine Rothman founded a self-help clinic in Los Angeles. It was the first in the nation, earning the title Self-Help Clinic One. Downer explained its philosophy for the July 1973 special health-care issue of the Women's Center publication *Sister*: "The goal of the Self-Help Clinic is to take women's medicine back into our own hands. The strategy is to take back the power over our own bodies, both everyday types of control which information and self-knowledge gives [sic] us, and we also want to acquire special skills and knowledge which will allow us collectively to independently provide our own health care."<sup>123</sup>

The magazine's cover featured a speculum-wielding Wonder Woman vanquishing male figures representing the American Medical Association, Sigmund Freud, and the Catholic Church. Self-Help Clinic One grew from a single back room in the Women's Center at 1027 South Crenshaw



**Figure 12.** Map of feminist health clinics, ca. 1975. Map by Lucas Lyons. Source: Appendix D

Boulevard to the entire side of the duplex. When the Women's Center closed in 1972, the clinic was renamed the Feminist Women's Health Center (FWHC) and took over both sides of the building. Soon the FWHC expanded into a two-story house at 746 South Crenshaw, where staff installed state-of-the-art communications equipment: five push-button lines on a rotary telephone.<sup>5</sup> When the lease at 746 South Crenshaw expired in July 1974, the FWHC moved to the second floor of an office building at 1112 South Crenshaw Boulevard.<sup>6</sup> Throughout its history, it stayed near its initial location and avoided any disruption in access for women who needed its services.

In 1975 the women's health movement in the United States included more than twelve hundred groups.<sup>5</sup> Warnings about dangerous obstetrical practices and the side effects of certain drugs spread quickly via C-R groups and mimeographed sheets distributed in women's centers. Grassroots activities that began locally in the United States soon had a national and global reach, with women's health organizations in Australia, Canada, Europe, Great Britain, and Mexico. In the United States, 110 clinics and centers delivered women's health services by 1978 (see figure 12 and appendix D for a partial list).<sup>6</sup>

## The Road to Reproductive Rights

In *Heman's Body, Woman's Right* (1990), the historian Linda Gordon places the contemporary struggle for reproductive rights in the context of the longer US social movement for birth control, which began in the late nineteenth century with feminists' demands for "voluntary motherhood."<sup>7</sup> Women can avoid having children by using contraception, by having an abortion, or by sterilization, but legal access to all three methods has not always been available. The government, influenced by cultural assumptions about proper sexual activity for women, has regulated all three at some point in US history. Men's reproductive functions, in contrast, have been exempt from legal control.<sup>8</sup>

Women, most of them white, led the mid-twentieth-century battle for reproductive rights. African American women were hesitant to join the fight because of its all-consuming focus on legalizing abortion; they were more concerned about forced sterilization. Middle-class white women, for their part, were slow to recognize sterilization abuse as a feminist concern. Since whites typically encountered resistance from private doctors if they sought the operation, they failed to understand that doctors often sterilized women of color without their consent.

founder of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party Fannie Lou Hamer experienced the latter. When Hamer checked into the hospital in Sunflower County, Mississippi, to have a small uterine tumor removed, the doctor performed a complete hysterectomy without medical justification and without her knowledge. She later discovered that 60 percent of black women in the county had been victims, as she had, of a "Mississippi appendectomy."<sup>57</sup>

Just as the *Relf* case mobilized African Americans, *Madrigal v. Quilligan* energized Mexican Americans. In 1973 Dr. Bernard Rosenfield, a resident at County General Hospital in Los Angeles, discovered an explosion in the number of sterilizations performed between 1968 and 1970. Dr. Rosenfield found little evidence of informed consent. Instead, he observed obstetricians urging uneducated patients to have tubal ligations, often so that doctors could gain surgical experience. Mexican American feminists learned of the practice and recruited more than one hundred women who had been forcibly sterilized. In 1978 ten of these women, all low-income Spanish-speaking immigrants, brought suit against the hospital. One of the plaintiffs, Dolores Madrigal, had signed a consent form to be sterilized after a medical assistant informed her, falsely, that her husband had already signed it. Other plaintiffs testified that they had been approached while in the last hours of a difficult labor when they were under stress, had been told they already had too many children, or had been denied a hernia repair unless they signed. In three cases, no consent was obtained. But the judge decided in favor of Dr. Quilligan, head of obstetrics and gynecology at County General, declaring that the defendants had acted in good faith and intended no harm.<sup>58</sup>

Activists saw feminist health clinics as women's only hope to combat the medical profession's abuse of their reproductive rights. None were more adamant about the power of self-help than Carol Downer and Lorraine Rothman.

### **Los Angeles Self-Help Clinic One**

The idea for the clinic took shape on April 7, 1971, at Everywoman's Bookstore in Los Angeles, where women dedicated to medical self-help regularly met.<sup>59</sup> Downer, a mother of six, believed that if mothers could care for their children with basic first aid knowledge, they could also take care of themselves with the proper training. Women with inflammation of the cervix (cervicitis), for example, were typically treated by cauterization. Yet the condition usually resolved itself over time. A woman could prevent costly visits to the doctor's office, and possibly unnecessary procedures, if she checked her cervix regularly. To demonstrate the technique that night, Downer lifted

her skirt, inserted a speculum into her vagina, and revealed her cervix for all the women to see.<sup>60</sup>

Later that year Downer and Rothman opened a clinic in the back bedroom of the Los Angeles Women's Center on South Crenshaw Boulevard.<sup>61</sup> The front room on the south side of the building was used on Tuesdays for the Women's Abortion Referral Service (WARS). Staff members performed uterine checks and counseled women about the upcoming procedure, then accompanied them to San Vicente Hospital where doctors would perform the abortions.<sup>62</sup> Some feminists were critical of abortion referral services because they received fees from hospitals. But defenders of the practice pointed out their advantages. Abortions were so lucrative that hospitals agreed to pay fees to referral services. If it was a feminist service, the fees paid rent and telephone expenses, financed abortions for indigent women, and compensated staff for time spent counseling women. Nonfeminist services, on the other hand, made profits that went into "some man's pocket."<sup>63</sup>

Downer and Rothman toured abortion clinics in New York City to collect ideas for their own facility. They found that each client would come through the front door into the waiting area. She would then progress through a series of stations, staffed by medical specialists, to have her blood drawn, change into a hospital gown, and have a pelvic exam, followed by anesthesia and the abortion. After recovery, she would leave by the back door. Downer and Rothman were determined to avoid that layout in the self-help clinic, later renamed the Feminist Women's Health Center (FWHC). They arranged for patients to sit around the stations and talk with each other, providing cheese and crackers if the wait was long. After her abortion, a woman would come back out into the waiting room where others could see that she was fine. This created a loop of peer counseling among patients that began when they walked in the door. The clinic layout empowered women to ask questions, observe how other women were doing, and support each other.<sup>64</sup>

The staff tried to ensure a comfortable and supportive environment that was as different as possible from a typical medical facility. They wanted to distinguish their place from the free clinics, run mainly by men, which were grimy, bare, and furnished with "ten-minute chairs" in which no one could sit for long. The FWHC was decorated with pictures on the walls and—a woman's touch—on the ceiling over the examination table so patients could focus on a calming landscape scene when their feet were in the stirrups. Rugs covered the floor of the living/waiting room, plants were scattered about, and comfortable chairs were arranged in a circle to facilitate conversations.<sup>65</sup>

Within two months of the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision, the FWHC opened Women's Choice Clinic at its two Crenshaw Boulevard locations and began

offering abortions. Physicians performed therapeutic abortions up to ten weeks after conception using vacuum aspiration and a local anesthetic. Women were counseled by staff both before and after the abortion, and staff accompanied them into the procedure room for emotional support and to explain each step of the process. Free pregnancy screenings and birth control information were available five days a week. Patients had two choices when they came to the clinic. They could make an appointment to be examined by a woman gynecologist and female lay workers who demonstrated self-examination techniques. Or they could choose the less conventional option of scheduling an appointment with several other women at the same time and, in addition to being treated by the doctor, observe the treatment of other women. Fees for services were on a sliding scale.<sup>70</sup>

Like other self-help pioneers, Downer and Rothman had a revolutionary agenda: women educated about their bodies should seize control of their health care from doctors and place it in their own hands, where it belonged. The first step was to alert women to their rights as consumers of existing health services. As a visitor from the Milwaukee Women's Health Collective discovered, the FWHC was more than a clinic. "It's a political organization that, as part of its politics and as a way to sustain itself, does provide abortion services and well-woman participatory gynecological services and pregnancy counseling."<sup>71</sup> Indeed, staff discussed politics daily, sometimes in meetings that lasted for hours. They all sat in a circle, on couches or on the floor, figuring out as they went how to run the clinic democratically.<sup>72</sup>

Political discussions were about more than the internal functioning of the FWHC. The clinic was also an operating base for political activity and engagement with the neighborhood. Refusing to just "sit inside the four walls" waiting for patients, staff members attended every community meeting—about police brutality, for example. They advocated for reproductive rights and gave interviews to the media when abortion was in the news. With its "Women's Choice Clinic" sign clearly visible from the street, the center became the symbol of legalized abortion. These were the ways in which the FWHC became influential in the public dialogue about abortion rights.<sup>73</sup>

Downer believed in a concept that was controversial among feminists: organizational structure. Running an effective clinic, Downer insisted, required such bureaucratic concessions as sign-in sheets, in- and out-baskets, trainings sessions, and personnel files. But she was quick to point out that it was an open structure inviting maximum participation in making clinic policy. Downer was committed to the ideals of egalitarianism, and to making the structure work for staff and patients, rather than having them fit the

structure. One of the guiding tenets of the clinic was collective control over the workplace by full-time staff members, with no outside board of directors or separate management structure.<sup>74</sup>

The founders took a collective approach to family life as well. One of the advantages of working at the Los Angeles FWHC, compared with any other type of clinic, was free on-site child care.<sup>75</sup> Children were loosely supervised by everyone, until one day they set a sofa on fire. Downer and Rothman decided it was time to hire someone to watch the kids. They let the children interview the candidates; the kids asked applicants if they would be allowed to curse and where they would take them on field trips.<sup>76</sup> Staff furnished the room with toys, a TV, and equipment older children could use when they came to the FWHC after school. Some of the women also shared housing. Living communally stretched their small wages, as did the food provided at the center. Staff members could have breakfast there, and snacks were available all day. One of the best benefits, though, was free membership in a gym two blocks away. Staff members took their own health seriously; gym time counted as work time.<sup>77</sup>

Francie Hornstein, who worked with Downer and Rothman, published a column for feminist newsletters titled "Assertiveness in the Doctor's Office." The list of thirteen suggestions started with "All people have a legal right to read their own medical charts and records" and "You have the right to full and complete explanations of all examinations, treatments, and medications." It included reminders that married women have rights to medical treatment without the consent of their spouses, and that it is the patient's right to read literature accompanying medications. Hornstein recommended a firm stand on the politics of language. "If you are addressed by your first name by office personnel (including the doctor) you should feel free to relate to them on a first name basis also."<sup>78</sup> Physicians assumed then—and some still do—that a female patient would use his title, while he was free to patronize her by using her first name regardless of her age. This practice tapped into feminists' anger at being called "girls" or "chicks" instead of women. For feminists, rejecting the familiarity implied by first names was crucial to leveling the balance of power. Hornstein was committed to revolution. In 1974 she told an interviewer that "Unlike most Free Clinics, our goal is *not* to provide an alternative health delivery system. . . . We do not want to coexist with the medical establishment, we want to take it over."<sup>79</sup>

The same year the clinic opened, Downer and Rothman embarked on a twenty-six-city tour to spread the gospel of self-help. They took with them a slide show illustrating cervical self-examination, childbirth, abortion, birth control, menopause, and other subjects related to women's health.<sup>80</sup> The trip

was prompted by their experience at a NOW conference at the Marina Hotel in Los Angeles where they had been prevented from demonstrating the ME technique. Although Downer and Rothman had been invited, conference organizers decided that the spectacle was too radical; the event took place in a hotel room instead of in a conference venue. (Downer would eventually give the demonstration at the 1973 NOW convention in Washington, DC). Madeline Schwenk of Chicago's Jane underground abortion referral network was at the 1971 conference and asked Downer and Rothman to teach self-examination techniques to Jane's members.<sup>77</sup> These experiences convinced Downer and Rothman that they had to reach a larger audience. At the invitation of NOW members across the country, they traveled by bus from Los Angeles to Wichita, Kansas City, Iowa City, Detroit, and Chicago, then to New Jersey, Brooklyn, and Providence, Rhode Island.<sup>78</sup>

It turned out to be a busy year. Carol Downer and staff member Colleen Wilson were arrested in September for practicing medicine without a license. The grounds? Downer had helped activist Z. Budapest insert yogurt into her vagina, a common home remedy for a yeast infection. Wilson had fit a woman with a diaphragm. Downer and Wilson spent several hours in jail before being released on \$500 bond each.<sup>79</sup> Wilson pleaded guilty; she was fined \$250, given 25 days' suspended sentence, and put on two years of probation. Downer pleaded not guilty and went to trial.<sup>80</sup> *Time* magazine predicted the case would become a "feminist cause célèbre."<sup>81</sup>

To arrest the two women the Los Angeles Police Department had raided the FWHC based on information from undercover witnesses. Two uniformed policemen and eight plainclothesmen conducted a "gynecological treasure hunt." They confiscated a fifty-foot extension cord, plastic specula, syringes and tubes, birth control pills, diaphragms, a pie tin, and a measuring cup. One of the informants was an ex-nun who had attended the session at which the yogurt incident took place. The other, the policewoman Sharon Dalton, reported that on April 28 Downer had offered to perform an abortion for her. In fact, Downer had flown to Portland, Oregon, that day to conduct a workshop at the American Psychological Association conference. At the time Downer was employed full time by the California Department of Corrections, Parole, and Community Services Unit. Things looked grim until the unit's secretary brought the plane tickets to court. Downer remembers that up to that moment, "the trial had not been going well, especially after Sharon Dalton's testimony. After Jenny [the secretary] testified, the entire atmosphere of the courtroom changed."<sup>82</sup>

The FWHC issued a press release expressing its outrage at the arrests, but it also conveyed the sense of absurdity surrounding "the great yogurt

conspiracy." Reporting that the premises had been searched and files and equipment seized, the statement noted that "police also attempted to confiscate a carton of strawberry yogurt, but were deterred by the strenuous objection of one of the center staff members, who stated, 'You can't have that; it's my breakfast.'" Los Angeles Deputy City Attorney David M. Schacter was indignant that women at the clinic had been practicing medicine. He insisted that all the procedures should have been performed by a physician, demanding, "Who are they to diagnose a yeast infection and prescribe yogurt for it?" To the clinic staff, Schacter's attitude was characteristic of men's monopolistic control of women's bodies. "The male-dominated medical profession would make Tampax a prescription item, if they thought they could get away with it" was one of Downer's more caustic remarks.<sup>83</sup>

News of the raid spread immediately through the feminist media. *The Monthly Extract: An Irregular Periodical*, published by the Feminist Gynecological Self-Help Clinics of America, issued an appeal for legal defense funds in its September 1972 newsletter.<sup>84</sup> The newsletter urged women to publicize the self-help clinic concept and the arrest through multiple efforts. They were to copy a sample press release, pass the word to feminist groups, and discuss the issue in C-R groups and meetings. The emergency appeal was also sent to presidents of all chapters of NOW. The newsletter emphasized that the charges concerned "every woman with a body that she wants to own and control." After all, the editors pointed out, "Much as a man has immediate access to his own penis, a woman can now have immediate access to her own cervix. IS THAT ILLEGAL?"<sup>85</sup> The fund-raising appeal garnered \$1,200 within a few months. Robin Morgan, the poet and editor of *Sisterhood Is Powerful*, contributed \$1,000 of that amount.<sup>86</sup>

Downer relished the trial. It was an opportunity to publicize the FWHC's efforts and focus public attention on women's health needs. Downer sent a "Dear Sister" letter to all feminist groups urging them to join her at the Los Angeles County Courthouse on November 27, 1972, at 9:00 a.m. Mindful of the costs their attendance might incur, the letter noted that women who needed child care or had parking problems should contact the FWHC for help. Downer anticipated a "resounding victory for Sisterhood!" Her feminist attorneys Diane Wayne and Jeannette Christy requested, and got, a woman judge. This was a major accomplishment given the scarcity of women judges at the time. Downer closed her appeal with the language of rights: "This trial is a direct threat to our rights to know our own bodies. We not only expect to win, but we also want to give emphatic notice to all who would deny us this right that *we will control our own bodies!*"<sup>87</sup>

Downer's prediction of a successful outcome was correct. After nine hours of deliberation, a jury of three black women, one white woman, and eight white men acquitted Downer of practicing medicine, which in California was defined as "diagnosing and treating a disease."<sup>88</sup> Attorney Wayne had argued that the statute was so vague that she wouldn't be able to discuss a cold with a friend or offer her a tissue. Wayne further pointed out that "half the mothers in the county could be charged with diagnosing that their children had the measles." This test case set a precedent for other self-help clinics to operate legally. The infamous "yogurt bust" reveals just how far authorities would go to eliminate the threat of clinics that gave women control of their health. Had Downer been unable to prove that she was out of town that day and been convicted, it would have been a serious setback to the women's health movement.<sup>89</sup>

Authorities would continue to harass the clinic. In October 1975 a representative of the state Health Department made an unannounced visit to investigate a complaint that nonphysicians were performing abortions. The representative found no evidence that unlicensed personnel were performing abortions but did report that staff members were performing pelvic exams, which she considered to be practicing medicine without a license. The clinic, however, was in full compliance with state regulations.<sup>90</sup>

In 1976 the California Board of Medical Quality Assurance recommended that the District Attorney file criminal charges against the clinic for practicing medicine without a license.<sup>91</sup> The news quickly reached the East Coast. The second annual report of the Boston Women's Community Health Center carried an appeal for letters of support, reminding readers that women must stand together to gain control over their bodies: "We must fight when our rights are violated."<sup>92</sup> The California Department of Consumer Affairs, at the behest of the Board of Medical Quality Assurance, also conducted an investigation in 1976, prompting the resignation of three physicians and loss of access to the hospital where second-trimester abortions were performed.<sup>93</sup>

