Women and Leadership Archives

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Loyola University Chicago

Margaret (Peggy) Roach Papers, 1945-2001

Creator: Roach, Margaret (Peggy), (1927 -)
Extent: 12 l ft.
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Administration Information

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Separations: 3 linear feet
See Also: Women and Leadership Archives-Mundelein Alumnae Files-Margaret Roach; " An Alley in Chicago –The Life and Legacy of Monsignor John J. Egan"-Commemorative Edition-Author-Marjorie Frisbie with an introduction and conclusion by Robert A. Ludwig-Sheed and Ward, 2002, originally published in 1991; University of Notre Dame Archives-Monsignor John J. Egan

Biography

Margaret (Peggy) Roach was born on the north side of Chicago, Illinois on May 16,1927 to James E. and Cecile Duffy Roach. Peggy once told a *Chicago Sun Times* reporter that she was known as Margaret only to the Social Security Administration. Peggy had three sisters and one brother and has always been a strong family person.

Graduating from St. Scholastica High School in 1945 Peggy registered at Mundelein College where she graduated in 1949. Peggy used her writing skills in working for the school paper. She was recognized for her leadership as student council president and for her volunteer activities. After graduation she had a variety of work experiences and in 1954 became the Executive Secretary of the Chicago Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women. There she recalls that she first met Monsignor John J. Egan when he stopped in her office to use her phone. During 1957-58 she did sales and promotion at St. Benet Book Shop. In 1958 Peggy returned to Mundelein College as Alumnae Director.

An important change in 1961 took Peggy as Administrative Assistant to the Catholic Interracial Council of Chicago. Moving to Washington D.C. in 1962 Peggy took the position of Social Action Secretary at the National Council of Catholic Women. There in 1963 she was active in organizing the National Conference on Religion and Race held in Chicago. The conference for the first time represented in the United States the formal cooperation of major faith bodies on a common moral social problem. Mathew Ahmann was the Conference Executive Secretary and in his introduction to the Conference published report gave special recognition and thanks to Peggy Roach. In a 1983 Chicago Sun Times article on the tenth anniversary of the Conference Ahmann is quoted as saying the conference in its first stages was strangling in red tape and Peggy

Roach rescued the idea. *The De Paulia News* in their 2001 article on Peggy's Brigid award noted that Peggy had played an instrumental role in organizing the Conference that marked Martin Luther King's first visit to Chicago.

Peggy was very active in civil rights legislation and was the NCCW representative to many groups. Among the groups were the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, National Conference on Religion and Race Continuation Committee, National Women's Committee on Civil Rights, Housing Conference, Citizen's Crusade Against Poverty, Women's Equal Pay Committee and National Catholic Social Action Conference. She worked with the National Conference of Jewish Women, Church Women United and National Council of Negro Women. She was national liaison NCCW representative to WICS (Women in Community Service) funded by the Office of Economic Opportunity She also planned and participated in 37 state NCCW leadership conferences. The 1963 NCCW Conference on Race-Challenge to Justice and Love-was based on the national Chicago meeting.

During her NCCW work Peggy was intensely involved with WIM (Wednesdays in Mississippi project). Sponsored by the National Council of Negro Women its original purpose was to build a bridge between Negro and white women. Participants worked as a team and Peggy led a team from Washington, D.C. from July 21 to the 23, 1964 to Jackson, Mississippi and her report is included in the WIM series.

In 1964 Peggy, also as a Board member of the National Catholic Conference for Interracial Justice, contributed planning assistance to the April 28 National Interreligious Convocation at Georgetown University with 4000 in attendance. The purpose was to show religious support for "congressional passage of a strong just and enforceable civil rights bill", The Catholic support stressed that the civil rights problem was a moral question.

