

Dayton Women Working

MS – 129

Wright State University  
Department of Special Collections and Archives

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## Introduction

Records of Dayton Women Working were accessioned into the Wright State University Department of Archives and Special Collections on two different occasions. Barbara Hill and Suby Seay donated materials in September, 1982, and Noreen Wilhelm, one of the organization's directors, donated her records in February of 1983.

The papers in this collection date from 1974-1983 and fill 4 Hollinger boxes and 45 file folders. The collection is arranged into five series as follows:

- Series 1: Administrative and Financial Papers
- Series 2: Publicity and Publications
- Series 3: Programs and Projects
- Series 4: Affiliate Organizations
- Series 5: Audio Materials

There are no restrictions on the use of these records.

### Brief Historical Sketch

Dayton Women Working (DWW) was founded in April, 1975 by a small group of Dayton-area office workers concerned with insuring equal employment opportunities for both women and minorities, and with raising women's consciousness about their importance in the workplace.

During its six years in Dayton, DWW grew to over 200 active members, held regular membership meetings, maintained an office and a small paid staff, published a newsletter, and engaged in a wide range of public activities. Among its activities were advocacy for women filing discrimination suits against their employers, individual and group job counseling, monitoring and publishing reports of discriminatory employment practices of selected Dayton businesses, and the generation of many educational and social activities for working women.

Dayton Working Women was also affiliated with two national network organizations of women office workers, the National Women's Employment Project and Working Women.

DWW closed its office and ceased operations in late 1980.

## Scope and Content

Spanning the years 1974-1983, the records in the Dayton Women Working Collection provide an excellent source of materials for research relating to working women, sex and race discrimination in employment, women's political organizing, and the women's movement in Dayton during the late 1970's.

The papers in the collection are arranged into five record groups or series. Series 1, Administrative and Financial Papers, contains executive committee and general membership meeting minutes (1979-1980), meeting agendas (1979-1980), a copy of the bylaws and articles of incorporation, a membership log-in book (1980), and organizational papers outlining tasks for various members and officers. A file of progress reports provides a monthly narrative, for 1976-1978, of Dayton Women Working (DWW) activities, projected plans, and programs. These reports were prepared by Sherrie Holmes, one of DWW's founders and its first director. The files of Noreen Wilhelm, who also served as director, and Suby Seay who served as recorder, contain various working papers, correspondence, and memos relating to their tenure in office.

Financial records include reports and balance sheets for 1977-1980, and fundraising files consist of various grant proposals prepared by DWW as well as information on funding sources. The final item in Series 1 is an extensive mailing list card file (box 2) which contains over 600 names of members, organizations, and individuals interested in DWW's activities.

Series 2, Publicity and Publications, contains a file of flyers, broadsides, and announcements sent to members and the press. The Dayton Women Working Newsletter, published from 1976-1980, gives information on activities and membership as well as reporting news pertinent to working women. A file of news clippings shows the extent of local newspaper coverage generated by DWW from 1977-1980. The Working Women's Shopping Guide to Dayton was published in 1979 by DWW and sold as a fundraiser.

The files in series 3 document several of DWW's public programs and projects. Included are materials pertaining to legal rights, wages, age discrimination, Jane Fonda's visit to Dayton, women in construction, and a complaint charging Dayton Power and Light Company with discrimination. The most important papers in this series deal with DWW's 2-year study of race and sex discrimination in the hiring and promotion practiced of three of Dayton's largest commercial banks. Materials include correspondence, research papers, survey forms, and a report of findings published in 1978.

Series 4, Affiliate Organizations, contains material related to DWW's membership in the National Women's Employment Project (1976-1979) and Women Working, National Association of Office Workers (1979-1980). Both these groups were national coalitions of organizations like DWW who joined together to share resources, attract funding, and lobby for the enforcement and enactment of better equal employment opportunity legislation. Included in this series are minutes, correspondence, memos, joint fundraising proposals, and policy papers. Some subjects covered are affirmative action, networking,

legislative research, lobbying efforts, federal and state agency monitoring, fundraising, and internal organization.