In 1979 a news crew from the Los Angeles CBS affiliate KNX-TV arrived unannounced at the FWHC to film an anti-abortion program. In addition to filming women entering and leaving the clinic, the team sent in a reporter claiming to be pregnant to demand an abortion, disrupting a clinic session in the process.<sup>94</sup> Staff members were furious. They wrote directly to CBS President William Paley to demand the program not be shown. The feminist abortion-rights network flew into action, writing Paley and KNX-TV General Manager Van Gordon Sauter to express their objections to the harassment.<sup>95</sup> The May 5–11 issue of *TV Guide* ran a

sensational headline advertising the upcoming show "Abortion without Pregnancy," hosted by KNX-TV News coanchor Connie Chung.<sup>96</sup> Ultimately three shows were aired, each five minutes long. The first addressed the supposed inaccuracies of the two-minute urine test that led to unnecessary abortions. The second and third shows were less critical and more informational, talking about the FWHC and what women should know about obtaining a clinic abortion. Feminists considered the calmer tone and educational content of the second part of the series evidence of their successful letter-writing campaign.<sup>97</sup>

In 1982 an employee of the California Department of Health Services took a secretarial job at the Women's Choice Clinic under false pretenses. The information she reported back to her bosses reached Kathy MacManus of *New West* magazine, who wrote an article condemning the clinic. State investigators tried to shut it down based on alleged violations of professional practice, political indoctrination of staff members, and unlawful billing practices. The FWHC sued the magazine for libel and won. Jack Shoemaker, the lead investigator in the Department of Health Services' investigation of MacManus's charges, was so livid over the FWHC victory that he had a nervous breakdown. He later claimed his emotional distress as a work disability.<sup>98</sup>

The Los Angeles FWHC promoted feminist goals by treating every woman with respect for her opinions and needs. Instead of using the painful dilation and curettage (D&C) to perform an abortion, FWHC staff relied on the gentler vacuum aspiration method. They accepted fees for services, gave speeches, and engaged in fund-raising to achieve financial independence from government sources. The FWHC was a place established by, serving, and run by women.<sup>99</sup> The Los Angeles FWHC became the model for dozens of "Self-Help Clinics-in-a-suitcase," as Downer called them.<sup>100</sup>

### Other Feminist Women's Health Centers in California

Feminist health clinics around the country used the Los Angeles "famous Self-Help Clinic #1" as their model.<sup>101</sup> Two clinics, one in Oakland and the other in Orange County, were originally part of the Los Angeles FWHC.<sup>102</sup> Chico, Sacramento, and San Diego also opened FWHCs. By 1974 the FWHC network of Feminist Women's Health Centers had expanded beyond California to include Boston, Detroit, and Tallahassee (Florida).<sup>103</sup> Boston's Women's Community Health Center became a member in 1974.<sup>104</sup> They were all connected through National Women's Health Network (NWHN) newsletters, conferences, and visits between facilities. Nonprofit FWHCs operated under three priorities that distinguished them from commercial

# SurveyLA

Los Angeles Historic Resources Survey

## LOS ANGELES CITYWIDE HISTORIC CONTEXT STATEMENT

### Context: Women's Rights in Los Angeles



*Prepared for:*

City of Los Angeles  
Department of City Planning  
Office of Historic Resource



October 2018

Another issue around which Latinas were active and visible was in voter registration efforts. After the unsuccessful run of Edward R. Roybal for city council, CSO women mounted a voter registration drive in Boyle Heights, Lincoln Heights, and other parts of east Los Angeles. Both Hope Mendoza and Eliza Baker were instrumental in the registration of thousands of new voters. CSO Neighborhood Improvement Committee Chairwoman, Bertha Villescas fought for streetlights, sidewalks, and traffic lights on behalf of neighborhood children. Maria Marichilar, chair of the CSO's Health and Welfare Committee, worked on issues such as polio vaccinations within the community.<sup>234</sup> In many ways, the women of the CSO laid the groundwork for Chicana feminists a decade later.

Although many women returned to more traditional gender roles after World War II, a small but persistent group of women sought work outside the home, higher education, and continued their civic engagement — often through social justice, civil rights, or labor issues. Rather than regard the period as one of complete dormancy for women's rights, it created the enabling environment for the next historic phase for women.

### **Reawakening and Activism: Second Wave Feminism in Los Angeles, 1960-1980**

If I am right, the problem that has no name stirring in the minds of so many American women today is not a matter of loss or femininity or too much education, or the demands of domesticity. It is far more important than anyone recognizes...it may well be the key to our future as a national and a culture. We can no longer ignore that voice within that says "I want something more than my husband and my children and my home."<sup>235</sup>

Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique*, 1963

Various scholars trace the beginnings of second wave feminism or the Women's Liberation Movement to a confluence of events in the 1960s. These include the 1960 approval of the first oral contraceptive, Enovid, by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) that gave women more control over their childbearing destiny; the rise of women in the labor force; President Kennedy's Commission on the Status of Women pointing to the significant inequality between men and women in the American workplace; the establishment of a national citizen's advisory council; and the arrival of Betty Friedan's (1921-2006) book, *The Feminine Mystique* in 1963. Friedan's book disrupted the consensus that a woman's place was in the home. Education was also on the rise among women during this period. After the passage of the Higher Education Act of 1965, more than two million women pursued degrees across the United States during the ensuing five years (see Figure 2).

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<sup>234</sup> Margaret Rose, "Gender and Civic Activism in Mexican American Barrios," in *Not June Cleaver*, ed. Joanne Meyerowitz (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994), 193.

<sup>235</sup> Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1963), 22.

## **SurveyLA Citywide Historic Context Statement**

### **Women's Rights in Los Angeles, 1850-1980**

Historians Rosalynn Baxandall and Linda Gordon correctly identify that "Women's Liberation was the largest social movement in the history of the U.S...the women's liberation movement, as it was called in the 1960s and 1970s, or feminism, as it is known today, reached into every home, school and business...it permanently altered the landscape."<sup>236</sup>

Baxandall and Gordon also posit that the late 1960s women's movement emerged "...in two separate streams with two distinct sets of roots."<sup>237</sup> The first stream, equal rights/NOW, was an outgrowth of the women's networks of WWII and the growth of labor unions in the early 1960s. Labor and women's activist Esther Peterson (1906-1997) was an advisor to President Kennedy and influenced the emergence of the equal pay Bill from Washington in 1963. Equal pay was underscored by the passage of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which codified that employers could not discriminate based on sex.<sup>238</sup> Subsequently, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) was established to investigate discrimination complaints; however, the EEOC largely failed to enforce sex discrimination laws. This inspired Friedan and her colleagues to establish the National Organization for Women (NOW). Members of this stream of the movement were largely older, educated white women of middle-class or upper middle-class backgrounds. Many were professionals.

The second stream identified by Baxandall and Gordon was the more radical women's liberation movement. Many of the women involved in this branch came from civil rights backgrounds and the New Left. These women were younger, and more radical than their equal rights/NOW counterparts. Many were college students and women of color. Included here are also lesbian feminists, whose activism not only advanced women but LGBTQ rights as well.

Like suffrage activists before them, 1960s feminists revived the battle for legal equality but expanded that to include sexuality, gender power dynamics, financial independence, reproductive rights, and violence against women. There were also tensions between the two movements regarding inclusivity and controversial issues such as women's reproductive rights, and health and wellness. Lesbian oppression was also a significant issue over which the two factions separated. NOW initially did not embrace the issue for fear of alienating public support for the broader women's equality issue. As a result, the radical feminists of the women's liberation movement were responsible for the founding of many local women's groups and women-controlled institutions for Euro-American, African American, Asian American, and LGBTQ women.



Betty Friedan speaks to the Valley Branch of the American Association of University Women in April of 1964. Source: Los Angeles Public Library.

<sup>236</sup> Rosalyn Baxandall and Linda Gordon, "Second-Wave Feminism," in *A Companion to American Women's History*, ed. Nancy A. Hewitt (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002), 414.

<sup>237</sup> Ibid.

<sup>238</sup> As well as race, color, national origin, and religion.

In addition to tensions between the two feminist factions, not all women were united behind the idea of second wave feminism and the greater women's liberation movement. Second wave feminism experienced opposition from a small, determined group of women who felt the need to protect their choice to remain non-working housewives and rallied against the ERA. Debate over the ERA intensified the anti-feminist opposition. The most famous national spokespeople in this regard were Phyllis Schlafly (1924-2016) and Anita Bryant (b. 1940). In Los Angeles, Maureen Startup, Chairman of California Stop ERA, was a visible opponent.

#### Rise of Second Wave Feminist Organizations

The following section examines the leading second wave feminist organizations that were primarily political or activist in nature. While it is acknowledged that the dialogue on feminism reached far beyond these organizations to social or collegial organizations, the emphasis here is on those that were change leaders in the movement.

#### *National Organization of Women (NOW)*

In 1966, Friedan formed the National Organization for Women (NOW), the leading organization of the legal rights branch of the movement. The group's mission was to bring women into the mainstream of American society in equal partnership with men with full legal equity.<sup>239</sup> New York, Boston, and Chicago emerged as hotbeds of feminism and Los Angeles quickly established itself with its own national reputation. In 1967, NOW ratified its Women's Bill of Rights, which focused on addressing many of the issues facing American women — opportunity for equal employment, adequate childcare facilities, equal opportunity to pursue higher education, the right of women in poverty to obtain job training, and reproductive rights.<sup>240</sup>

Although the board had met previously at members' homes, the first official meeting of the Southern California Chapter of NOW was held April 1, 1967 at Clifton's restaurant in Century City (10250 West Santa Monica Boulevard, not extant).<sup>241</sup> Subsequent general membership meetings were regularly held at restaurants, including the Century House Restaurant at 10250 West Santa Monica Boulevard (not extant),<sup>242</sup> and in 1969, at the Original Barbecue restaurant at 801 South Vermont Avenue (not extant). Soon membership growth outpaced the occupancy levels of these venues; the general membership of NOW met in 1970 and 1971 at the California Federal Bank Building, 5670 Wilshire Boulevard, in the

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<sup>239</sup> "Group Forms to Push Equality for Women," *Los Angeles Times*, October 31, 1966, 11.

<sup>240</sup> Architectural Resources Group, "Standard Oil Company Department Building/Woman's Building," City of Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument Nomination Continuation Sheet, 11.

<sup>241</sup> Daphne Spain, *Constructive Feminism: Women's Space and Women's Rights in the American City* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2016), 37. The restaurant was located in the Westfield Century City Mall from 1966-1986. The business is no longer extant, and the shopping center has since been substantially altered.

<sup>242</sup> The restaurant was located in the Westfield Century City Mall. The business is no longer extant, and the shopping center has since been substantially altered.

third-floor Auditorium/Cafeteria.<sup>243</sup> Chapter board meetings appear to have been held at board members' homes.

By 1971 there were approximately 20 NOW chapters in Southern California with membership of about 2,000 women.<sup>244</sup> Over time, several community-based NOW chapters were established including the Hollywood, Beach Cities, and San Fernando Valley chapters.

Virginia A. "Toni" Carabillo (1926-1997) was a significant figure in the feminist movement in Los Angeles and nationally. Carabillo served as founder and first president of the Los Angeles Chapter of NOW (1968-1970, 1980-1982),<sup>245</sup> was a member of NOW's national Board of Directors (1968-1977) and served as Vice President (1971-1974), and chaired NOW's National Advisory Committee (1975-1977). Carabillo's partner Judith K. Meuli (1938-2007) was the designer of the "Brassy," the women's movement's signature symbol of an equal sign within the gender symbol for woman. Meuli and Carabillo's Los Angeles home at 1126 South Hi Point Street (Contributor, Carthay Square HPOZ) was an important early gathering place for women's rights advocates and the site of their business, Graphic Communications (a.k.a., Women's Heritage Series, Inc.), which published the *Woman's Almanac* in 1970 and other feminist literature.<sup>246</sup> As described in Carabillo's own writing in her scrapbook, "1126 HiPoint has a reputation as NOW's party house and [for] rabble rousing."<sup>247</sup>



L: Home of Toni Carabillo (1926-1997) and Judith K. Meuli (1938-2007) site of NOW parties, educational events and NOW organizing work at 1126 South Hi Point Street. R: Undated national NOW membership taskforce meeting at 1126 South Hi Point Street. Source for both: Toni Carabillo and Judith Meuli Papers, ca.1890-2008, MC 725. Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.

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<sup>243</sup> LA Women's Liberation Movement Collection, *NOW News* 1970-1971, Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research, Los Angeles, CA.

<sup>244</sup> "A New Target For NOW," *Los Angeles Times*, August 21, 1970, E1.

<sup>245</sup> Other presidents of the Los Angeles Chapter of NOW during the 1970s included Virginia Carter, Shelly Mandell, and Gloria Allred (b. 1941).

<sup>246</sup> Carabillo and Meuli's archive is located at Harvard University. Materials include images of early Los Angeles feminists gathered at their home.

<sup>247</sup> Toni Carabillo and Judith Meuli Papers, ca.1890-2008. MC 725, folder #. Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.

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Protests and demonstrations were an important and visible part of activism. In particular, 1968 to 1970 were significant for a number of protests by women that captured media attention.<sup>248</sup> Nationally, this included the protest of the Miss America Pageant for both sexism and racism and the display of a banner during the show's broadcast on live TV reading "Women's Liberation."

In 1969, Los Angeles NOW members staged a sit-in at the Polo Lounge in the Beverly Hills Hotel against the bar's policy prohibiting women from entering the bar unless accompanied by men.<sup>249</sup> In June of the same year, the chapter demonstrated at the *Los Angeles Times* building, protesting segregated classified ads.<sup>250</sup> At the time, the newspaper listed separate sections on "Jobs of Interest to Women" and "Jobs of Interest to Men." The Los Angeles event was patterned after a similar protest at the *New York Times*.

*Newsweek* reported that "1970 was the year in which the American women became intellectually aware of the modern feminist movement."<sup>251</sup> Los Angeles feminists were on the cutting edge of that movement. Jeanne Cordova (1948-2016), an early lesbian feminist who founded the *Lesbian Tide* newsletter described Los Angeles' special place in the feminist movement:

Theory came out of the East Coast where feminists read and wrote more; fleshing out of institutions occurred in LA due to more space and greater financial backing. There were strong connections to gay men, married lesbians and the movie industry...a large counter-culture Jewish community...these factors built whole maps worth of institutions not possible elsewhere.<sup>252</sup>

On August 26, 1970, Los Angeles women participated in Betty Friedan's "National Woman's Strike Day" to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of winning the vote and "signal the start of a major political effort for the liberation of the women of the United States of America."<sup>253</sup> In Los Angeles, 2,500 women marched from the new Federal Building at 11000 Wilshire Boulevard to the Janss Steps on the UCLA campus. Public protests continued throughout the 1970s, and at each one, women were visible in the streets of Los Angeles with signs promoting equality, equal employment, abortion, and child care. Local protests included women picketing the State Department of Human Resources at 1525 South Broadway and the Federal Building at 300 North Los Angeles Street. Guerilla theater performances were frequently part of these protests. In August 1975, women marched at the City Hall Mall (201 North Los Angeles Street) to mark the 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary of suffrage.

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<sup>248</sup> Historians generally agree that feminism became an organized political movement in 1968; 1970 was the year that it became a mainstream, publicly acknowledged movement.

<sup>249</sup> Mary Reinholtz, "Storming the All Electric Doll House," *Los Angeles Times*, Jun 7, 1970, N54.

<sup>250</sup> Factions within the organization were already emerging. Dorothy Gilden penned an opposition op-ed to this demonstration in the *Los Angeles Times* that accused the organization of phony problem solving.

<sup>251</sup> "Feminist Yearbook," *Newsweek*, November 16, 1970, 113.

<sup>252</sup> Notes of Jeanne Cordova Interview March 17, 2010, provided by Lynn H. Ballen in email to the author, April 11, 2018.

<sup>253</sup> David M. Dinsmore, "When Women Went on Strike: Remembering Equality Day, 1970," *Ms. Magazine* (blog), accessed August 26, 2010, <http://msmagazine.com/blog/2010/08/26/when-women-went-on-strike-remembering-equality-day-1970/>.

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Over time, the Los Angeles chapter of NOW operated a Center/Offices in several locations: first the Now Center for Women's Studies in 1971 at 8864 West Pico Boulevard (not extant), then in the Woman's Building (1727 North Spring Street, City of Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument No.1160),<sup>254</sup> and later in several offices in the building at 8271 West Melrose Avenue.<sup>255</sup>

#### *Women's Center/ Women's Liberation Center*

As a counterpoint to NOW, the more radical women's liberation branch of the movement founded less formal and structured groups.

Ann ForFreedom (née Herschfang, b. 1947) was an early activist who established a women's liberation group that met at UCLA in 1968.<sup>256</sup> In the fall of 1969, Joan Ellen Hoffman Robins (b.1947), along with Dorothy Bricker and Marianne Yatrovsky, established one of the first consciousness-raising groups in Los Angeles.<sup>257</sup> Initially, they convened at the Haymarket Center, a well-known headquarters for a Silver Lake leftist group, at 507 North Hoover Street (altered).<sup>258</sup> As the group grew, they moved meetings to a church in South Los Angeles.<sup>259</sup>

An important new organizing principle of the women's liberation movement was the idea that "the personal is political." The phrase became a rallying cry emphasizing that the connections between personal experience and larger social and political structures. Unlike early 20<sup>th</sup> century meetings that mostly involved hearing from experts, the new feminism used consciousness raising techniques and "rap sessions" to help women open up about their own experiences with discrimination and empower them as a group. The collected experiences were analyzed to chart the social conditions common to women as an oppressed group. As a result, the importance of gendered spaces increased as safe spaces where women could discuss, explore, and learn together. Robins, Bricker, and Yatrovsky's next move was to establish a permanent women's center location.<sup>260</sup> The building itself was to have symbolic value as "visible evidence that 'something is being done' about women's problems and needs, drawing women from the shadow and adding legitimacy to the movement."<sup>261</sup> The Center was to be "...a place of central



Undated photo of protest at the Los Angeles Federal Building at 11000 Wilshire Boulevard. Source: Toni Carabillo and Judith Meuli Papers, ca.1890-2008; item description, dates. MC 725. Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.

<sup>254</sup> The Woman's Building is one of the few resources noted in this context that was designated specifically for its association with women's history.

<sup>255</sup> The building was designed by architect Daniel L. Dworsky in 1957.

