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Descriptive Summary

Identifier  ICU.SPCL.REIDMG

Title  Reid, Margaret G. Papers

Date  1904-1990

Size  30.5 linear feet (54 boxes)

Repository  Special Collections Research Center
University of Chicago Library
1100 East 57th Street
Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.

Abstract  Margaret Gilpin Reid (1896-1991) was a Professor of Home Economics and Economics at the University of Chicago between 1951 and 1961. Reid was one of the first economists to theorize the economic contributions of non-market activities such as housework. Her work during the 1930s, which argued the household was a site of production as well as consumption, has been cited as an important forerunner to the "New Home Economics" of the 1960s. This collection contains Reid's research data and drafts of her books and papers. It also contains cards, clippings, professional and personal correspondence, and writings by other scholars. Material spans 1904-1990, concentrated in the 1930s through the early 1980s.

Information on Use

Access

The collection is open for research.

Citation

When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Reid, Margaret G. Papers, [Box #, Folder #], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

Biographical Note

Margaret Gilpin Reid (1896-1991) was an economist whose research interests centered on household production and consumption, and later on the relationships between health, income, and productivity. Her work on the importance of non-market activities such as housework is considered to have anticipated "New Home Economics" in the 1960s.

Reid was born in Canada and completed a degree in Home Economics at the University of Manitoba in 1921. She received her PhD from the University of Chicago in 1931. She taught briefly at Connecticut College, moving on to Iowa State College (Iowa State University) where
she taught and researched until 1945. Her first book, Economics of Household Production, was published in 1934. Reid, like her PhD advisor Hazel Kyrk, sought to theorize the productive contribution made by domestic activities within the household. She drew much of her data from experimental agricultural stations in the Midwest. Her attention to labour skills and technologies applied in the home led her to conclude that the household was not only a site of consumption, but of production. Feminist economists would later argue that this work was underappreciated and even ignored, pointing out its similarity to Gary Becker’s 1965 Nobel-prize winning theory of time allocation.

Reid served as an economic advisor to the Division of Statistical Standards during 1943 and 1944. She moved permanently to Washington the following year, where she served as the Head of Family Economics for the Department of Agriculture. She returned to academia in 1948, taking up a position in economics at the University of Chicago, Urbana-Champaign. She was also a member of the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities, reporting on price inflation and family budgets to its Committee on Postwar Agricultural Policy. Reid’s tenure at Iowa State and at UIUC involved her in controversies about academic freedom: in Iowa, faculty chafed at the dairy lobby’s control over the administration, while in Illinois a series of resignations protested the administration’s removal of a popular Dean.

In 1951 Reid returned to the University of Chicago as a Professor of Home Economics and Economics. Although she became emeritus in 1961, she continued to research and write until her death in 1991. Her work at Chicago brought her in contact with economists such as Theodore W. Schultz (a colleague from Iowa) and Milton Friedman. She was an active member of Gary Becker’s Applications of Economics Workshop. In later years her work was preoccupied with the relationship between demographic factors such as age, race, health, and income, and productivity and consumption.

The American Economic Association named Reid a Distinguished Fellow in 1980, recognizing her as a "truly tireless colleague" whose contributions to the field were complemented by a "felicitous sense of humour." In 1996 Feminist Economics devoted an issue to recognizing her research, and scholarship continues to try to restore her status as a pioneering economist.

**Scope Note**

This collection is divided into three series:

Series I: Research and Writings, contains Reid's research data and notes. "Data" refers both to raw data and calculations. The series includes correspondence, as well as articles, conference papers, and drafts of papers and books authored by Reid and other scholars. Of note is material related to her early research into household production and consumption, drawn from agricultural stations and farm agencies during the 1930s and 1940s. Oversized data has been transferred to Series III. Material spans the 1937 through 1986.
Subseries II: Personal, contains address books, bills, cards, certificates, clippings, personal correspondence, prints, a passport, and a journal. It also contains photographs of Reid's friends and family. Oversized certificates have been transferred to Series III. Material spans 1904-1990.


Related Resources
The following related resources are located in the Department of Special Collections:

http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/spcl/select.html

Subject Headings
- Reid, Margaret G. (Margaret Gilpin), 1896-
- Consumption (Economics)
- Home economics
- Housing -- United States
- Income -- United States

INVENTORY
Series I: Research and Writings
This series contains Reid's research data and notes. "Data" refers both to raw data and calculations. The series includes articles, conference papers, and drafts of papers and books. These were authored by Reid unless otherwise noted. Some folders contain related correspondence and one includes teaching materials. Oversize material has been moved to Series III. Material is divided into five subseries:

Subseries 1: Household Economics, contains material related to Reid's early research and publication on household consumption and production. The bulk of the data and notes in this subseries were drawn from agricultural stations and collected by the Farm Security Administration (FSA) and Farmers' Home Administration (FAH); these loan agencies required farm families to keep detailed income and expenditure records during the 1930s and 1940s. These records are of particular note. Also of note are clippings and correspondence on the oleomargarine controversy at Iowa State College during 1943 and 1944, while Reid was faculty there. When faculty recommended wartime use of oleomargarine, the Iowa dairy lobby pressured the administration to change their publication. Some faculty resigned in protest. Material spans the 1930s-1979, primarily covering the period between 1937 and 1951. It is organized alphabetically by topic and title.

Subseries 2: Income and Consumption, covers the middle part of Reid’s career and documents her interest in the demographics of income and consumption, particularly in urban areas. This
subseries contains data, research notes, and book drafts. It spans 1950-1978 and is organized alphabetically by topic and title.

Subseries 3: Income and Health, contains data, notes, and drafts on the relationship between health, income, and productivity. These topics preoccupied Reid in the final stages of her career. Material spans 1964-1985, primarily covering the 1970s and early 1980s. It is organized alphabetically by topic and title.

