Guide to the Lynn M. Osen Papers

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Lynn M. Osen papers
Date: 1952-2000,
Date (bulk): bulk 1969-1995
Collection Number: MS-R130
Creator: Osen, Lynn M.
Extent: 0.8 linear feet (2 boxes)
Languages: The collection is in English.
Repository: University of California, Irvine. Library. Special Collections and Archives.
Irvine, California 92623-9557

Abstract: This collection comprises the papers of Lynn Moses Osen, who helped develop the Women's Studies program at the University of California, Irvine and actively spoke on behalf of women's education. The papers document Osen's teaching career at the University of California, Irvine and her speaking engagements at high schools, colleges, workshops, churches, and women's events throughout Southern California. The collection includes correspondence, awards, academic papers, resumés, course proposals and syllabi, clippings, fliers, and a signed copy of Osen's book, *Women in Mathematics* (1974).

Access
The collection is open for research.

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Preferred Citation

For the benefit of current and future researchers, please cite any additional information about sources consulted in this collection, including permanent URLs, item or folder descriptions, and box/folder locations.

Acquisition Information

Processing History

Biography
Author and lecturer Lynn Moses Osen was an energetic spokesperson for women's rights throughout Southern California in the latter half of the 20th century. She actively participated in many professional and community organizations including the Orange County League of Women Voters and the Orange County Commission on the Status of Women. As an instructor at the University of California, Irvine (UCI), Osen was instrumental in the development of the Women's Opportunities Center and the Women's Studies Program and taught courses in mathematics, statistics, psychology, and women's issues. During World War II young Lynn Moses received the U.S. Navy Department's Civilian Service Award for her original work in systems analysis. She continued working for the Navy after she married Don Osen in 1950 at the age of 30. In the 1960s and 1970s, Osen earned bachelor's and master's degrees in psychology.

Osen was known for her tireless efforts to promote women's equal education and employment. She was a driving force behind the establishment of the Orange County League of Women Voters in 1957 and was later the founding chairperson of the Orange County Commission on the Status of Women. She also served as head of the speakers' bureau for the National Organization for Women (NOW) in Orange County.

In addition to her work in female psychology, Osen was an accomplished statistician and mathematician and a member of the American Association of Women in Mathematics. Combining her interests in women’s studies and mathematics, Osen wrote a well-received paper entitled "The Feminine Mathtique" (1971) and a widely translated book, *Women in Mathematics* (1974). She described the "feminine mathtique" as a myth that "encourages the notion that to enjoy mathematics in its many forms is to be, in some obscure way, at variance with one's womanhood" (Osen, 1974, p. 11); during her lifetime Osen devoted much of her time and energy to dispelling that myth among her contemporaries. To this end she designed and taught courses at UCI and presented workshops and lectures for various colleges, high schools, businesses, churches, and women's organizations throughout Southern California.
Osen's interests and activities expanded beyond women's issues to include memberships in organizations such as the Newport Harbor Art Museum, Orange County Museum of Art, California State Central Committee, Author's Guild (Author's League of America), Mental Health Advisory Board of Orange County, and the Western Psychological Association. Osen also contributed articles to Architectural Digest, Psychonomic Science, Rangefinder Magazine, Los Angeles Times Magazine, Mathematics Newsletter, and Reader's Digest.

In later years, Osen spent time traveling and writing; she contributed articles to magazines such as Asia, China Tourism Press, and Hong Kong Tatler. Osen continued to live in Laguna Beach, California and participate in women's organizations and the local Orange County community until her death in 2003.

Biography/Organization History

1920 November 13
Born in Alabama. (Father: William B. Moses.)

1945
Received U.S. Navy Department Civilian Service Award for original work in systems analysis.

1950 May 20
Married Donald Shotwell Osen.

1950-1954
Supervised Statistics Division, Industrial Relations Department, U.S. Navy.

1954
Gave birth to son, Frank Sanford Osen.

1957
Obtained charter and organized first Orange County chapter of the League of Women Voters.

1958
Volunteer for State Central Committee, Democratic Party.

1958-1959
Attended the University of California, Berkeley.

1961-1965
Vice President of Osen-Ojeda Development Corporation.

1966
Received Bachelor of Science in Psychology from the University of California, Irvine.

1968
Received Master of Science in Psychology from California State University, Fullerton; thesis title: Reciprocal Bibliographical Citations of Ten Psychological Journals.

1969-1977
Planned, coordinated, and taught Women's Studies courses at the University of California, Irvine.

1970
Published Multi-Dimensional Scaling (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press).

1971
Published The Feminine Mathtique (KNOW, INC.).

1972
Named "Outstanding Alumna," University of California.

1974
Published Women in Mathematics (MIT Press).

1974

1985
September
Named one of Dawn Magazine's "Women of Achievement."

2003 September 01
Died.


Collection Scope and Content Summary

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Although Osen was an active member of feminist and civic organizations throughout Orange County, California, the papers do not reflect these memberships or activities.

Collection Arrangement

This collection is arranged alphabetically by folder title.

Separation Note

Materials concerning Osen's research on female pirates and her travel writings on the Orient were not retained.

Indexing Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

Subjects

Osen, Lynn M. -- Archives.

University of California, Irvine -- Curricula.
University of California, Irvine -- Women's Studies Program -- Archives.
University of California, Irvine -- Archives.
Feminism -- United States -- 20th century.
Women's studies -- United States -- 20th century.
Women -- Education -- United States -- 20th century.
Women mathematicians -- California -- Irvine.
California -- Archives.

Genres and Formats of Materials
Letters -- California -- Orange County -- Irvine -- 20th century.
Clippings -- California -- Orange County -- Irvine -- 20th century.
Ephemera -- 20th century.
Fliers (Printed matter) -- California -- Orange County -- Irvine -- 20th century.

Occupations
Mathematicians.

Titles
Women in mathematics.

| Box : Folder 1 : 1 | Academic papers |
| Box : Folder 1 : 2 | Master's thesis 1969 |
| Box : Folder 1 : 3 | Transcripts and master's degree 1952 1965-1969 |
| Box : Folder 1 : 6 | Awards, resumés and biographical information undated |
| Box : Folder 1 : 7 | Correspondence |
| Box : Folder 1 : 8 | Personal 1994 undated |
| Box : Folder 1 : 10 | Program and course proposals |
| Box : Folder 1 : 11 | Planned by Osen at UCI 1969-1975 undated |
| Box : Folder 2 : 1 | Planned by other colleges 1969-1970 |
| Box : Folder 2 : 2 | Presentations and speaking engagements |
| Box : Folder 2 : 5 | Undated undated |
| Box : Folder 2 : 6 | Women in Mathematics |
| Box : Folder 2 : 8 | Correspondence |
| Box : Folder 2 : 9 | General 1970-1997 undated |
| Box : Folder 2 : 10 | Concerning rights and permissions 1971 1973 1991 undated |
| Box : Folder 2 : 11 | Concerning royalties 1982-1996 |
| Box : Folder 2 : 12 | Concerning translations 1975-1977 undated |
| Box : Folder 2 : 14 | Notes and references 1975 undated |
| Box : Folder 2 : 15 | Signed copy 1974 |