In 1966 Peggy moved back to Chicago as Administrative Assistant at the NCCIJ. She also volunteered at Presentation parish where she assisted Msgr. Egan with secretarial tasks. From Sept. 1968 to Aug. 1970 Peggy worked at the Contract Buyers League in Chicago. She was secretary of the Gamaliel Foundation, established in Sept. 1968 "to aid exploited and underprivileged members of society to achieve economic, political and social stature". The first action of the Foundation was to organize the Contract Buyers League, which was a group of black home purchasers on the west and south sides of Chicago. The purpose was to seek renegotiation of unjust contracts under which homes had been purchased. Peggy served as office manager and secretary in CBL Lawndale (west side) office.

Still working with Msgr. Egan, Peggy moved with him to the University of Notre Dame in Aug. 1970 as Administrative Assistant for the Catholic Committee on Urban Ministry (CCUM). She was director from 1974-1976. In Jan. 1977 Peggy became Administrative Assistant to Egan at the Center for Pastoral and Social Ministry. Peggy was also Director of the Religious Leaders Program during this time. From Aug. 1978 to April 1983 she was Associate Director of the Center. During this time Peggy received two important awards. In 1975 she was awarded the St. Benedict Medal by St. Scholastica High School and in 1981 she received the Distinguished Alumna Award from Mundelein College.

In 1983 Peggy moved with Egan when he returned to Chicago as Director of the Archdiocesan Office of Human Relations and Ecumenism. In 1987 they moved to De Paul University where Egan headed the Community Affairs Office. In 1992 Egan organized a sixty-fifth birthday celebration for Peggy at Quigley Seminary where her friends had the opportunity to praise and applaud her. At the celebration Rev. Philip Murnion in his address said that perhaps Peggy epitomized the Martha spirituality of hospitality to all brothers and sisters on the journey. He added that she had shown it was possible to do justice as a work and not as an ideology.

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When Peggy was at DePaul she received the Brigid Award and the De Paulia paper described Roach along with Egan as "leading the Coalition to Reform Payday Loans, a project involving payday loan businesses found mostly in poor neighborhoods".

Msgr. Egan after an illness died at age eighty-four on May 19, 2001. At the funeral liturgy in Holy Name Cathedral for Egan an unusual recognition of Peggy occurred. Eugene Kennedy reported this in a *Religious News* release on May 30, 2001. The following are excerpts from the release:

> "We have all had the experience of discovering something we were not looking for. ... Such an experience occurred in Chicago's Holy Name Cathedral, to which hundreds of people had come to attend the funeral of Monsignor Jack Egan referred to by the *Chicago Tribune* as the "conscience of the city".
>
> Everybody expected a feast of memory and celebration for a greatly loved priest. What was delivered to everyone, however, was an unexpected footnote, a grace note, so to speak, as in one of the discourses reference was made to Peggy Roach, Egan's secretary for thirty and more years.
>
> Those in the Cathedral recognized this unplanned moment, and like a rapidly cresting wave, surged from their seats and broke into applause to salute this remarkable woman who had never sought acclaim and had hardly ever gotten her name in the papers.
>
> The standing ovation recognized a treasure overlooked, carrying out a ministry of service...The applause was for Peggy Roach whose supportive presence in the shadow of his great work, like that of so many women in the Church, has been something everyone counted on even when her name did not roll in the credits."

In August 2001 Peggy retired from De Paul University. In a news item from De Paul University when Peggy retired after fifty years of fighting for equality and justice she was called "one of America's quiet treasures and one of the women pioneers of the civil rights movement." The item concluded by saying that Peggy will not retire but instead will continue to inspire all those who cross her path.

Among the collection papers is a card with Cardinal Suhard's famous statement:
"One cannot be a Saint and live the Gospel we preach without spending oneself to provide everyone with the housing, employment, goods, leisure, education, etc. without which life is no longer meaningful". Peggy's work and concerns were and are her answer to that Gospel challenge.

Scope and Content

The papers of Margaret Roach span the years 1955-2001 and document her work in social and racial justice issues. Voluminous files reflect Peggy's social justice convictions and activities. Her ability as an organizer and planner was well recognized and extensively used. During her years from 1962-1966 at the National Council of Catholic Women she planned and led many workshops and institutes nation-wide. Her political and social concerns are identified in the numerous news clippings and collections of papers and talks on racial and social justice issues, civil rights, ecumenism, economic problems, women, parish ministry and Vatican II. She was involved through her work with many laywomen and men, religious, clergy and bishops.

