

S0371 Hickey, Margaret A. (1902-1994)
Addenda, 1922-1978
77 Folders, 249 Photographs, 1 Videotape

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Margaret Hickey donated the material in this addenda to the Western Historical Manuscript Collection on April 10, 1979.

Margaret A. Hickey, lawyer, journalist, business- woman, public servant, and volunteer, was active in business and government affairs from the 1930's into the 1970's. An interest in women and their economic and social problems proved the motivating force behind much of her work. As a lawyer, she became conscious of the unique legal problems facing women; as a government advisor, she studied various facets of women's role in society; and as the founder and director of a secretarial school, she helped train educated women for careers in the labor force.

Although an advocate of equal rights for women, Margaret Hickey based her feminism on the belief that women were agreeably unique and different from men. She denounced feminists who denigrated the role of women in the home and the role of volunteer in society, for MH believed that women had a very powerful role to play as mother and wife. Moreover, MH called upon women to "drop the old cold war of the sexes" and enlist the support of men to help them overcome the tragic inequities in employment, education and politics. Until true equality was reached, she felt it was not wise for a woman to "throw away the advantages of her sex."

Margaret A. Hickey was born on March 14, 1902 in Kansas City, Missouri, the second daughter of Elizabeth Wynne and Charles L. Hickey. Elizabeth Wynne, prior to marriage, attended Liberty Women's College, a finishing school for young women, in Kansas City. She then moved to Paris to study music. While in Paris, Elizabeth Wynne met Charles Hickey, twenty years her senior, and at, the age of 30, married him. Charles Hickey, of Irish descent, had attended the University of Kansas where he acquired a classical education. Coming from a family of some means, he entered the Foreign Service and served at posts in Europe and the Ottoman Empire until World War I. The whole family accompanied him during his tours of duty. The Hickey's first daughter died in infancy, leaving Margaret the oldest of four children. Margaret Hickey recalled her childhood as a happy one. Her parents were devoted to each other and openly expressed their affections. Discipline, what little there was of it, was meted out by a governess, not her parents. From her father, Margaret acquired a love of reading. She learned to read at an early age and remained an avid reader all her life. From her mother came the notion of helping others, a belief characteristic of much of what MH did.

In 1914, the Hickeys moved back to the United States and settled in Kansas City, where MH attended Mt. Marty School. Prior to this time, MH did not attend a regular school. Mrs. Hickey herself tutored all of her children at home. Once back in the States, Elizabeth Hickey

took up the suffrage cause and interested her daughter in making placards, marching in parades, and campaigning for the vote. Her service in the suffrage movement heightened MH's interest in other social reforms and during the 1920's she worked for the peace movement.

Upon graduation, MH enrolled in college but dropped out in 1921 to take a job with the local newspaper, the Kansas City Star. As a reporter, she came into contact with many prominent business women involved in the National Federation of Business and Professional Women. This organization appealed to MH and she managed to convince these women that she was qualified to become a member. One woman in particular, Judge Florence Allen, so impressed MH that she decided to go to law school. In 1923 Margaret Hickey entered the University of Kansas City Law School (now part of the University of Missouri.) She made such good grades that in her sophomore year she pledged Kappa Beta Phi, the honorary legal sorority for women.

In law school Margaret Hickey encountered some instances of sex discrimination. Although qualifying for the debating team in her first year, she was discredited because of her sex. The next year however, after some vigorous campaigning, MH was selected for the team. Sexual discrimination was also evident in the classroom. One professor of criminal law requested that she not attend class on the days that he lectured on rape cases, as it was improper to discuss the subject in front of a "nice young woman."

In 1928 Margaret Hickey graduated from law school and passed her bar exams for the state of Missouri. Although several good firms in Kansas City and St. Louis offered her jobs, she, declined them, to go into private practice. That year MH moved to St. Louis to open her own office. The depression soon turned her practice into poverty law as potential clients turned into non-paying customers. During the depression Margaret Hickey was able to maintain her practice because her father's will provided her with a small trust fund, the income from which paid her living expenses for the next six years.

After moving to St. Louis, MH maintained her contacts with the Business and Professional Women's Club and began to do volunteer work for the YWCA and the Red Cross. She also joined a citizen's group concerned with the problems of the unemployed, particularly unemployed women. In 1931, Margaret Hickey convinced the YWCA to let her organize a class to help retrain unemployed women with previous business experience or a college education. Her program offered to these women counseling and guidance, some retraining and skill development, and placement advice. Margaret Hickey ran this program until 1933 when the federal government became interested in the program and took it over for the YWCA. On the advice of some friends and businessmen, MH decided to open up her own secretarial school. She borrowed some money from her mother and, established the Margaret Hickey School for Secretaries at Delmar and Skinker, St. Louis, in 1933. When the business proved a success, MH gave up her law career to devote full time to the school.

That same year Margaret Hickey met her future husband, Joseph T. Strubinger, during a Red Cross Fund drive. He was a widower, fourteen years older than she, and the senior partner of a law firm. He greatly impressed Margaret Hickey because he was one of the few men she had met genuinely interested in her as a person and her many activities. On October 20, 1935 they were married.