<sup>256</sup> Spain, *Constructive Feminism*, 54-55.

<sup>257</sup> Finding Aid to the Joan Robins papers, 1972-1991, UCLA Library Special Collections.

<sup>258</sup> "Anti-Castro Raiders Blamed for Arson at Leftist Headquarters," *Los Angeles Times*, April 15, 1970, A1.

<sup>259</sup> The location of the church is unknown.

<sup>260</sup> Robins was also the author of the *Handbook of Women's Liberation* in 1968, available only through the Women's Center.

<sup>261</sup> *LA Women's Liberation Center News*, Second Anniversary Insert, c. 1972. LA Women's Liberation Movement Collection, 1970-1976, Southern California Library of Social Studies and Research, Los Angeles, CA.

communication...a kind of nerve center to inform all persons in the Los Angeles area who are involved a woman's struggle to become full, human and free."<sup>262</sup> Feminist organizations seldom had the resources to buy property or construct new buildings, so they typically rented existing buildings and converted them to their needs.

A duplex at 1027 South Crenshaw Boulevard<sup>263</sup> was selected by Robins, Bricker, and Yatrovsky for the Women's Center (a.k.a., Women's Liberation Center) and it opened on January 11, 1970 (extensively altered).<sup>264</sup> By August of 1970, more than 1,500 women were affiliated through feminist groups or the Center's newsletter.<sup>265</sup> By 1972, that newsletter had the largest circulation and national readership of any feminist publication, with 2,700 subscribers. A year later it became the *Sister* newspaper.<sup>266</sup>

The Women's Center offered a speakers' bureau, bookstand, open rap sessions, and a Women's Liberation School "to help women function autonomously and understand the nature of their oppression."<sup>267</sup> Teachers at the school resided all over Los Angeles, and included Ann ForFreedom (14 East Wavecrest Avenue, Venice), Hannah Lerman (10480 West Santa Monica Boulevard, not extant), Judy Freespirit (née Ackerman, 25 East Navy Street, #9, Venice), Joan Hoffman (1969-1985 North Whitley Avenue, Hollywood; Contributor, Whitley Heights HPOZ; Contributor, National Register of Historic Places Whitley Heights Historic District), Avril Adams (3330 West Hamilton Way), and Regina Barton (1225 South Hi Point Street; Contributor, Carthay Square HPOZ).

The Women's Center was the weekly meeting place for "Gay Women's Liberation" (a.k.a., Gay Liberation Front) an early lesbian feminist group led by Rita Goldberger that "...educated the public about homosexuality as a valid lifestyle."<sup>268</sup> The group became the first feminist lesbian group in Los Angeles, "The Lesbian Feminists."<sup>269</sup> The Center was also the location of the Women's Liberation Inter-Group Council, an intermediary group of feminist organization leaders such as Margaret Wright.<sup>270</sup> In addition to the workshops held at the Center, a speaker's bureau was organized to reply to external requests for workshops. Many of the workshops were held at St. Paul's Methodist Church at 1200 South Manhattan Place (Contributor, Country Club Park HPOZ).

Evidence of the tensions between the legal rights/NOW branch of the movement and the women's liberation branch occurred locally when the Southern California NOW chapter withdrew its support for the Women's Center on Crenshaw because it was seen as too leftist. As a result, NOW opened its own center on Pico Boulevard.

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<sup>262</sup> Ibid.

<sup>263</sup> The original Women's Center sign was discovered and presented to the June Mazer Archive in November of 2009.

<sup>264</sup> *LA Women's Liberation Center News*, Second Anniversary Insert, c. 1972. Building permits show the address as a duplex with a residence and office.

<sup>265</sup> Spain, *Constructive Feminism*, 58.

<sup>266</sup> Ibid.

<sup>267</sup> *LA Women's Liberation Center News*, Second Anniversary Insert, c. 1972

<sup>268</sup> *Women's Liberation Center Newsletter*, vol. 1, no. 8, December, 1970, 2. The newsletter is housed at the Southern California Library, 6120 Vermont Avenue. At the time of this study, issues were located in an unmarked, uncatalogued box.

<sup>269</sup> Notes of Jeanne Cordova Interview March 17, 2010, provided by Lynn H. Ballen in email to the author, April 11, 2018.

<sup>270</sup> *Women's Liberation Center Newsletter*, vol. 1, no. 10, February, 1971, 4.

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The Women's Center on Crenshaw became home to the beginning of the women's self-help movement and the site of Women's Self-Help One. Women's Self-Help One became a model for the national Self-Help movement; by 1975, there were more than 40 clinics nationwide.<sup>271</sup> Founded in 1971 by six women, including Carol Aurilla Downer (b. 1933) and Evelyn Lorraine Rothman (1937-2007), the clinic was initially part event and part place, calling on women to take control of their own bodies. Combining techniques of consciousness raising and education and self-examination, women were taught about contraception, their bodies, and reproductive systems. Established in a former back bedroom of the Women's Center at Crenshaw, the clinic was purposefully designed to be a non-medical setting, with homey furniture and a playground for children. It was meant to be an alternative to the male-dominated medical profession. Women who worked at the Crenshaw Center lived communally, sharing housing and stretching their small wages and the food provided at the center.

The self-help clinic concept received broad exposure in the feminist movement during the summer of 1971, when the NOW convention was held in Los Angeles. Afterwards, women made pilgrimages to Los Angeles to learn the techniques first-hand. Later, a decentralized coalition known as the Federation of Feminist Women's Health Clinics (FWHC) shared materials and best practices and met annually in Los Angeles each summer for political education.<sup>272</sup>

From the beginning, the Clinic was under police surveillance, culminating with the arrest of Downer on live television and charges by the California Board of Medical Quality Assurance for practicing medicine without a license. The Clinic moved to its second location at 746 South Crenshaw Boulevard (not extant) in 1973. In 1974, it moved to its third and final location at 1112 South Crenshaw Boulevard. An arsonist burned the building in 1985 and it never reopened.

#### Second Wave Feminism and Inclusivity

Like earlier women's rights movements, second wave feminism generally, and the legal rights branch specifically, was criticized for its lack of inclusivity. Reports of married women feeling criticized and unwelcome in some settings were common. Women of color felt they had less in common with their white sisters who were not still struggling with their civil rights. Lesbians faced a similar predicament – discrimination based on their gender and sexuality. Initially, NOW tried to distance itself from lesbian



Two unidentified women in front of the Feminist Women's Health Center, exact location unknown (undated). Source: Los Angeles Public Library.

<sup>271</sup> Spain, *Constructive Feminism*, 111-112.

<sup>272</sup> Michelle Murphy, "Immodest Witnessing: The Epistemology of Vaginal Self-Examination in the U.S. Feminist Self-Help Movement," *Feminist Studies* vol. 30, no. 1 (Spring 2004): 123.

women fearing they might discredit and distract from the organization's ability to champion the rights of women and achieve political change. However, in 1971, prominent lesbian members of NOW, including Los Angeles feminist Eve Norman (b. 1935) called for a vote to affirm that lesbian oppression was a feminist issue. It passed overwhelmingly, and lesbian feminists became a significant force in the second wave feminist movement nationally and in Los Angeles.<sup>273</sup> NOW issued a resolution that read, "Lesbians have never been excluded from NOW, but we have been evasive or apologetic about their presence within the organization. Afraid of alienating public support, we have often treated lesbians as the step-sisters of the movement."<sup>274</sup>



Lesbian feminist marchers in front of the First African Methodist Episcopal Church (2270 South Harvard Boulevard) in 1977. Source: Los Angeles Public Library.

A number of scholars have written about the nature of the separate feminist movements in the African American and Latina communities. As Benita Roth points out in her book *Separate Roads to Feminism: Black, Chicana and White Feminist Movements in America's Second Wave*, black and Chicana feminism grew as a consequence of participation in the simultaneous Civil Rights/Black Freedom or Chicano Movements, respectively.

Many African American feminists were working within the larger Black Liberation or Black Power movements, believing feminism was inherent in the anti-racist struggle. Some tried to incorporate a feminist agenda into these movements and were met with resistance, as these movements were characterized by strong masculine discourse and the belief that truly revolutionary black women were the supportive ones.<sup>275</sup> Likewise, black feminists viewed white middle-class women as out of touch with those who did not enjoy race or class privilege. Although sympathetic to some aspects of the white feminist struggle, most African American women declined to organize within or alongside white feminist groups. Many avoided using the feminist label, to avoid the polarizing national debate. Black feminists largely functioned in unorganized, decentralized groups doing consciousness-raising at the local level.

The pragmatic result of this was that few national organizations of black feminists emerged or were sustained. A local African American voice promoting feminine progress was Ferrol Bobo Starks (1908-2006), President of the Los Angeles chapter of the National Council of Negro Women (NCNW). A nurse and a teacher, in the early 1960s she held many NCNW meetings at her home at 1466 West 50<sup>th</sup> Street. The National Black Feminist Organization (NBFO) was founded in New York in May of 1973. By 1974, there

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<sup>273</sup> For more information about the intersection of the feminist and LGBT rights movement, see the SurveyLA *LGBT Historic Context Statement*.

<sup>274</sup> LA Women's Liberation Movement Collection, 1970-1976, Box 1, Folder 9, Southern California Library of Social Studies and Research, Los Angeles, CA.

<sup>275</sup> Benita Roth, *Separate Roads to Feminism: Black, Chicana and White Feminist Movements in America's Second Wave* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 76.

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were eight local chapters including one in Los Angeles, but there is little known about the chapters.<sup>276</sup> The NBFO fell apart in 1975, but by some accounts, the Los Angeles chapter kept the name alive and worked toward change until the late 1970s.<sup>277</sup> In 1973, Wilma Miller<sup>278</sup> attempted to form a Los Angeles chapter of the San Francisco-based Black Women Organized for Action. There is currently no evidence of her success. Meeting locations for these groups do not exist in the currently available written record, although some evidence suggests that members' homes were the most common meeting places.

Althea Scott (1928-2004) was a Los Angeles-based black feminist who advocated alongside a small group of friends. A radiology technician and a member of the Orange County chapter of the NBFO, she was also the host of "Ad Lib," a feminist talk show airing on KTTV/Los Angeles in the mid-1970s. Scott described her feminist kinship with white women: "We don't have to be Siamese twins to be sisters."<sup>279</sup> However, she acknowledged the challenges and the need for an ongoing dialogue between African American and Caucasian feminists wondering, "how can a liberated woman rush to a meeting leaving her black maid at home to look after the children and then wonder where all the black sisters are?"<sup>280</sup>

Margaret Wright (1921-1996) espoused feminist principles, played an active role within the Black Power movement, and fought for equal education against the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) system from her home at 3831 South Woodlawn Avenue. As an activist in the group Women Against Repression, she "confronted issues from battering to inequalities in household chores."<sup>281</sup> Wright argued that black women had to work for wages and be responsible for the household, yet they were told the struggle for black liberation was "a man's job."<sup>282</sup> "In black women's liberation," Wright described, "we don't want to be equal with men, just like in black liberation we're not fighting to be equal with the white man. We're fighting for the right to be different and to not be punished for it."<sup>283</sup>

Yvonne Brathwaite Burke (b. 1932) was an outspoken advocate for the ERA and its impact on job equality dating back to the late 1960s. Burke (D-Los Angeles) was the first African American woman to serve in the state legislature and was one of the first to represent the west in the U.S. Congress. Still other African American feminists worked through professional organizations. Los Angeles attorney Sandra L. Carter served as the first president of Black Women Lawyers and championed women's rights as a top priority. Another voice for Black Feminism in Los Angeles was Emily F. Gibson, a freelance writer and columnist for the *Los Angeles Sentinel*, who summed up the community's lack of enthusiasm for the Women's Liberation movement as "Why join when being equal to a black man offers no advance?"<sup>284</sup>

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<sup>276</sup> Ibid., 109.

<sup>277</sup> Kimberly Springer, *Living for the Revolution: Black Feminist Organizations, 1968-1980* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005), 212.

<sup>278</sup> Nine Wilma Millers from Los Angeles are listed in the U.S. Social Security Death Index.

<sup>279</sup> Betty Liddick, "Black Lib: Sisters Going Their Own Way," *Los Angeles Times*, July 8, 1973, I1.

<sup>280</sup> "Blacks vs. Feminists," *TIME*, March 26, 1973, 64.

<sup>281</sup> Robin D.G. Kelley and Earl Lewis, eds., *To Make Our World Anew: A History of African Americans* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 551.

<sup>282</sup> Kelley and Lewis, *To Make Our World Anew*, 551.

<sup>283</sup> Gerda Lerner, ed., *Black Women in White America: A Documentary History* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992), 608.

<sup>284</sup> Emily F. Gibson, "Missing Minorities Question Women's Lib," *Los Angeles Times*, September 15, 1975, B5.

financial literacy, and workforce integration. In 1972, Sheila Kuehl (b. 1941) co-founded the Women's Resource Center at UCLA (Room 2, Dodd Hall, 390 Portola Plaza). The third location of the Center for New Directions at CSUN remains at 7112 North Owensmouth Avenue. However, many campus resource centers no longer exist.

### Violence Against Women

One of the important issues for feminists during the 1970s was violence against women. Whether domestic, physical, mental, or rape, crimes of violence against women remained under wraps for decades as they were seen by law enforcement as family issues not prosecutable under the law. Violence against women was an example of an issue that surfaced during the consciousness-raising sessions offered at women's centers and other support groups. Women had nowhere to go to escape abuse; there were no battered women's shelters available.<sup>317</sup> As of 1978, the *Los Angeles Times* reported there were just 30 beds for women needing shelter in Los Angeles County.<sup>318</sup> By the end of the 1970s, violence against women had become a major feminist issue. Feminists became crucial in teaching women self-defense, establishing rape crisis hotlines, and creating shelters.

The Crenshaw Center was the initial home of the Anti-Rape Squad, a guerilla effort to expose and publicize the crime and provide rides to hitchhiking women. Organized by Joan Robins, it later moved to the Westside Women's Center. In 1973, it was formalized as the Los Angeles Commission on Assaults Against Women at the first Los Angeles Conference on Assualts Against Women held at St. Alban's Episcopal Church at 580 South Hilgard Avenue in Westwood. The Commission on Assualts Against Women also ran the city's first rape crisis hotline.<sup>319</sup> In 1975, Robins became their Director of Education and a visible spokesperson on the topic. Other hotlines established included the Woman Against Violence Against Women (WAVAW) Hot Line, the Rape Crisis Hotline, the East Los Angeles Rape Hotline (the first Spanish-language hotline), and the South Bay Hotline.

The location of shelters in Los Angeles is difficult to determine because they were purposefully kept secret — handled through word of mouth or referrals to protect women from their abusers. Small shelters such as the Women's Shelter at 745 South Oxford Avenue (not extant) was established in 1972.<sup>320</sup> The first well-publicized battered women's shelter in Los Angeles was the Sojourner Shelter (location unknown),<sup>321</sup> established circa 1973.<sup>322</sup> The Good Shepard Women's Shelter (location unknown) began operating in 1977. That same year, Haven Hills (location unknown), the first resource for battered women in the San Fernando Valley began organizing under the leadership of two Canoga Park Women's Club members, Jacquie Gordon and Cheryl Cornell.<sup>323</sup> In 1978, funds for "the first Los Angeles shelter for battered women" were allocated by the Los Angeles City Council; the shelter was

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<sup>317</sup> According to Spain, the shelter movement started in London in 1971. It established its first U.S. foothold in Boston.

<sup>318</sup> "About Women," *Los Angeles Times*, January 15, 1978, E8.

<sup>319</sup> Spain, *Constructive Feminism*, 63.

<sup>320</sup> *LA Women's Liberation Center Newsletter*, vol. 1. no. 2, 6, 1972.

<sup>321</sup> A *Los Angeles Times* article from 1981 indicates the shelter was located in West Los Angeles. While no address has yet been identified, it is known that a call for volunteers was held at Santa Monica's Ocean Park Community Center in 1978.

<sup>322</sup> "Battered Women Shelter Plans Birthday Brunch," *Los Angeles Times*, June 25, 1981, 121.

<sup>323</sup> "Haven Hills – A Shield for Battered Women," *Los Angeles Times*, July 20, 1980, V1.

operated by the Rosasharon Foundation under the direction of Beverly Monasmith (location unknown).<sup>324</sup> In 1979, a shelter in east Los Angeles was also operated by the Chicana Service Action Center (location unknown).<sup>325</sup> In 1980, a shelter was opened in a converted garage and two small apartment buildings (location unknown).

### Second Wave Feminism and the Media

Communications and print media were essential to the growth of second wave feminism, a lesson learned during the suffrage movement. Feminists replaced flyers and handbills with newsletters, magazines, and resource directories. Much of local feminist print media was simply-designed, grass-roots materials produced in the homes of individual editors or at various women's centers. New media such as radio and television also started to play an important role in raising awareness for the cause. With the women's movement coming of age at approximately the same time as viewer-sponsored television, i.e., the transition from VHF channels to public television, feminist programming was an important part of the transition.

One of the earliest feminist newspapers in Los Angeles, *Everywoman*, published its inaugural issue in May of 1970. Known as a "radical feminist newspaper," some subscribers were reported by the *Los Angeles Times* as having requested that it be delivered in a plain brown wrapper.<sup>326</sup> The newspaper took its name from the Everywoman Feminist Center and Bookstore at 1043-B West Washington Boulevard, but listed its mailing address as 6516 West 83<sup>rd</sup> Street, a residence. Ann Forfreedom was the only paid staff member and the newspaper relied on the work of volunteers such as Vicki Comer, Emilie Diehl, and Gail Williamson. *Everywoman* offered feminist news, articles, fiction, poetry, art, and reviews.

Other major feminist media included the *California NOW News*, the newsletter of the state organization, and *NOW News*, the newsletter for the Los Angeles Chapter. The managing editor during the early years of *NOW News*, Leonore Youngman, resided at 1748 Griffith Park Boulevard (not extant) during her tenure. Initiated by Nancy Robinson in 1970, the *L.A. Women's Liberation Center Newsletter* was another grass-roots publication offering a detailed calendar section of workshops at the Center and other locations. As noted above, by 1972 the Crenshaw Center's newsletter had 2,700 subscribers, the largest circulation and national readership of any feminist publication. A year later it became the *Sister* newspaper.<sup>327</sup> *Sister* staff included Joan Robins, Sue Talbot, Dixie Youts, Donna Cassyd, and Cheryl Diehm, among others.<sup>328</sup>

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<sup>324</sup> "About Women," *Los Angeles Times*, January 15, 1978, E8.

