

Gretchen Leppke Papers,
1972-2004, n.d.

Creator: Gretchen Leppke (b. 1927 -)

Extent: 2.75 linear ft.

Location:

Processor: Laura McDowell, April 18, 2008

Administration Information

Access Restrictions: None.

Usage Restrictions: Copyright was transferred to the Women & Leadership Archives upon the donation of material. Copyright to secondary published works is retained by the original authors.

Preferred Citation: Loyola University Chicago. Women & Leadership Archives. Gretchen Leppke Papers. Box #, Folder #.

Provenance: The materials were donated to the Women & Leadership Archives by Gretchen Leppke on August 27, 2003, June 16, 2004, and July 6, 2004. Accessioned as WLA2004.17 and WLA2004.37. Material donated on August 27, 2003 was separated for the Women, Ministry, and the City records. Accessioned as WLA2003.21.

Separations: Less than .5 linear feet of duplicates and extraneous materials were removed and discarded.

See Also: Women, Ministry, and the City. WLA2003.21.

Biographical/Administrative History

Gretchen Buenger (Leppke) was born on September 26, 1927, one of two daughters of architect Edgar Walter Buenger and homemaker Gertrude Weber Buenger. Involved in several extracurricular activities, Buenger graduated from Rochester High School in 1945. Her numerous high school accolades included membership in the honor society, and election to vice president of the student council. Buenger was active at an early age in candy striping, the Walther League of the Lutheran Church, and Republican politics. Buenger enrolled in the University of Minnesota where she became involved in Gamma Delta (Lutheran student organization), All University Council, Mortar Board, and Amity Among Nations. In 1949, Buenger was awarded the Order of the Gopher, an honorary award for leadership. In the summer of 1949, she traveled to Sweden with Amity Among Nations, deciding to live and work in Sweden after the trip from August 1949 to June 1950.

In September, 1955, she married Delbert Max Leppke. Gretchen Leppke became a stay at home mom for nearly two decades, caring for her two children, Kevin and Karen. During this time, Leppke continued her involvement in charitable and political organizations such as the Lutheran Church, the Women's Republican Club, Cub Scouts, and the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, calling herself "a professional volunteer." Her church involvement increased in 1972 when Leppke joined the Lutheran Women's Caucus, the feminist branch of the Lutheran Church. At this time, Leppke also returned to school. She earned a Master of Arts in Urban Studies from

Loyola University Chicago in 1974 and a Master of Theological Studies from the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago in 1982. Leppke's enthusiasm in transitioning from her role as a

homemaker to one as a scholar and activist organizer was inspired by the feminist movement. Leppke credits Betty Freidan's book "The Feminine Mystique" as one important motivator. Her feminist ideology grew stronger as a student. "I was shocked. I remember one time storming around the halls wanting to burn down the library for some of the stuff I read there about the weaker sex," Leppke remarked.

Leppke served as national President of the Lutheran Women's Caucus from 1979-1985. She became the administrator of Women, Ministry, and the City from 1983-1987(8) and served on the organization's board until about 1993. Leppke also organized and ran the Women of Faith Resource Center from 1988-1994, an organization created after the conference "Women of Faith – Same Journey: Different Paths." In addition to church and feminist activism, Leppke briefly worked on a proposed book of essays about Lutheran women during the 1980s. Gretchen Leppke's intellectual and professional pursuits primarily included Lutheranism and feminism, both locally and globally.

Scope and Content

The original collection and addendum were consolidated and reprocessed to create The Gretchen Leppke Papers. This consolidation reduced redundancy and increased the level of access to the collection. These papers consist of four series and 3 subseries; they span from 1972 to 2004. The folders are arranged alphabetically within the series and folder contents are arranged chronologically.

Series 1: Autobiographical and Professional Information, 1974-2004, n.d., Box 1

Contains papers written by Leppke about her life, general correspondence about religion, academic papers from graduate school, and materials relating to her proposed book about Lutheran women.

Series 2: Women of Faith Resource Center, 1987-1995, n.d, Boxes 1-2

Contains the organizational papers of the Women of Faith Resource Center (called the Women's Place Resource Center beginning in 1994). Included are promotional materials, correspondence, membership lists, documents relating to conferences and public program planning, and board meeting agendas and minutes.

Series 3: Subject Files, 1972-2001, n.d., Boxes 3-5

Include secondary information relating to organizations Leppke belonged to. Secondary materials also include educational pamphlets. There are three subseries and each is arranged alphabetically.

Subseries 3A: General, Box 3, Subseries 3B: United Nations, Box 4, and Subseries 3C: Women and Religion, Box 5.