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Peggy's address at Mundelein College in 1981 when she received the Distinguished Alumna Award reflected her wide reading and her deep conviction of service to others. Her awards and the wide correspondence and congratulatory messages at the time of the awards are an indication of her wide friendships, the appreciation of co-workers and the respect she had from church and public leaders.

Series 1,Biographical Material, 1975-2001, box 1.This series contains resumes of work experiences, news clippings and pictures.

Series 2, National Council of Catholic Women, 1962-1966, **box 1,** contains correspondence, reports on NCCW conferences and institutes; NCCW papers and publications; Peggy's resignation and recommendations.

Series 3, Wednesdays in Mississippi (WIMS), 1964-65, box 2, contains organization of WIMS, team reports, Handbook and Newsletters

Series 4,Social and Justice Issues, 1955-2001, boxes 3-9, is arranged alphabetically. News clippings and papers from significant people identified with social and racial issues are included in this file. Of particular interest are files on the Catholic Committee on Urban Ministry (CCUM), Catholic Interracial Council, and National Conference for Interracial Justice, Contract Buyers League, and Msgr. John J. Egan.

Series 5,Publications and Material Significant for Peggy's Work and Writing, 1968-1976, boxes 10-11, contains a review of Peggy's co-edited book and volumes of Link and Connector both co-edited by Peggy while at CCUM. Reference material used by Peggy is also included in this series.

Series 6, Awards and Honors, 1945-2001, boxes 12-16, contains awards, pictures, and correspondence and many congratulatory letters and cards.

Series 7,Newspapers and Memorial Issues for John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, and Robert F. Kennedy, 1964-1968, box 17. Also included is news coverage of 1968 Chicago race riots.

Subjects

Ahmann, Mathew
Archdiocese of Chicago-Office of Human Relations and Ecumenism
Association of Chicago Priests
Black Power
Catholic Conference on Urban Ministry (CCUM)
Catholic Interracial Council
Chicago
Church and the Urban Racial Crisis
Civil Rights-National Interreligious Convocation
Contract Buyers League
De Paul University-Office of Community Relations
Egan, Msgr. John J.

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Hesburg, Theodore
Mundelein College
National Catholic Conference for Interracial Justice (NCCIJ)
National Conference on Religion and Race
National Council of Catholic Women
Priests Ministry
Race Relations
Roach, Margaret
Washington, D.C.
Wednesdays in Mississippi (WIMS)
University of Notre Dame-Center for Social and Pastoral Ministry

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Box	Folder	Title	Dates
		Series 1. Biographical Material, 1975-2001	
1	1	Resumes, news clips, Murnion talk, Friends	1975-2001
1	2	Picture-Mundelein College	1960
1	3	Picture-65th Birthday celebration	1992
		Series 2. National Council of Catholic Women, 1962-1966	
1	4	NCCW correspondence	1962-1965
1	5	NCCW-Institute on Race: Challenge to Justice and Love	1963
1	6	NCCW-Women and Civil Rights/Vista article/Wims Report	1963-1964
1	7	NCCW-WORD/Women in Community Action Service (WICS)/ Mealey address	1965-1966
1	8	NCCW-ECUMENICAL ENCOUNTERS INSTITUTE Program	1965
1	9	NCCW-Correspondence with Larry Rossini/ Daniel Mallette address	1965
1	10	NCCW with NCCM-GRASS ROOTS ECUMENICAL KIT	1966
1	11	NCCW-Resignation of Peggy Roach- and Recommendations to NCCW	1966
		SERIES 3 Wednesdays In Mississippi –(WIMS), 1962-1967	
2	1	WIMS-Race Relations in Mississippi	1962-1965
2	2	Peggy Roach's Jackson, MS. Team Report/ Frances Hennessy Correspondence	1964
2	3	WIMS correspondence/Catholics on teams	1964
2	4	WIMS team members Confidential Handbook	1964
2	5	WIMS organizational memos from Polly Cowan	1964
2	6	Reports from team members/News clips/Cowan report	1964
2	7	Workshops for WIMS Conference	1964
2	8	WIMS Atlanta meeting/Lists of team members/Marynoll Sisters	1964
3	1	WIMS-1964 Report/1965 Final Report	1964-1965
3	2	Newsletters /National Council of Negro Woman	1965
3	3	WIMS Newsletters	1966-67