<sup>325</sup> "Rose Bird to Speak at Benefit for Shelter," *Los Angeles Times*, March 16, 1979, F16.

<sup>326</sup> "Feminist Newspaper: No Laughing Us Off," *Los Angeles Times*, November 26, 1970, G1.

<sup>327</sup> Ibid.

<sup>328</sup> Notes of Jeanne Cordova Interview March 17, 2010, provided by Lynn H. Ballen, email to the author, April 11, 2018.

## Appendix B: Women's Rights Known and Designated Resources

Sojourner Truth Home (a.k.a. Sojourner Truth Industrial Club III)	1807 S Crenshaw Blvd (1805 and 1807 S. Crenshaw Blvd)	Multi-family residence	Associated with the Sojourner Truth Club of Los Angeles, an early African American woman's club organized to improve the low wages and poor working conditions faced by black women. This is the third location of a residential home for women operated by the club.
Westside Women's Center	218 E Venice Blvd (218 S Venice Blvd)	Multi-family residence/ Women's Center	Local meeting place for the women's movement. The Center purposefully reached out to women of all ages and colors and economic conditions to deal with issues in the neighborhood, including those on welfare or with drug abuse problems. Causes also included violence against women, anti-rape squads, and self defense. It was affiliated with the Women's Center on Crenshaw. Also the location of a lending library for books on women's issues. Also held workshops on carpentry, money management, non-sexist child rearing, and other women's issues and political activism. Per the SurveyLA LGBT Historic Context, this organization was founded in 1970, and published a feminist newspaper, provided therapy, and trained women in the building trades.
UCLA Women's Resource Center	405 N Hilgard Ave (Room 2, Dodd Hall, 390 Portola Plaza, UCLA)	Resource Center	Women's resource centers were also often opened on college campuses. By 1977, Cal State University, Los Angeles, Pierce College, UCLA and LA Valley College all had centers providing information and referral services for questions about health, legal matters, professional or career choices and personal problems. In 1972, Sheila Kuehl (b. 1941) co-founded the Women's Resource Center at UCLA.
Center for New Directions III	7112 N Owensmouth Ave	Service Center	Third location of the women's resource center sponsored by Cal State University Northridge (CSUN) and the San Fernando Valley branch of the American Association of University Women. Location of one-on-one counseling and seminars on legal rights, financial literacy, and entering the workforce. Evelyn Ghormley was the director during this period. More information needed on the duration of the program.
Chicana Service Center	435 S Boyle Ave	Service Center	Woman's center from the feminist woman's movement period; the only one in Los Angeles solely dedicated to Latinas. Sponsored by the Comision Femenil Mexicana (CFM), the center expanded services to two additional locations by 1975. Gloria Molina served as the CFM president circa 1976. The center provided a variety of services for women including job readiness, language assistance, child care, and family planning/social service referrals.
Gay Women's Service Center (first location)	1168 N Glendale Blvd	Service Center	In early 1971, Del Whan and Virginia Hoeffding opened the first location of the Gay Women's Service Center at 1168 Glendale Boulevard.
Haven Hills	restricted	Shelter	The first resource for battered women in the San Fernando Valley; began organizing under the leadership of two Canoga Park Women's Club members, Jacquie Gordon and Cheryl Cornell.
Rosasharon Foundation Shelter (Battered Women's Shelter)	restricted	Shelter	Largest early, non-religious battered women's shelter in Los Angeles, and one of very few in the county prior to 1980. Location TBD - Trying Yvonne Brathwaite Burke Papers at USC. Location purposefully kept secret to protect women.
Sojourner Shelter (Sojourner Center)	restricted	Shelter	Sojourner Center was founded in 1977 as an emergency program for women transitioning back into society after release from prison. The shelter was founded because women leaving the criminal justice system rarely had the skills or support to be successful in the outside world. Sojourner Center provided a temporary home as well as programs that taught self-sufficiency, empowerment and family skills, which helped the women rebuild their lives.
Sunshine Mission (Casa de Rosas)	954-1008 W Adams Blvd (2600 S Hoover St)	Shelter	Designated HCM #241 and listed on the National Register.
Women's Center / Women's Liberation Center / Crenshaw Women's Center / Women's Choice Clinic	1027 S Crenshaw Blvd	Women's Service Center/ Multi-family residence (duplex turned commercial)	Significant as the first women's center in Los Angeles that functioned as a safe space for nurturing the autonomy of women and organizing for the second wave of feminism and the Women's Liberation Movement. These types of centers were the heart of the early feminist movement. Also potentially significant for its association with feminist Joan Robins, founder. The building was home to consciousness raising sessions, feminist film screenings and a feminist theater group. Also the home of the Anti-Rape Squad. Additionally significant as the first self-help feminist health clinic in Los Angeles and the first in the nation; its layout and services were widely emulated nationwide by other clinics and it became the first in a network of affiliated clinics under the Feminist Women's Health Center (FWHC) name. When the Women's Center closed in 1972, the clinic expanded to both sides of the duplex building.
Magnolia Residence Home / Japanese YMCA	2616 E 3rd St	YWCA	Significant as a home for single Japanese girls. By 1940 it was home to 14 Japanese women who came to LA for work or study.

# SurveyLA LGBT Historic Context Statement

City of Los Angeles  
Department of City Planning  
Office of Historic Resources

September 2014

Prepared by:



With contributions from:

Carson Anderson, Senior Architectural Historian, ICF/Jones & Stokes  
Wes Joe, Community Activist

**Certified Local Government Grant Disclaimers**

### **Theme 5 – Homosexuality: The Mental Illness That Never Was (1948-1980)**

At one time, homosexuality was considered both a criminal act and a mental disorder. In both legal and medical texts, the term homosexuality was applied to both men and women and a broad range of transgressive sexual or gender behaviors. It was decriminalized in most of the United States, although not California, before it was removed from the diagnostic manuals as a pathology that should be cured. More enlightened behavioral science perspectives began to emerge in the 1950s. The research of Dr. Alfred Kinsey and Dr. Evelyn Hooker challenged the traditional notion of the male-female, masculine-feminine, homosexual-heterosexual binaries. The works of Kinsey, Hooker, and other behavioral scientists played an important role in the history of the gay liberation movement. Finally free from the stigma of being considered mentally ill, LGBT persons began to experience more tolerance from mainstream American society during the 1970s; however, achieving greater acceptance would take several more decades.

The scientific study of sexuality began in 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe with the medical profession. Doctors were called on as experts in legal proceedings against individuals who were engaging in homosexual behavior, which was a crime. Indeed, the Hungarian writer Karl Maria Kertbeny coined the term "homosexual" in 1869 while campaigning against German sodomy laws. The medical and psychological fields during this period established the theory that individuals were innocent because same-sex attraction was innate; therefore individuals should be placed under psychiatric care rather than prosecuted as criminals. The term "sexual inversion" was popularized by the English sexologist Havelock Ellis who believed that homosexuality was a congenital variation of sexuality and not a disease. The notion of sexual inversion continued to dominate behavioral science theories about homosexuality into the 20<sup>th</sup> century as researchers employed the latest techniques to uncover its biological basis.

Even before sex hormones were discovered, homosexuals were hypothesized to be neuro-endocrinological hermaphrodites. This was the preferred theory of German sexologist Magnus Hirschfeld. Hirschfeld was perhaps the first physician who was public about his own sexual orientation and was a tireless advocate for gay rights. He founded the Scientific Humanitarian Committee in Berlin in 1897, which lobbied for the decriminalization of homosexual acts. Hirschfeld argued homosexuality was an intermediate sex and a natural, biological variant in the spectrum between absolute maleness and femaleness. Hirschfeld was also a pioneer in writing about what is now referred to as gender identity disorder.<sup>115</sup>

During the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, many psychiatrists and psychologists believed that homosexuality should and could be "cured" through therapy. In the 1940s and 1950s, LGBT persons could be involuntarily committed to psychiatric facilities by their families. Men and women arrested for unconventional sexual or gender behaviors were sometimes forced to accept incarceration in a mental hospital as a part of a plea

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<sup>115</sup> Raymond Melville, "Famous GLBT People: Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld," Stonewall Society, accessed February 17, 2014, <http://www.stonewallsociety.com/famouspeople/magnus.htm>.

bargain. For example, in 1954 ONE Magazine contributing artist Sidney Bronstein was entrapped by an LAPD vice officer in Pershing Square. The judge in the case offered Bronstein his choice between three months in a mental hospital or one year in prison. "The judge did not expect the hospital to cure Bronstein of his homosexuality, but he believed that psychotherapy would curb Bronstein of his promiscuity and help him 'adjust to society'."<sup>116</sup> While some hospitals practiced psychotherapy, Bronstein was sent to the Atascadero State Mental Hospital in San Luis Obispo County, which was designed for sexually violent criminals.

About sixty percent of the inmate population at Atascadero were sex offenders, including many convicted of consensual adult sodomy or oral sex. At the beginning, the institution was relatively relaxed, even if ineffective in "curing" those incarcerated there. A key philosophy of the institution was controlling inmates who were resistant to treatment or authority. Doctors performed a steady but small stream of lobotomies. However, the main treatment, which Atascadero pioneered, was an aversion therapy involving the drug succinylchloride, commonly known as Anectine, a muscle relaxant. While the victim was unable to breathe, but fully conscious, the 'therapist' would tell him to stop having "unnatural" thoughts about men.<sup>117</sup> This drug was used continually at

Atascadero until 1969, when a visiting law student raised a scandal about its use.



**Figure 20:** The pioneering work Dr. Evelyn Hooker challenged the widely held belief that homosexuality was a disease. Source: [http://psychology.ucdavis.edu/faculty\\_sites/rainbow/html/hooker2.html](http://psychology.ucdavis.edu/faculty_sites/rainbow/html/hooker2.html)

Kinsey Reports demonstrated that homosexuality was more common than was assumed, suggesting that these behaviors are normal and part of a continuum of sexual behaviors.

In 1952, the American Psychiatric Association (APA) included homosexuality under "sociopathic personality disturbance" in its first official list of mental disorders. But the idea that homosexuality was a disease began to slowly change by the middle of the century thanks to the work of Dr. Alfred Kinsey, Dr. Evelyn Hooker, and Dr. Blanche Baker. Kinsey was a sexologist who founded the Institute for Sex Research at Indiana University in 1947. He is best known for writing *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* (1948) and *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female* (1953), commonly referred to as the Kinsey Reports. The

<sup>116</sup> Craig M. Loftin, *Masked Voices: Gay Men and Lesbians in Cold War America* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2012), 193.

<sup>117</sup> This very polite account was drawn from graphic exposés of Atascadero in the early 1970s. See John LaStala, "Atascadero: Dachau for Queers?" *The Advocate*, April 26, 1972, 11, 13 (LaStala was an inmate in 1955); Rob Cole, "Inside Atascadero IV: Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Treatment" in *The Advocate*, October 11, 1972, 5.

Hooker was a psychologist who taught at UCLA during the 1940s and 50s. One of her students introduced her to the gay and lesbian subculture of Los Angeles, which became her life's work. In 1954, she applied for a grant from the National Institute of Mental Health to conduct a scientific study comparing homosexual and heterosexual men. Through her contacts at the Mattachine Society and ONE Incorporated, she found homosexual men who were willing to participate in the study.<sup>118</sup> In 1956, she presented her paper "The Adjustment of the Male Overt Homosexual" at a meeting of APA in Chicago. Her research showed that gay men are as well-adjusted as straight men.<sup>119</sup>

Baker was a psychologist from San Francisco who travelled frequently to Los Angeles to collaborate with the administrators of ONE Incorporated. "She consulted with ONE Inc. and their Social Services Division from 1955-1958, before beginning a column in ONE Magazine in 1958 called "Toward Understanding." Dr. Baker's advice column took on a wide array of issues including the causes of homosexuality, social isolation, gay marriage, gays in the military, latent homosexuality, and fetishes. Unfortunately the column lasted only until 1960 when Dr. Baker passed away. Although Dr. Baker's collaboration with ONE Inc. was short lived, the courage to use her status to speak out against the prejudices of her profession gave sorely needed support to ONE Inc. and its readers the world around."<sup>120</sup>

In the 1960s, the leaders of the gay liberation movement used the works of Kinsey and Hooker to confront the APA and other mental health professional organizations. LGBT persons were denied many basic rights under the law, in part, because homosexuality was designated a mental disorder. The designation also exacerbated societal prejudices towards the LGBT community. The APA made one small step toward accepting homosexuality as an aspect of normal sexual behavior in 1968 when they moved it from the "sociopathic" to "sexual deviation" category. In 1969, a National Institute of Mental Health study chaired by Hooker urged the decriminalization of private sex acts between consenting adults.

In 1970, members of the Gay Liberation Front disrupted the APA conference in San Francisco, which effectively forced one of the first dialogues between mental health professional and the LGBT community. In 1973, the APA finally removed homosexuality from its list of mental illnesses. The declassification of homosexuality as a mental illness allowed gay and lesbian psychiatrists and psychologists and issues affecting LGBT patients to achieve greater visibility. Prior to 1973, gay and lesbian professionals in the field of mental health feared that they would lose their jobs and licenses if their true identities were known.

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<sup>118</sup> Incidentally, Hooker was friends and neighbors with the author Christopher Isherwood.

<sup>119</sup> Katherine S. Milar, "The Myth Buster," *Monitor on Psychology*, February 2011, Vol. 42, No. 2, accessed February 17, 2014, <http://www.apa.org/monitor/2011/02/myth-buster.aspx>.

<sup>120</sup> "Dr. Blanche Baker and One Inc.," ONE Archives at the USC Libraries, accessed February 18, 2014, <http://one.usc.edu/dr-blanche-baker-and-one-inc/>.



**Figure 21:** The Alcoholism Center for Women is an example of a residential treatment center.

Source: <http://www.alcoholismcenterforwomen.org/>

By the late 1970s, the focus of the mental health community shifted from attempting to “cure” homosexuality to assisting the special needs of LGBT persons who were at higher risk for mental disorders such as depression, anxiety, and substance abuse because of the stress of societal condemnation. The increased tolerance of LGBT persons by mainstream American society in the 1970s did not necessarily translate into acceptance. This was especially true for teenagers coming out to their families. Rejection by family members resulted in higher rates of homelessness and suicidal thoughts among LGBT persons

than their straight counterparts. Among the early organizations to support the medical and mental health needs of LGBT persons were the Gay Community Service Center (GCSC), the Van Ness Recovery House, the Los Angeles Women's Center, the Feminist Women's Health Center, and the Alcoholism Center for Women.

The following tables describe designated and known resources associated with healthcare and social service agencies that supported the LGBT community. Eligibility Standards address purpose-built clinics, residential properties used by therapist as well as those converted into treatment facilities.

#### Designated Resources

Resource Name	Location	Comments
Alcoholism Center for Women	1147 S. Alvarado Street	This property is known as the Thomas Potter Residence and is designated LAHCM # 327 for its architecture. It also appears to be significant in this context for its association with the Alcoholism Center for Women. Founded by Brenda Weathers in 1974, this was a pioneering residential treatment center for women/lesbian alcoholics.

### Known Resources

Resource Name	Location	Comments
Van Ness Recovery House	1919 N. Beachwood Drive	Founded by Don Kilhefner in 1973, this was the first residential substance abuse and treatment facility specifically for LGBT persons.
Evelyn Hooker Residence	400 S. Saltair Avenue	Hooker (1907-1996) was a psychologist and professor at UCLA. Her research played a critical role in refuting the idea that homosexuality was a mental illness.
Liberation House	1168 N. Edgemont Street	In 1971, the GCSC opened the initial "Liberation House" on Edgemont Street, the nation's first facility for homeless gay adults and youth. This would be followed later that year by four additional "Liberation Houses," one exclusively for female adults and youth, and a fifth free overnight "crash pad" for up to 12 men and women (houses were located on Van Ness, Oxford, Central and Las Palmas). A sixth, opened on in 1972, was coed.
The Women's Center	1027 Crenshaw Boulevard	The Women's Center opened in 1972. Services included psychological, job, and abortion counseling, a suicide hotline for lesbians, a volunteer switchboard and a small bookstore (which morphed into Sisterhood.) Raided by the LAPD in 1972 for practicing medicine without a license.
Feminist Women's Health Center	746 Crenshaw Boulevard	Founded in 1971, the Feminist Women's Health Center was the first self-help health clinic in the country. Raided by the LAPD in 1972 for practicing medicine without a license.

## Open House to Inaugurate Women's Center

An open house Sunday from 5 to 9 p.m. will inaugurate the Women's Center at 1027 S. Crenshaw.

Sponsored by women's liberation groups in the Los Angeles area, the center is designed to provide coordination among such groups, offer needed services to women, organize women for social change and educate them about female liberation.

Among initial activities will be a workshop for working women beginning Tuesday. Dorothy Gilden will conduct the 7:30-9:30 p.m. sessions at the center.

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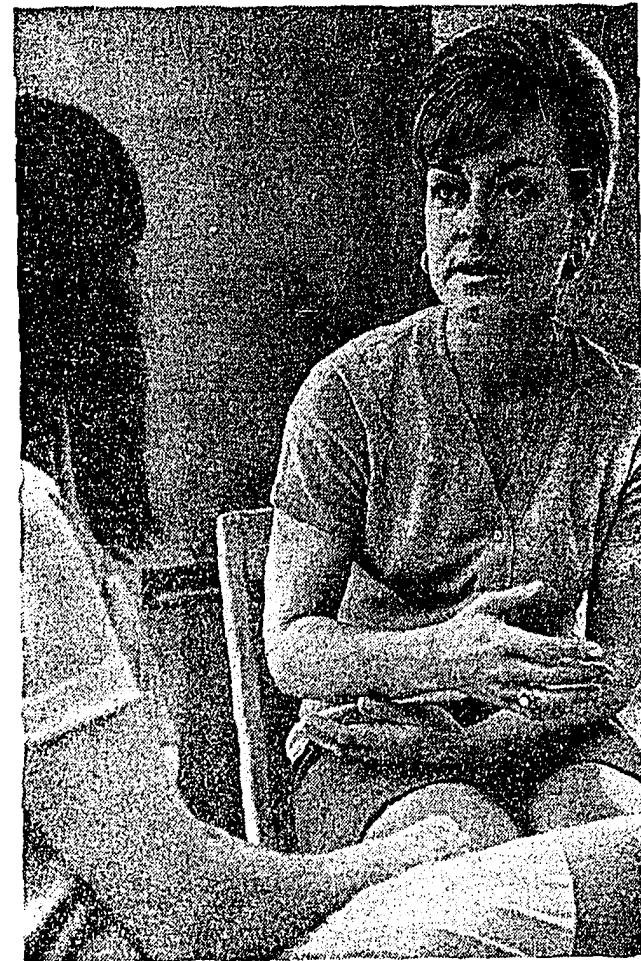
Thu, Jan 28, 2021

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Murphy, Jean  
Los Angeles Times (1923-1995); May 24, 1970; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Los Angeles Times  
pg. D1

# Clearing House for L.A. Women's Lib

## Forum Attempts to Coordinate Splinter Groups



Even revolutions have their quiet moments. Activists in feminist liberation movement talk peacefully at the Women's Center where Ellie Stein, left, cheers an unhappy housewife and Deanna Nordquist, right, explains womlib purposes.

