1. NAME AND LOCATION OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: Furies Collective

Other Name/Site Number:

Street and Number (if applicable)**:** 219 11th Street SE

City/Town: Washington **County:** None **State:** DC

Designated a National Historic Landmark by the Secretary of the Interior September 2, 2024.

2. SIGNIFICANCE DATA

NHL Criteria: 1: Broad National Patterns

NHL Criteria Exceptions: None

NHL Theme(s): II. Creating Social Institutions and Movements
2. Reform Movements

Period(s) of Significance: 1971-1973

Significant Person(s) (only Criterion 2)**:** n/a

Cultural Affiliation (only Criterion 6)**:** n/a

Designer/Creator/Architect/Builder:
Architect: Nicholas T. Haller[1] Builder: William Murphy[2]

Historic Contexts: LGBTQ America: A Theme Study of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer History.

[1] Building Permit 4979, District of Columbia, "HistoryQuest DC," n.d., https://dcgis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=4892107c0c5d44789e6fb96908f88f60; Mark Meinke, "The Furies Collective, Washington, D.C.," National Register of Historic Places Nomination (Washington, DC: National Park Service, 2016), 6, https://www.nps.gov/nr/feature/places/pdfs/16000211.pdf.
[2] Building Permit 4979; Meinke, "Furies Collective," 6.

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3. WITHHOLDING SENSITIVE INFORMATION

Does this nomination contain sensitive information that should be withheld under Section 304 of the National Historic Preservation Act?

___ Yes

_X_ No

4. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

1. **Acreage of Property:** 0.04 Acre

2. **Use either Latitude/Longitude Coordinates or the UTM system:**

   Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)**:**

   Datum if other than WGS84:

   Latitude: 38.887016 **Longitude:** -76.991794

3. **Verbal Boundary Description:** Lot 66 in Square 969, a rectangular lot eighteen feet wide on its east and west ends and 100 feet and four inches long on its north and south sides.

4. **Boundary Justification:** Lot 66 in Square 969 is the same lot upon which the house at 219 11th Street SE was built in 1913 and was the site of the Furies' Collective from 1971 to 1973.[3]

[3] Permit 4979; Meinke, 27.

5. SIGNIFICANCE STATEMENT AND DISCUSSION

INTRODUCTION: SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

As the headquarters of the short-lived, but consequential Furies Collective, the rowhouse at 219 11th Street SE, Washington, DC is significant under NHL Criterion 1 for the important role it played in the articulation of lesbian feminist separatism, a school of thought that upholds heterosexuality as a key element in perpetuating women's oppression. As an antidote to this, lesbian feminist separatism urges women to devote their emotional, sexual, political, and productive energy exclusively to other women. It was the philosophical underpinning of the "women's culture" of the 1970s and 1980s, which fostered women-owned businesses, women artists, and a significant lesbian subculture in the United States. Within the LGBTQ civil rights movement, lesbian feminism constituted a "parallel revolution" to gay liberation, with both tracks eventually joining together to inform the late-twentieth- and early-twenty-first-century LGBTQ movement. Finally, lesbian feminism left a legacy within the larger women's movement by offering a critique of the ways that heterosexuality helps uphold male supremacy.

The Furies Collective played a key role in the articulation of lesbian feminist separatism through its nationally circulated newspaper *The Furies,* which they produced at this location. In addition, the collective embodied the principles of lesbian feminism by living communally at this rowhouse and at other locations in DC, producing their newspaper collectively, training women how to live independently from men, and utilizing women-owned businesses and workers whenever possible. The property at 219 11th Street SE in Washington, DC, has a period of significance of 1971-1973, representing the period the Furies lived and operated out of this location.

PROVIDE RELEVANT PROPERTY-SPECIFIC HISTORY, HISTORICAL CONTEXT, AND THEMES. JUSTIFY CRITERIA, EXCEPTIONS, AND PERIODS OF SIGNIFICANCE LISTED IN SECTION 2.

Criterion 1

LGBTQ Political Activism and the Women's Movement, 1965-1990

The Furies Collective is significant under NHL Criterion 1 for its role in LGBTQ Political Activism and the Women's Movement, 1965-1990. Specifically, the Furies Collective is significant for its contribution to the articulation of lesbian feminist separatism (hereafter referred to as lesbian feminism), through its nationally circulating newspaper *The Furies*.[4] Lesbian feminism seeks to create a society based on equity by urging women to devote their energies exclusively to other women. Although indisputably a product of the women's movement of the 1960s and 1970s, lesbian feminism's greatest historical impact can be seen in LGBTQ history. The philosophy, as articulated by the Furies Collective, was the basis for "women's culture," a woman-centered subculture that thrived in the 1970s and 1980s and supported female self-sufficiency, women-owned businesses, women artists, and women's leadership. Although women's culture was not exclusively lesbian, it was

[4] The Furies had a largely underground readership of lesbians and radical feminists, numbering about 5,000. In the twenty-first century, back issues of the newspaper are held in repositories around the world, including the University of Ghent (Belgium) and the National Library of Australia. A full run of the newspaper has been digitized and is available through the fee-based "Independent Voices" database. The first issue of *The Furies* (January 1972) is freely accessible in digital form through the Sallie Bingham Center for Women's History and Culture at Duke University; see https://repository.duke.edu/dc/wlmpc/wlmms01033. Circulation numbers from Jacqueline Rhodes, *Once A Fury*, Streaming video, 2020, https://onceafury.com/.

generally a subculture that admired lesbianism for its independence from men and its perceived radical approach to women-centeredness.

In addition to giving women opportunities for leadership and self-sufficiency they would not have had in the larger US society, women's culture created a world in which women loving women was the norm. In an era when sexual variance was largely viewed as something shameful and positive information about lesbianism was not readily available in mainstream media, women's culture provided a critical cultural counterpoint that celebrated love between women.[5] As historian Genny Beemyn has argued, "In no small measure, the work of former members [of the Furies] has made it possible for many more lesbians to feel comfortable coming out, have greater opportunities to meet others like themselves, and have access to a lesbian feminist culture, no matter where they live."[6]

Lesbian feminism constituted what historian Lillian Faderman has called a "Parallel Revolution," happening simultaneously but largely separate from the gay liberation movement of the 1970s.[7] This is a key argument for the national significance of the Furies Collective. The Furies formed the conceptual underpinnings of lesbian feminism, and lesbian feminism is critical to understanding the dynamics of the fight for LGBTQ civil rights in the United States. Although the standard narrative of LGBTQ history highlights the political work of the gay liberation movement in the years after the Stonewall uprising of 1969, this narrative privileges men's experience over women's. The gay liberation movement was dominated by cisgender White men—a fact that alienated significant numbers of women, as well as men of color and people who did not conform to a strictly masculine gender presentation. Queer women were only present in gay liberation organizations in small numbers compared to men (estimated as only 10%-15 % of the membership of the Gay Liberation Front, for example, with similar numbers in the Gay Activists Alliance).[8] Instead, young, politically active lesbians and bisexual women were devoting their efforts to the cause of lesbian feminism.[9] Over time, both movements shifted their priorities and became more sophisticated in coalition building. Gay liberation and lesbian feminism, along with other queer movements such as what was then known as third world gay and lesbian rights, the bisexual movement, and transgender activism, came together under the umbrella of the late-twentieth- and early-twenty-first-century LGBTQ civil rights movement. Lesbian feminist activists brought their leadership experience and skills at social analysis to this newly conceived LGBTQ movement.[10]

Finally, the Furies are significant because of the impact they had on the larger women's movement of the late twentieth century. They formulated a version of feminism that placed lesbian issues at the forefront, which in turn raised awareness of sexual politics within the larger women's movement. As historian Anne Valk has argued, by articulating a political theory informed by their outsider status, the lesbians of the Furies offered the larger women's movement insight into the ways patriarchy and capitalism were still defining mainstream feminism's understanding of the world.[11] Valk continues, "Their notion that sexual identity was socially constructed rather than biologically determined and their understanding of the ways that enforced

[5] Anne M. Valk, "Living a Feminist Lifestyle: The Intersection of Theory and Action in a Lesbian Feminist Collective," *Feminist Studies* 28, no. 2 (2002): 309, 326–27, https://doi.org/10.2307/3178744.
[6] Genny Beemyn, *A Queer Capital: A History of Gay Life in Washington, D.C* (New York: Routledge, 2015), 203.
[7] Lillian Faderman, *The Gay Revolution: The Story of the Struggle* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2015), 227–46.
[8] Faderman, 228, 229.
[9] This statement applies mostly to European American women. Although women of color engaged with lesbian feminist theory, as demonstrated by Audre Lorde and the Combahee River Collective, far greater numbers of lesbian and bisexual women of color who were engaged in radical activism in this era leant their energies to what was then known as third world gay and lesbian organizing.
[10] Bonnie J. Morris, *The Disappearing L: Erasure of Lesbian Spaces and Culture* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2016), 177–202.
[11] Anne M. Valk, *Radical Sisters: Second-Wave Feminism and Black Liberation in Washington, D.C.* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2008), 135–36; Meinke, 7–8; Dale M. Brumfield, *Independent Press in D.C. and Virginia: An Underground History* (Charleston, SC: History Press, 2015), 83.

heterosexuality served male supremacy came to constitute central arguments of feminists."[12]

The National Historic Landmark Theme Study on LGBTQ history offers insight into the Furies' far-ranging significance. The collective is included in *eight* of the theme study's chapters, suggesting the range of areas it impacted. Those chapters are: "Prologue: Why LGBTQ Sites Matter"; "Introduction to the LGBTQ Heritage Initiative Theme Study"; "The Preservation of LGBTQ Heritage"; "LGBTQ Business and Commerce"; "LGBTQ Civil Rights in America"; "LGBTQ Art and Artists"; LGBTQ Sport and Leisure"; and "Teaching LGBTQ History and Heritage."[13] Some of these essays mention the Furies Collective primarily within the context of its being added to the National Register of Historic Places. At the time of its designation in 2016, the Furies Collective was the only National Register property with primary significance in LGBTQ history to have associations with lesbians alone.[14] The "LGBTQ Business and Commerce" essay includes the Furies and the later work of some of its members in its section on gay commercial media; the "LGBTQ Sport and Leisure" chapter also mentions Furies members' role in the women's music industry.[15] The essay on the LGBTQ Civil Rights Movement notes the Furies' significance in drawing national attention to lesbian issues.[16] The "LGBTQ Art and Artists" chapter highlights the work of Furies member Joan E. Biren (JEB) in documenting lesbian life with her photography, and the "Teaching LGBTQ History" essay mentions the Furies as an example of sites associated with lesbian feminism.[17]

Background and Historic Context: Social Movements of the 1960s

The members of the Furies were all seasoned activists by the time they formed this collective. They were all already active in the women's movement, and most had also worked for other social movements in the 1960s. The decade of the 1960s was marked by a rise in activism and grassroots protests in support of social justice and against the Vietnam War. Much of this activism was inspired by the ongoing African American civil rights movement and was fueled by the demographic trend of the baby boom. The unprecedented US birthrate in the years following World War II created a generation of youth with substantial cultural influence, due to their large numbers. The 1960s saw the oldest members of this generation move into their late teens and twenties. They joined older activists in fighting for social change, and as increasing numbers of this generation became active in social movements, branches of these movements became more radical. The late 1960s and early 1970s saw a shift within social movements, in which many members changed their goals from social change to social revolution. These activists envisioned a new society based on equality and collectivism.