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SERIES 4-SOCIAL AND JUSTICE ISSUES, 1955-2001

3	4	Addresses and talks by Archbishop Boyle, Daniel Berrigan, Philip Scharper, Harvey Cox, David Riesman	1965-66
3	5	Archdiocese of Chicago Clergy Conference on the Catholic Church and the Negro/ Papers by Rollins Lambert/Cardinal Albert Meyer	1960
3	6	Archdiocesan Conservation Council/ Edward Marciniak/Michael Schitz	1960,n.d.
3	7	Archdiocese of Chicago-Commission on Human Relations and Ecumenism	1966-1967
3	8	Association of Chicago Priests/ Position Papers/Project Equality	1967
3	9	Bishops' Committee on Pastoral Ministry/Position Paper/ John J. Egan/ Andrew Greeley news clips	1967
4	1	Black Power/News clippings/Martin L. King letter, Magazine article	1966-1968
4	2	Catholic Clergy Conference on the Interracial Apostolate—Conference on the Parish in the City 1966 COMMONWEAL issue/Archbishop John Dearden/Black Catholic Clergy Caucus statement	1968
4	3	Catholic Committee on Urban Ministry (CCUM)/ Correspondence/The Fourth Dimension	1976
4	4	Catholic Interracial Council/Lawndale meeting of Religious Leaders/News clippings	1958-1967
4	5	Chicago Conference of Laymen	1968
4	6	Church and the Urban Racial Crisis NCCIJ Program for Kansas City Meeting/Mathew Ahmann on Church and the Urban Negro/ Dearden, Robert Kennedy and D. Cantwell were Speakers	1967
4	7	Civil Disobedience	1964-1966
4	8	Civil Rights Legislation/Archbishop Albert Meyer, Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Act	1959-1966
4	9	Civil Rights-National Interreligious Convocation at Georgetown University, Washington, D.C. News clippings	1964
4	10	Dennis Clark—Correspondence/Papers/Letter to Archbishop Krol/"PRICE OF PROTEST"	1962-1963
5	1	Clergy and Laymen Concerned about Vietman	1967
5	2	Contract Buyers League-Gamaliel Foundation	1968

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		CBL Story/History/Jack McNamara/News clips	
5	3	Contract Buyers League	1968-1984
		Class Action Filing/ New World report/	
5	4	Peggy Roach correspondence	1974-81
		Congratulations/Peg gy Nealyn	
5	5	Peggy Roach correspondence/Singles Retreat	1976-1979
5	6	Peggy Roach correspondence/ Thank you notes for	1980-1984
		Presentations and talks by Peggy	
5	7	Detroit Archbishop Committee on Human Relations	1964-1968
		Archbishop John Dearden	
5	8	Egan, John J. (Msgr.)	1965-66
		Office of Urban Affairs/ Pastor of Presentation Parish/	
		Joseph Fichter S. J. America article	
5	9	Housing Integration/Open Housing Bill/	1961-1967
		Catholic Interracial Council/Archbishop John Cody/	
		Martin Luther King Jr.	
6	1	Inner City/ Lutheran Newsletter, The Girard Street	1964-68
		Project	
6	2	Moynihan, Patrick—THE NEGRO FAMILY	1965
6	3	National Association of Intergroup Relations	1964-67
6	4	National Catholic Conference for Interracial Justice	1963-1964
		(NCCIJ)—Correspondence /Leadership Conference on	
		Civil Rights, 1964/1963 Civil Rights March	
6	5	NCCIJ-Reports/Minutes of Board of Directors	1963-64
6	6	NCCIJ –Southern Field Services Program/Race	1963-64
		Relations	
6	7	NCCIJ-Correspondence/ S.Claire Marie, OSF/Margaret	1964-1966
		Traxler, SSND (S. M. Peter), University on Wheels	
7	1	NCCIJ-Education and race/ Prejudice	1964
7	2	NCCIJ-Board of Directors correspondence/Roach and	1964
		Ahmann correspondence/Member lists/1964 Civil	
		Rights Bill	
7	3	NCCIJ-Board of Directors Correspondence/ Parish and	1965-1966
		Inner City Conference	
7	4	NCCIJ-Project Equality/Minutes/Program Reports	1964-1968
7	5	NCCIJ-Study of Race Relations—A Teaching Unit by	1965
		S.Joann Carman, OSF	
8	1	National Conference on Religion and Race	1963-1983
		Report and Recommendations for action/Extension	
		report/ Highlights	