Times photos by Mary Frampton

BY JEAN MURPHY  
Times Staff Writer

In the drizzle-becoming-downpour that is the feminist liberation movement, the Women's Center here is trying to be an umbrella.

Completing its first six months of chaotic organization, the forum attempts to coordinate activities of the proliferating (and often differing) womlib groups, spread the liberation gospel, strengthen the movement and help women solve their personal problems.

"And we create new goals as we go along," said Charlotte Conn, president.

Housing these ambitious goals is a small, plain building at 1027 S. Crenshaw Blvd. There women come for classes, meetings, referrals and counseling.

### Abortion Counseling

Most frantic of its services is abortion counseling, which is offered at 7:30 p.m. Wednesdays.

"We simply advise women on how they can obtain a legal abortion under existing law. We don't send them underground," said Deanna Nordquist, a community-at-large member of the center's board of directors.

About 98% of all women who obtain therapeutic abortions in California are middle-class whites "who know how and where to get help," she observed. Appeals for advice on specifics such as unwanted pregnancies

"They have husbands and homes and they feel they should be happy and they don't know why they're not."

"What I want to do is help them realize why they're unhappy and what they can do about it. They say they can't go back to school, they're too old; they say they can't go to work, they have children; they can't do this or that because they can't drive. So we explore alternatives."

"Once they know they're not alone, and that they can move, they can find themselves as individuals."

### Sociological Problem

"Their problems are really more sociological than psychological," Ms. Stein said. (Like many other liberationists, she prefers to be known by her first name or by the noncommittal Ms. instead of Miss or Mrs.)

"What really shocks me," she said, "is that they all take a lot of drugs, tranquilizers and so on, pills to pep them up and pills to push them down."

"They don't see the pills as a problem but then they wonder where their kids get them."

In addition to its legal, psychological, vocational and medical referral and counseling services, the center also offers classes in such subjects as Women's Oppression and Finding Your Potential and workshops for working women.

Liberationists are convinced they have been oppressed in the

Please Turn to Page 11, Col. 1

**WOMEN'S CENTER LA**  
1027 So. Crenshaw Blvd.  
Los Angeles, 90019  
937-3964 937-3965  
Open Mon.-Sat.

and legal-red tape problems tend to come from lower-income women, while middle-income women complain of vaguer maladies.

Among those coming to the

center for general counseling, most are "housewives of all ages who stay home, who really feel they've done nothing with their lives, who are frightened and feel alone with their problem,"

said Ellie Stein, one of the center's 10 counselors. (A lay counselor trained at the center, she refers women with more serious emotional or psychological problems to professionals.)

# WOMLIB

Continued from First Page

male-dominated society, but they do not hate men.

"Hating men is not an issue," Ms. Nordquist said. "Women's liberation will result in a more harmonious relationship between male and female."

### Cultural Lesson

"Our cultural lessons have been that we are second rate, that we're just to stay home. When the culture opens other lifestyles to women, when these culturally induced barriers are relaxed, men and women will be able to relate in a much healthier fashion. We're certainly not against men."

Men are even invited to attend some classes, but the center's seven rooms (including kitchen and cubbyholes) are normally for-women-only. Its mattresses provide sleeping quarters for visiting liberationists; its copious pamphlets and books "articulate the message"; its sparse furniture leaves ample room for floor-sitting; its coffee pot provides comfort.

"Sometimes we're so crowded we have to meet in the bathroom," Ms. Nordquist said.

### Recorded Voice

At other times, only a recorded voice is there to answer the telephone (the number is 937-3964) although the center is open some daylight hours and most evenings.

Participating in the center are such groups as NOW (National Organization for Women), Women's Liberation One, Socialist Women's Organizing Project, Sisters in Struggle, Union for Women's International Liberation, Wom's Lib UCLA and Wom's Lib Cal State L.A.

"We're attempting to coordinate the different groups but there are new groups every day and some old groups take different directions," Mrs. Conn said.

The center was originally funded with "a small nest egg" of donations from interested women and now receives some financial support from student funds at UCLA.

### Summing Up

Its plans call for the provision of emergency, temporary housing for girls and women in trouble; for a share-a-home program; and for classes in various Los Angeles areas. . .

Ms. Nordquist summed up the center's programs:

"Training counselors to help women who come to the center with personal problems; articulating the message of women's liberation via classes, group discussions and consciousness raising; acting as a resource center to serve the needs and interests of as many women as we can involve; and, always, innovation in developing programs and classes."

# **Women's Health Nurse Practitioners, Feminism, and Women's Studies**

**Linda A. Bernhard**

Women's health is an interdisciplinary field concerned with meeting the health needs of women across the lifespan in the context of their own lives. Women's health is a philosophical worldview and approach to working with women that evolved from the feminist women's health movement (WHM). As such, women's health has its origins in reproductive health, but it is holistic and includes other biological aspects—as well as social, psychological, emotional, spiritual, historical, and political aspects—of women's lives.

Women's health as a specialty in nursing began in the early 1980s when women's health centers suddenly appeared in hospitals across the country. The radical, alternative approach to care for women (as seen in feminist women's health centers) was being co-opted by hospitals and health care systems that needed nurses to staff these *women's* health centers. So, nursing created master's degree programs in women's health.<sup>1</sup> Those early nursing programs often included feminist principles and praxis, and the emphasis was on the specialty of women's health. By the 1990s, however, most nursing graduate programs were transformed from educating nurse specialists to educating nurse practitioners, including women's health nurse practitioners.<sup>2</sup> Nurse practitioners are more likely to emphasize general clinical nursing care than specialty practice.

Today, women's health nurse practitioners (WHNPs) are master's degree-prepared nurses who focus on the care of women. Only a small number practice in the specialty of women's health as defined above; most do not. WHNPs are registered nurses, first and foremost; they are principally traditionally educated health care professionals. Their goals are to provide good nursing care to women, not necessarily to provide feminist women's health care.

In their profession, nurses have created standards and guidelines for nursing practice to enhance quality and credibility. In 1996, two organizations that were created as nursing organizations, the Association of Women's Health, Obstetric, and Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN; formerly the Nurses' Association of the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology) and the National Association of Nurse

Practitioners in Reproductive Health (NANPRH; now the National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health),<sup>3</sup> published "clear, unified guidelines for [the] practice and education" (p. 1, NANPRH, 1996) of WHNPs, to promote similarity across nursing programs. Although the WHNP is described in the guidelines as a "specialist in the field of women's health" (p. 1), women's health is not defined in the guidelines—as feminist or in any other way, and there is nothing in the guidelines that is unique to women's health. Rather, the guidelines emphasize good *nursing*. Any nurse could use the six guidelines—client care, nurse-client relationship, health education and counseling, professional role, managing health care delivery, and quality of care.

After the guidelines were published, Linda Andrist, a feminist, WHNP, and WHNP educator at MGH Institute of Health Professions, in Boston, mailed a survey to 31 graduate nursing programs that were identified as educating WHNPs. What she found from the 28 programs that responded was a lack of consensus about how WHNPs should be educated, and even in how they were titled (Andrist, 1998). There were at least five different titles (women's primary care nurse practitioner, women's nurse practitioner, women's health/obstetric-gynecology nurse practitioner, women's health care nurse practitioner, and women's health nurse practitioner). The confusion in titling reflects differences in program content and focus, but it appears that rather than maintain any feminist framework that once existed, WHNPs are becoming medicalized themselves, becoming more like conventional medical doctors (particularly obstetricians and gynecologists), than like feminist women's health specialists.

But it does not have to be that way! Quality care for all women is diminished when alternatives to conventional medical care are not available. Of course there *are* alternatives (e.g., massage therapy, naturopaths, herbalists), but most are not covered by health insurance, Medicaid, or Medicare. This limits their availability to those who can pay cash.

WHNPs could be the health providers who work in the margins of health care and provide an alternative to conventional medicine. Their status as nurses and "regular" health providers who work inside the system means that their services *are* covered by health insurance, thus making them more accessible to the public. But they could also provide alternative women's health care within a feminist framework.

In this essay I will provide a context for women's health nurse practitioner practice today. I will start with a brief history of the women's health movement. Then I will discuss some explanations for why women's health nurse practitioners may not be feminist and

the tensions for nurses generally about feminism. Then I will discuss some of the feminist activity that is happening in nursing today to demonstrate the potential that women's health nurse practitioners have. I will conclude with some ideas about how women's studies can assist in the process.

### The Women's Health Movement

Women's health today is a product of the WHM. Although Weisman (1998) argues that a women's health "megamovement" has existed since early in the nineteenth century, the present wave of the movement began on the sleeve of the second wave of the women's movement that occurred during the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Parts of the WHM developed on both coasts. In the East what became the Boston Women's Health Book Collective provided the roots of the WHM as an educational enterprise in which women could educate themselves and one another about issues of health. In 1969 in Boston, a group of women attended a conference at which they shared their displeasure with the lack of education that physicians were providing to women about their bodies and their health. So they decided to work together, each studying and writing a paper to share with the others about some aspect of women's health. Their papers were compiled in December 1970 and then published in an underground newspaper; this collection later became *Our Bodies, Ourselves* (Boston Women's Health Book Collective, 1992). The book was an instant success among women, has been updated and republished many times since, and remains one of the most important feminist texts on women's health.

On the West Coast the practice roots of the WHM started in early 1971 with Carol Downer and Lorraine Rothman (Pearson, 1996). Downer and Rothman were concerned about reproductive rights and women's access to abortion, and they believed that control of reproduction was central to freedom for women. They believed that medicine and the female body could be demystified; they decided to do something. One evening, with a small group of women observing, Downer inserted a speculum into her vagina, while she and the others viewed her cervix. Soon, Rothman invented the Del-Em, a tool for menstrual extraction that these women used to subvert the medical system (Pearson, 1996). With their radical feminist group they started gynecology self-help and a feminist women's health center. After the women discussed their practices and demonstrated them at the national conference of the National Organization for Women, in

August 1971, their self-help methods and a variety of feminist women's health centers sprang up all across the country.

The feminist women's health centers were anti-professional, but specifically, anti-physician. The women believed that avoidance of governmental and male/medical control of reproduction could only be achieved *outside* the medical system, and with only women serving other women. They argued that women could describe and manage health, and examine their own bodies, seeking health, rather than searching for disease and illness.

Simultaneously with the educational and practice origins of the WHM on both coasts, "radical," activist women in Chicago were developing Jane (Kaplan, 1995). Jane began as an abortion referral service and evolved into an abortion providing service. It was a single-issue organization, but in 1971, when the Jane women found and read *Our Bodies, Ourselves*, they were excited to learn more about women's health and its many other aspects besides reproduction. Henceforth, Jane provided free copies of the book to all the women who came to them for services.

The women who worked on both coasts, as well as the Chicago women, were predominantly white, middle class, urban, and heterosexual. They were not educated in the health professions. Although nurses were not specifically identified as the problem (as physicians were), and although nurses at that time were almost all white middle-class women, nurses were notably absent from the WHM. Wilma Scott Heide, a nurse and the president of the National Organization for Women from 1971 to 1974, tried to rally nurses—and other women—to feminism, but not specifically to women's health.

By 1980 a few nurses were writing about feminism. Joan Mulligan (1980), a professor in nursing and women's studies at the University of Wisconsin, urged nurses to become involved with feminism. But Mulligan also realized the need for education for both nurses and feminists. She called for a required women's studies course for nursing students, and a required nursing course for women's studies students; however, her cry was largely unheard or ignored by both nursing and women's studies. Neither nursing nor women's studies moved forward with cross-disciplinary courses.

The WHM was grounded in radical feminism, whose goals were to transform society completely so that women would not be oppressed (Tong, 1989). Women and women's experiences were central. If radical feminists wanted to completely transform society to achieve justice for women, the WHM and its activists wanted to completely transform health care for the benefit of women's health. They challenged the

# Carol Downer Cleared of Practicing Medicine

Feminist Carol Downer has been acquitted of a charge of practicing medicine without a license.

A municipal court jury of eight men and four women deliberated two days before finding the 39-year-old defendant not guilty of violating the law by treating the infection of another woman with yogurt last May 11.

The incident occurred at the Women's Center, 1027 S. Crenshaw Blvd., Los Angeles, where she was conducting a class in female ailments.

## "Good Precedent"

Commenting on Tuesday's verdict, Ms. Downer said, "It's a real good pre-

cedent for women who try to learn more about their own bodies."

She said it would free them from the "crippling anxiety" of learning about themselves.

The defendant said she had not diagnosed the ailment, and "I don't think we should diagnose."

## Will Continue

Testimony during the trial showed that the other woman had mentioned she thought she had an infection.

Ms. Downer said she will continue to conduct classes in self-help for women at the center.

A resident of Eagle Rock, she is the mother of six children.

Clipped By:



kateblaine

Thu, Jan 28, 2021

—Feminist Women's Health Center, 746 S. Crenshaw Blvd., L.A. 90005. Phone 936-7219. Sponsors Women's Choice Clinic, 1027 S. Crenshaw Blvd.

Clipped By:



kateblaine

Thu, Jan 28, 2021

# LESBIAN FEMINISTS

The Lesbian Feminists group's function is defined in its name: It is a women's liberation group with an emphasis on lesbian oppression.

It has initiated the Gay-Straight dialogues to promote understanding in the women's movement. The latest dialogue was held in March. Lesbian Feminists speak at colleges and organizations to promote education of the gay and straight communities.

\*

Individual members are active in helping to run the Women's Center, which is where the group's meetings are held. They are also active in such organizations as the Lesbian Coalition of Southern California, and took active-part in organizing the April 22nd Anti-War March and the Lesbian Conference on April 23rd. They are also taking much responsibility in planning the June Christopher Street West March.

One of the most important on-going projects of the Lesbian Feminists is the Coffee House which is open every Saturday from 8 P.M. - 2 A.M.. There is beer, wine, soft drinks, dancing and talking. The Coffee House is intended to be an alternative to the bars, a place where women can enjoy themselves and meet new people in an atmosphere of sisterhood.

Meetings of the Lesbian Feminists are every Tuesday night at 8 P.M. at the Women's Center, 1027 So. Crenshaw (off Olympic and Crenshaw). All women are welcome.

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## WEEK OF ABORTION REPEAL ACTIVITY

May 4th to 11th. Sisters United of Cal State L.A. and the L.A. Women's Abortion Action Committee sponsors, "A Woman's Right to Choose". Special Activities: Thursday at 12 noon, picket in front of Federal Courthouse. Wednesday evening, Evelyn Reed,

# N.O.W. Votes Yes on Lesbians

If you read the L. A. Times of Friday, 9/3, you saw that Betty Friedan, a founder of NOW (National Organization for Women), intended to come to L.A. to "complete the purge of Lesbians" from that organization, a purge she initiated last year in the New York Chapter. If, however, you attended the National NOW Conference, held in Los Angeles during Labor Day weekend this year, you were pleasantly surprised. The lesbian issue not only was not a divisive battle, it was a positive, unifying experience.

Some background, now. In April, the Lesbian Feminists of Los Angeles invaded a meeting of the L. A. Chapter of NOW and invited them to confront their low level of consciousness. A rap session three weeks later produced an immense amount of emotional interchange between NOW members and lesbians from the Daughters of Bilitis, Lesbian Feminists, and Gay Women's Service Center. It also produced the following resolution:

"WHEREAS, THE L.A. CHAPTER RECOGNIZES THE DOUBLE OPPRESSION OF WOMEN WHO ARE LESBIANS; WHEREAS, THE CHAPTER RECOGNIZES THAT A

WOMAN'S RIGHT TO HER OWN PERSON INCLUDES THE RIGHT TO DEFINE AND EXPRESS HER OWN SEXUALITY AND TO CHOOSE HER OWN LIFESTYLE; THEREFORE, WE ACKNOWLEDGE THE OPPRESSION OF LESBIANS AS A LEGITIMATE CONCERN OF FEMINISM."

The resolution was passed at the next business meeting, thereby creating new policy for the L.A. Chapter. Those of us who had worked so hard to get this far were not ready to stop; we decided to go National. In order to accomplish this, the resolution was sent to the National Board of NOW and presented at a workshop of the National Convention.

**UNANIMOUS SUPPORT -**  
Our workshop ended up with nearly half the conference delegates, a sure sign that the topic was timely. Our spirits rose at the applause which greeted the Lesbian position paper, and soared when a woman stood up minutes later to move that we pass the resolution by acclamation. We continued discussion a little longer -- not because we were worried about the vote, but to be sure there were no misconceptions...And the vote was unanimous!

(cont. on p. ?)

NOW cont....

The second hurdle would be harder. Our resolution then went to the Conference Resolutions Committee along with about one thousand other resolutions from other workshops. Just over a hundred survived the Committee, still much too much to present to the Conference in the short time available. Luckily, the Committee established a priority which allowed the Lesbian Resolution to come to the floor. Other workshops had the luck of seeing their work sent to a Task Force to be dealt with after the Conference.

Betty Friedan had not appeared at the workshop, nor had we heard of any statements from her. But, would she let the Resolution come before the National body without saying anything? Amazingly, that's what happened. Friedan was nowhere to be seen. There was one attempt to cut out half of the position paper, which had become part of the Resolution; this was voted down by a substantial majority. When the vote was taken, it was almost unanimous in favor of the resolution.

