

Janet Sass McDermott Papers
1968-2020
Preliminary Finding Aid

Creator: Janet Sass McDermott

Extent: 5.5 linear feet (5 boxes + oversized items)

Language: English

Repository: Women and Leadership Archives, Loyola University Chicago. Please contact WLArchives@luc.edu regarding use.

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions: Restricted folders marked in container list. See archivist for more information.

Usage Restrictions: Copyright for all materials created by Janet Sass McDermott in this collection has been transferred to the Women and Leadership Archives.

Preferred Citation: Identification of item, date of item, box #, folder #, Janet Sass McDermott Papers, Women and Leadership Archives, Loyola University Chicago.

Provenance: Materials were donated to the WLA in 2021 and 2022 by Janet Sass McDermott (WLA2021.15, WLA2022.11).

Processing Information: This collection is unprocessed. Information in the preliminary finding aid was gathered through an initial inventory. Preliminary finding aid created in 2024.

Biographical History

Janet Sass McDermott was born on March 13, 1947. She grew up in Cicero, a suburb of Chicago, Illinois, and graduated from J. Sterling Morton East High School in 1965. As a sophomore in college, McDermott transferred from a community college to Mundelein College, where she graduated in 1969 with her B.A. in History. While at Mundelein, McDermott served as the coeditor of *The Skyscraper*, the school's student newspaper.

After completing her undergraduate education, she took brief internships with various publishing and magazine companies. In the fall of 1969, McDermott enrolled in the graduate History program at SUNY Stony Brook for one semester, after which she worked briefly as a freelance writer.

Between 1973 and 1974, McDermott was active in Women Employed Chicago (WE) and was a member of the organization's Secretaries' Committee. WE was formed in April of 1973 during National Secretaries Week with two primary goals; to pressure employers into complying with equal opportunity legislation and to demand employers respect and properly compensate their women employees.

In 1975, McDermott began working for the California State Employees Association (CSEA), which later became SEIU Local 1000. She first acted as a field representative in Sacramento assigned to the clerical and allied employee’s occupational group. She also held positions as an Employee Relations Representative and a Clerical Organizer. McDermott left the CSEA in 1977.

In the years following her departure from CSEA, McDermott worked with AFSCME Local 2620, which represents health and social services professionals in California. In the mid-1980s, she worked as a labor representative for the California Nurses Association in Sacramento, where she was responsible for negotiating and servicing collective bargaining agreements.

Janet Sass McDermott married Christopher McDermott in 1976. They had three children: Molly, Katelin, and Michael.

Scope and Content

The Janet Sass McDermott papers consist of 5.5 linear feet of materials spanning the years 1968-2020. Materials include correspondence, resumes, books, press, promotional materials, articles, newspapers, and newsletters from different labor rights and women’s rights organizations. Subjects covered include labor organizing, women’s employment rights, feminism, equal pay, and women’s studies.

Subjects:

Labor Organizing
Women’s Rights
California State Employees Association
AFSCME
California Nurses Association
Women Employed Chicago

Box	Folder	Title	Dates
1	1	<i>Wonder Woman</i> , Introduction by Gloria Steinem, interpretive essay by Phyllis Chesler	1972
1	2	<i>Rights at Work: Pay Equity Reform and the Politics of Legal Mobilization</i> by Michael W. McCann	1994
1	3	<i>The New Nightingales: Hospital Workers, Unions, New Women’s Issues</i> by Patricia Cayo Sexton	1982
1	4	“The Emergence of Nursing as a Political Force,” published by the National League for Nursing	1979
1	5	<i>Against Our Will: Men, Women, and Rape</i> by Susan Brownmiller	1975
1	6	<i>Hospitals, Paternalism, and the Role of the Nurse</i> by Jo Ann Ashley	1976

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1	7	“The Working Woman’s Cookbook: Recipes for a Small Salary”	1975
1	8	16 unpublished articles in secretaries Job Dissatisfaction	1973, undated
1	9	28 “Crisis,” <i>Spare Rib</i>	1971-1973, 1976,
2	1	32 Affirmative Action Discrimination Complaints	1976
2	2	58 Special editions of <i>Ms.</i> Magazine, part 1	1977, 1982, 1987
2	3	58 Special editions of <i>Ms.</i> , <i>Time</i> , and <i>Spare Rib</i> , part 2	1972, 1979, 1991, 2002,
2	4	59 “The Female Studies as Joke Syndrome...”	undated
2	5	RESTRICTED	1975-1978, undated
2	6	64 Upward mobility in CA State Service & background, part 1	2000-2001, 2013-2014, undated
2	7	64 Upward mobility in CA State Service, part 2	2014-2017
2	8	[The Spokeswoman]	1977
2	9	31A (1) Background Comparable Worth Battles, part 1	1974-1981
2	10	31A (2) Comparable Worth Battles, part 2	1976-1977, 1981
2	11	31A (3) Comparable Worth Battles, part 3	1974-1977
2	12	31A (4) Comparable Worth Battles in California	1975-1976
2	13	31A (5) Strike for Comparable Worth San Jose, California	1981
2	14	31A (6) Hearings in Comparable Worth, California	1981-1982
2	15	31A (7) Private sector legal cases related to comparable worth	1975, 1980
2	16	31A (8) Articles, Newsletters, Papers on Comparable Worth	1976-1982, 2018, 2020, undated
2	17	31B (1) Background-Trade Routes My Role at CSEA	1976
2	18	31B (2) Trade Rates Strategy	1975-1977
2	19	31B (3) Trade Rates Proposals	1975-1978
2	20	31B (4) Clerical Classification Task Force	1976-1977, 1979
2	21	31B (5) Cleri-Cal State Employee Newspapers	1975-1978
2	22	31B (6) CSEA Flyers	1976-1977, undated
2	23	31B (7) CASE (Clerical and Allied Service Employees)	1975-1978
2	24	31B (8) 1989 Legue Decision	1989
2	25	31B (9) Demographics	1976, 1981, 2002