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8	2	National Council of Catholic Men The Parish and the Constitution on the Church / Program Kit/ Decree on the Laity	1965
8	3	Poverty- A Religious View/ The Other America /Michael Harrington/Challenge to Interracial Action	1963-1966
8	4	Poverty-War on Poverty/Economic Opportunity Act	1964
8	5	Priest's Ministry—Andrew Greeley/Archbishop John Dearden/ Ave Maria article "Silenced Priests"	1966-1968
8	6	Race Relations/ Racial Justice/The Negro in America	1955-1963
8	7	Race Relations/ Race Riots/National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders	1965-1968
8	8	Selma AL. Voting Rights March Congressional Record for April 27,1965/News clips	1965
9	1	Sisters of Charity, B.V.M. Vista magazine/Race Apostolate/Mother Mary Consolatrice B.V.M. address/Nuns in Selma	1965
9	2	Tutoring in Washington, D. C. /Literacy Workshop Certificate	1963-1966
9	3	United States Catholic Conference/ National Task Force on Urban Problems/Recommendations	1968
9	4	Vatican II-Social Action/ Laity/News clips/ Chicago Summer Biblical Institute	1966-1967

Series 5 Publications and Materials Significant for Peggy's work and writing, 1964-1982

10	1	The Church and the Urban Racial Crisis, Edited by Mathew Ahmann and Margaret Roach Papers delivered at NCCIJ 1967 meeting in Kansas City, Missouri	1967
10	2	Extension magazine review	1968
10	3	"Call to Action" Marynoll magazine-Women in Ministry issue	1982
10	4	LINK-Vols.1 and 2-Peggy Roach Associate Editor	1972-1974
10	5	Connector-Peggy Roach Associate Editor-published by CCUM	1974-1976
11	1	The Negro in American History-A Curriculum Resource for Secondary Schools-District of Columbia Public Schools	1964
11	2	The Voting Rights Act-U.S.Commission on Civil Rights -To Bear Witness-Selma to Montgomery	1965-1968

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11	3	Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders	March 1968
11	4	Supplemental Studies for the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders	July 1968
11	5	Vatican II-The Spirit of Renewal/A Short Course on Vatican II for Lay People/"Pacem in Terris" in Saturday Review, Decree on Ecumenism	1964-1967