Subseries 4: General, contains computations, data, and research notes on unidentified topics. It also contains indexed bibliographies. It includes Reid’s cv a list of her publications. Much of this material is undated, though it appears to cover the 1930s up to 1981.

Subseries 5: Writings by Others, contains articles and papers written by other scholars. Reports by government departments or other institutions are filed by topic along with other research material in the preceding subseries. These writings are organized by author and span the 1930s-1986.

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**Series II: Personal**

This series is divided into two subseries:

Subseries 1: Papers, contains address books, bills, cards, certificates, clippings, personal correspondence, prints, a passport, and a journal. Of note is the journal, which details faculty politics at Iowa State College circa 1943. Oversized certificates have been moved to Series III. Material spans 1933-1986.

Subseries 2: Photographs, contains photographs of Reid’s friends and family from 1904-1990.

Subseries 1: Papers

Box 52
Folder 1

Box 52
Folder 2
   American Economic Association, Distinguished Fellow Award and correspondence, 1979
Box 52
Folder 3
   Asian prints, undated
Box 52
Folder 4
   Bills, 1982-1984
Box 52
Folder 5
   Bowman, Mary Jean, Columbia University Teacher's College Medal, 1982
Box 52
Folder 6
   British passport, 1933
Box 52
Folder 7
Box 52
Folder 8
   Check, 1986
Box 52
Folder 9-12
   Christmas and birthday cards, 1980s, undated
Box 52
Folder 13-14
   Clippings, 1982, undated
Box 52
Folder 15
   Correspondence, 1980-1986
Box 52
Folder 16
   Gettysburg Address and Bill of Rights, copies, undated
Box 53
Folder 1
   Journal, circa 1943
Box 53
Folder 2
   Knight, Frank, memorial speech and papers, 1972
Box 53
Folder 3
   Legends of the North Carolina Coast, Pocahontas Wight Edmunds, with postcards, 1941
Box 53
Folder 4
   Musical recordings, list, undated
Box 53
Folder 5
Subseries 2: Photographs

Box 53
Folder 11
      Angus, Bonnie, and Anne, circa 1950s

Box 53
Folder 12
      Back garden, undated

Box 53
Folder 13
      Cabin in the snow, undated

Box 53
Folder 14
      Camping with the cats, undated

Box 53
Folder 15
      Christmas, 1980

Box 53
Folder 16
      Doris, undated

Box 53
Folder 17
      Family, undated

Box 53
Folder 18
      Family farmhouse, John Reid, undated

Box 53
Folder 19
      Family and friends, undated
Box 53
Folder 20
Gail gets called to the Ontario Bar, 1974

Box 53
Folder 21
Gerry, 1980

Box 53
Folder 22
Jack, 1983

Box 53
Folder 23
Margaret (Jr) with Jordan and Grahame, 1984-1986

Box 53
Folder 24
The McDonalds, 1973

Box 53
Folder 25
McFetridge, Peter Reid as a baby, undated

Box 53
Folder 26
McFetridge, Peter Reid marrying Jean, undated

Box 53
Folder 27
Norway, friends or family, 1982-1983

Box 53
Folder 28
Patricia, 1971

Box 53
Folder 29
Patricia and Ben’s wedding, undated, and with their children, 1984

Box 53
Folder 30
Plum, David, 1939

Box 53
Folder 31
Reid, John, and Sarah Clements, 1904

Box 53
Folder 32
Reid, Margaret, undated

Box 53
Folder 33
Reid, Margaret, and Jack, 1954

Box 53
Folder 34
Reid, Margaret, and Jack in Vancouver, 1981
Folder 35
   Reid, Margaret, and Jack at Beaconhill Lodge, 1984
Box 53
Folder 36
   Tree, 1990
Box 53
Folder 37
   Trinity Lodge, undated
Box 53
Folder 38
   Unidentified children, undated
Box 53
Folder 39
   Unidentified couple, 1957
Box 53
Folder 40
   Unidentified gatherings, undated
Box 53
Folder 41
   Unidentified man with President Reagan, undated
Box 53
Folder 42
   Unidentified people, 1948-1961
Box 53
Folder 43-44
   Unidentified people, undated
Box 53
Folder 45
   Van Haute, Stephanie, undated
Box 53
Folder 46
   Van Haute, Stephanie with David and Gillian, 1984
Box 53
Folder 47
   Wilcox, Bob and Margaret, 1942

Series III: Oversize
This series contains clippings, certificates, and research data. It includes a copy of Reid’s book Consumers and the Market. Newspaper clippings are in poor condition. They relate to controversies at the University of Illinois during Howard Bowen’s tenure as Dean of the College of Commerce and Business Administration. Bowen was forced to resign in 1950 and his departure was followed by a wave of resignations by economics faculty. A copy of resignation letter written by chair Everett E. Hagen can be found in Series I, Subseries 1, under "University of Illinois." This series covers 1938-1977.
Folder 1
   Alphabetical file, blank, undated
Box 54
Folder 2
   Computations, circa 1975
Box 54
Folder 3
   Data, 1961
Box 54
Folder 4-5
   Data, 1965-1974
Box 54
Folder 6
   Data, undated
Box 54
Folder 7
   Family expenditure and consumption, data, 1950-1970
Box 54
Folder 8
   Farm data, circa 1940s
Box 54
Folder 9
   University of Manitoba, Honourary Doctor of Laws, 1960
Box 54
Folder 10
   Who's Who of Intellectuals, Certificate of Inclusion, 1977
Box 55
Folder 1-4
   Champaign-Urbana Courier and University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign student newspapers, clippings, 1950-1951
Box 55
Folder 5
   Reid, Consumers and the Market, 1938