The discussion that follows highlights different avenues of social justice work that influenced the members of the Furies, but in reality the lines between all these efforts were fairly blurred. Many individuals worked for social revolution on multiple fronts, and others who were active primarily within one movement were sympathetic to the goals of other social movements. Furthermore, the milieu of social revolution did not lend itself to traditional organizational structure: there were no membership rolls and often no recognized group leaders. Organizations that historians might identify as being part of the same movement (radical feminism, for example) were often in bitter conflict, seeing themselves as fighting for different goals. Finally, the federal

[12] Valk, *Radical Sisters*, 153.
[13] Megan E. Springate, ed., *LGBTQ America: A Theme Study of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer History* (Washington, DC: National Park Foundation and National Park Service, 2016), https://www.nps.gov/subjects/tellingallamericansstories/lgbtqthemestudy.htm.
[14] Megan E. Springate, "Introduction to the LGBTQ Heritage Initiative Theme Study," in Springate, *LGBTQ America*, vol. 1, 2.7-2.11.
[15] David K. Johnson, "LGBTQ Business and Commerce," in Springate, *LGBTQ America*, vol. 1, 16.30; Katherine Schweighofer, "LGBTQ Sport and Leisure," in Springate, *LGBTQ America*, vol. 2, 24.42.
[16] Megan E. Springate, "LGBTQ Civil Rights in America," in Springate, *LGBTQ America*, vol. 2, 18.34-18.35.
[17] Tara Burk, "LGBTQ Art and Artists," in Springate, *LGBTQ America*, vol. 2, 23.12, n. 32.

government in the 1960s and 1970s heavily surveilled activists and groups critical to existing social structures; as a result, organizations and alliances were often short-lived and written documentation often destroyed.

Likewise, feminists of color often operated in a parallel sphere where they were not fully aligned with or accepted by White feminists or Black male civil rights activists. Organizations like the National Black Feminist Organization (1973) and the Combahee River Collective (1975) formed to escape sexism within the Black Power movement and racism in the lesbian feminist movement. These collectives focused on fighting the overlapping systems of sexual and racial oppression and raise awareness about them. While *The Furies* newspaper addressed the category of race in a limited way, it was not a primary subject covered in their writings.[18]

The New Left

The activist organizations of the New Left sought to move beyond the class-based politics of older left-wing organizations (which they termed the Old Left) and engage in more intense and theatrical forms of protest to accomplish their vision of society. The term began with the movement against the Vietnam War, specifically Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), but eventually the term expanded to include a range of other concerns related to social inequality and a critique of capitalism and Cold War imperialism.[19]

Many members of the Furies Collective—Ginny Berson, Joan Biren, Sharon Deevey, Helaine Harris, Susan Hathaway, and Tasha Peterson—began their political activism in the New Left's opposition to the Vietnam War. However, this movement was notoriously male dominated, focused as it was around protesting the military draft, which only men were subject to. Some women worked within the anti-war and other New Left movements to pursue a feminist agenda, while other women ultimately left these movements to devote themselves entirely to the women's movement. The exodus of women from the New Left into the women's movement infused feminism with a younger, more radical perspective.[20]

Second-Wave Feminism

The women's movement of the 1960s and 1970s has historically been called "second wave feminism," to distinguish it from the first wave of feminist activism leading up to the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment, ratified in 1920, which ostensibly granted women the right to vote.[21] However, recently, scholars have challenged the metaphor of different waves, arguing that such a construction overlooks the feminist activity that continued between these two "waves" and that has continued since the second wave. Nevertheless, for the sake of simplicity, this nomination utilizes the phrase "second wave feminism," or sometimes "women's liberation," to describe the full range of feminist philosophy and activism that took place in the 1960s and

[18] On feminists of color in the 1960s and 1970s, see Winifred Breines, *The Trouble Between Us: An Uneasy History of White and Black Women in the Feminist Movement* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006); Kimberly Springer, *Living for the Revolution: Black Feminist Organizations, 1968-1980* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005); Benita Roth, *Separate Roads to Feminism: Black, Chicana, and White Feminist Movements in America's Second Wave* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004).
[19] Simon Hall, *Rethinking the American Anti-War Movement* (New York: Routledge, 2012); Judy Tzu-Chun Wu, *Radicals on the Road: Internationalism, Orientalism, and Feminism during the Vietnam Era* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013), 122–24.
[20] Ellen Carol DuBois and Lynn Dumenil, *Through Women's Eyes: An American History with Documents* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2005), 633–35; See also, Alice Echols, *Daring to Be Bad: Radical Feminism in America, 1967-1975* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989). On feminist efforts within the New Left, see Wu, *Radicals on the Road*.
[21] In reality, numerous barriers prevented many American women from exercising this right. Examples include restrictions against African American voters and immigration laws that, in the early 1920s, stripped women of their American citizenship upon marrying a man who was a citizen of another country.

1970s.

The 1963 publication of the book *The Feminine Mystique*, by Betty Friedan, was a watershed moment in bringing women's issues to a large readership of mostly middle-class European American women, and as such, historians sometimes use the year of its publication to mark the start of the women's liberation movement. However, feminist activists had been slowly gathering strength and pursuing a legislative agenda since the 1950s. The 1961 establishment of the President's Commission on the Status of Women, by President John F. Kennedy, represents an early achievement of the movement. The first major victory of second wave feminism was the inclusion of sex in Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which barred discrimination in employment.[22]

The National Organization of Women (NOW) was founded in 1966 and became a leader within the liberal branch of feminism, which sought to reduce gender discrimination through legislative and judicial channels. However, as with other social movements of the 1960s, a branch of second wave feminism was growing increasingly radical by the late 1960s. These more radical activists sought a feminist revolution, in which society would be rebuilt on more egalitarian terms.[23] Because it was influenced by other identity movements of the era, radical feminism challenged mainstream (liberal) feminism to better address the needs of lesbians, women of color, and working-class women. In addition, because radical feminism was more attuned to structural oppression, it interrogated fundamental tenets of society, such as heterosexuality, marriage, and capitalism.[24]

Radical feminism is something of an umbrella term used to describe feminist groups who sought to dramatically transform society toward the goal of gender equality. Within this branch of the women's movement, activists aligned with different approaches and groups based on their diverse understandings of the causes of women's oppression and the best ways to achieve a just society. Some, like the Combahee River Collective, focused on issues facing women of color. Others, such as Radicalesbians and the Furies, drew attention to issues facing lesbians. The Furies also incorporated class analysis and, to a lesser extent, race analysis into their call for true social equality.

The group Radicalesbians formed slightly earlier than the Furies, and its work had a direct influence on the Furies' philosophy. Radicalesbians was based in New York City and was comprised of a group of young lesbians who had grown increasingly frustrated with NOW's refusal to take a stand in support of lesbian issues. NOW President Betty Friedan believed that if NOW took on lesbian issues, it would discredit the movement. For this reason, she referred to lesbianism as the "lavender menace."[25]

On May 1, 1970, the Radicalesbians disrupted NOW's Congress to Unite Women, held in New York City, to protest the organization's stance on lesbian issues. Women wearing lavender T-shirts emblazoned with the words "Lavender Menace" stormed the stage and took over proceedings for two hours, distributing a pamphlet entitled "Woman-Identified Woman." This pamphlet, in turn, became a foundational text in the articulation of lesbian feminism, as the first essay to frame lesbianism as a political act of solidarity with other women.[26]

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[22] Winifred D. Wandersee, *On the Move: American Women in the 1970s* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1988), 16–18.
[23] Anne Valk offers a succinct introduction to the various philosophical strains of the women's movement in Valk, "Living a Feminist Lifestyle," 306–8.
[24] Echols, *Daring to Be Bad*, 3–5.
[25] Echols, 212–17.
[26] Echols, 214–17. The 1970 Congress to Unite Women was held at Intermediate School 70, 333 West 17th Street, New York City.

Black Power

The Black Power movement was a branch of the African American civil rights movement that began in the mid-1960s and gained traction in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Frustrated by the civil rights movement's philosophy of nonviolence, politics of respectability, and commitment to working within existing political structures, adherents to Black Power instead sought more immediate change through social revolution. Many members of the Furies had been active on some level with the African American civil rights movement, and Ginny Berson, Joan Biren, Charlotte Bunch, and Nancy Miren had each devoted a substantial amount of time working toward racial equality. As the civil rights movement adopted more radical approaches, grouped here under the term Black Power, these Furies members stayed abreast of these changes.[27]

In the mid-1960s, the Black Power movement first introduced the concept of separatism to the social movements of this era. They argued that African Americans needed to separate themselves from European Americans in order to remove themselves from the racist society they had been raised in. Black Power separatists saw separatism as the fastest route to racial self-determination and the construction of a new society. This idea influenced some feminist activists. By the late 1960s, a Boston feminist group known as Cell 16 was espousing feminist separatism, although they did not include lesbianism as a component of their theory. The Furies' articulation of lesbian feminism envisioned women devoting their energies exclusively to other women and thus introduced the concept of lesbian separatism to the women's movement.[28]

Interestingly, the original idea for a lesbian feminist collective based in DC was sparked at a convention of the Black Panthers, a leading Black Power organization. In September 1970, the Black Panthers sponsored the Revolutionary People's Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia, which drew radical activists from a variety of movements, including feminism. Feminist attendees repeatedly sought to have their issues addressed by the convention and were repeatedly put off. Eventually the feminist attendees met among themselves, and feminist activists from DC heard about the work lesbian feminists were doing in New York City. Future Furies members Joan Biren and Sharon Deevey attended the conference, and after meeting representatives of Radicalesbians, they resolved to form a lesbian feminist collective in DC. They invited some of the lesbian feminists from New York to join them in this effort, and ultimately eight women, four from DC and four from New York, committed. In addition to Biren and Deevey, the group included future Furies members Nancy Myron, one of the feminists from New York, and Ginny Berson, who was active in the DC women's movement and who had previously attended college with Biren in Massachusetts. The collective they organized, Amazing Grace, disbanded within a week of starting.[29]

The Furies Collective

The Furies were a lesbian feminist collective comprised of twelve members. The collective operated in

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[27] Women were active in the creation of the Black Power movement, as recent scholarship has demonstrated; see for example, Ashley D. Farmer, *Remaking Black Power: How Black Women Transformed an Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017); Robyn C. Spencer, *The Revolution Has Come: Black Power, Gender, and the Black Panther Party in Oakland* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016). African American women were also active within second wave feminism. However, the women's movement in this era was also not particularly attuned to issues of intersectionality. African American feminists ultimately joined with other feminists of color to articulate their own ideology that addressed their intersecting issues related to race and gender.

[28] Echols, *Daring to Be Bad*, 222–24; Valk, *Radical Sisters*, 136–44; Rebecca C. Dolinsky, "Lesbian and Gay DC: Identity, Emotion, and Experience in Washington DC's Social and Activist Communities (1961-1986)" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Santa Cruz, University of California, Santa Cruz, 2010), 181–83.

[29] Echols, *Daring to Be Bad*, 222–24; Dolinsky, "Lesbian and Gay DC," 181–83, 188–89; Meinke, 10. On gay liberationists' reception at this convention, see Emily K. Hobson, *Lavender and Red: Liberation and Solidarity in the Gay and Lesbian Left* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2016), 32–34.

