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University of Miami Special Collections

1300 Memorial Drive

Coral Gables

FL

United States

33146

Telephone: (305) 284-3247

Fax: (305) 284-4027

Email: asc.library@miami.edu

<https://library.miami.edu/specialcollections/>

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Murrell, Ethel E. Papers

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Summary information

Repository:	University of Miami Special Collections
Title:	Murrell, Ethel E. Papers
ID:	ASM0142
Date:	1946-1953 (date of creation)
Date:	1946-1953 (date of creation)
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Language:	English
Dates of creation, revision and deletion:	

Administrative history / Biographical sketch

Note

Ethel E. Murrell, a lawyer, writer and lecturer, campaigned for the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment. After graduating from the University of Miami Law School in 1934, Murrell opened a Miami law firm, and maintained her practice while travelling frequently to lecture on historical, religious, and feminist topics. During the 1940's, Murrell headed the Married Women's Law Committee of the Florida State Bar Association. The Association drafted and sponsored the Married Women's Act of 1943. Murrell defended the Act before the Florida Supreme Court in 1944 and succeeded in having the constitutionality of the law upheld on all points.

Murrell also participated in a drive for the re-drafting of the Florida constitution and was named a member of the Dade County Bar Association Constitutional Committee. She presented a resolution to the Bar calling for the inclusion of a phrase which would make men and women equal before the law. A dedicated member of the National Woman's Party (NWP), Murrell held the position of Chairwoman in 1952.

Murrell, however, resigned one year later as a result of rivalries for leadership and the group's departure from the exclusive goal of the Equal Rights Amendment.

In addition to her political activities, Murrell wrote newspaper columns, magazine articles, college law textbooks and books of poetry which were published in the United States, Europe and the Far East.

Scope and content

The Ethel E. Murrell Papers document the activities of the National Woman's Party (NWP) under her leadership from 1952-53. The files include correspondence, newsletters and other materials with other women's organizations including the General Federation of Women's Clubs, the World Woman's Party,

the American Woman's Foundation, and the American Woman's Council. The papers document the cooperative efforts of these groups in working for the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, including articles written from 1938 to 1953 publicizing the Amendment.

Charters, minutes, speeches, press releases, resolutions, and correspondence dated 1946-53 detail Murrell's efforts as a lawyer, writer and political organizer. The files also highlight NWP attempts to promote its agenda. The papers are significant as a record of activity during the 1940's and 1950's, years considered by many as a period of decline between the two larger feminist movements of the early twentieth century and the 1960's. The records also include references to cold war anticommunism. One letter of resignation, for example, dated June 17, 1953 expressed a sentiment characteristic of several members: "...I wondered...if the 'pinkos' had not taken over. I certainly do not want to be connected with any organization that does not stand for good Americanism."

Notes

Title notes

Restrictions on access

This collection is open for research.

Conditions governing use

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Other notes

- **Publication status:** Published
- **Description identifier:** ArchonInternalCollectionID:647

Access points

- General Federation of Women's Clubs
- National Woman's Party
- World Woman's Party
- Charters (documentary form)
- Letters (documentary form)
- Minutes (documentary form)
- Newspapers (documentary form)
- Scores (documentary form)
- Periodicals (documentary form)
- Photographs (documentary form)
- Press releases (documentary form)

- Civil rights -- United States -- History -- 20th century (subject)
 - Equal rights amendments (subject)
 - Women -- Education (Higher) -- United States -- History (subject)
 - Women's rights -- United States -- History -- 20th century (subject)
-

Series descriptions

Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
id380637	File -			1