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2	26	40 Discrimination in Exam Process fighting systematic sexism—and a win!	1976-1977
3	1	“Sisterhood Is Blooming—Springtime Will Never Be the Same” poster [2 copies]	1972
3	2	“2 nd Congress to Unite Women” poster [2 copies]	undated
3	3	“Sisters” poster	undated
OS	1	“BA Is No Job Guarantee” Washington Post	1971
OS	2	“Women and Men” poster	undated
4	1	[Contents overview]	undated
4	2	25 1 <i>Life</i> Magazine Photo	1976
4	3	25A1 Secretaries’ Committee [meeting notes]	1974
4	4	25A2 Secretaries’ committee [Secretaries bill of rights, working condition testimony, handouts]	1970, 1973-1974
4	5	25B Firing of Arlene Nagy	1974
4	6	25C Internal Reports [handwritten notes]	1973-1974, undated
4	7	RESTRICTED	1974, undated
4	8	25E WE Research and Surveys	1973, 1979, undated
4	9	25F Affirmative Action/Discrimination	1973-1974
4	10	25G WE [Women Employed] Convention	1975
4	11	25H WE Fundraising/finance	1974, 1977
4	12	25J WE Flyers and Newsletters	1973-1974, 1977-1979, 1982-1983
4	13	25K Outside Press	1972-1978, 1980-1981
4	14	25L Janet’s “trying-to-bring-it-all-together” [WE critique]	undated
4	15	25M Fun Stuff [poem, songs, cartoons]	1973, undated
4	16	25N History of “typewriters” myths	1972, 1976
4	17	25O Personal letters and photos	1973-1975
4	18	25P 9 to 5, Boston	1974-1975, 1978
4	19	25Q Women Organized on Employment (WOE) San Francisco	1974-1980
4	20	25R Working women, Los Angeles and Cleveland	1979, 1981
4	21	<i>Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution</i> by Adrienne Rich	1976
4	22	<i>The Mother Knot</i> by Jane Lazarre	1976
4	23	<i>The Subtle Revolution: Women at Work</i> edited by Ralph E. Smith	1979
4	24	<i>Pink Collar Workers: Inside the World of Women’s Work</i> by Louise Kapp Howe	1977

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4	25	26 Presentations from Midwest Academy in Women's Movement	1975-1978
4	26	24 Letters between myself and Heather Booth	1973-1975
4	27	11 Background in female studies VI	1972, 1977-1979
4	28	12 Female studies VI	1972
4	29	13 Women's Studies Programs at US Colleges	1970-1972
5	1	Midwest Academy Organizing Handbook 1973 (1 of 4) [binder]	1973
5	2	Midwest Academy Organizing Handbook 1973 (2 of 4) [binder]	1973
5	3	Midwest Academy Organizing Handbook 1973 (3 of 4) [binder]	1973
5	4	Midwest Academy Organizing Handbook 1973 (4 of 4) [binder]	1973
5	5	"Bargaining for Equality: A Guide to Legal and Collective Bargaining Solutions for Workplace Problems that Particularly Affect Women" produced by the Women's Labor Project of the National Lawyers Guild	1981
5	6	<i>Not Servants, Not Machines: Office Workers Speak Out</i> by Jean Tepperman	1976
5	7	"We Hold These Rights: A Guide to Women's Rights and Responsibilities" produced by AFSCME	1980
5	8	"Today's Secretary" produced by Gregg/McGraw-Hill	1974
5	9	"Working Papers: Working Women, Marriage, and Retirement" produced by the President's Commission on Pension Policy	1980
5	10	29a. Spokeswoman (7/1974 to 12/1977) [1 of 2]	1974-1977
5	11	29a. Spokeswoman (7/1974 to 12/1977) [2 of 2]	1974-1977
5	12	29b. Spokeswoman (2/1978 to 12/1979) [1 of 2]	1978-1979
5	13	29b. Spokeswoman (2/1978 to 12/1979) [2 of 2]	1978-1979
5	14	29c Spokeswoman (1/1980 to 12/1981) [1 of 2]	1980-1981
5	15	29c Spokeswoman (1/1980 to 12/1981) [2 of 2]	1980-1981
5	16	10. Women in Labor Unions	undated
5	17	17. Women in the Labor Movement	1973
5	18	39. The Wilmar 8 Strike	1979, 1981

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5	19	33. Union W.A.G.E.	1976-1978, 1982
5	20	47. Race Against Time: Automation of the Office	1980
5	21	<i>Immaculate Deception: A New Look at Women and Childbirth in America</i> by Suzanne Arms	1975
5	22	<i>Our Mother's Daughters</i> by Judith Arcana	1979
5	23	[Loose Literature of Women's Issues]	1971-1973,
5	24	2 Token Learning-A study of women's higher education in America	1968
5	25	3 Toward a Female Liberation Movement	circa 1969
5	26	4 Motive-on the liberation	1969
5	27	5 Notes from the Second Year: Women's Liberation	1970
5	28	6 Notes from the Third Year: Women's Liberation	1971
5	29	14 Women and literature, annotated bibliography	1972
5	30	"Frontiers: a journal of women studies," University of Colorado	1978
5	31	<i>Our Bodies, Ourselves: A Book by and for Women</i> , by The Boston Women's Health Book Collective	1973
5	32	<i>Ourselves and Our Children: A Book by and for Parents</i> , by The Boston Women's Health Book Collective	1978