Washington, DC, from 1971 to 1973. Members lived communally and worked collectively to publish a national newspaper (*The Furies*) that, over the course of its eighteen-month run, articulated much of the basis for lesbian feminism. This philosophy had a dramatic impact on lesbian culture for the next two decades, prompting the creation of a women's culture and a national network of women-owned businesses, women artists, and feminist thinkers. According to historian Lillian Faderman, "the *Furies* newspaper, which was sold at the women's bookstores that were mushrooming across America, inspired thousands of lesbian feminists to form their own collectives in cities, farms, forests, and mountains all over America and in Europe, too."[30]

The collective nature of the Furies' efforts is essential to understanding what they—and many other social movement activists of the era—hoped to accomplish. In a political milieu dedicated to interrogating social power structures and critiquing the inequalities produced by capitalism, collectivity provided a means to develop new ways of interacting and living. Collectives usually operated as pure democracies, where each member had equal say; there were no leaders; and work and resources were divided equally.[31]

Historian Stephen Vider argues that collective living situations had particular resonance with LGBTQ activists during the 1970s. In addition to all the ideological reasons, communal living allowed sexual and gender minorities, who had been excluded from traditional (heteronormative) depictions of domesticity, to "[reinvent] domestic practices, spaces, and relationships not as a retreat from politics or community but [as] a form of everyday political and social rebellion."[32] For feminists, collective living situations allowed them to pool domestic responsibilities, so that they could devote more time to personal development and working toward gender equality, in contrast to the heterosexual nuclear family where domestic chores fell disproportionately on the one adult woman in the household.[33]

Lesbian feminist collectives can be understood within all of these motivations. As sites of political organizing and work, lesbian feminist collectives sought to model their ideals of egalitarianism and women-centeredness. As domestic sites, lesbian feminist collectives sought to create a female-centered space in which to explore new domestic constructions. As spaces that combined work with collective living—as many lesbian feminist collectives, including the Furies, did—these arrangements challenged the distinction of public and private brought about by industrial capitalism.[34]

The women of the Furies worked collectively to publish their newspaper, but they also lived collectively, in an effort to embody their ideals. As Ginny Berson describes the arrangement in her memoir:

> Communal living, implemented through a lens of class consciousness and class analysis, was one part of our vision that we engaged in from the start. We developed an income-sharing system that reflected our class differences. The women with the most privilege contributed the most to the common pot, and the women with the least privilege put in less. Women with more education and marketable skills were expected to earn more and contribute more so that women with less education and skills would not have to work longer hours to earn enough to live....We made a collective decision to send one working-class woman, who had supported herself since high school, to printing school so that she would have a marketable skill, and one that we expected

[30] Faderman, *The Gay Revolution*, 240.
[31] Stephen Vider, *The Queerness of Home: Gender, Sexuality, and the Politics of Domesticity after World War II* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2021), 84–88; Hobson, *Lavender and Red*, 44–45; Valk, "Living a Feminist Lifestyle," 321–22.
[32] Vider, *The Queerness of Home*, 86.
[33] Vider, 85–86.
[34] On the history of lesbian feminist collectives, see Katherine Schweighofer, "Legacies of Lesbian Land: Rural Lesbian Spaces and the Politics of Identity and Community" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Bloomington, Indiana University, 2015).

> would be useful for us down the line. We divided up the cars that individual women owned so that every one of our three communal houses had at least one car.[35]

The communal living arrangement was a laboratory in their articulation of lesbian feminism, and also a sign of their commitment to the cause of women-centered culture. Within this collective, the women of the Furies were able to hone their theory through its real-life implementation.

Origins

The twelve women who comprised the Furies had all been active in the women's movement before the formation of this collective. Many of the members had also spent time in other political movements, especially the African American civil rights movement and the New Left. All of the Furies were White, although they were from various socioeconomic backgrounds. They ranged in age from eighteen to twenty-eight when the collective was formed. Two DC organizations figured in multiple Furies members' political careers: *off our backs*, a feminist publication, and the Institute for Policy Studies, a social justice think tank.

off our backs was a national feminist newspaper "by, for, and about women," founded by Marilyn Webb, Frances Chapman, Onka Dekker, and Nancy Ferro, among others.[36] The first issue of *off our backs* was released on February 27, 1970, and the periodical ran continuously until 2008, making it the longest-running feminist newspaper in the United States.[37]

Future Furies members Susan Hathaway, Tasha Peterson, Coletta Reid, and Lee Schwing had all been involved in producing *off our backs* in its early period. However, the newspaper began amid the tumultuous period of 1970-1971, when lesbianism became a divisive issue within second wave feminism. Feeling that the idea that lesbianism was the purest form of feminism was sending the women's movement in the wrong direction, the *off our backs* collective purged its ranks of lesbians. The start of the *Furies* newspaper was, in part, a response to this action.[38]

The Institute for Policy Studies (IPS), also located in DC, was another organization that featured in the careers of multiple members of the Furies. IPS is a liberal think tank founded in 1963 to provide scholarship in support of social justice movements. Future Furies member Sharon Deevey (who was heterosexually married before coming out as a lesbian in 1970) originally came to Washington, DC, when her husband got a job at IPS. Furies member Charlotte Bunch was a fellow there, and these two initially met future Furies member Joan Biren through David Morris, who was also affiliated with the institute.[39]

In Spring 1971, ten of the future Furies—Berson, Biren, Brown, Bunch, Deevey, Harris, Hathaway, Peterson, Reid, and Schwing—formed a collective called Those Women. This group operated out of two houses in northwest Washington and chose its name as a reclamation of a sneer often used in the DC feminist

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[35] Ginny Berson, *Olivia on the Record: A Radical Experiment in Women's Music* (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 2020), 43–44; see also, Valk, "Living a Feminist Lifestyle," 321–22.
[36] Brumfield, *Independent Press in D.C. and Virginia*, 68.
[37] Brumfield, 72; *off our backs* operated at this time out of a basement office at 2318 Ashmead Place NW, in Washington, DC; it later moved to the Community Building at 1724 Twentieth Street NW, Washington, DC. See Paula Martinac, *The Queerest Places: A National Guide to Gay and Lesbian Historic Sites* (New York: Henry Holt & Co, 1997), 55; Johnson, "LGBTQ Business and Commerce," 16-25 n90.
[38] Brumfield, *Independent Press in D.C. and Virginia*, 75–76.
[39] Dolinsky, "Lesbian and Gay DC," 184. Echols also notes the central role played by IPS in the DC women's movement generally; see Echols, *Daring to Be Bad*, 69.

community to refer to lesbians.[40] Lesbian feminism was foremost in the women's minds, and the group began work on a special issue of the United Methodist Church youth publication *motive*[41] devoted to the topic, a project that seems forward-thinking even by twenty-first century standards. Biren, Brown, Bunch, and Reid served as guest editors of the issue. Although the issue was scheduled to be released in Fall 1971, production delays led to a release date in early 1972.[42]

Among its members, Those Women brought a fair amount of experience in publishing to this project. Hathaway, Peterson, Reid, and Schwing had served in the o*ff our backs* collective, and Charlotte Bunch had guest-edited an earlier special issue of *motive* on the women's movement. In addition, Peterson and Harris dedicated themselves to learning composition and layout skills while this issue was in development. Over the course of creating the lesbian feminist issue of *motive,* the group discussed the possibility of starting their own newspaper devoted to the cause. In the fall of 1971, Those Women changed their name to the Furies and moved their collective to three rowhouses that they rented a few blocks apart from each other in the Capitol Hill neighborhood in southeast Washington, with the intention of doing just that.[43]

One property they rented, 219 11th Street SE, is the site that best represents the Furies' contribution to the articulation of lesbian feminism. Listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2016, the property was where the *Furies* newspaper was produced, and this was the primary medium through which the collective articulated and disseminated their views. The house was the site of Furies seminars and other events it organized for the wider DC feminist community. Finally, it served as communal living space for half of the collective at various times: Nancy Myron, Tasha Peterson, Susan Hathaway, Ginny Berson, Lee Schwing, and Helaine Harris.[44]

Rita Mae Brown and Jennifer Woodul lived at 217 12th Street SE, a block away from the main Furies house. The other house was located at 115 8th Street SE, four blocks from the main house. Charlotte Bunch, Coletta Reid, and originally Lee Schwing and Helaine Harris lived at this site. Joan Biren and Sharon Deevey, who were in a romantic relationship with each other, remained at 1861 California Street NW, one of the houses occupied by the group when they were calling themselves Those Women.[45]

Furies Members

The Furies consisted of twelve women, all European American. All were already active in the women's movement, though they traveled diverse paths before finding second wave feminism. Brief biographies of each of the Furies shed light on the various influences on the group, as well as its legacy, since most members of the collective continued to be active in the women's culture that the Furies were instrumental in articulating. They

[40] Meinke, 11–12; Helaine Harris, Comments to Draft 2 of the Furies Collective National Historic Landmark Nomination, submitted to Susan Ferentinos, March 24, 2022, via email. The houses were located at 1861 California Street NW and 2900 18th Street NW, and both buildings still stand.
[41] The *motive* publication is always spelled with a lower case "m." The publication is recognized as "the official magazine for the Methodist Student Movement from its founding in 1941 and, for a few years at the end of its life, for the entire University Christian Movement (UCM)." It ceased publication in 1972. B.J. Stiles, "motive Magazine," Boston University School of Theology, Center for Global Christianity and Mission, https://www.bu.edu/cgcm/scm-usa-project/motive-magazine/ (accessed December 21, 2023).
[42] Meinke, 11–12; Joan Biren, Comments on Draft 2 of the Furies Collective National Historic Landmark Nomination, submitted to Susan Ferentinos, March 28, 2022, via email.
[43] Meinke, 11–14; Harris Comments, March 24, 2022.
[44] Meinke, 12–13.
[45] Meinke, 13, 15; Mark Meinke, Comments on Draft 2 of the Furies Collective National Historic Landmark Nomination, submitted to Susan Ferentinos, March 16, 2022, via email.

are listed here alphabetically.

Ginny Berson (1946-) was raised Jewish in Fairfield, Connecticut, and became active in the New Left and civil rights movements while attending Mt. Holyoke College (class of 1967). While at Mt. Holyoke, she first met Joan Biren, who would also become a member of the Furies. Both were political science majors and active in the student political scene. After college, Berson served in the Peace Corps in Panama. In 1970, she moved to Washington, DC, to take a job at the New Left newspaper *Hard Times.* Once in DC, she got involved in the women's movement. After the Furies disbanded, Berson cofounded Olivia Records, a lesbian feminist music production company instrumental in establishing the women's music industry, which mentored, recorded, and promoted women musicians. After leaving Olivia in 1980, she had a distinguished career in community radio, eventually filling leadership roles at both Pacifica Radio and the National Federation of Community Broadcasters.[46]

Joan E. Biren (1944-), also known as JEB, was born in Washington, DC, the child of civil servants and was raised culturally Jewish. She first became politically active in high school, continued her activism in college, and was part of the anti-war movement throughout the late 1960s before joining the women's movement.[47] She graduated from Mt. Holyoke College in 1966 and attended a graduate program in political science at Oxford University. She is best known as a photographer, where she uses the name JEB, and in 1979 published *Eye to Eye,* the first book of photography to explicitly feature lesbians.[48] She has contributed to and chronicled the women's movement, the LGBTQ movement, and lesbian lives for a half century, through her photographs, films, and the feminist film distribution company Moonforce Media.[49] In the words of *Gay and Lesbian Biography*, a guide to prominent LGBTQ figures:

> Joan E. Biren, who is perhaps better known as JEB, was the first, and the most expressive, lesbian to photograph lesbians of all races, creeds, and colors. Biren's art necessitated the locating of lesbians who were willing to be openly identified as such and have images of themselves published. Her efforts through still photography and as a video producer managed to bring popular visibility to an otherwise invisible, marginal population.[50]

Rita Mae Brown (1944-) was born in Hanover, Pennsylvania, and was raised working-class. In the 1960s, she was expelled from University of Florida because of her lesbianism and later earned her undergraduate degree from New York University. She was active in the mainstream and radical branches of the women's movement before becoming involved in the development of lesbian feminism. As a member of the New York-based Radicalesbians in 1970, she was the major author of the foundational lesbian feminist essay "Woman-Identified Woman." She continued to publish feminist theory after the Furies disbanded. In 1974, she cofounded the feminist journal *Quest* with former Furies member Charlotte Bunch, and in 1976, she published a book of feminist essays titled *Plain Brown Rapper*. In 1973, the year the Furies ended publication of their newspaper, Brown published the semi-autobiographical novel *Rubyfruit Jungle,* which remains a lesbian

[46] Berson, *Olivia on the Record*, 17–35; Biren Comments, March 28, 2022.
[47] Andrea L.T. Peterson, "JEB," in *Gay and Lesbian Biography*, ed. Michael J. Tyrkus and Michael Bronski (Gale in Context: Biography Online, 1997); Dolinsky, "Lesbian and Gay DC," 195; Valk, "Living a Feminist Lifestyle," 324.
[48] Beemyn, *A Queer Capital*, 203.
[49] Roxanne Samer, "Lesbian Feminist Cinema's Archive and Moonforce Media's National Women's Film Circuit," *Feminist Media Histories* 1, no. 2 (April 1, 2015): 90–124, https://doi.org/10.1525/fmh.2015.1.2.090; Biren Comments, March 28, 2022.
[50] Peterson, "JEB." Joan Biren's papers are held by the Sophia Smith Collection of Women's History at Smith College, Northampton, MA.

classic.[51] According to *Gay and Lesbian Biography*, the book "is the contemporary literary lesbian Bible, performing the same function that Radclyffe Hall's *The Well of Loneliness* did for earlier generations."[52] She began work on this novel while part of the Furies and completed it after she left the group but was still living in one of the sites associated with the collective, 217 12th Street SE.[53] Brown has been a prolific novelist since the publication of *Rubyfruit Jungle*. She works primarily in the mystery genre, and her books feature lesbian protagonists.