Among her many activities during the 1930's, MH served on an advisory committee to the Social Security Board and just prior to World War II, she worked on a committee considering women's problems for the Office of Emergency Planning, headed by General Knutson and Sidney Hillman. In this capacity she met Frances Perkins, Secretary of Labor, who later recommended MH for the Women's Advisory Committee of the War Manpower Commission in 1942. The WAC was set up by the War Manpower Commission to study the problems involved in recruiting five million women into the wartime economy. From 1942-1945 Margaret Hickey acted as chairman of this committee. At the same time she was an observer on the National Management Labor Committee. National prominence contributed to her election as president of the National Federation of Business and Professional Women. She served in this capacity from 1944-1946 and thereafter remained honorary president. As national president of BPW, and at the invitation of the State Department, Margaret Hickey attended the United Nations

San Francisco Conference in 1945. She worked with other prominent women on the human rights section of the U.N. Charter. The following year, MH joined the staff of the Ladies Home Journal as editor of Public Affairs. To fulfill her duties as editor, Margaret Hickey maintained an apartment in Philadelphia and commuted between there and her home in St. Louis. In 1953 she received the Ben Franklin award for distinguished public service journalism.

By 1950, MH had gained such national prominence that she was in great demand as a public lecturer, both nationally and internationally. For the next 25 years, she maintained a vigorous lecture schedule as her correspondence in Series Three illustrates. Margaret Hickey's other accomplishments are so numerous that they are best listed under the two categories of government positions and volunteer activities.

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1. Central Business College, Log and Brochure, 1922
2. Kansas City School of Law, Syllabus and Exams, 1924-1929
3. General Correspondence, 1943-1976
4. Correspondence, Gould, Beatrice, 1968-1970
5. Correspondence, McCoy, Doris Lee, 1971-1977
6. Correspondence, Reading, Stella, (Lady Reading)1952-1963
7. Correspondence, Reading, Stella, (Lady Reading)1964-1971
8. Transcript of Discussion between Lady Reading and Margaret Hickey on Volunteering, 1966

9. Speeches, American Youth Foundation and Camp Miniwanca, 1957
10. Speeches, Business and Professional Women's Clubs, 1944-1977
11. Speeches, *Ladies Home Journal*, nd
12. Speeches, Red Cross, 1953-1961
13. Leadership Speech, nd
14. Status of Women Speeches, nd
15. Speeches Before Various Organizations, 1955-1966
16. Speeches, Commencements, 1962-1976
17. Speeches, Untitled and Undated
18. *Our Mobile Families*, Article for Department of Health Education and Welfare, 1961
19. Article, *Women in the Performing Arts*, nd
20. Women's Advisory Committee, Correspondence, 1943-1945
21. Women's Advisory Committee, Minutes, 1945
22. Women's Advisory Committee, Statements and Resolutions, 1942-1945
23. Women's Advisory Committee, History and Appraisal, 1944-1945
24. War Manpower Commission, Minutes, 1943-1944
25. War Manpower Commission, Weekly Activities Reports, 1943
26. War Manpower Commission, Memoranda, 1942-1945
27. War Manpower Commission, Press Releases, 1942-1943
28. War Manpower Commission, Press Releases, 1943-1944
29. Reports on the Mobilization of British Women, 1943-1944
30. War Manpower Commission, Background Material, 1942-1943
31. War Manpower Commission, Publications, 1943-1947
32. War Manpower Commission, Publications, 1942-1944
33. War Department, Women's Interests Section, Bulletins, 1944

34. President's Commission on the Status of Women, Meeting Materials, 1962

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35. President's Commission on the Status of Women, Correspondence, 1962

36. President's Commission on the Status of Women, Media and Publications, 1962

37. President' Commission on the Status of Women, Report Materials, 1962

38. President's Commission on the Status of Women, Meeting Material, 1962

39. President's Commission on the Status of Women, 14th Amendment Study, 1962

40. President's Commission on the Status of Women, Correspondence, 1963

41. President's Commission on the Status of Women, Reports, Statements, 1963

42. Citizens Advisory Council on the Status of Women, Correspondence, 1964

43. Citizens Advisory Council on the Status of Women, Minutes, Reports, 1962-1964

44. Citizens Advisory Council on the Status of Women, Memos, 1963-1964

45. American Youth Foundation, 1941, 1973-1977

46. Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Conference, 1946

47. Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Fourth Congress, 1947

48. Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Seminar on the United Nations, 1950

49. Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Ford Foundation Correspondence, 1954-1955

50. Business and Professional Women's Clubs, 1968-1975

51. Business and Professional Women's Clubs, 1976-1978

52. Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Drafts, 1975-1976

53. International Council on Social Welfare, 1972-1974

54. *Ladies Home Journal*, 1954-1976

55. *Ladies Home Journal*, Conference on Food, 1962

56. National Endowment for the Arts, Report, 1973

57. Red Cross, 1956-1958, 1969-1972

58. Red Cross, 1973-1974
59. Rockefeller Brothers Fund, 1953-1969
60. State Department, German Cultural Exchange, 1949-1950
61. State Department, International Development Advisory Board, 1950-1951
62. State Department, International Educational Exchange Program, 1954
63. State Department, Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid, 1970-1975
64. State Department, Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid, Transcript, 1974
65. India Trip, 1952
66. South American Trip, 1962
67. Quality of Life Conference, 1970
68. LIVE Conference, 1970

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69. Newsclippings, 1943-1977
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Videotape: V371.1 The American University Agency for International Development, Program #252: Margaret Hickey, Advisory Committee on Foreign Aid; Dr. Dorothy I. Height, President, National Council of Negro Women; UPI reporter David Anderson; Jessie Stearns, Stearns News Service; Program Host, Michael J. Marlow. "For broadcast, January 21, 1976 or thereafter." 3/4 inch tape

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4 Phonograph Records

Margaret Hickey, 7/6/46

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