First, the position paper is a consciousness-raiser. It gives specific instances of the ways lesbians are oppressed, and serves as a pointed reminder to anti-lesbian NOW members that they have fallen short of the goal of sisterhood.

Second, the intelligent and non-emotional presentation of this "controversial" issue is a deterrent to lesbian-baiters, both within NOW and elsewhere. Lesbian-baiting has devastated many feminist speakers, has been one of the most potent weapons used against the Women's Movement. We have de-fused that weapon by bringing the issue out into the open, recognizing our past smallness, and welcoming our sisters.

Finally, by establishing National NOW policy, the resolution opens the way for specific NOW actions in behalf of lesbians. There is already a case in litigation in San Francisco in which a NOW lawyer is suing for the right of a lesbian to custody of her child. Under the new policy, NOW may be able to help with court costs in this case.

...

Sharon Zecha

# Anti-Rape Squad Goal: Curb Crimes and Change Attitudes

**BY BARBARA RIKER**

*Westside Women's News Editor*

**VENICE**--An anti-rape squad has been established at Westside Women's Center in an attempt to prevent violent crimes against women and change social attitudes which foster the rapist.

Members of the squad have devised several practical ways to prevent rape and to help the girl who has been raped.

For one thing, women are being asked to pick up other women who are hitchhiking. A new bumper sticker with the slogan "Sisters Give Rides to Sisters" is being distributed to members of the center.

"We are trying to protect the women who, in all innocence, are hitching a ride," explained Jill, a 26-year-old student and member of the anti-rape squad.

"We want to alert them that the hippie love trip is over and this is not the ideal, safe neighborhood it was."

"Violent crimes are taking place against women who are simply hitchhiking or walking on the beach after 7 p.m."

## Calls to Center

Members of the anti-rape squad also are encouraging women who have been raped to call the center at 218 W. Venice Blvd. immediately afterward. After the center closes for the day, some members are on call at home.

"We especially want to help the younger girls who cannot face the humiliation of being raped, and are afraid to tell their parents," said Sara, 23.

"Women are definitely more willing to talk to other women who are supportive and accepting."

## Squad Helps Out

If the woman who has been raped chooses to report it to the police, a member of the squad will go with her along with a woman attorney whenever possible.

Squad members have researched laws on rape to help women become better informed of their rights.

Another way in which they hope to help is to take down the descriptions women give of rapists and their cars.

These will be posted at

the center, on telephone poles in the community and along the beachfront.

"A guy with long hair and love beads can still be a rapist," said Valerie, 24. "You can't tell a rapist by his looks. The only thing you know is the rapist is always a man."

Members of the squad contend that rape is an act which is a reflection of a male-oriented society.

They are sponsoring discussions which they hope will change attitudes which subtly condone rape.

## Shift the Blame

"We would like to shift the blame from the victim to the rapist, and help the general public realize that society supports rape and praises the rapist."

"Rape is a consequence of society's belief in the 'sacred' nature of masculinity. Rape is an extension of a man whistling at you, and this is more insidious than when he pulls you off the street."

Members of the squad say that too often the woman is considered to be at fault, for "asking to be raped" because of her dress or behavior.

"This is based on the assumption that every woman wants to be raped."

"If a woman is raped then murdered, the man is the criminal. But if she gets away, she is treated as if she were the criminal."

# CALENDAR

## NOVEMBER

- Tues, 2      7:30 Lesbian Feminists Mtg. 1027 S. Crenshaw
- Wed, 3      6:30 Officers Mtg., 8:30 Encounter Group DOB Cen.
- Thurs, 4      8:00 Community Dinner GWSC 1542 N. Glendale Blvd.
- Fri, 5      8:00 Cards, 12-4:00 Afterhours DOB Center
- Sat, 6      "Sisters" Coffeehouse 1027 S. Crenshaw
- Sun, 7      Task Force Mtg. 1-3:00, Intergroup Council Mtg. 3-5:00 DOB Center
- Mon, 8      7:30 DCB Business Mtg., Task Force- UCLA 8:00am further info- 934-6593
- Tues, 9      8:00 Rap- "Metaphysics", Lesbian Feminists Mtg. 7:30 1027 S. Crenshaw
- Wed, 10      7:30 Officers Mtg., 8:30 Group, further info- 479-6349 DOB Center
- Fri, 12      7:30 General Mtg (elections), 12-4 Afterhours DOB Center, KMET (94.7) every Fri. Gay News 5:30
- Sat, 13      "Sisters" Coffeehouse- dancing, beer
- Sun, 14      12 noon Picnic and Softball at Griffith Park
- Tues, 16      7:30 Lesbian Feminists Mtg. 1027 S. Crenshaw
- Wed, 17      7:30 Officers Mtg., 8:30 Group
- Fri, 19      8:00 Thanksgiving Dance "Free Turkey"
- Sat, 20      "Sisters" Coffeehouse - dancing, beer
- Tues, 23      7:30 Lesbian Feminist Mtg. 1027 S. Crenshaw
- Fri, 26      7:30 General Mtg., 12-4:00 Afterhours DCB Center
- Tues, 30      7:30 Lesbian Feminists Mtg. 1027 S. Crenshaw

# Womlib School Set at Center

A new Women's Liberation School will open in Los Angeles in early October, with registration and orientation scheduled from 2 to 5 p.m. Sept. 25 at the Women's Liberation Center, 1027 S. Crenshaw.

Sponsored by the center and open to all women, the school will offer courses in such subjects as auto mechanics, carpentry and electricity, feminist art, history, law, sociology, literature and psychology, and self-defense.

The school, according to the center's announcement, is "designed to enable women to understand themselves . . . to recognize their capabilities and potentials and develop the skills necessary for them to function autonomously."

Classes in the eight-week program will be held in the evenings or on weekends. Fees will be \$2 per class or \$5 for as many classes as desired. Additional information may be obtained by calling the center at 937-3964.

# Legal Team Will Offer Help for Woman's Lib Court Cases

BY JEAN MURPHY

Times Staff Writer

A legal team, comprised largely of para-professionals, is being planned by the Women's Liberation Center to fight in the courts against job discrimination based on sex.

"Cases (of employment discrimination against women) must be litigated if the system is to be altered," attorney Barbara Schlei told a meeting at the center, 1027 S. Crenshaw Blvd. "One lawyer with a group of para-professionals could handle a large number of cases."

Fourteen women at the meeting signed up as volunteers to work on the team and Riane Eisler, an attorney and co-founder of the center's legal program, said that "this is a very real thing we can do and we're really going to try to get some action out of it."

#### Lecture Series

Mrs. Schlei, district counsel for the federal Equal Employment Opportunities Commission in



**JOB RIGHTS**—Attorney Barbara Schlei, in lecture series at the Women's Liberation Center, discusses employment discrimination which is based on sex.

Times photo

that follows in story but is not included in caption

Clipped By:



kateblaine

Thu, Jan 28, 2021

get some action out of it."

**Lecture Series**

Mrs. Schlei, district counsel for the federal Equal Employment Opportunities Commission in Los Angeles, was a speaker in a lecture series on "Women and the Law" at the center.

She said that volunteers who are not lawyers could do 95% of the work on litigation but she warned that their "attitude must be professional. You can't start a law suit and then decide to go to the beauty parlor."

A Yale law school graduate, Mrs. Schlei noted that individual women can seldom afford to take their cases to court.

"I urge you to consider a para-professional relationship in a legal services team . . . to do what a woman cannot do alone," she said. "I would simply form teams and start doing it; I would plunge right in and do it. Anybody is better than nobody and nothing will be lost because there are cases not being litigated at all now."

Mrs. Schlei cautioned

**JOB RIGHTS**—Attorney Barbara Schlei, in lecture series at the Women's Liberation Center, discusses employment discrimination which is based on sex.  
Times photo

that talking is easy but that "it's very hard to sit down and do the kind of drudgery it takes to make meaningful changes in the system."

She said that the EEOC offices at 1543 W. Olympic Blvd. are "literally flooded with people all day with discrimination complaints."

**Use of Courts**

There are about 100 discrimination cases now in litigation in the EEOC district, which includes Southern, California, Arizona, Nevada and Hawaii. Of these, Mrs. Schlei said, about half involve women.

"We can move forward through using the courts . . . and be judged as individuals on the basis of our individual capacities," she said.

Mrs. Schlei discussed women's protective laws which "females are not asking for in today's society" and which she believes "will be overturned in California and throughout the nation."

She also attacked various business and industrial employment practices which she said hinder women in job-finding and promotion.

Other speakers in the center's legal lecture series will be Phyllis Deutsch, who has specialized in family law for more than 20 years and who will explain California's new divorce law at 8 p.m. Thursday.

On Feb. 18, Valerie Vanaman, house counsel for the County Welfare Rights Organization and a lecturer at USC and UCLA, will discuss welfare issues.

"Government Programs and Their Impact on Women" will be discussed by Jean Kidwell, a practicing attorney for more than 25 years, in a talk on Feb. 25.

Clipped By:



kateblaine

Thu, Jan 28, 2021

# Fixing Own Car: That's Liberation

BY JEAN MURPHY

*Times Staff Writer*

Liberation may mean never having to hire a mechanic to overhaul your carburetor.

"Taking care of our own cars is another step on the road to making women self-sufficient," said Harriet Whitehead at the Women's Liberation Center, 1027 S. Crenshaw, where she conducts a Volkswagen clinic on Saturday afternoons.

"We're brought up to think we're not supposed to know anything about cars. We've been excluded from auto mechanics courses in high school; we haven't been given the alternative of learning."

## Oil Change

Ms. Whitehead helps, without charge, other VW owners keep their cars in condition. In a small, dusty lot adjoining the center, the women change the oil, adjust the brakes, replace fan belts, tune up engines and perform other "grubby but fun" work.

"And the book gives us instructions for troubleshooting so that we can diagnose even if we can't repair," Ms. Whitehead said.

The book is "How to Keep Your Volkswagen Alive: A Manual of Step-by-Step Procedures for the Compleat Idiot" by John Muir.

The manual encouraged Ms. Whitehead, who is in Los Angeles completing work on a doctorate in anthropology from the University of Chicago, to feel she could take care of her six-year-old VW.

She and Cheri Maynard, who had learned car care from her brother, started the clinic in February simply "by announcing we would be available on Saturday afternoons to help other women."

## In Control

Since then, an average of three to five women have showed up every Saturday to work on their cars.

One of the most enthusiastic is Donna Cassyd, a teacher with a master's degree in English from UCLA. She drives a 1963 bug.

"It's exhilarating. It takes away my sense of powerlessness; I'm in control of my own destiny, Volkswagen-wise," she said.

That particular feeling of triumph is new for women, according to Ms. Whitehead.

"Men have the confidence to do these things, things like plumbing and



**WHEEL-WISE** -Harriet Whitehead, left, and Donna Cassyd change oil in 1963 bug during Volkswagen clinic at the Women's Liberation Center.

*Times photo by Larry Bessel*

carpentry and rewiring houses, but women don't," added Johanna Gullick, a sociology student at Cal-State Dominguez Hills.

The women, along with Mary—Mary asked not to be fully identified—agreed on the financial benefits.

The mechanics at the

women's center have come a long way, but not all the way. The class in general auto mechanics which precedes the VW clinic is taught by a man.

Occasionally, it might seem, the women go too far.

"Now my husband wants me to overhaul his carburetor," Mary said.



Primary Address: 1025 S CRENSHAW BLVD  
Other Address: 1027 S CRENSHAW BLVD  
1029 S CRENSHAW BLVD  
Name: Crenshaw Women's Center  
Year built: 1920  
Architectural style: Vernacular

#### Context 1:

Context:	Public and Private Institutional Development, 1850-1980
Sub context:	Civil Rights Movement - Ethnic and Gender Equality, 1942-1980
Theme:	Gay Civil Rights Movement, 1942-1965
Sub theme:	Important Events and Institutions in the Gay Civil Rights Movement, 1942-1965
Property type:	Institutional
Property sub type:	No Sub-Type
Criteria:	A/1/1
Status code:	3CS;5S3
Reason:	Significant as a pioneering venue for lesbian education and empowerment; a rare example of institutional development associated with the LGBT community in the Wilshire area. While it is known that the Crenshaw Women's Center opened in 1969, it is not clear how long the center remained in operation at the location; additional research is needed to determine the period of significance. Less than 50 years old and not of exceptional importance; therefore not eligible for listing in the National Register.

# VICTORIA

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196

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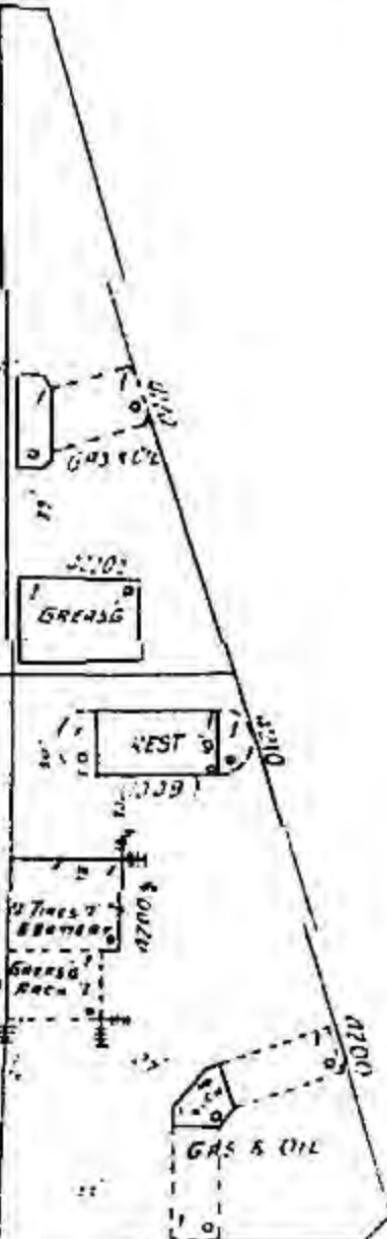
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1029-27

1023

1025



CRENSHAW

BLVD

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1120 - 27

# All Applications Must be Filled Out by Applicant

## **DIGEST FORM X**

**PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS**  
and other data must also be filed

# **DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING AND SAFETY**

# Application to Alter, Repair or Demolish

To the Board of Building and Safety Commissioners of the City of Los Angeles:

Application is hereby made to the Board of Building and Safety Commissioners of the City of Los Angeles, through the office of the Superintendent of Building, for a building permit, in accordance with the description and for the purpose hereinafter set forth. This application is made subject to the following conditions, which are hereby agreed to by the undersigned applicant and which shall be deemed conditions entering into the exercise of the permit:

conditions entering into the exercise of the permit.

First: That the permit does not grant any right or privilege to erect any building or other structure therein described, or any portion thereof, upon any street, alley, or other public place or portion thereof.

Second: That the permit does not grant any right or privilege to use any building or other structure therein described, or any portion thereof, for any purpose that is, or may hereafter be prohibited by ordinance of the City of Los Angeles.

Third: That the granting of the permit does not affect or prejudice any claim of title to, or right of possession in, the property described in such permit.

**REMOVED FROM** \_\_\_\_\_ **REMOVED TO** \_\_\_\_\_

# **REMOVED FROM**

**REMOVED TO**

1. What purpose is the present Building now used for? *Office*
  2. What purpose will Building be used for hereafter? *Office*
  3. Owner's name *Frank C. Dillenbeck*
  4. Owner's address *3970 Albert St.*
  5. Architect's name \_\_\_\_\_
  6. Contractor's name *M. C. Johnson*
  7. Contractor's address *410 West 10th St.*
  8. VALUATION OF PROPOSED WORK { Including Plumbing, Gas Fitting, Sewers, Cesspools, Elevators, Painting, Finishing, all Labor, etc. } *\$275.00*
  9. Class of present Building *A* No. of rooms at present *8*
  10. Number of stories in height *1* Size of present Building *38 x 51*
  11. State how many buildings are on this lot *1*
  12. State purpose buildings on lot are used for \_\_\_\_\_

STATE ON FOLLOWING LINES EXACTLY WHAT ALTERATIONS, ADDITIONS, ETC., WILL  
BE MADE TO THIS BUILDING:

To the Ward of Campfield, etc.  
A. G. Steele, Corroborate  
P. J. K. C. L. M. S. S.

I have carefully examined and read the above application and know the same is true and correct, and that all provisions of the Ordinances and Laws governing Building Construction will be complied with, whether herein specified or not.

OVER

(Sign here) *John G. Golditt*  
(Owner or Authorized Agent.)

**Owner or Authorized Agent:**

**FOR DEPARTMENT USE ONLY**

<b>PERMIT NO.</b> <b>3508</b>	Plans and Specifications checked and found to conform to Ordinances, State Laws, etc.	Application checked and found in order to issue it is <b>O. K.</b>
		
<b>APPROVED</b> <b>MAR 28 1927</b> <b>UNDULATED</b>		

13. Size of new addition 10' x 12' No. of Stories in height 1
14. Material of foundation Concrete Size footings 12" Size wall 6" Depth below ground 6'
15. Size of Redwood Mudsills 2" x 6" Size of interior bearing studs x
16. Size of exterior studs x Size of interior non-bearing studs x
17. Size of first floor joists x Second floor joists x
18. Will all provisions of State Housing Act be complied with? Yes

I have carefully examined and read the above blank and know the same is true and correct, and that all provisions of the Ordinances and Laws governing Building Construction will be complied with, whether herein specified or not.

(Sign here) M. G. Jensen  
(Owner or Authorized Agent)

### FOR DEPARTMENT USE ONLY

APPLICATION	O. K.
CONSTRUCTION	O. K.
ZONING	O. K.
SET-BACK LINE	O. K.
ORD. 33761 (N. S.)	O. K.
FIRE DISTRICT	O. K.