Charlotte Bunch (1944-) was born in West Jefferson, North Carolina, and earned her undergraduate degree in 1966 from Duke University. She first became politically active in college, becoming involved with the African American civil rights movement and the student Christian movement. She was married to James L. Weeks for four years (1967-1971) before coming out as a lesbian with a political statement against the patriarchy.[54] After the Furies, Bunch cofounded *Quest: A Feminist Quarterly* with Rita Mae Brown and continued to expound on lesbian feminist theory from within the academy. She also founded UNWomen, a branch of the United Nations focused on women's empowerment and was the founding director of the Center for Women's Global Leadership at Rutgers University. She has become "one of the most highly regarded feminist theorists of the 20th-century women's movement," as well as "one of global feminism's chief proponents."[55]

Sharon Deevey (1945-) attended boarding school in Massachusetts and England before enrolling in Swarthmore College, where she became active in the New Left. She married after college and originally moved to Washington for her husband's job. In DC, Deevey became active in the women's movement and came out as a lesbian around 1970. After the Furies, she moved to Ohio, became a nurse, and was active in Cassandra: The Radical Feminist Nurses Network.[56]

Helaine Harris (1953-), the youngest member of the collective, joined the Furies when she was just eighteen. She had become active in the women's movement as a teenager in Houston. In May 1970, at age sixteen, she attended the Southern Female Rights Union conference in Edwards, Mississippi, and was so inspired by this event that she ran away to devote herself to the women's and anti-war movements. She spent some time in Albuquerque, where she cofounded the Southwest Female Rights Union.[57] She was also a part of the Venceremos Brigade, a New Left organization, started by SDS, that sent volunteers to Cuba to assist that country with its communist revolution and to draw attention to the US economic blockade of the island.[58] She arrived in DC in November 1970, where she joined Those Women.[59] After the Furies, she joined the Olivia Records lesbian feminist music collective and was a cofounder of Women in Distribution, a distributor for small

[51] Jill Franks, "Rita Mae Brown: Overview," in Tyrkus and Bronski, *Gay and Lesbian Biography*; Valk, "Living a Feminist Lifestyle," 326.
[52] Franks, "Rita Mae Brown: Overview."
[53] Rita Mae Brown, *Rita Will: Memoir of a Literary Rabble-Rouser* (New York: Bantam Books, 1997), 271–72; Berson, *Olivia on the Record*, 51.
[54] Pamela Kester-Shelton, "Charlotte Bunch," in *Feminist Writers* (Gale in Context: Biography Online, 1996).
[55] Kester-Shelton; Faderman, *The Gay Revolution*, 246. Quotation from Kester-Shelton. Charlotte Bunch's papers are held by the Schlesinger Library at Radcliffe Institute, Cambridge, MA.
[56] "Sharon Deevey's Lesbian Jottings 1970-2010," accessed March 14, 2021, http://www.lesbianpoetryarchive.org/book/export/html/243.
[57] Echols, *Daring to Be Bad*, 382; Harris Comments, March 24, 2022.
[58] Echols, 382; Teishan A. Latner, "'Agrarians or Anarchists?' The Venceremos Brigades to Cuba, State Surveillance, and the FBI as Biographer and Archivist," *Journal of Transnational American Studies* 9, no. 1 (2018), https://escholarship.org/uc/item/0j60s45v; Harris Comments, March 24, 2022.
[59] Berson, *Olivia on the Record*, 35; Harris Comments, March 24, 2022.

women's presses featuring lesbian authors.[60] In 1980, she joined Daedalus Books and Music, a remainder company, and worked there for nearly forty years.[61]

Susan Hathaway began her activist career with the New Left in Chicago, where she served as part of the defense committee for the Chicago Seven, a group of activists charged with inciting the riots at the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago. Hathaway moved to Washington, DC, with Tasha Peterson (another future member of the Furies) and Rennie Davis, a member of the Chicago Seven. Once in DC, she became involved with the women's movement and worked at *off our backs* with Peterson and Coletta Reid before joining the Furies.[62]

Nancy Myron had been involved in the civil rights movement before becoming involved in radical feminism while living in New York City. She, along with a few other feminists from New York, moved to Washington, DC, to be part of an earlier feminist collective in the city, the short-lived Amazing Grace.[63]

Tasha Peterson, born Natasha Dellinger, was the daughter of David Dellinger, a well-known twentieth-century peace activist, who was one of the Chicago Seven. Peterson shared her father's political leanings and was active in the New Left. She moved to Washington, DC, with New Left activists Susan Hathaway and Rennie Davis. After relocating, Peterson and Hathaway became active in the women's movement, and both worked for a time at the feminist publication *off our backs.*[64] After the Furies, she became a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and now practices under the name Natasha Dellinger Singer.[65]

Coletta Reid (1943-) was married and became the mother of two children before coming out as a lesbian. She was active in the women's movement and worked for *off our backs* before joining the Furies. After the Furies disbanded, Reid cofounded Diana Press, an influential lesbian feminist publishing house.[66]

Lee Schwing (1952-) originally came to DC when she was eighteen, as part of a college internship at *off our backs.* She ended up staying and joining the Furies. After the collective disbanded, she was part of the collective that founded the lesbian feminist recording company Olivia Records and later cofounded Women in Distribution with Helaine Harris and Cynthia Gair.[67]

Little is known about **Jennifer Woodul's** life before she joined the Furies; however, after the collective disbanded, she briefly moved to Albuquerque, then came back to DC to help found Olivia Records. She left Olivia in 1980 and worked in communications, cofounding a business called LiveWorld.[68]

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[60] Echols, *Daring to Be Bad*, 382.
[61] Kara Nuzback, "Helaine Harris: Love of Fresh Food Leads to New Institution," *Cape Gazette*, August 16, 2011, https://www.capegazette.com/node/15418; "Helaine Harris," LinkedIn, accessed March 14, 2021, https://www.linkedin.com/in/helaine-harris-31b3724/.
[62] Echols, *Daring to Be Bad*, 220, 221, 382.
[63] Echols, 224; Valk, "Living a Feminist Lifestyle," 308–9; Dolinsky, "Lesbian and Gay DC," 183.
[64] Echols, *Daring to Be Bad*, 220–21.
[65] Michael T. Kaufman, "David Dellinger, of Chicago 7, Dies at 88," *New York Times*, May 27, 2004, sec. U.S., https://www.nytimes.com/2004/05/27/us/david-dellinger-of-chicago-7-dies-at-88.html; "Sacred Journeys Counseling," n.d., http://www.natashadellingersinger.com/.
[66] Berson, *Olivia on the Record*, 35; Courtney Dean, *Finding Aid: Diana Press Records, 1970-1994 (Collection 2135)* (Los Angeles: UCLA. University Library. Department of Special Collections, 2013), http://pdf.oac.cdlib.org/pdf/ucla/mss/dian2135.pdf.
[67] Beemyn, *A Queer Capital*, 203; Berson, *Olivia on the Record*, 63–65.
[68] "Jennifer Woodul," Olivia, n.d., https://olivia.com/entertainment-single/145; Berson, *Olivia on the Record*, 63–65.

The Mission of the Furies Collective

From the beginning, the Furies was an intentional endeavor. The women were intrigued by the lesbian feminist ideology that was starting to coalesce in the women's movement, and they created the collective as a means for exploring the possibilities of these theories, particularly lesbian separatism, which called on women to devote themselves exclusively to other women. In the words of historian Anne Valk, "Rather than deplete their energies through continued battled over the legitimacy of lesbianism, the Furies turned to separatism as a means of strengthening their arguments...."[69] By articulating what they understood to be the truest form of feminism, they hoped to lead the movement toward the end of patriarchal society.[70] In her sweeping analysis of the "Gay Revolution," historian Lillian Faderman includes a discussion of the Furies, stating:

> Their real work would be to find ways to develop a "politics of lesbian-feminism": They'd analyze how heterosexism supports male supremacy. They'd rid the world of patriarchy and remake society to be nonsexist, nonracist, nonimperialist, and socialist. They had no interest in reforming society. It had to be torn down and redone from scratch.[71]

The lead article of the first issue of the *Furies* newspaper, written by Ginny Berson, introduced the collective's beliefs and purpose to their readership. The article states:

> We believe The FURIES will make important contributions to the growing movement to destroy sexism. As a collective, in addition to outside projects, we are spending much time building an ideology which is the basis for action.[72]

The article described how the collective members saw their efforts as breaking new ground:

> A political movement cannot advance without systematic thought and practical organization. The haphazard, non-strategic, zig-zag tactics of the straight women's movement, the male left, and many other so-called revolutionary groups have led only to frustration and dissolution. We do not want to make those same mistakes; our ideology forms the basis for developing long-range strategies and short-term tactics, projects, and actions.[73]

Finally, this introductory article offered a snapshot of the lesbian ideology the group was developing:

> Sexism is the root of all other oppressions, and Lesbian and woman oppression will not end by smashing capitalism, racism, and imperialism. Lesbianism is not a matter of sexual preference, but rather one of political choice which every woman must make if she is to become woman-identified and thereby end male supremacy… Lesbians must get out of the straight women's movement and form their own movement in order to be taken seriously, to stop straight women from oppressing us, and to force straight women to deal with their own Lesbianism.[74]

With these words, the Furies took lesbian feminism into more extreme territory. As historian Genny Beemyn (not to be confused with Furies member Ginny Berson) points out, while Radicalesbians were the first

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[69] Valk, "Living a Feminist Lifestyle," 310.
[70] Valk, *Radical Sisters*, 136; Beemyn, *A Queer Capital*, 193.
[71] Faderman, *The Gay Revolution*, 239.
[72] Ginny Berson, "[Lead Article]," *Furies* 1, no. 1 (January 1972): 1.
[73] Berson.
[74] Berson.

to suggest that lesbianism was a political choice, stating that any women could be a lesbian, the Furies made lesbianism an imperative. Their stance was that lesbianism was essential to ending male supremacy, and thus, all women must make the choice to be lesbians. As Rita Mae Brown put it, "You can't build a strong movement if your sisters are out there f***ing with the oppressor."[75]

The group chose the Furies as their name, in reference to the Furies of Greek mythology, who were goddesses of vengeance. As the twentieth-century Furies explained it, "The story of the Furies is the story of strong, powerful women, the 'Angry Ones,' the avengers of matricide, the protectors of women."[76]

The Furies *Newspaper*

The Furies located their newspaper operation at 219 11th Street SE. The house was owned by Jewell Johnson and Irene Clagett.[77] Mark Meinke, who wrote the National Register nomination for this property, synopsizes the role the house played in the Furies mission:

> The house provided adequate space for meetings and for the publication project, the creation of a national lesbian feminist separatist newspaper, the *Furies.* The basement provided space for working on graphics, layout, and composition of the newspaper. The house also provided space for collective meetings, consciousness-raising sessions, and educational/training sessions. Nancy Myron, Tasha Peterson, and Susan Hathaway were the first residents at 219 11th Street SE. Over the coming year, Ginny Berson would move in (and out again when she and singer Meg Christian became lovers), as would Lee Schwing and Helaine Harris.[78]

The production of a feminist periodical out of a rented residential property fits a spatial characteristic of second wave feminism. Scholar Daphne Spain has flagged the transitory nature of spaces associated with the women's movement as a particular challenge of preserving these sites. Spain states:

> Rarely possessing the resources to buy property or construct new buildings, activists rented existing buildings and modified them to serve their needs. Consequently, feminist places are often lost to history because they were neither designed by architects nor identified with famous figures or events, although some have been noted by feminist scholars trying to restore women's history through historic preservation.[79]

