

***Dana McDermott Papers,
~ 1971-2018***

Preliminary Finding Aid

Creator: Dana McDermott

Extent: 3 linear feet

Language: English

Repository: Women and Leadership Archives, Loyola University Chicago

Administration Information

Access Restrictions: None

Usage Restrictions: Copyright for materials created by Dana McDermott was transferred to the Women and Leadership Archives.

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

Provenance: The materials were donated by Dana McDermott in 2018 (WLA2018.23).

Processing Information: This collection is unprocessed. Information in this preliminary finding aid was gathered through an initial inventory.

Separations: None

Biographical History

Dana R. McDermott is a psychologist, parenting educator, and emeritus associate professor at DePaul University. She was born April 5, 1945 in Chicago to parents Daniel Edward McDermott and Rose (Morsovillo) McDermott. She attended primarily Roman Catholic elementary schools in Chicago and Michigan City, Indiana and graduated from Mother McAuley Liberal Arts High School in 1963. After graduating, she joined the Missionary Sisters of St. Columban in Boston. She left the order after seven years to care for her two younger siblings and grandparents when her parents died.

She entered Loyola University Chicago in September 1967. McDermott graduated with honors magna cum laude in 1971 with a Bachelor of Science-Honors in Psychology. She continued her studies at Loyola in Social and Development Psychology, earning her MA in 1975 and PhD in 1977.

As a student, McDermott co-founded the student organization “Loyola Volunteers Interested in People,” later renamed “Volunteer Action Program,” to engage students in serving the neighboring community. She also joined the Volunteer Tutoring Project Advisory council and started a weekly seminar with neighborhood senior citizens and Loyola faculty and students. She fought to improve student volunteer programs at the university with better training, supervision, and evaluation. She worked at the Doyle Center and their language lab serving children with autism. In 1971, she was named Illinois Volunteer of the Year for Danny Thomas’s St. Jude’s Hospital in Memphis.

McDermott served on various committees of the Illinois Students for Voluntary Action, served for two years as President of the Loyola chapter of Psi Chi, the National Honors Society of Psychology, and was inducted into Alpha Sigma Nu, the National Jesuit Honor Society.

In 1973, McDermott married Daniel Edward Murphy. They had a son in 1975, a daughter in 1978, and a son in 1980. Daniel died in 2020.

McDermott was initially interested in studying children but was inspired to shift her graduate research to focus on aging men and women after the death of her grandparents. In 1982, she published the book *Options for a New Beginning: A Handbook for Midlife and Older women*, through the Illinois Commission on the Status of Women. During this period, she was President of the Illinois Chapter of the National Action Forum for Older Women, where she established the Center for Midlife Women at Mundelein College.

While completing her Ph.D, McDermott began her teaching career as an instructor in Loyola’s Department of Psychology. She became an Adjunct Professor in the School of Education in 1982 and a visiting Assistant Professor of Applied Psychology from 1987-1993. McDermott co-founded the Family Studies Program and she designed the Parent Education Certificate program. She served as Assistant Dean for the Water Tower Campus, College of Arts and Sciences and was an advisor to undergraduate and graduate students throughout her years at Loyola.

In 1987, McDermott became a Certified Family Life Educator through the National Council on Family Relations. She also completed training as a parent educator for Children through a Mailman Foundation Scholarship in 1989. In 1993, McDermott participated in a Russian/American professional exchange on parenting education held in Moscow.

McDermott left Loyola in 1999 and became a Lecturer in the Human Services Department at Kendall College in Chicago. In 2002 she joined the faculty of DePaul University as an Associate Professor in the School for New Learning, a program geared toward adult learners. She continued to teach there for over a decade, was tenured as an associate professor, and retired in 2014.

McDermott’s research covered the subjects of parenting education and support, parent-child relationships, the role of schools in child development, gender identity, transitions to adulthood, and aging. Through her research, she developed and implemented education programs for parents, K-12 schools, and parenting educators, and volunteered her time to teach parenting courses in the community. McDermott advocated for programs that taught parenting skills to young children to better prepare future parents and develop strong parent-child relationships in future generations. McDermott’s work has been published in the form of book chapters, papers, research reports, and

articles in peer-reviewed journals such as *Academic Exchange Quarterly*, *Child Welfare*, *Childhood Education*, *America's Family Support*, and more. In 2008, she published the textbook, *Developing caring relationships among parents, children, schools and communities*. She was also an editor for the book, *Special Issue: Parenting Education and Support: Advances in theory and research*, published in 2006.

McDermott continues to contribute to the profession by serving on committees of the National Parenting Education Network (NPEN) and providing professional development webinars for NPEN. She is a member of NPEN, Psychologists for Social Responsibility, Celtic Women International, Illinois and National Council on Family Relations, among other affiliations.

Scope and Content

The Dana McDermott Papers consist of 3 linear feet and roughly span the years 1971-2018. This collection is unprocessed so dates and descriptions are only estimations. Materials relate primarily to McDermott's research and career as a psychologist and educator, as well as her volunteer service to the community and international organizations. Materials also relate to her time as a student at Loyola University Chicago. The collection contains published and unpublished writings by McDermott including articles, essays, book chapters, research reports, student writings, and her thesis and dissertation. Other materials include research proposals, course evaluations, correspondence, presentations, diplomas, certificates, and course syllabi and planning materials.

Materials are arranged into these subjects:

- Loyola University Chicago: Teaching and Graduate Studies
- DePaul University Chicago: Teaching
- Syllabi for Courses Taught
- Course Evaluations and Other Evaluations
- Presentations/Theory
- Invited Articles/ Essays
- Research Reports
- Refereed Articles
- Chapters in Books
- Books
- VHS Tapes: The Caring Paradigm
- Work in Progress
- Research Proposals
- Service: School for New Learning
- Service: DePaul University
- Community Service
- Service to the Profession
- International Service