### REMARKS

Not to be over 10' from property line. This was done.  
Not affected by 10' street widening just occurring

M. G. Jensen

3

**APPLICATION TO  
ALTER, REPAIR, or DEMOLISH  
AND FOR A  
Certificate of Occupancy**

Form 54  
CITY OF LOS ANGELES  
DEPARTMENT  
OF  
BUILDING AND SAFETY  
BUILDING DIVISION

Lot No. 54

Tract The Kellogg Thalwart ProjectLocation of Building 1027-29 Randolph Blvd  
(Room Number and Street)Approved by  
City EngineerBetween what cross streets? 11th & Olympic BlvdB. J. Deputy

USE INK OR INDELIBLE PENCIL

1. Present use of building Residence - office Families 2 Rooms 8  
(Store, Dwelling, Apartment House, Hotel or other purpose)2. State how long building has been used for present occupancy 15 yrs3. Use of building AFTER alteration or moving residence off Families 2Rooms 84. Owner Dr. G. Kelly Hayes Phone 8-2-195. Owner's Address 1027 Randolph Blvd P. O. 8-2-19

State

License No.

State

License No.

State

License No.

6. Certificated Architect None Phone7. Licensed Engineer None Phone8. Contractor None Phone9. Contractor's Address None Phone10. VALUATION OF PROPOSED WORK 3000 \$  
Including all labor and material and all permanent heating, heating, ventilation, water supply piping, air conditioner, electrical wiring and elevators, pumping, storage or service.11. State how many buildings NOW One Single story Garage  
(Store, Dwelling, Apartment House, Hotel or other purpose)12. Size of existing building 36 x 51 Number of Stories high 1 Height to highest point 15'13. Material Exterior Walls Wood (Wood, Sheet or Masonry) Exterior Framework Wood (Wood or Sheet)14. Describe briefly all proposed construction and work:  
Same exterior, front and sides. replace old front porch with one new one. same frame as per plans.**NEW CONSTRUCTION**15. Size of Addition 15' x 56' Size of Lot 50x150 Number of Stories when complete 116. Footing: Width 2 Depth in Ground 12 Width of Wall 6 Size of Floor Joists 2x617. Size of Studs 2 x 4 Material of Floor Wood Size of Rafters 2x6 Type of Roofing Caves

I hereby certify that to the best of my knowledge and belief the above application is correct and that this building or construction work will comply with all laws, and that in the doing of the work authorized thereby I will not employ any person in violation of the Labor Code of the State of California relating to Workmen's Compensation Insurance.

Sign here G. Kelly Hayes  
(Owner of proposed work)By None**FOR DEPARTMENT USE ONLY****PLAN CHECKING****OCCUPANCY SURVEY**

Investigation Fee \$

Cert. of

Occupancy Fee \$

Bldg Permit Fee \$

Total \$

12.00

Valuation \$ 3000  
500

Area of Blkd. Sq. Ft.

Fee \$ Inside Lot 50x150 Outside 12x60 Total 12.00

TYPE Maximum No. Occupants Inside Lot Corner Lot Keyed

GROUP Plans and Specifications checked None Size 2x6 Date 7/10/70 Application checked and approved NoneFee Paid None Correction Verdict None Size 2x6 Date 7/10/70 Application checked and approved None

TYPE Maximum No. Occupants Inside Lot Corner Lot Keyed

GROUP Plans and Specifications checked None Size 2x6 Date 7/10/70 Application checked and approved NoneFee Paid None Correction Verdict None Size 2x6 Date 7/10/70 Application checked and approved None

TYPE Maximum No. Occupants Inside Lot Corner Lot Keyed

GROUP Plans and Specifications checked None Size 2x6 Date 7/10/70 Application checked and approved None

DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE

TYPE OF RECEIPT DATE ISSUED TRACER NO. ON RECEIPT NO. CODE FEE PAID

Plan Checking 7/10/70 40719Supplemental Plan Checking 7/10/70 40719Building Permit 7/10/70 LA23229 40719

REASH

-5

Example

3

**APPLICATION TO ALTER - REPAIR - DEMOLISH  
AND FOR CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY**

CITY OF LOS ANGELES

DEPT. OF BUILDING AND SAFETY

1. LEGAL LOT 54	BLK.	TRACT	N.X.Kelley's Montview Tr.		DIST. MAP
2. BUILDING ADDRESS 1027-29 Crenshaw Blvd.	APPROVED			ZONE C-2	
3. BETWEEN CROSS STREETS Olympic Blvd.	AND Country Club Drive			FIRE DIST. II 70	
4. PRESENT USE OF BUILDING Business & Residence	NEW USE OF BUILDING Same			INSIDE	
5. OWNER Dr. Guido F. Ruccione	PHONE WE 47695			KEY	
6. OWNER'S ADDRESS 897 5th Ave.	P.O. L. A. 5			COR. LOT	
7. CERT. ARCH.	STATE LICENSE PHONE			REV. COR. LOT SIZE	
8. LIC. ENGR.	STATE LICENSE PHONE			REAR ALLEY	
9. CONTRACTOR Owner	STATE LICENSE PHONE			SIDE ALLEY	
10. CONTRACTOR'S ADDRESS Above	P.O. ZONE			BLDG. LINE	
11. SIZE OF EXISTING BLDG. 30 X 30	STORIES 1	HEIGHT	NO. OF EXISTING BUILDINGS ON LOT AND USE 1 (Duplex) Bus.&Res.		BLDG. AREA
12. MATERIAL EXT. WALLS: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WOOD <input type="checkbox"/> METAL <input type="checkbox"/> CONC. BLOCK <input type="checkbox"/> STUCCO <input type="checkbox"/> BRICK <input type="checkbox"/> CONCRETE	ROOF CONST. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WOOD <input type="checkbox"/> CONC.	<input type="checkbox"/> STEEL <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER	ROOFING		SPRINKLERS REQ'D, SPECIFIED

3 1027-29 Crenshaw Blvd. DISTRICT OFFICE L. A.

VALIDATION LA51697	AUG-27-56	71642	CASHIER'S USE ONLY	A - 2 CS	1.00
TYPE ✓ GROUP ✓ MAX P.C. G-1 U.C.	AUG-27-56	71643		A - 1 CS	3.50

C. OF O. ISSUED	P.C. \$1.00	S.P.C.	B.P. 3.50	I.F.	O.S.	C/O
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13. VALUATION: TO INCLUDE ALL FIXED EQUIPMENT REQUIRED TO OPERATE AND USE PROPOSED BUILDING.	\$ 450.00	DWELL. UNITS
--	-----------	--------------

14. SIZE OF ADDITION	STORIES	HEIGHT	VALUATION APPROVED	PARKING SPACES
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15. NEW WORK: EXT. WALLS add doors & steps, rear, remove Close side doors, remove steps, eaves, & columns front entrance add metal hoods over doors	ROOFING	APPLICATION CHECKED Ott	GUEST ROOMS
		PLANS CHECKED J. R. Ruccione	FILE WITH

I certify that in doing the work authorized hereby I will not employ any person in violation of the Labor Code of the State of California relating to workmen's compensation insurance.	CORRECTIONS VERIFIED J. R. Ruccione	CONT. INSP.
---	--	-------------

SIGNED

*Dr. Guido F. Ruccione*

This Form When Properly Validated is a Permit to Do Work Described.

PLANS APPROVED

*J. R. Ruccione*

APPLICATION APPROVED

*R. Raymond*

INSTRUCTIONS: 1. Applicant to Complete Numbered Items Only.  
2. Plot Plan Required on Back of Original.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED

HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
DATE 12/20/01 BY SP/SP

## APPLICATION

CITY OF LOS ANGELES DEPT OF BUILDING AND SAFETY

TO ADD-ALTER-  
REPAIR-DEMOLISH  
AND FOR CERTIFICATE  
OF OCCUPANCY**3** FOR INSPECTION! **3 0 0 2 - 0 0 1 2**

INSTRUCTIONS: 1. Applicant to Complete Numbered Items Only.

1. LEGAL DESC'R.	LOT 54	BLOCK	TRACT N C KELLYS Mountview	COUNCIL DISTRICT NO 10	DIST. MAP 132-189 CENSUS TRACT 2727.00		
2. PRESENT USE OF BUILDING ( ) SFD		NEW USE OF BUILDING ( ) OFFICE/RETAIL		ZONE C2-1-0			
3. JOB ADDRESS 1025 Crenshaw Blvd						FIRE DIST TWO	
4. BETWEEN CROSS STREETS Olympic		AND Country Club		LOT TYPE Int			
5. OWNER'S NAME Mrs Chung Kyu Lee		PHONE 734-3500		LOT SIZE 50x150			
6. OWNER'S ADDRESS 1010 Arlington		CITY LA ZIP					
7. ENGINEER Jay Han		BUS. LIC. NO. 38208 ACTIVE STATE LIC. NO. 384-3106 PHONE		ALLEY --			
8. ARCHITECT OR DESIGNER		BUS. LIC. NO. ACTIVE STATE LIC. NO. PHONE		BLDG. LINE 5'			
9. ARCHITECT OR ENGINEER'S ADDRESS 422 S. Western Ave #102		CITY LA ZIP 90020		AFFIDAVITS			
10. CONTRACTOR Not Selected		BUS. LIC. NO. ACTIVE STATE LIC. NO. PHONE		---			
11. SIZE OF EXISTING BLDG. WIDTH 39 LENGTH 51		STORIES 1	HEIGHT 15'	NO. OF EXISTING BUILDINGS ON SITE AND THE P.C. HAD			
12. CONST. MATERIAL OF EXISTING BLDG. STUCCO		ROOF COMPO	FLOOR raised	DISTRICT OFFICE LA			
13. JOB ADDRESS 1025 CRENSHAW BLVD		STREET GUIDE		SEISMIC STUDY ZONE --			
14. VALUATION TO INCLUDE ALL FIXED EQUIPMENT REQUIRED TO OPERATE AND USE PROPOSED BUILDING		\$ 4700.00		GRADING -- FLOOD --			
15. NEW WORK (DECR'DO) REMOVE PARTITION WALL, UPGRADE WALL ON EACH SIDE TO ONE HOUR				HWY. DED. CONS. YES --			
NEW USE OF BUILDING Office/retail		SIZE OF ADDITION N/C		STORIES 1	HEIGHT 15'		
TYPE	GROUP OCC. B2	FLOOR AREA	N/C	ZONED BY BIRMUS			
DWELL UNITS	MAX OCC NC	TOTAL	PLANS CHECKED JAY SHIH		FILE WITH		
GUEST ROOMS	PARKING REQ'D	PARKING PROVIDED STD. COMP		APPLICATION APPROVED			
PC	QFT	CONT. INSP		TYPED BY SZ			
35.87		NO		B-52-3 (REB)			
SPG	PM			1. 52 OSS			
BP	E			35.87 B-52-3			
42.20	.50			42.20 BM-52-3			
IP	PH			59034 BOS			
OS	1.57			59034 BOS			
SD/NA	PS			61421-2 03704707			
DIST. OFFICE	SOSC	SPRINKLERS REQ'D SPEC		80.14 CHTO			
LA		NO					
E NO	C/O	ENERGY					
7868		NO					
PLAN CHECK EXPIRES ONE YEAR AFTER FEE IS PAID PERMIT EXPIRES TWO YEARS AFTER FEE IS PAID OR 180 DAYS AFTER FEE IS PAID IF CONSTRUCTION IS NOT COMMENCED							

## DECLARATIONS AND CERTIFICATIONS

## LICENSED CONTRACTORS DECLARATION

16. I hereby affirm that I am licensed under the provisions of Chapter 9 (commencing with Section 7000) of Division 3 of the Business and Professions Code, and my license is in full force and effect.

Date 3/1/87 Lic. Class B Lic. Number 524-261 Contractor Jay H. Han (Signature)

(Signature)

## OWNER-BUILDER DECLARATION

17. I hereby affirm that I am exempt from the Contractor's License Law for the following reason (Sec. 7031.5, Business and Professions Code: Any city or county which requires a permit to construct, alter, improve, demolish, or repair any structure, prior to its issuance, also requires the applicant for such permit to file a signed statement that he is licensed pursuant to the provisions of the Contractor's License Law (Chapter 9 (commencing with Section 7000) of Division 3 of the Business and Professions Code) or that he is exempt therefrom and the basis for the alleged exemption. Any violation of Section 7031.5 by any applicant for a permit subjects the applicant to a civil penalty of not more than five hundred dollars (\$500).):

I, as owner of the property, or my employees with wages as their sole compensation, will do the work, and the structure is not intended or offered for sale (Sec. 7044, Business and Professions Code: The Contractor's License Law does not apply to an owner of property who builds or improves thereon, and who does such work himself or through his own employees, provided that such improvements are not intended or offered for sale. If, however, the building or improvement is sold within one year of completion, the owner-builder will have the burden of proving that he did not build or improve for the purpose of sale.).

I, as owner of the property, am exclusively contracting with licensed contractors to construct the project (Sec. 7044, Business and Professions Code: The Contractor's License Law does not apply to an owner of property who builds or improves thereon, and who contracts for such projects with a contractor(s) licensed pursuant to the Contractor's License Law.).

I am exempt under Sec. 8. & P. C. for this reason.

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Owner's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## WORKERS' COMPENSATION DECLARATION

18. I hereby affirm that I have a certificate of consent to self-insure, or a certificate of Workers' Compensation Insurance, or a certified copy thereof (Sec. 3800, Lab. C.)

Policy No. \_\_\_\_\_ Insurance Company \_\_\_\_\_

Certified copy is hereby furnished.

Certified copy is filed with the Los Angeles City Dept. of Bldg. & Safety.

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Attorney's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

## CERTIFICATE OF EXEMPTION FROM WORKERS' COMPENSATION INSURANCE

19. I certify that in the performance of the work for which this permit is issued, I shall not employ any person in any manner so as to become subject to the Workers' Compensation Laws of California.

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Applicant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

NOTICE TO APPLICANT: If, after making this Certificate of Exemption, you should become subject to the Workers' Compensation provisions of the Labor Code, you must forthwith comply with such provisions or this permit shall be deemed revoked.

## CONSTRUCTION LENDING AGENCY

20. I hereby affirm that there is a construction lending agency for the performance of the work for which this permit is issued (Sec. 3097, CIV. C.).

Lender's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Lender's Address \_\_\_\_\_

21. I certify that I have read this application and state that the above information is correct. I agree to comply with all city and county ordinances and state laws relating to building construction, and hereby authorize representatives of this city to enter upon the above-mentioned property for inspection purposes.

I realize that this permit is an application for inspection, that it does not approve or authorize the work specified herein, that it does not authorize or permit any violation or failure to comply with any applicable law, that neither the city of Los Angeles nor any board, department, officer or employee thereof make any warranty or shall be responsible for the performance or results of any work described herein or the condition of the property or soil upon which such work is performed. (See Sec. 81-0202 LAMC)

Signed Jay H. Han Cont'd 5/3/87 Date 5/3/87

(Owner or agent having property owner's consent)

Position

Date

14300200013 enriques 2-28-87

BOND 14 PDR

10/10/80 7 12613

1500 4E065

42° 02' 28"

74° 28' 56"

15° 25' 00"

55° 00' 01"

C  
C  
C

NO CHANGE ON PLOT PLAN

## APPLICATION

CITY OF LOS ANGELES DEPT. OF BUILDING AND SAFETY

TO ADD-ALTER-  
REPAIR-DEMOLISH  
AND FOR CERTIFICATE  
OF OCCUPANCY

3 1 8 0 4 7 0 1 9

## INSTRUCTIONS: 1. Applicant to Complete Numbered Items Only.

1. LEGAL DESC'R.	LOT 54 & 55	BLOCK --	TRACT N.C. KELLEY'S MONTVIEW MP6-1	CITY CLERK REF. NO.	DIST. MAP 132B189
2. PRESENT USE OF BUILDING 13/16 OFFICE/RETAIL	NEW USE OF BUILDING 13/16 SAME			ZONE C2-1-0	
3. JOB ADDRESS 1025-1027 CRENSHAW BL.				SUITE/UNIT NO.	FIRE DIST. 2 COUN. DIST. 10
4. BETWEEN CROSS STREETS OLYMPIC BL.	AND COUNTRY CLUB DR.			LOT TYPE INT.	
5. OWNER'S NAME AHN, YANG JAY + SON	( ) TENANT	( ) BUILDING		PHONE 737-3502	LOT SIZE 100 X 145
6. OWNER'S ADDRESS 5274 LOS CABALLEROS	L.A.	CA	90017	ZIP	
7. ENGINEER ---	BUS. LIC. NO.	ACTIVE STATE LIC. NO.	PHONE	ALLEY	
8. ARCHITECT OR DESIGNER ---	BUS. LIC. NO.	ACTIVE STATE LIC. NO.	PHONE	BLDG. LINE 5 FRONT	
9. ARCHITECT OR ENGINEER'S ADDRESS ---	CITY	ZIP	DOCUMENTS/ EASEMENTS		
10. CONTRACTOR OWNER ---	BUS. LIC. NO.	ACTIVE STATE LIC. NO.	PHONE	ZI 1117	
11. SIZE OF EXISTING BLDG. WIDTH 39 LENGTH 56	STORIES 1	HEIGHT -	NO. OF EXISTING BUILDINGS ON LOT AND USE 1-OFFICE/RETAIL		
12. FRAMING MATERIAL OF EXISTING BLDG. →	EXT. WALLS WOOD	ROOF WOOD	FLOOR CONC.		
13. JOB ADDRESS 1025-1027 CRENSHAW BL.				SUITE/UNIT NO.	

14. VALUATION TO INCLUDE ALL FIXED EQUIPMENT REQUIRED TO OPERATE AND USE PROPOSED BUILDING	450.00	DIST. OFF. L.A. P.C. RECD. NO(1)
15. NEW WORK (Describe) REPLACE SWING AWNING		GRADING - SEISMIC -
		HWY. DED. YES FLOOD -

NEW USE OF BUILDING OFFICE/RETAIL	SIZE OF ADDITION	STORIES	HEIGHT		FILE WITH - 4/2/93
			BUILDING	ZONING	
TYPE V.N	GROUP OCC. B2	MAX. OCC.	PLANS CHECKED T-McCormick		
DWELL UNITS	BUILDING AREA	ZONING AREA	APPLICATION APPROVED S. S. CAUDILLO		
GUEST ROOMS	PARKING REQ'D	PARKING PROVIDED S C HC.	INSPECTION ACTIVITY		INSPECTOR E.S. CAUDILLO
			(CS)	GEN.	MAJ.S.
				EQ.	-

P.C. 35.70	G.P.I. + NP —	CONT. INSP.	SSYB Yes		SSYD	B & S 08-B-3 (R.7/93)
S.P.C.	P.M.					
B.P. 42.00	E.I. 0.00	X	Claims for refund of fees paid on permits must be filed: 1. Within one year from date of payment of fee; or 2. Within one year from date of expiration of extension for building or grading permits granted by the Dept. of B. & S. SECTIONS 22.12 & 22.13 LAMC.			
I.F. —	F.H. —					
S.D. —	O.S.S. —	X				
ISS. OFF. HO	S.O.S.S. —	SPRINKLERS REQ'D SPEC.				
P.C. NO. cc	C/O	ENERGY	DAS			
Unless a shorter period of time has been established by an official action, plan check approval expires one year after the fee is paid and this permit expires two years after the fee is paid or 180 days after the fee is paid if construction is not commenced.						