Other scholars have made a similar argument for spaces associated with LGBTQ history.[80]

The Furies' commitment to not only create the content of their lesbian feminist newspaper, but to also do the composition and layout is likewise noteworthy. It was an embodiment of their philosophy. Lesbian separatists sought to remove men from their lives and instead partner with other woman-identified women to create an alternative culture, society, and economy. If they were to live their ideals, they needed to learn a host of skills traditionally taught to men but not women. For the Furies, this included the skills of composition,

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[75] Beemyn, *A Queer Capital*, 198, quotation also from 198.
[76] Berson, "[Lead Article]."
[77] Meinke, 12.
[78] Meinke, 13.
[79] Daphne Spain, *Constructive Feminism: Women's Spaces and Women's Rights in the American City* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2016), 13.
[80] See, for example, Susan Ferentinos, "Maryland LGBTQ Historic Context Study" (Baltimore: Preservation Maryland, 2020), 19–23, https://www.preservationmaryland.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/maryland-lgbtq-historic-context-study-september-2020-full-web.pdf.

layout, and printing. For lesbian separatists more generally, it included car repair, carpentry, and welding, as well as industry-specific skills such as—in the case of the women's music industry—sound engineering, lighting design, and stage rigging. What the Furies did not do themselves, they sought from others who believed in their feminist ideology. They did not have a printing press, so put great initial effort into finding a lesbian feminist printer. There was no such printer in Washington, DC, and so for the first issue of their newspaper, members of the collective drove the issue to Atlanta, Georgia—over 600 miles away—so that it could be printed by the feminist-owned Sojourner Truth Press. When that option proved unsustainable, the Furies printed the newspaper at the *Army Times* printing press, ironically the only local printer they could find who would work with an openly lesbian publication.[81]

The first issue of *The Furies* was released in January 1972. And because its articles were written almost entirely by members of the collective—unlike the special lesbian feminist issue of *motive*—it actually preceded the release of that special issue. The one exception to the all-Furies content of the first *Furies* issue was a poem by lesbian poet Judy Grahn. Interestingly, the issue also included a scathing review by Rita Mae Brown of an article recently written by Roxanne Dunbar, the main force behind Cell 16, the group that had first proposed feminist separatism. Brown's critique of the Dunbar article, titled "The Movement and the Working Class," centered around Dunbar's call for working-class feminists to continue working with working-class men on labor issues. Brown saw that idea as misguided at best. "How will men, especially working-class men, learn to shed sexism? If we leave them flat, that's how. As long as there is a woman to wipe their noses, cushion reality for them, serve them, men aren't going to change."[82]

The *Furies* newspaper ran from January 1972 to May/June 1973, with ten issues published in all. The content remained primarily authored by members of the collective, although a few articles in each issue were authored by women outside of the collective. Over the short course of the publication, the Furies' rhetoric evolved. Although the group still advocated for women to devote their energies exclusively to other women, they became less unwavering in their commitment to interact only with other lesbian feminists.[83]

The End of the Furies

Internal disagreements about the politics of the group quickly led to discord within the collective. The Furies were very cognizant of class issues and their newspaper included a significant amount of class analysis. Within the group, class dynamics were also interrogated. At least four of the collective members were from solidly working-class backgrounds; the others had either solidly middle-class backgrounds or had grown up in the liminal space between these two classes. The Furies were committed to evening out economic imbalances between members; they owned all possessions and income communally. More subtle issues produced less agreement. For instance, should the collective make the best use of the assertiveness and ambition of some of its members, or were those members exhibiting signs of class privilege and so should work to control these impulses?[84]

In addition to class dynamics, the question of children was also one of the more contentious issues for the group. Tasha Peterson had a young daughter, and Coletta Reid had two young children, a son and a

[81] Brumfield, *Independent Press in D.C. and Virginia*, 80; Meinke, "Furies Collective," 11; Rhodes, *Once A Fury*. Meinke notes that a woman-owned print shop did not exist in DC until one opened in the later 1970s at 1803 Florida Avenue NW; see Meinke Comments, March 16, 2022.
[82] Rita Mae Brown, "Roxanne Dunbar: How a Female Heterosexual Serves the Interests of Male Supremacy," *Furies* 1, no. 1 (January 1972): 5–6.
[83] Meinke, "Furies Collective," 16. Meinke's National Register nomination includes a description of the contents of each issue.
[84] Dolinsky, "Lesbian and Gay DC," 192–95; Meinke, "Furies Collective"; Rhodes, *Once A Fury*.

daughter. From the beginning, the group agreed to be women/girl-only, and Reid's ex-husband assumed primary caretaking of their son. However, the two daughters, plus another young girl whose parents were unable to care for her, lived in the Furies Collective. The presence of children brought up more political questions. If the Furies were a true collective, it seemed that they should raise the children collectively and divide their care equally among members. However, some members had no interest in children and did not want to be obligated to care for them. Others, most vocally Rita Mae Brown, felt that children were a distraction from the group's political mission and in fact were endangered by living with a group who was trying to start a revolution.[85]

In early spring 1972, the group decided to remove the children from the collective. Joan Biren and Sharon Deevey had grown very devoted to the unattached girl the collective was caring for, who was named Cassidy, and they vocally opposed this decision. This opposition, combined with some class issues that had already arisen, prompted the rest of the Furies to purge Biren and Deevey from the collective, although they continued to work on the paper. Initially Biren and Deevey moved with the children to 4110 Emery Place NW, but soon Cassidy returned to her mother, who subsequently put her up for adoption. Biren and Deevey were unable to adopt her because of their lesbianism. The fathers of the other two girls took over their care.[86]

In March 1972, shortly after Biren and Deevey were removed, Rita Mae Brown left the group. In the words of Biren:

> At the same time, Rita was acting more individualistically, and we began to question her commitment. We finally confronted Rita as a group, but she made it clear that she was not going to change, and we realized she had to go. I think that she was ready to strike out on her own in any case. She had started writing *Rubyfruit Jungle*, and the collective was becoming too demanding for her.[87]

Brown's 1997 memoir confirms that she had grown tired of the collective by the time she was asked to leave. She felt that her strong personality and desire to lead were a bad fit for a leaderless collective, and she yearned "to write in solitude and to live on the land with animals."[88]

Yet, despite the conflict within their living collective, the women managed to continue publishing their newspaper for another year, releasing its final issue in May/June 1973. Although the newspaper only published for eighteen months, it accomplished at least part of what the members had set out to do. The Furies had articulated a vision of the women's movement—and the world—in which lesbianism was at the vanguard, valued and respected for its revolutionary potential. They had kindled a national, possibly worldwide, discussion about the interrelatedness of heterosexuality and gender inequality. The collective had also played a pivotal role in the establishment of women's culture, both by envisioning and articulating the lesbian separatism that was its foundation and by the later cultural contributions of its individual members. In the words of filmmaker Jacqueline Rhodes, "It's not an overstatement to say that the work of the Furies shaped lesbian culture in the United States for decades."[89] As such, the Furies Collective is significant to both women's history and LGBTQ history.

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[85] Dolinsky, "Lesbian and Gay DC," 196–98; Rhodes, *Once A Fury*; Brown, *Rita Will*, 270–71.
[86] Dolinsky, "Lesbian and Gay DC," 196–98; Rhodes, *Once A Fury*; Meinke Comments, March 16, 2022. The Emery Place house still stands.
[87] Berson, *Olivia on the Record*, 51.
[88] Brown, *Rita Will*, 268–71, quotation from 269.
[89] Rhodes, *Once A Fury*.

Legacy: Women's Culture

The lesbian feminist separatism that the women of the Furies articulated had a lasting impact on late-twentieth-century lesbian activism, and its legacy continues to inform the LGBTQ movement. Many feminists—straight, bisexual, and lesbian—embraced the idea of centering their lives around other women, and a women's subculture flourished in the United States during the 1970s and 1980s.

The development of women's culture was part of a larger feminist shift in the 1970s and 1980s. While liberal feminism—the wing of the women's movement that emphasized legislative and judicial approaches to gender equality—became more acceptable in mainstream politics, radical feminism moved more into the cultural realm. Scholars refer to this new emphasis on personal choices and cultural expression as cultural feminism, although feminist scholars Verta Taylor and Leila Rupp rightly point out that no women actually identified themselves as "cultural feminists"; it is more of an academic catch-all for a variety of feminist trends.[90]

As discussed earlier in this nomination, distinctions between the grassroots movements of the 1960s and 1970s can be blurry, and that is certainly true of the various schools of feminist thought to emerge from the women's liberation movement. Cultural feminism is often criticized for being more about lifestyle than politics,[91] but that assessment ignores the very real political work that was accomplished within women's culture.[92] The phrase "lesbian separatism" becomes more common in the women's culture era, although arguably, lesbian feminist ideology became *less* separatist as women's culture grew. And many (but not all) feminists in this era used the word "women"—as in women's culture, women's bookstores, and women's music—to mean "lesbian feminist."[93]

Nevertheless, the legacy of the Furies can be seen in all these 1970s and 1980s feminist permutations—separatism, cultural feminism, and women's culture. Elements of women's culture included a national network of women's bookstores (featuring women authors, feminist theory, and information about lesbian life and which in turn supported a wider network of feminist and LGBTQ publishing houses); the women's music industry (which not only featured women performers singing songs about their lives, but supported an entire female workforce of agents, sound and light engineers, and touring companies); and women's music festivals (which were in fact women's fairs that, in addition to music, featured workshops, political organizing, and marketplaces in which women-owned businesses sold feminist and lesbian-oriented products).[94]

Women's culture is today remembered in part for being dominated by college-educated White women, who alienated many people by assuming a universal female experience that overlooked racial, class, and generational differences as well as differences in sexual expression. Lesbian cultural feminists moving into the 1980s offered harsh critiques of bisexuality, lesbian pornography, and lesbian sexual expressions that explored issues of power, such as butch-femme relationships and sadomasochism. Lesbian feminism's embrace of "women-only space" quickly collided with the transgender community over competing definitions of

[90] Echols, *Daring to Be Bad*, 238–86; Verta Taylor and Leila J. Rupp, "Women's Culture and Lesbian Feminist Activism: A Reconsideration of Cultural Feminism," *Signs* 19, no. 1 (1993): 34.
[91] See, for example, Echols, *Daring to Be Bad*.
[92] Taylor and Rupp, "Women's Culture and Lesbian Feminist Activism," 44; Hobson, *Lavender and Red*.
[93] On the blurring of categories and language in this era, see Kathy Rudy, "Radical Feminism, Lesbian Separatism, and Queer Theory," *Feminist Studies* 27, no. 1 (Spring 2001): 191–222, https://doi.org/10.2307/3178457; Taylor and Rupp, "Women's Culture and Lesbian Feminist Activism"; Hobson, *Lavender and Red*, 43–44.
[94] Kristen Hogan, *The Feminist Bookstore Movement: Lesbian Antiracism and Feminist Accountability* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016); Morris, *The Disappearing L*; Faderman, *The Gay Revolution*, 245; Beemyn, *A Queer Capital*, 193; Spain, *Constructive Feminism*, 2.

"women."[95]

While this critique of cultural feminism certainly contains more than a grain of truth, other scholars have noted that lesbian feminism did include analyses of economic and racial, as well as gender, inequality. In fact, historian Alice Echols, a vocal critic of cultural feminism generally, credits the Furies (particularly its member Rita Mae Brown) with raising the issue of class dynamics as they were being played out within the women's movement.[96] Historian Anne Valk details the Furies' interrogation of and work on racial issues within the women's movement, and more recently, the DC LGBTQ Historic Context Statement highlights "the collective's insistence on embedding racism, classism, sexism, and homophobia within the oppressive systems of patriarchy and capitalism."[97] In a similar vein, scholars such as Kristen Hogan, Bonnie J. Morris, and A. Finn Enke, have challenged the memory of women's culture, in particular, as exclusionary, arguing that the subculture's diversity and efforts to intervene in structural racism have been erased in favor of an image that emphasizes infighting and shortcomings.[98]

Indeed, historian Bonnie J. Morris's 2016 book *The Disappearing L* decries what she sees as the historical erasure of the far-reaching impact of women's culture. She writes, "My concern is that as we advance farther into the twenty-first century, we are witnessing the almost flippant dismissal of recent, late-twentieth-century lesbian culture, particularly the loss of physical sites such as women's bookstores and women's music festivals and their material legacies (books, journals, albums, tapes, magazine interviews with artists.)"[99] Yet, as discussed in this nomination's earlier argument for significance, women's culture created a safe space for women-identified-women to explore issues of feminism and sexual identity and to develop leadership and organizing skills in an era when mainstream culture understood homosexuality to be something shameful and often prevented women from reaching their full potential.