The audio materials in Series 5 consist of tape recordings of two public hearings: one, conducted by Dayton Women Working and concerning a new directive that federal and state agencies cooperate in the filing of discrimination complaints, and the other, conducted by Cleveland Women Working and concerning age discrimination in employment. Both hearings were held in February 1980. The final item in this series is the typed transcript of an interview with Sherrie Holmes which took place in June of 1983. This interview is informative about the impetus for founding DWW, its early organization and membership, the banking study, and fundraising activities. The interview also contains Ms. Holmes' insights about Dayton Women Working's successes, failures, and the reasons for its demise.

All the materials in this collection are arranged chronologically within each file folder.

Container Description

| Box  | File | Description   | Date      |
|--|------|---|-----------|
| <b>Series I: Administrative and Financial Papers</b> |      |   |           |
| 1  | 1    | Executive Committee Meetings                        | 1979-1980 |
|  | 2    | General Membership Meetings                         | 1979-1980 |
|  | 3    | Meeting Agendas                                     | 1979-1980 |
|  | 4    | Bylaws  | 1979      |
|  | 5    | Organizational Papers                               | 1979      |
|  | 6    | Articles of Incorporation                           | 1979      |
|  | 7    | Membership Log-in Book                              | 1980      |
|  | 8    | Progress Report                                     | 1976-1978 |
|  | 9    | Anti-discrimination Agencies                        | n.d.      |
|  | 10   | Community Resources File                            | n.d.      |
|  | 11   | Noreen Wilhelm File                                 | 1974-1980 |
|  | 12   | Suby Seay File                                      | n.d.      |
|  | 13   | Financial Records                                   | 1977-1980 |
|  | 14   | Fundraising Sources                                 | 1978-1979 |
|  | 15   | Archdiocese of Cincinnati                           | 1979      |
|  | 16   | Miami Presbytery                                    | 1977-1979 |
|  | 17   | The Youth Project                                   | 1976-1980 |
|  | 18   | Dayton and Cleveland Women Working                  | 1975-1977 |
|  | 19   | Vista   | 1977-1979 |
| 2  | 1    | Mailing list card file                              | n.d.      |
| <b>Series II: Publicity and Publication</b>          |      |   |           |
| 3  | 1    | Announcements and Broadsides                        | 1977-1980 |
|  | 2    | <u>Dayton Women Working Newsletter</u>              | 1976-1980 |
|  | 3    | Newspaper Clippings                                 | 1977-1980 |
|  | 4    | <u>Working Women's Shoppers Guide to Dayton</u>     | 1979      |
|  | 5    | <u>Temple of the Holy Typewriter</u> by Wencke Bild | 1975      |
| <b>Series III: Programs and Projects</b>             |      |   |           |
| 3  | 6    | "Know Your Legal Rights" Workshop                   | 1979      |
|  | 7    | "Getting a Raise" Workshop                          | 1979      |
|  | 8    | "How to Start a Group in Your City" Resource Kit    | n.d.      |
|  | 9    | Department of Labor Consultation                    | 1979      |
|  | 10   | Age Discrimination                                  | 1979-1980 |
|  | 11   | Jane Fonda Event                                    | 1979      |
|  | 12   | Dayton Power and Light Complaint                    | 1979-1980 |

|   |    |  |           |
|---|----|--|-----------|
| 3 | 13 | <u>Employment Discrimination in Dayton's Three Largest Banks: A Dayton Women Working Study</u> | 1978      |
|   | 14 | Correspondence, Banking Study  | 1977-1980 |
|   | 15 | Banking Industry Research  | n.d.      |
|   | 16 | Women in Construction  | 1977-1979 |
|   |    | <b>Series IV: Affiliate Organization</b>   |           |
|   |    | National Women's Employment Project  |           |
| 4 | 1  | Minutes  | 1977-1979 |
|   | 2  | Correspondence and Memos   | 1976-1978 |
|   | 3  | Policy Comments  | 1977-1978 |
|   | 4  | Funding Proposals  | 1977-1979 |
|   | 5  | Working Women Bylaws   | 1979      |
|   | 6  | Working Women Correspondence and Memos   | 1979-1980 |
|   | 7  | Working Women EEOC/Age Program   | 1979-1980 |
|   |    | <b>Series V: Audio Materials</b>   |           |
| 4 | 8  | Recording of Public Hearing by DWW: EEOC/OCRC Cooperation on the Filing of Discrimination (1)  | Feb. 1980 |
|   | 9  | Recording of Public Hearing by CWW: Age Discrimination (2)                                     | Feb. 1980 |
|   | 10 | Oral Interview with Sherrie Holmes   | June 1983 |