04/20/93 11:04:05AM H001 T-7627 C 26  
BLDG PLAN CHEC 35.70  
BLDG PERMIT CO 42.00  
INVOICE # 0050034 88  
EI COMMERCIAL 0.50  
SYS DEV 4.69  
ONE STOP 1.56  
FROM TRAN 7625 TO 7627  
TOTAL 183.03  
CASH 183.03

NEW AFFIDAVITS	
PLAN CHECK EXTENDED TO _____ PER	
ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVAL DATED _____	
BY _____	
D.A.D. PLANS CHECKED <i>4/20/93</i>	
HOUSING MITIGATION FEE ORDINANCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> REQUIRED	<input type="checkbox"/> EXEMPT
ASBESTOS NOTIFICATION	
Check Box: <input type="checkbox"/> Notification letter sent to AQMD or EPA.	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I declare that notification of asbestos removal is not applicable to addressed project.	
Signature <i>X Young Jay S.</i> Date <i>4/2/93</i>	

93HO 22140

## DECLARATIONS AND CERTIFICATIONS

## LICENSED CONTRACTORS DECLARATION

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I am exempt under Sec. \_\_\_\_\_, B. & P. C. for this reason \_\_\_\_\_ Date *4/20/93* Owner's Signature *X Young Jay S.*

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18. I hereby affirm that I have a certificate of consent to self-insure or a certificate of Worker's Compensation Insurance, or a certified copy thereof (Sec. 3800, Lab. C.).

Policy No. \_\_\_\_\_ Insurance Company \_\_\_\_\_

Certified copy is hereby furnished.

Certified copy is filed with the Los Angeles City Dept. of Bldg. & Safety.

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Applicant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

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Lender's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Lender's Address \_\_\_\_\_

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Signed *X Young Jay S.* (Owner or agent having property owner's consent) Position *Owner* Date *4/2/93*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 1 0 1 1 1 2

Bureau of  
Engineering

## ADDRESS APPROVED

DRIVEWAY

HIGHWAY REQUIRED

DEDICATION COMPLETED

## FLOOD CLEARANCE

Public Works  
ImprovementRequired  
YES  NO  PERMIT #

SEWERS

RES. NO.

CERT. NO.

SEWERS AVAILABLE

NOT AVAILABLE

SFC PAID

SFC NOT APPLICABLE

SFC DUE

Grading PRIVATE SEWAGE SYSTEM APPROVED

Comm. Safety APPROVED FOR ISSUE  NO FILE  FILE CLOSED 

CEQA

Fire APPROVED (TITLE 19) (L.A.M.C.-S700)

APPROVED - HYDRANT UNIT, ROOM 920 CHE

O. Bldg 7-20-93

CRA APPROVED PER REDEV. PROJECT

Transportation APPROVED FOR DRIVEWAY LOCATION

APPROVED FOR ORD. #

Planning WORK SHEET #

APPROVED UNDER CASE #

LANDSCAPE / XERISCAPE

SIGHT PLAN REVIEW

Housing HOUSING AUTHORITY AFFIDAVIT NO.

Construction Tax RECEIPT NO. DWELLING UNITS

Cultural Affairs

Rent Stabilization Division

## LEGAL DESCRIPTION

Modification allows non collapsible frame 4/2/93 Tm &amp; L

Consider zoning etc per H.S. Dec. - Rev. 4/2/93

ON PLOT PLAN SHOW ALL BUILDINGS ON LOT AND USE OF EACH

32HD LISTED

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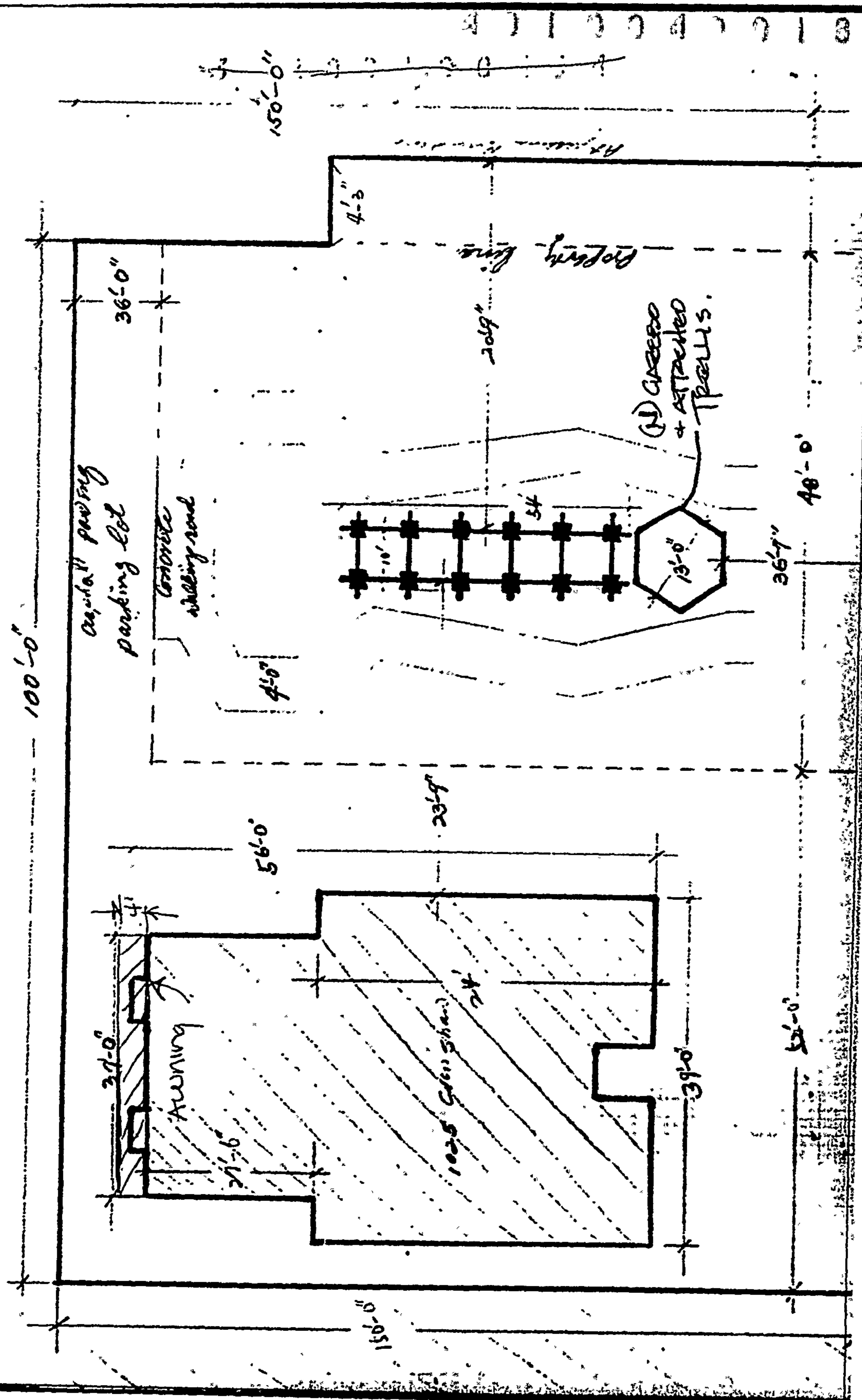
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ATTACHED PLOT PLANS SHALL NOT EXCEED ABOVE THIS LINE

1027 - Cannabace Bl.





# City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning

**2/23/2021  
PARCEL PROFILE REPORT**

**PROPERTY ADDRESSES**

1025 S CRENSHAW BLVD  
1027 S CRENSHAW BLVD  
1029 S CRENSHAW BLVD

**ZIP CODES**

90019

**RECENT ACTIVITY**

CHC-2021-1448-HCM  
ENV-2021-1449-CE

**CASE NUMBERS**

CPC-9807  
ORD-74286  
ORD-74285  
ORD-66889  
ORD-58593  
ORD-114396  
AF-91-1912506-LT

**Address/Legal Information**

PIN Number	132B189 1198
Lot/Parcel Area (Calculated)	7,498.2 (sq ft)
Thomas Brothers Grid	PAGE 633 - GRID F4
Assessor Parcel No. (APN)	5082027013
Tract	N. C. KELLEY'S MONTVIEW TRACT
Map Reference	M B 6-1
Block	None
Lot	54
Arb (Lot Cut Reference)	None
Map Sheet	132B189

**Jurisdictional Information**

Community Plan Area	Wilshire
Area Planning Commission	Central
Neighborhood Council	Olympic Park
Council District	CD 10 - Mark Ridley Thomas
Census Tract #	2127.02
LADBS District Office	Los Angeles Metro

**Planning and Zoning Information**

Special Notes	None
Zoning	C2-1-O
Zoning Information (ZI)	ZI-2452 Transit Priority Area in the City of Los Angeles
General Plan Land Use	Neighborhood Office Commercial
General Plan Note(s)	Yes
Hillside Area (Zoning Code)	No
Specific Plan Area	None
Subarea	None
Special Land Use / Zoning	None
Historic Preservation Review	No
Historic Preservation Overlay Zone	None
Other Historic Designations	None
Other Historic Survey Information	None
Mills Act Contract	None
CDO: Community Design Overlay	None
CPIO: Community Plan Imp. Overlay	None
Subarea	None
CUGU: Clean Up-Green Up	None
HCR: Hillside Construction Regulation	No
NSO: Neighborhood Stabilization Overlay	No
POD: Pedestrian Oriented Districts	None
RFA: Residential Floor Area District	None
RIO: River Implementation Overlay	No
SN: Sign District	No
Streetscape	No
Adaptive Reuse Incentive Area	None
Affordable Housing Linkage Fee	None
Residential Market Area	Medium-High

This report is subject to the terms and conditions as set forth on the website. For more details, please refer to the terms and conditions at [zimas.lacity.org](http://zimas.lacity.org).  
(\*) - APN Area is provided "as is" from the Los Angeles County's Public Works, Flood Control, Benefit Assessment.

Non-Residential Market Area	High
Transit Oriented Communities (TOC)	Tier 3
RPA: Redevelopment Project Area	None
Central City Parking	No
Downtown Parking	No
Building Line	5
500 Ft School Zone	No
500 Ft Park Zone	No
<b>Assessor Information</b>	
Assessor Parcel No. (APN)	5082027013
Ownership (Assessor)	
Owner1	1009 CRENSHAW LP
Address	1009 CRENSHAW BLVD LOS ANGELES CA 90019
Ownership (Bureau of Engineering, Land Records)	
Owner	URBAN COMMONS CRENSHAW BLVD LLC
Address	10250 CONSTELLATION BLVD # 1750 LOS ANGELES CA 90076
APN Area (Co. Public Works)*	0.172 (ac)
Use Code	1100 - Commercial - Store - One Story
Assessed Land Val.	\$2,348,040
Assessed Improvement Val.	\$10,404
Last Owner Change	09/17/2020
Last Sale Amount	\$4,000,040
Tax Rate Area	67
Deed Ref No. (City Clerk)	8-626 610326 475258 451431 324631 2376614 1625087-88 1450277 1384054-55 0505654 0215369
Building 1	
Year Built	1920
Building Class	D55B
Number of Units	2
Number of Bedrooms	0
Number of Bathrooms	2
Building Square Footage	1,771.0 (sq ft)
Building 2	No data for building 2
Building 3	No data for building 3
Building 4	No data for building 4
Building 5	No data for building 5
Rent Stabilization Ordinance (RSO)	No [APN: 5082027013]

<b>Additional Information</b>	
Airport Hazard	None
Coastal Zone	None
Farmland	Area Not Mapped
Urban Agriculture Incentive Zone	YES
Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone	No
Fire District No. 1	No

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(\*) - APN Area is provided "as is" from the Los Angeles County's Public Works, Flood Control, Benefit Assessment.

Flood Zone	Outside Flood Zone
Watercourse	No
Hazardous Waste / Border Zone Properties	No
Methane Hazard Site	Methane Buffer Zone
High Wind Velocity Areas	No
Special Grading Area (BOE Basic Grid Map A-13372)	No
Wells	None

### Seismic Hazards

Active Fault Near-Source Zone	
Nearest Fault (Distance in km)	2.06876904
Nearest Fault (Name)	Puente Hills Blind Thrust
Region	Los Angeles Blind Thrusts
Fault Type	B
Slip Rate (mm/year)	0.70000000
Slip Geometry	Reverse
Slip Type	Moderately / Poorly Constrained
Down Dip Width (km)	19.00000000
Rupture Top	5.00000000
Rupture Bottom	13.00000000
Dip Angle (degrees)	25.00000000
Maximum Magnitude	7.10000000
Alquist-Priolo Fault Zone	No
Landslide	No
Liquefaction	No
Preliminary Fault Rupture Study Area	No
Tsunami Inundation Zone	No

### Economic Development Areas

Business Improvement District	None
Hubzone	Not Qualified
Opportunity Zone	No
Promise Zone	None
State Enterprise Zone	None

### Housing

Direct all Inquiries to	Housing+Community Investment Department
Telephone	(866) 557-7368
Website	<a href="http://hcida.lacity.org">http://hcida.lacity.org</a>
Rent Stabilization Ordinance (RSO)	No [APN: 5082027013]
Ellis Act Property	No
AB 1482: Tenant Protection Act	No

### Public Safety

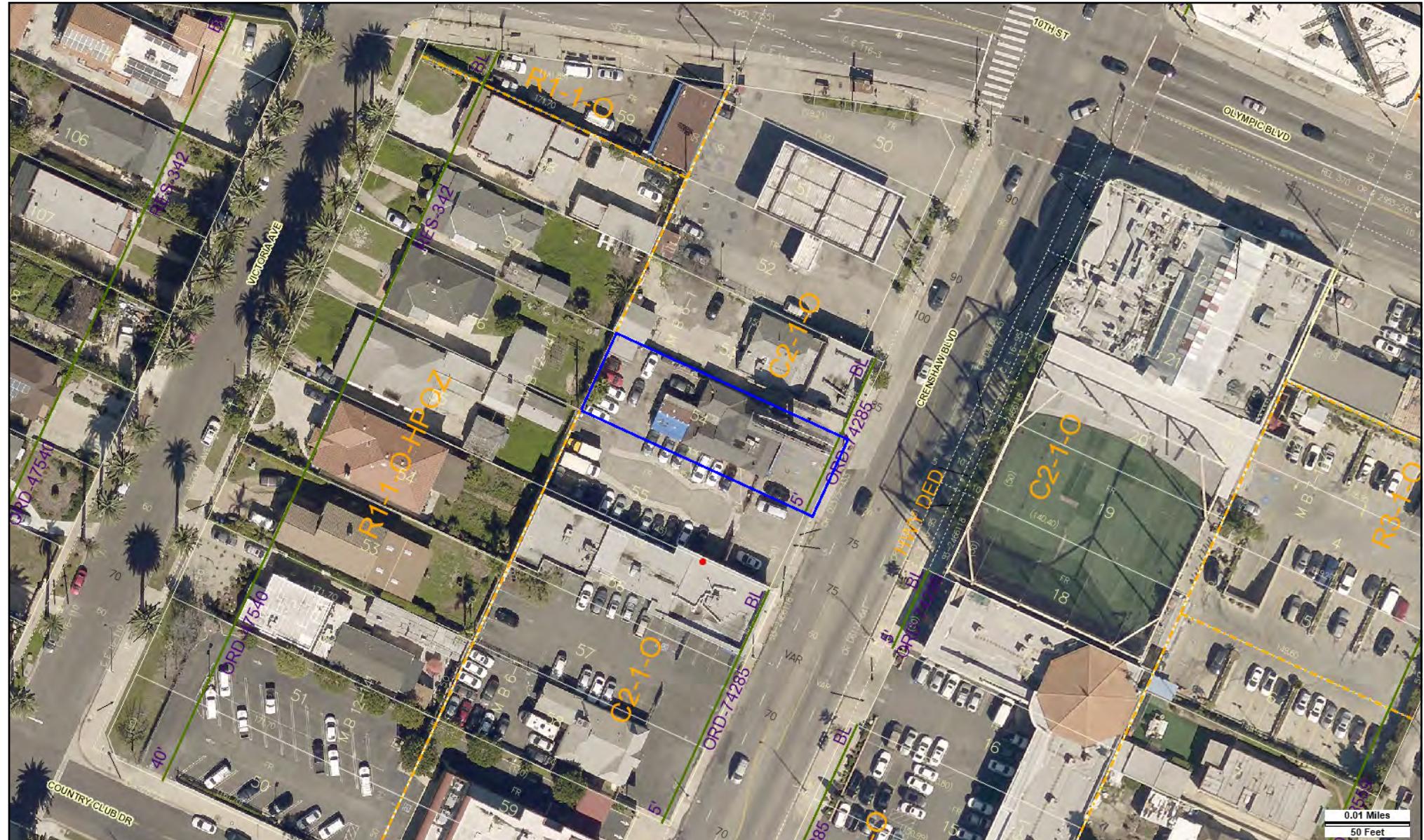
Police Information	
Bureau	West
Division / Station	Wilshire
Reporting District	749
Fire Information	
Bureau	Central
Battallion	11
District / Fire Station	29
Red Flag Restricted Parking	No

## CASE SUMMARIES

Note: Information for case summaries is retrieved from the Planning Department's Plan Case Tracking System (PCTS) database.

### DATA NOT AVAILABLE

CPC-9807  
ORD-74286  
ORD-74285  
ORD-66889  
ORD-58593  
ORD-114396  
AF-91-1912506-LT



Address: 1025 S CRENSHAW BLVD

APN: 5082027013

PIN #: 132B189 1198

Tract: N. C. KELLEY'S MONTVIEW  
TRACT

Block: None

Lot: 54

Arb: None

Zoning: C2-1-O

General Plan: Neighborhood Office Commercial