Lesbian feminism represented a "parallel revolution" within the history of LGBTQ activism, occurring at the same time but largely separate from gay liberation. The Furies Collective played a crucial role in the articulation of lesbian feminist separatism, which in turn sparked a counterculture that, for twenty years, placed women, and specifically lesbians, at its center.

Comparative Analysis

The property at 219 11th Street SE is the best site to represent the Furies' contribution to the articulation of lesbian feminism because it is where the collective produced the *Furies* newspaper that articulated and disseminated its views. It also served as one of the communal living spaces for the collective, along with serving as a primary meeting and workspace between 1971 and 1973.

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[95] Leila J. Rupp, *A Desired Past: A Short History of Same-Sex Love in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 185–89; Claire Bond Potter, "Taking Back Times Square," *Radical History Review*, no. 113 (Spring 2012): 67–80; Josh Sides, *Erotic City: Sexual Revolutions and the Making of Modern San Francisco* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 216–19; Lillian Faderman, *Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers: A History of Lesbian Life in Twentieth-Century America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 246–70.

[96] Echols, *Daring to Be Bad*, 236. Ironically, the Furies ultimately splintered, in part, over class issues.

[97] Rebecca Graham and Kisa Hooks, "Historic Context Statement for Washington's LGBTQ Resources" (Washington, DC: District of Columbia Office of Planning, Historic Preservation Office, September 2019), 2.35, https://planning.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/op/publication/attachments/Historic%20Context%20Statement%20for%20Washington%27s%20LGBTQ%20Resources_1.pdf; Valk, *Radical Sisters*, 135–57; See also, Meinke, 13–14.

[98] Hogan, *The Feminist Bookstore Movement*; Morris, *The Disappearing L*; Anne Enke, *Finding the Movement: Sexuality, Contested Space, and Feminist Activism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007).

[99] Morris, *The Disappearing L*, 2.

Comparable Properties

Other properties associated with the Furies include the two additional houses where Furies members lived communally. One of these houses was located at 217 12th Street SE, a block away from the main house. Rita Mae Brown and Jennifer Woodul lived at this site, and it is where Brown wrote her classic novel *Rubyfruit Jungle*. The other house was located at 115 8th Street SE, four blocks from the main house. Charlotte Bunch, Coletta Reid, and originally Lee Schwing and Helaine Harris lived at this site. Both buildings still stand. Joan Biren and Sharon Deevey lived farther away from the main house, at 1861 California Street NW, one of the houses occupied by the group when they were calling themselves Those Women. The other house associated with Those Women was 2900 18th Street NW; and both houses still stand as well. However, none of these additional properties were as closely associated with the production of the newspaper as was 219 11th Street SE.

A comparable property related to the articulation of lesbian feminism more generally is the site of the Lavender Menace protest, staged by Radicalesbians at the Second Congress to Unite Women in May 1970. This event took place at Intermediate School 70 (now the New York City Lab School for Collaborative Studies) at 333 West 17th Street, New York, New York. This property represents a single event that, while influential in the articulation of lesbian feminism, was not as sustained as the work done by the Furies at 219 11th Street, and thus had a different impact.

Properties related to other articulations of radical feminism include the site most closely associated with Cell 16, the group that first presented the idea of separatism within the context of second wave feminism. This property is located at 16 Lexington Avenue, Cambridge, Massachusetts. Consisting of half of a duplex dwelling, the house where Cell 16 met and several of its members lived in the late 1960s and early 1970s still stands. While it represents a movement toward feminist separatism, Cell 16 did not incorporate lesbianism into its theory and thus did not have the same impact on LGBTQ history that the Furies Collective did.

Other properties in this category are those associated with the Combahee River Collective, an important African American radical feminist organization whose 1977 "Combahee River Collective Statement" added an intersectional component to lesbian feminist theory. In the words of historian Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, the statement "is an important document, not only as a statement of radical Black feminism but also in its contribution to the revolutionary left in the United States."[100] A site that appears to be strongly associated with the Combahee River Collective is the Cambridge Women's Center at 46 Pleasant Street in Cambridge, Massachusetts where the group met from the late 1970s through 1981.[101] This building still stands, and its connection to the Collective should be further studied. Further research is needed to identify sites associated with the Collective's work and the authors of their statement: Barbara Smith, Beverly Smith, and Demita Frazier. Since the Combahee River Collective articulated a vision of feminism significantly different from that of the Furies, in that it dealt more substantively with race as a category of analysis, properties associated with the Collective deserve consideration for National Historic Landmark designation.

Scholarship also exists on lesbian feminist collectives in California. Chelsea Nicole Del Rio's doctoral dissertation from the University of Michigan identifies some collectives that demonstrate similar traits as the Furies. Further research may reveal individual sites with comparable national influence or that demonstrate

[100] Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, ed., *How We Get Free: Black Feminism and the Combahee River Collective* (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2017), quotation from the introduction, p.7.
[101] Ibid., pp. 54-55, 123, 128. Marian Jones, "If Black Women Were Free": An Oral History of the Combahee River Collective," *The Nation*, October 29, 2021, https://www.thenation.com/article/society/combahee-river-collective-oral-history/.

other important activities and events in this important historical trend in women's history and LGBTQ history. One example called out in Del Rio's work is the collective formed by members of the Gay Women's Liberation group in Oakland, California in 1970 (4205 Terrace Street). Known as the Terrace Collective, Del Rio argues that "it became a principal site of lesbian feminist resources and information."[102] Additional sites identified by Del Rio, such as the Berkeley Women's Center at 1124/26 Addison Street, should also be assessed for their connection to national trends in lesbian feminist separatism.[103]

[102] Chelsea Nicole Del Rio, "'That Women Could Matter': Building Lesbian Feminism in California, 1955-1982" (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 2016), p. 130, https://deepblue.lib.umich.edu/bitstream/handle/2027.42/135777/cheldel_1.pdf.
[103] Ibid., Chapter 2.

6. PROPERTY DESCRIPTION AND STATEMENT OF INTEGRITY

Ownership of Property	Category of Property
Private: X	Building(s): X
Public-Local:	District:
Public-State:	Site:
Public-Federal:	Structure:
	Object:

Number of Resources within Boundary of Property:

Contributing		Noncontributing	
Buildings:	1	Buildings:	1
Sites:	0	Sites:	0
Structures:	0	Structures:	0
Objects:	0	Objects:	0
Total:	1	Total:	1

PROVIDE PRESENT AND PAST PHYSICAL DESCRIPTIONS OF PROPERTY

The property at 219 11th Street SE is a two-story, rowhouse-type brick dwelling in the Capitol Hill neighborhood of Washington, DC. The building, erected in 1913, has a raised basement and a two-bay, full-width front porch. It is located on Lot 66 of Square 969, on a street lined with turn-of-the-twentieth-century rowhouses. The dwelling is located within the boundaries of the Capitol Hill National Register Historic District, locally significant for its architecture, community planning, and military history.[104] In addition, the property was individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2016 for its association with the Furies Collective.[105]

Location

The Furies Collective is situated on Lot 66 of Square 969, in the Capitol Hill neighborhood in Washington, DC. This square is bounded by Independence Avenue SE to the north, C Street SE to the south, 10th Street SE to the east, and 11th Street SE to the west. A fork-shaped, paved alley extends north-south through the square and provides access to a number of garages that line the alley, including one associated with the Furies Collective house.

Although parts of the Capitol Hill neighborhood were developed before the Civil War, the area where the Furies house is located developed beginning in the 1870s. The area contained mostly middle-class homes

[104] No mention of the Furies appears in the district nomination, and the district's period of significance ends in 1945, well before the Furies era. Suzanne Ganschinietz, "Capitol Hill Historic District, Washington, D.C.," National Register of Historic Places Nomination (Washington, DC: National Park Service, 1976), https://catalog.archives.gov/id/117692001.
[105] Meinke, "Furies Collective."

and housed some of the growing number of federal workers in this era.[106] The block that contains the Furies Collective developed in phases. The north end of square 969 was mostly developed between 1900 and 1909. The exceptions are four lots at the corner of 11th Street and Independence Avenue, developed in 1911 by F.D. McAuliffe, and lots 65 and 66, along 11th Street, which contain the Furies house and its adjacent twin at 217 11th Street SE. These dwellings were built in 1913, on lots purchased by William Murphy in 1912. These lots (65 and 66) had recently been subdivided from a larger lot, originally classified as lot 16. The entire southern half of square 969 was developed in 1923 by T.A. Jameson.[107]

In the early 1970s, when the Furies rented this property, a burgeoning LGBTQ neighborhood existed a few blocks away, centered around 8th Street SE. According to the property's National Register documentation:

> Joanna's, at 430 8th Street SE, had offered local lesbians a gathering place since May 1968, and became the first LGBTQ business to offer a place for same-sex dancing. Across 8th Street SE was the Pub 9, where [Furies member] Rita Mae Brown staged film nights. In mid-summer 1971, former staff of Joanna's and Johnnie's (across E Street from Joanna's) opened the Phase One at 525 8th Street SE, the second Capitol Hill bar for lesbians. Next to the Pub 9 was the gay dance club Plus One (where in 1968 gay men refused to scatter, ignoring a police raid). Along Pennsylvania Avenue SE was Mr. Henry's gay- and lesbian-friendly restaurant and the Liferaft (at 639 Pennsylvania Avenue SE), another gay male club. In 1973, Judy Winsett (who helped with publication of both *motive* and the *Furies*) and Leslie Reeves would create a jewelry shop and bookstore at 321 7th Street SE, known as Lammas.[108]

Exterior

The rowhouse at 219 11th Street SE was built in 1913, from the design of Nicholas T. Haller, a local architect. It occupies a 0.04-acre elongated lot, while its architectural twin, built the same year, resides to the north on lot 65. The two-story, brick, stretcher-bond dwelling has a raised basement, a minimally sloped metal roof, and a poured concrete front porch that runs the width of the first story.[109] The current owners have added solar panels to the roof which are not visible from the ground.

The house is set about ten feet back from the brick sidewalk. That set-back is filled, north to south, with a square planting bed, a brick walkway to the basement entrance, another square planting bed, and poured-concrete stairs leading to the elevated front porch. The basement walkway leads to three descending poured-concrete steps that in turn lead to a small poured-concrete patio enclosed by wrought-iron security bars, located underneath the front porch. The basement has a three-bay facade, with a door and two paired, two-light casement windows contained within the three bays, extending north to south. The basement windows are covered with exterior, sliding, aluminum storm windows.

The first and second stories, comprising the main living areas of the house, each contain three bays on the street-facing facade. The building's main entrance exists in the southernmost bay on the first floor and is accessed by an elevated, poured-concrete front porch supported by poured-concrete piers. The porch runs the full width of the building. A small flight of poured-concrete exterior stairs with a midpoint landing leads from the sidewalk to the porch; these stairs align with the building's main entrance in the south bay. The porch

[106] Ganschinietz, "Capitol Hill Historic District," 8.6.
[107] District of Columbia, "HistoryQuest DC"; Meinke, "Furies Collective," 4.
[108] Meinke, "Furies Collective," 12, quotation edited to fit with NHL style; no words changed, only punctuation.
[109] The following architectural description is based on a site visit to the property, conducted by Susan Ferentinos, Kathryn Smith, and Sarah Canfield, on April 4, 2022. The information is supplemented by Meinke, "Furies Collective."

features three wood Tuscan columns set on concrete plinths, and concrete balusters. The concrete plinths, balusters, and porch piers feature raised panels of aggregate facing. The concrete porch is not original to the 1913 construction; it was added in 1921, replacing the original frame porch.[110] Nevertheless, it was part of the building during its national period of significance in the early 1970s. The only major modification to the porch since the period of significance was the addition of a single-pane rectangular skylight in the porch roof.

