

C Neth, Mary C. (1954-2005), Papers, 1927-2004
4040 8 linear feet, 15 audio cassettes, 4 card files

This collection is available at The State Historical Society of Missouri. If you would like more information, please contact us at shsresearch@umsystem.edu.

INTRODUCTION

The professional papers of Mary C. Neth, created during her research of rural women's history of the Midwest and the history of American tap dance consists of research material, essays, newspaper clippings, photographs, conference materials, professional correspondence, and other papers. The collection also includes various documents related to the activities of the Rural Women's Studies Association, of which Neth was a founding member.

DONOR INFORMATION

The Mary C. Neth Papers were donated to the State Historical Society of Missouri by Midge Eisele on September 11, 2007 (Accession no. 6157). An addition to the collection was made by Ryan Stockwell on August 11, 2008.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Mary Carol Neth was born in Missouri in 1954. She studied at the University of Wisconsin and received her M.A. in history in 1980, and her Ph.D. in 1987. After working at the Smithsonian Institution, Virginia Polytechnic University, and American University in Washington D.C., Neth came to teach at the University of Missouri-Columbia in 1995 where she taught several courses, mostly on women's and gender studies.

Preserving the Family Farm, her study of women's farm work in the first half of the twentieth century, was published by Johns Hopkins University Press in 1995. In 1998, Neth helped found the Rural Women's Studies Association and was active in its affairs. She participated in various conferences about the history of rural Midwest women. For the last ten years of her life, she worked on a large project about her other major scholarly interest, a social and cultural history of tap dancing in America. Neth died of cancer on September 14, 2005.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Mary Neth Papers have been arranged into twelve series according to the type of document: **Professional Correspondence; Conference Papers; Rural Women's Studies Association Papers; Newspaper Clippings; Course Syllabi; Photographs; Grants and Proposals; Speeches; Research Material; Essays, Book Reviews, and Dissertations; Miscellaneous Papers; Card Files; and Audio Cassettes.**

The **Professional Correspondence** series contains letters Neth received from various academic institutions, historical organizations, and colleagues. The letters cover such topics as her research of rural women's history, her participation in different conferences, and letters of recommendation she wrote. The letters have been kept in their original order based on topic.

The **Conference Papers** series includes official papers and notes from various historical conferences in which Neth participated. The papers contain schedules, programs, proposals, Neth's notes, and correspondence related to the conferences. The documents have been arranged by conference name and chronological order therein.

The **Rural Women's Studies Association Papers** series contains papers related to Neth's membership in the RWSA. The papers include the articles of incorporation, lists of members, correspondence, newsletters, promotional material, and miscellaneous documents of the RWSA.

The **Newspaper Clippings** series contains clippings that Neth collected from various newspapers and magazines pertaining to her studies of rural Midwest history; advertising; historic sites in St. Louis, Kansas City, and Columbia; and various other topics. There are also newspaper pamphlets from 1927, 1942, and the 1970s about the women's rights movement. The documents have been arranged in chronological order.

The **Course Syllabi** series consists of papers related to Neth's teaching career at American University and the University of Missouri-Columbia. They include the syllabi of both her courses and the related courses of her colleagues, as well as lecture outlines.

The **Photographs** series contains photographs and photocopies of images Neth collected for her rural history research. There are photographs of different village communities in the Midwest, housing types, house interiors, rural families, and women at work.

The **Grants and Proposals** series contains documents related to Neth's applications for various grants and scholarships. The documents include correspondence with the respective organizations, applications, and proposals she wrote.

The **Speeches** series includes written drafts of various speeches Neth delivered at conferences, lectures, and meetings about the history of Midwest farm women.

The **Research Material** series is the largest series in the collection. It contains material Neth used for her research of the rural history of the Midwest, as well as the history of tap dance in America. The documents include articles written by other historians with Neth's comments, demographic studies, photocopies of farm diaries from the 1920s and 1930s, archival inventories and guides, excerpts from novels, oral history research material, advertisements, drafts and notes written by Neth, and other miscellaneous documents. The documents were arranged in folders by the creator according to the topic of the research they cover. Neth's original order has been preserved.

The **Essays, Book Reviews, and Dissertations** series includes articles and essays written by Neth. It also contains book reviews she wrote for various historical magazines, as well as reviews of her own works. The series also contains her M.A. dissertation, *For a "Suffering Fellow Creature" – Changing Religious Values in Popular Women's Fiction 1850-1870*.

The **Miscellaneous Papers** series contains Neth's financial records, articles, publication notes, applications, reports, proposal material and letters, as well as her notebooks on American history.

The **Card Files** series contains three alphabetic index card files and one file of bibliographic notes Neth created during her research.

The **Audio Cassettes** series includes recordings of interviews Neth conducted with Wisconsin farm women. Each interview produced multiple tapes, but not all the tapes are present in the collection.

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