Series 6 Awards and Honors, 1945-2001

12	1	Address in Honor of Jack Egan and Peggy Roach	n.d.
12	2	St. Scholastica High School Diploma / Mundelein College Degree	1945-1949
12	3	Notre Dame Magazine 1979-20 Great Notre Dame People/ Congratulatory notes	1979
12	4	Grenville Clark Award-University of Notre Dame/Father Ted Hesburg letter/N.D. Report	1983
12	5	Catholic Theological Union-Board of Trustees Resolution of Gratitude	1992
12	6	Celebration of Peggy's sixty-fifth birthday/ NCR card/City of Chicago Proclamation	1992
12	7	Brigid Award Program/ Address/Congratulatory notes	2001
12	8	Brigid Award photos	2001
12	9	Lewis University Honorary Degree Program/Address	2001
13	1	Medal of St. Benedict Award/St.Scholastica High School/Photos	1975
13	2	Medal of St.Benedict Award-Event/Program/Address/Correspondence	1974-1975
13	3	Medal of St.Benedict Award/Congratulatory notes/	1975
13	4	Mundelein College Distinguished Alumna Award Correspondence /Mundelein Now issues/1980 Jubilee Convocation	1978-1981
13	5	Mundelein College Distinguished Alumna Award Award Citation/Peggy Roach address/Program	1980-1981
13	6	Mundelein College Distinguished Alumna Award Congratulatory notes	1981
13	7	Mundelein College DAA-Party celebration Msgr. Egan party April 4th/Hesburg letter	1981

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14	1	Mundelein College Distinguished Alumna Award	1981
14	2	University of Notre Dame Institute for Pastoral and Social Ministry Advisory Council Award	1983
14	3	Association of Chicago Priests Coordinating Board Award	1985
14	4	St. Thomas Seminary/Board of Trustees Award	1990
14	5	University of Notre Dame/Father Ted Hesburg	n.d.
15	1	Distinguished Service Award/Catholic Theological Union	1992
16	1	Association of Chicago Priests/Hillenbrand Award	1992
16	2	Apostolic Blessing/Pope John Paul II	1992
16	3	Grenville Clark Award-University of Notre Dame	1983
16	4	Lewis University Award-Framed	2001

SERIES 7-Newsapers and Memorial Issues on John Fitzgerald Kennedy/ Martin Luther King, Jr., and Robert Francis Kennedy/ Chicago Race Riots, 1964-1968

17	1	John Fitzgerald Kennedy Memorial Book/ Look magazine	1964
17	2	I Have A Dream-The story of Martin Luther King	1968
17	3	Collectors Edition-Martin Luther King Memorial	1968
17	4	Robert F. Kennedy-His Words and Ideas—Chicago Tribune Memorial issue	June 11,1968
17	5	Chicago Daily News Memorial issue/M L King	April 9, 1968
17	6	He Had A Dream-Martin Luther King-Chicago Sun Times-Special Memorial issue	April 21, 1968
17	7	Memorial section-Robert F. Kennedy-Chicago Daily News	June 10,1968
17	8	Memorial Supplement/Center Light, Greenwood, Ms./Martin Luther King	April 5,196
17	9	Newsweek Martin Luther King death	April 15,1968
17	10	Life Martin Luther King-Murder in Memphis	April 12, 1968

17	11	Time Martin Luther King assassination	April 12, 1968
17	12	Life The Negro and the Cities	March 8,1968
17	13	"Saint" Martin Luther King by John Cogley in Georgia Bulletin	April 18,1968
17	14	Martin Luther King-Milwaukee Catholic Herald Citizen	April 13, 1968
17	15	The Georgian-Martin Luther King//also item on Cardinal Bernardin elected Secretary for U.S. Catholic Bishops	April 1968
17	16	Chicago Catholic New World /Martin Luther King	April 1968
17	17	National Catholic Reporter-Martin Luther King	April 10,1968
17	18	Chicago Sunday Star-Martin Luther King-Death	April 7, 1968
17	19	Chicago Daily News-Robert F. Kennedy assassination	June 1968
17	20	Chicago Sun Times-Robert F. Kennedy	June 5,6,1968
17	21	Catholic Standard; Monitor; National Register—Robert F. Kennedy	June 1968
17	22	Chicago Sun Times-Army Troops Arrive/Curfew	April 7,1968
17	23	Chicago Daily News 9 Killed in Riots	April 6,1968
17	24	Chicago Sun Times Martin Luther King/Chicago Riots	April 5/12, 1968
17	25	Chicago Daily News –Chicago Riots	April 5-13, 1968

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