The front entrance contains a single-light door set within a wood frame with a brass kickplate, an ornate brass doorknob and escutcheon, and an egg-and-dart molding framing the beveled-glass full light. It is topped by a single-light transom with the house's street number painted on it. In addition to the side-hall main entrance, the front of the building features two wood, double-hung, one-over-one windows covered by aluminum storm windows. These windows feature striated stone sills that have been painted. Each façade bay is capped by a rusticated stone lintel that is also painted.

The façade's second story is capped by a heavy wood cornice with large dentil molding. A wooden bed-mold runs between the cornice and the upper windows. Rusticated stone lintels (painted) cap the three second-story windows which also feature finished stone sills. The windows themselves are wood, double-hung, one-over-one sashes with aluminum storm windows added.

The south side of the building adjoins the neighboring house for its full length. The north side of the building is adjoined to its neighbor at the front of the building. The north side of the building features a rear ell leading from the rear entrance of the basement to a rear courtyard running the width of the house. The rear basement entrance leads to two brick steps that ascend to an exterior passageway running between the Furies Collective's rear ell and the adjacent house to the north. The rear basement door is wood and features a four-light window with panels below, and the doorway features a jack-arch brick lintel. Above the basement rear entrance are single, wood, double-hung, one-over-one windows on the first and the second stores. Covered by aluminum storm windows, these windows display simple stone sills and jack-arch brick lintels. On the north wall of the rear ell there are two replacement single-light windows with finished stone sills at the basement level. The first-story north wall of the rear ell contains two wood, double-hung, one-over-one windows with stone lintels and brick segmental-arch lintels. The second story contains one identical window. The westernmost first-floor window is covered by iron security bars.

A wooden gate separates the passageway between the rear ell and the adjacent house from the courtyard at the rear of the house. The rear elevation of the main house consists of a two-story addition dating from 2007.[111] The first-story rear exterior features a three-unit glass sliding door capped by a single-light transom. The second story contains two one-over-one, wood, double-hung windows with aluminum storm windows. The rear door leads to a small wooden deck, added after the period of significance, with stairs leading to a square courtyard paved in brick. The courtyard features two asymmetrical planting beds. It is enclosed on the north and south by a high, unpainted, non-historic picket fence, to the east by the main house, and to the west by a single-story two-car garage running the width of the property. The garage is a wood, vertical plank-clad frame building with a shed roof covered in rolled asphalt roofing. It has a poured concrete floor and is accessed from the courtyard by a metal single-light door and from the alley by two metal, overhead roll-up doors. While according to historic building permits, there was a garage on the property as early as 1916 and parts of the existing structure may have been in place in the early 1970s, as it currently stands, the garage appears to be a later building, thus it is noncontributing.

[110] Meinke, 4.
[111] Meinke, 5.

Interior

On the interior, front door opens into a first-floor side-passage hallway, with a straight-run, stained wood staircase leading to the second floor. The staircase has a square wood newel post and square wood balusters. To the right (north) of the front hallway is the living room accessed through a double-wide opening framed with wide stained wood trim and capped by a stained wood lintel. This opening includes a single-leaf, double-wide, paneled pocket door. The living room has the two front windows overlooking the porch on the east wall; an exposed brick north wall with no windows or doors; a doorway to the hallway on its south wall; and a wide doorway into the dining room, with an original pocket door, on its west wall.

The dining room, to the west of the living room, has a single window on the north side of the west wall, overlooking the passageway between the rear ell and the adjacent building. The wall between the dining room and the hallway has been removed, so that the dining room is now open to the hallway. A single wood Tuscan column now stands where the wall once stood. According to the current homeowners, this change was made by the previous owner, who lived in the house between 1996 and 2004.

The hallway leads into the kitchen to the west, in the rear ell of the house. A small kitchen entryway contains an enclosed pantry and a small powder room to the north, and what was originally a staircase to the basement descending under the second-floor staircase. Access from the main house to the basement has been removed, and additional storage space has been added where the basement staircase was. The bathroom has a wood, double-hung, one-over-one window with original wood trim; otherwise, this room contains no original fabric.

The kitchen has been remodeled and extended since the period of significance. It features replacement wood cabinetry, cork floors, tile backsplash, and a pressed-tin ceiling that pre-dates the current owners. The kitchen has a historic wood, double-hung, one-over-one window on its north wall. The rear of the kitchen (west wall) features a small addition of about five feet in depth, which creates a small breakfast nook. The rear wall is comprised of mostly glass, with a wood-framed, three-unit sliding glass door.

Except for in the kitchen and bathroom, there are standard-width, tongue-and-groove, stained-wood flooring throughout the first floor. Doors and windows are trimmed throughout this floor with wide, banded trim capped by wide lintels surmounted by a narrow cornice trim. Tall, plain baseboards appear throughout this floor.

The second story of the house is accessed from the front hallway by way of a straight-run wooden stairway. A skylight has been added to the second-floor stair hall ceiling, over the staircase. The upper hallway provides access to three bedrooms and a bathroom. The stained-wood, five-panel doors that open into the upstairs rooms are original, and each has an intact single-light, operable, glass transom. All the upstairs rooms feature wide wood door and window trim and lintels that are either painted or stained. The floors are stained tongue-and-groove wood throughout and there are stained or painted tall baseboards.

The largest bedroom is in the front of the house, over the living room. It is accessed from the upper hallway through a doorway on its west wall and has three front-facing windows on its east wall. The middle bedroom is accessed from the upper hallway by a doorway on its south wall; it has a window on its west wall, overlooking the passage between the house's rear ell and the adjacent rowhouse. The upstairs (main) bathroom is located between the middle bedroom and the back bedroom and has been enlarged and renovated since the period of significance. The back bedroom is accessed from the hallway through a door on its east wall. This room, over the kitchen, includes an extension of about five feet on its west wall, matching the kitchen addition

downstairs. The addition features two double-hung, one-over-one windows overlooking the rear courtyard. It appears that the historic window trim was either reused or matched for these windows.

The main house retains its original woodwork and hard wood flooring throughout the house, except in the kitchen and bathrooms. Some ornate brass plating and ceramic doorknobs remain as well. Additions and renovations are sympathetic to the era of construction.

The basement of the house has been remodeled into a separate, two-bedroom, one-bath apartment and retains little original fabric, save for the exterior brick walls, front casement windows, window openings in the north wall, and its two entrances, one at the front of the building and one leading to the rear passageway.

Integrity

The main house at 219 11th Street SE retains the basic room layout and footprint of its original design, although some small changes have been made. Since the period of significance (1971-1973), the wall that originally divided the dining room from the front hallway has been removed. Skylights have been added to the second-floor hallway and to the front porch roof. The kitchen and back bedroom have been expanded by extending the back wall of the building. During the Furies era, the house was an older rental in a marginalized neighborhood. In 2023, most of the same historic fabric remains and has been well cared for. The neighborhood retains its historic character but has returned to the well-maintained, middle-class homes that originally comprised this area of Capitol Hill.

The biggest change to the building since the Furies era lies in the basement's conversion to a separate apartment. During the period of significance, this space was used for production and layout of the *Furies* newspaper and so is an important part of the Furies' association with this building. While the space has been reorganized and access to the main floor via an interior stair removed, the exposed brick walls and the historic front windows and front and rear doors still recall the utilitarian space as it existed in the 1970s. Period photographs showing the Furies working in the basement seem to confirm that the walls were unfinished and utilities were exposed at that time, though little else of the 1970s layout is apparent.

Despite these changes, the overall integrity of the property remains high with strong integrity of location, setting, design, materials, and workmanship lending to its robust sense of historical feeling and association with the period of significance. The house still reflects the Furies' use as a site of collective living and political and editorial meetings, which mostly took place in the main living areas of the first floor.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

X Previously listed in the National Register (fill in 1 through 6 below)

__ Not previously listed in the National Register (fill in **only** 4, 5, and 6 below)

1. NR #: 16000211
2. Date of listing: 5/2/2016
3. Level of significance: Local
4. Applicable National Register Criteria: A x B__ C__ D__
5. Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): A__ B__ C__ D__ E__ F__ G x
6. Areas of Significance: Social History

__ Previously Determined Eligible for the National Register: Date of determination:
__ Designated a National Historic Landmark: Date of designation:
__ Recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey: HABS No.
__ Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record: HAER No.
__ Recorded by Historic American Landscapes Survey: HALS No.

Location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office:

Graham, Rebecca, and Kisa Hooks. "Historic Context Statement for Washington's LGBTQ Resources." Washington, DC: District of Columbia Office of Planning, Historic Preservation Office, September 2019. https://planning.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/op/publication/attachments/Historic%20Context%20Statement%20for%20Washington%27s%20LGBTQ%20Resources_1.pdf.

Other State Agency:

Federal Agency:

Local Government:

University:

Other (Specify Repository): The full run of the *Furies* newspaper has been digitized and is available through the *Independent Voices* database, produced by JSTOR. Issues are also available through the Rainbow History Project Collection at the DC Historical Society.

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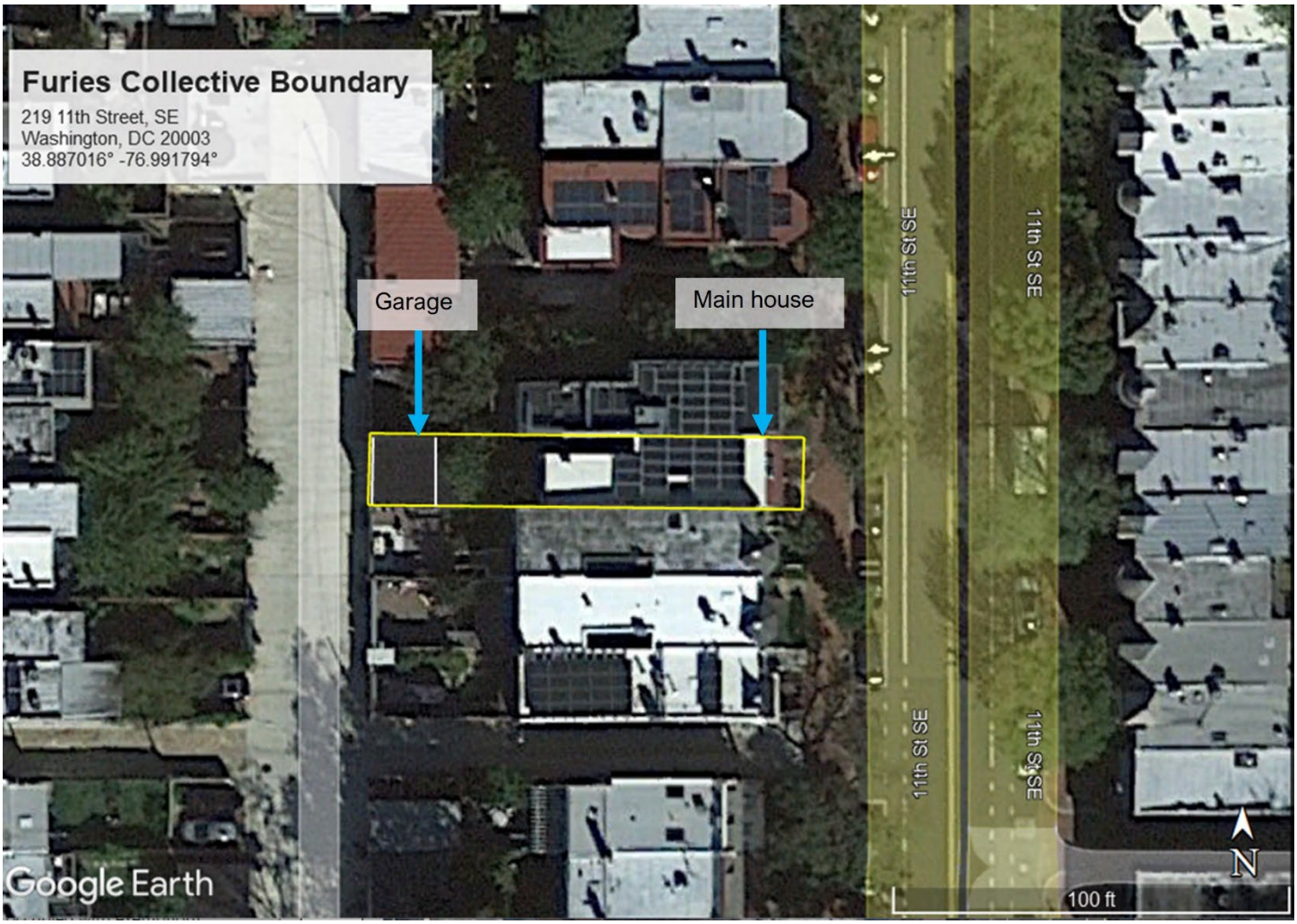
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MAPS



Map 1: Location Map.



