

**S0465 Roudebush, Dorothy C. (1912-)
Papers, 1959-1982
39 Folders**

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Dorothy Coleman Roudebush, chairperson of the Citizens' Committee For Family Planning Through Public Health Services (1963-1968), donated her papers to the Western Historical Manuscript Collection at the University of Missouri-St. Louis on March 16, 1988.

Born in St. Louis on March 4, 1912, Roudebush received an A.B. in English and Theater from Vassar College in 1932, a bachelor's in journalism from the University of Missouri in 1934, and an M.A. in Counseling from Washington University in 1968. She held positions as a guidance counselor, publicity director, and English teacher on the faculty of John Burroughs School in St. Louis from 1954 to 1965. Roudebush worked as a counselor at Lindenwood College in St. Charles, Missouri, from 1963 to 1970.

In 1963 social worker Julian Hall suggested to Planned Parenthood that it form a citizens' group to make family planning services available to St. Louis families through area public health institutions. Dorothy Roudebush, a long-time member of Planned Parenthood, helped organize the Citizens' Committee for Family Planning Through Public Health Services in February 1964. She served as the committee's chairperson until the group disbanded in 1968.

The Citizens' Committee sought endorsements to provide birth control clinics in city and county health facilities from individuals, civic and religious groups, as well as city and county officials. Although endorsements came from the Urban League, the Metropolitan Church Federation, the Ethical Society, the St. Louis Rabbinical Association, and the United Church Women of St. Louis, the group failed to convince public officials to add family planning to its public health services.

Family planning clinics did not become a part of St. Louis public health service until after the federal government made "War on Poverty" funds available in 1965. The Citizens' Committee worked with the St. Louis Human Development Corporation to establish and ensure the implementation of family planning programs. Once it accomplished its work, the Citizens' Committee disbanded. A Family Planning Task Force formed shortly thereafter to continue monitoring the area's resources, facilities, and expansion of family planning services. Roudebush served first as secretary and later as the chairperson of the Family Planning Task Force group until 1971.

In December 1969, Roudebush helped found the Committee for Legal Abortion in Missouri and served as its president. The group launched a drive to persuade the state legislature to liberalize the state's 1835 law forbidding abortions. A bill designed to repeal the law in 1971, sponsored by Representative DeVerne Calloway, remained in committee. Before a similar measure could be introduced in 1973, the U. S. Supreme Court's Roe vs. Wade decision legalized abortion nationwide.

Other organizations and groups in which Roudebush took an active role included: the University City League of Women Voters; the League of Women Voters of St. Louis; the St. Louis chapter of the United Nations Association; and the Commission on the Ministry of the Diocese of Missouri. Roudebush served as president of the League of Women Voters of St. Louis from 1941 to 1943.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Dorothy Roudebush Papers document her activities as an advocate of family planning. The collection consists of three series: 1) Citizens' Committee for Family Planning Through Public Health Services, 1959-1969; 2) Committee for Legal Abortion in Missouri, 1962-1982; and 3) Family Planning Task Force, 1956-1971.

Series 1 documents the work of the Citizens' Committee for Family Planning Through Public Health Services in attempting to establish birth control clinics at the public health departments and hospitals in St. Louis and St. Louis County. The series contains correspondence soliciting support from St. Louis Mayor Raymond Tucker; St. Louis County Supervisor Lawrence Roos; St. Louis City Hospital Commissioner, Frank Gilmore; Cardinal Ritter; Episcopal Bishop George Cadigan; and area physicians. The series also includes the June 17, 1965 proposal to St. Louis' Human Development Corporation for birth control programs to be included in the HDC request for federal "War on Poverty" funds.

Series 2 reflects the activities of Dorothy Roudebush and the Committee for Legal Abortion in Missouri to persuade the state legislature to pass a law allowing abortions to be performed in Missouri. Folder 30 contains Roudebush's testimony before the Senate Sub-Committee investigating the proposed right-to-life amendments in 1974. The series also includes speeches made by Roudebush to civic groups, schools, and organizations on birth control and the need for legalized abortion.

Series 3 contains correspondence, memos, newsclippings, and minutes documenting the efforts of the Family Planning Task Force to study the resources and facilities available for family planning in the St. Louis area prior to expanding them with federal funds. The series also includes a Planned Parenthood- sponsored meeting and a conference with Missouri Governor John Dalton in 1963.

Material on the United Nations Association's Conference on Waters of the World (April 1978) was placed in collection SL#446, the United Nations Association of the USA, St. Louis Section Records. Folder 79 contains the Waters of the World Conference material.

Collections SL#111, SL#112, SL#195, SL#197, and SL#449 contain related information on family planning, abortion, and birth control clinics.

SERIES DESCRIPTION

SERIES 1 - CITIZENS' COMMITTEE FOR FAMILY PLANNING THROUGH PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES, 1959-1969, FOLDERS 1-8

Arranged alphabetically. Includes correspondence, a xeroxed copy of a correspondence scrapbook, endorsement and membership lists, a history, notices, minutes, press releases,

resolutions, statements, and a proposal to St. Louis' Human Development Corporation.

**SERIES 2 - COMMITTEE FOR LEGAL ABORTION IN MISSOURI, 1962-1982,
FOLDERS 19-30**

In alphabetical order. Contains correspondence, notes, newsclippings, press releases, resolutions, statements, statistics, speeches, and Roudebush's 1974 testimony before a Senate Sub-Committee against a right-to-life amendment to the Constitution.

SERIES 3 - FAMILY PLANNING TASK FORCE, 1956-1971, FOLDERS 31-39

Arranged alphabetically. Correspondence, memos, minutes, newsclippings, and notes constitute folders 31-36. Planned Parenthood-sponsored meetings and a conference with Missouri's Governor John Dalton in 1963 are in folders 37-39.

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4. Correspondence with St. Louis officials, 1964-1965
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6. Department of Health and Hospitals, St. Louis City, 1964
7. Division of Public Health and Hospitals, St. Louis County, 1964
8. Endorsement List, 1964
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11. Minutes, 1963-1964, 1969
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13. Press Release, February 19, 1964
14. Proposal to St. Louis Human Development Corporation, June 17, 1965

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