Series 4: Audiovisual material, 1987-1992, n.d., Box 6

Includes audio taped lectures on the subject of power and religion as well as numerous photographs of Leppke, the Women of Faith Resource Center, the Women's Place Resource Center, conferences, and public programs these organizations were involved in.

*Women and Leadership Archives
Ann Ida Gannon, BVM, Center for Women and Leadership
Loyola University Chicago*

Subjects:

Feminism

Global Women's Activism

The Lutheran Church

Women and the Church

Women of Faith Resource Center

Women and Leadership Archives
Ann Ida Gannon, BVM, Center for Women and Leadership
Loyola University Chicago

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Dates</u>
Series 1: Autobiographical and Professional Information, 1974-2004, n.d.			
1	1	Autobiographical Information	1980, 2003-2004
	2	General Correspondence	1978, 1991
	3	Academic Papers and Bible Study	n.d.
	4	Proposed Lutheran Women Book: Plans	1980, n.d.
	5	Proposed Lutheran Women Book: Correspondence	1974, 1979-1981, 1992, n.d.
	6	Proposed Lutheran Women Book: Research, Henrietta Lund	n.d.
Series 2: Women of Faith Resource Center, 1987-1995, n.d.			
	7	Board of Directors: Correspondence, Agendas, and Minutes (1 of 3)	1988-1989
	8	Board of Directors: Correspondence, Agendas, and Minutes (2 of 3)	1990-1994
	9	Board of Directors: Correspondence, Agendas, and Minutes (3 of 3)	n.d.
	10	“The Church and the Spirituality, Sexuality, and Socialization of Young Girls,” Report of the WOFRC	1993, n.d.
	11	Conference: “Women of Faith – Same Journey: Different Paths”	1986, n.d.
2	1	Conference and Public Programs: “Weaving Women’s Stories”	1991-1993, n.d.
	2	General Correspondence (1 of 3)	1987-1989
	3	General Correspondence (2 of 3)	1990-1994
	4	General Correspondence (3 of 3)	n.d.
	5	Membership Lists	1987, 1989, 1994, n.d.
	6	Organizational Information	1990-1992, n.d.
	7	Public Programs and WOFRC Promotional Materials, (1 of 3)	1988-1989
	8	Public Programs and WOFRC Promotional Materials, (2 of 3)	1990-1995
	9	Public Programs and WOFRC Promotional Materials, (3 of 3)	n.d.

Series 3: Subject Files
Subseries 3A: General

Women and Leadership Archives
Ann Ida Gannon, BVM, Center for Women and Leadership
Loyola University Chicago

3	1	Global Hunger	1977, 1979, 1985
	2	Global Women's Work and Gender Awareness	1979, 1985, 1989, 1995
	3	Liberation Theology	1972, 1980, 1982, n.d.
	4	Philippine Women	1985, n.d.
	5	The Sisterhood is Global Institute	1995-2000, n.d.
	6	Women's Roles, Rights, and Resources	1973-1995, n.d.

Subseries 3B: United Nations

4	1	Fourth World Conference on Women at Beijing (1 of 3)	1994-1996
	2	Fourth World Conference on Women at Beijing (2 of 3)	1995-1996, n.d.
	3	Fourth World Conference on Women at Beijing (3 of 3)	1987, 1993-1996
	4	Fourth World Conference on Women at Beijing, Correspondence	1995
	5	Nairobi Conference	1984-1986
	6	United Nations Decade for Women	1980-1994, n.d.
	7	UNIFEM	1994-1997

Subseries 3C: Women and Religion

5	1	Abortion and Reproductive Rights	
	2	The Community of Women and Men in the Church	1979-1981
	3	Gender Roles and Feminism in the Church	1980-1993, n.d.
	4	Inclusive Language	1972, 1985-1987, 1993, n.d.
	5	The Pentecost Partnership: Combatting Sexism	n.d.
	6	Surveys	1973, 1979, n.d.

Series 4: Audiovisual Material, 1987-1993, n.d.

6	1	Bettenhausen Lecture Tapes	n.d.
	2	Miscellaneous Photographs	1988, 2000-2001
	3	Negatives	1989
	4	Parliament of World Religions Photographs	1993
	5	Rush of a Mighty Wind Pentecost Celebration Photographs	n.d.
	6	Weaving Women's Stories Photographs	1991, n.d.
	7	Women of Faith Conference Pictures (1 of 2)	1986
	8	Women of Faith Conference Pictures (2 of 2)	1986
	9	Women of Faith Resource Center Founders Photographs	n.d.
	10	Women, Ministry and the City Photographs and Negatives	1992, 1994
	11	Women's Place Resource Center Photographs	1994