Map 2: Boundary and resource map showing main house and garage locations.

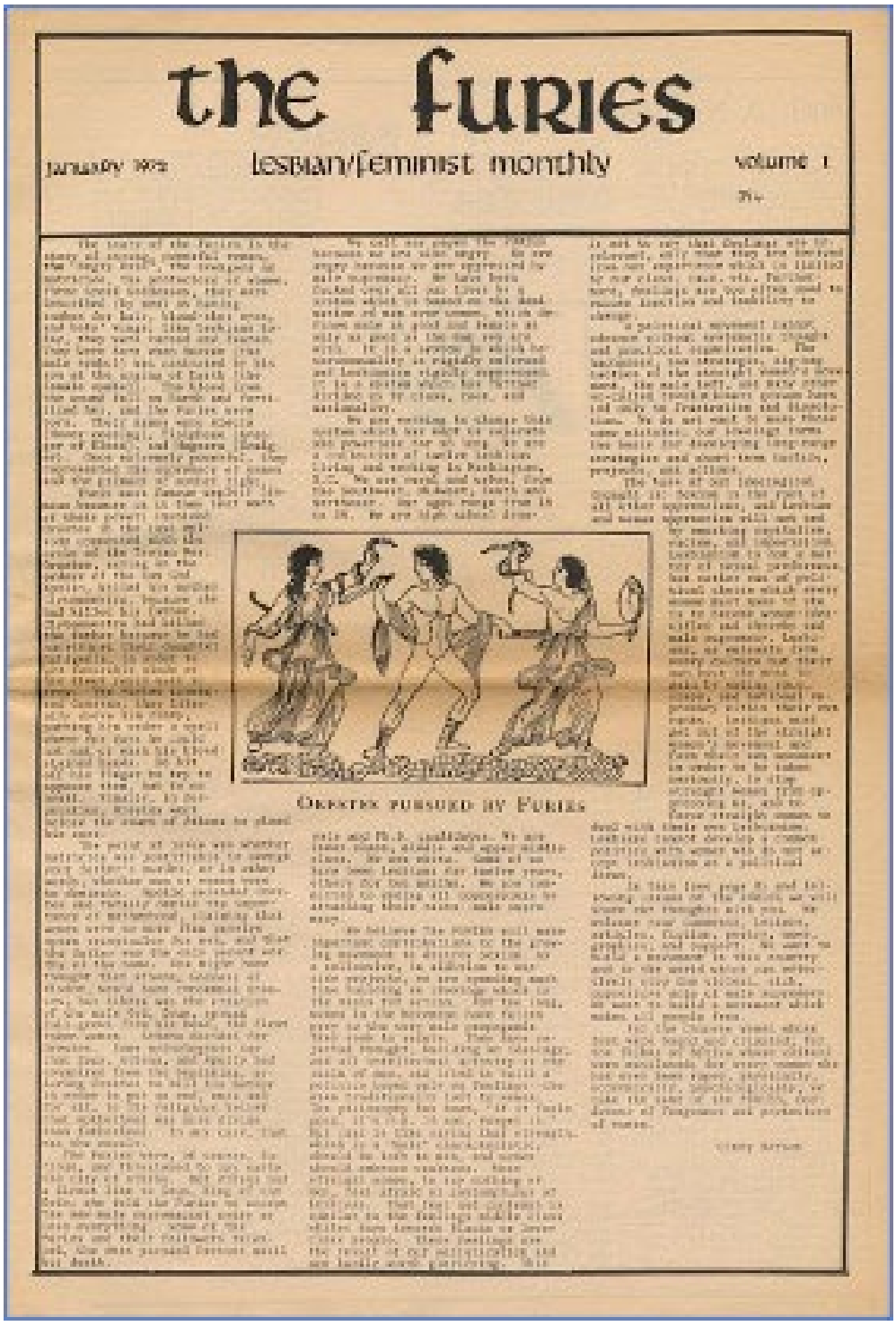
HISTORIC IMAGES



Figure 1: Historic photograph of Furies members packing a newspaper issue for shipping. Left to right: Ginny Berson, Susan Baker (not a member of the collective), Coletta Reid (standing), Rita Mae Brown, and Lee Schwing. Picture taken in the basement of 219 11th Street, SE by Joan E. Biren. Used with permission.



Figure 2: Historic photograph of Furies members laying out the newspaper (or possibly the special issue of *Motive*). Left to right: Lee Schwing, Tash Dellinger Peterson, Ginny Berson, and Jennifer Woodul. Picture taken in the basement of the property by Sharon Deevey. Used with permission.



the furies

january 1972 lesbian/feminist monthly volume 1

ORESTES PURSUED BY FURIES

Figure 3: Front page of the first issue of the *Furies* newspaper.

Photo List

Location: 219 11th Street, SE, Washington, DC
Date: April 2022
Photographer: Susan Ferentinos (except where noted)

Photo 1
East Elevation (front). Camera facing west.

Photo 2
East Elevation (front), showing poured concrete porch columns and balusters and basement patio. Camera facing west.

Photo 3
Rear (west) exterior ell, showing rear basement entrance and first floor dining room window. Camera facing east.

Photo 4
West (rear) elevation, showing rear addition and back stairs. Camera facing southeast.

Photo 5
Rear courtyard and one-story garage. Camera facing southwest.

Photo 6
Interior front hallway, showing stairway to the second floor, entrance to the living room (on right) and rear addition's windows in the background. Camera facing west. (Photographer: Kathryn Smith)

Photo 7
Interior, living room. Camera facing east. (Photographer: Kathryn Smith)

Photo 8
Interior, kitchen addition, with back deck and garage in background. Note the remains of the original brick rear wall, to the right. Camera facing west.

Photo 9
Interior, second-floor hallway, showing newel post, skylight, upstairs woodwork, transoms. Note the poster for the NPS LGBTQ Heritage Initiative, depicting the Furies Collective, upper poster. Camera facing east. (Photographer: Kathryn Smith)

Photo 10
Interior, basement apartment showing the west wall with historic entrance door and windows. Camera facing west. (Photographer: Kathryn Smith)

CURRENT PHOTOGRAPHS



Photo 1 of 10

East Elevation (front). Camera facing west.



Photo 2 of 10

East Elevation (front), showing poured concrete porch columns and balusters and basement patio. Camera facing west.



Photo 3 of 10

Rear (west) exterior ell, showing rear basement entrance and first floor dining room window. Camera facing east.



Photo 4 of 10

West (rear) elevation, showing rear addition and back stairs. Camera facing southeast.

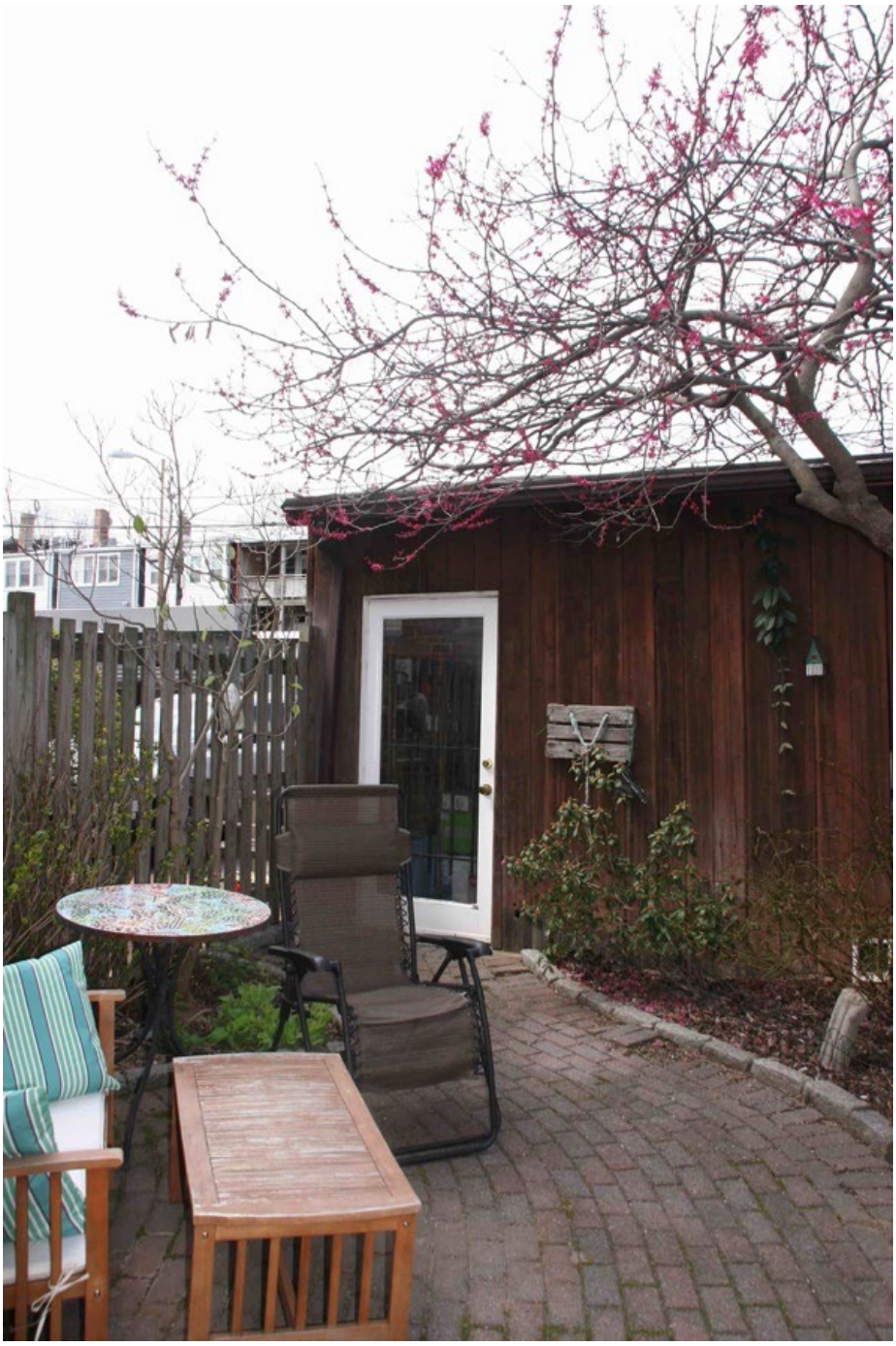


Photo 5 of 10

Rear courtyard and one-story garage. Camera facing southwest.



Photo 6 of 10

Interior front hallway, showing stairway to the second floor, entrance to the living room (on right) and rear addition's windows in the background. Camera facing west.

(Photographer: Kathryn Smith)



Photo 7 of 10

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(Photographer: Kathryn Smith)



Photo 8 of 10

Interior, kitchen addition, with back deck and garage in background. Note the remains of the original brick rear wall, to the right. Camera facing west.



Photo 9 of 10

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Photo 10 of 10

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