The Archive of Women in Theological Scholarship The Burke Library Union Theological Seminary

Finding Aid for

Suzanne Hiatt Papers, 1963-1998



Finding Aid prepared by: Leslie Reyman, October 2000

Summary Information

| Creator: | Suzanne Hiatt, 1936-2002 |
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| Title: | Suzanne Hiatt Papers |
| Inclusive dates: | 1963-1998 |
| Bulk dates: | 1975-1998 |
| Abstract: | John Seely Stone Professor of Homiletics and Pastoral Theology at the Episcopal Divinity School, Cambridge Massachusetts, and participant in the women's ordination movement in the Episcopal Church; correspondence, publications related to the "irregular" ordination of women clergy; material related her teaching career. |
| Size: | 27.0 linear feet |
| Storage: | Onsite storage |
| Repository: | The Burke Library |
| | Union Theological Seminary |
| | 3041 Broadway |
| | New York, NY 10027 |
| | Phone: 212-280-1502 |
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Administrative Information

 Provenance: Suzanne Hiatt donated her papers to the Archives of Women in Theological Scholarship in 2000
 Access restrictions: This collection is unrestricted
 Preferred Citation: item, folder title, box number, Suzanne Hiatt Papers, Archives of Women in Theological Scholarship, The Burke Library, Union Theological Seminary

Biography

The life of Suzanne Hiatt began on September 21, 1936 in Hartford, Connecticut. Hiatt was the first child born to Alfred and Frances (Radley) Hiatt. Hiatt had childhood dreams of entering the ministry, dismissed them as impossible, and then came to believe she had been called.

She graduated from high school in Edina, Minnesota and attended Wellesley College for one year before transferring to Radcliffe College, where she graduated cum laude with a degree in American History in 1958.

For two years after graduation, Hiatt worked as a Girl Scout professional in Hartford, Connecticut. During this time she also traveled in Europe and taught high school. In an interview with *The Philadelphia Inquirer* in August 1974, Hiatt told of a life-changing decision: "That fall (1961) was a real crossroads in my life. I felt a strong calling to the church but at the same time I was very aware that in terms of a career, a social work degree was clearly the best choice.' She remembered a particularly agonizing Wednesday evening. The seminary was to start the next morning, the social work school the following Monday and she still hadn't made up her mind. 'Finally I said to myself, "Sue, just go to the seminary tomorrow and if you don't like it you can always get to Minnesota by Monday. So on the morning of my 25th birthday in the midst of a hurricane, I walked into that seminary and there I stayed."

Hiatt received her Master of Divinity degree from the Episcopal Theological School (ETS, Boston) in 1964, and her Masters in Social Work from Boston University in 1965. In 1966 she returned to Minnesota working with the Presbyterian Church (US) in 'ghetto ministry.' After only a couple of months she returned to Philadelphia for a new position. "Suzanne Hiatt had arrived in Philadelphia in 1966 to work on public and private welfare issues," wrote Charles F. Pennimam, Jr. in his book *How We Came to Be: An Historical Account of the Church Without Walls, the First 25 Years* (1996). "She and a colleague soon saw the need for a lobbying organization of the poor if their voices were to be heard by people who could make a difference. The Welfare Rights Organization (WRO) began as an organization could make a difference and assisting the growth of whatever leadership might arise among them." She was fired from her job at the Health and Welfare Council and went back to working with the Episcopal Diocese of Philadelphia. "It seemed at the time that someone should work with suburban Episcopalians who might be organized for involvement in some special action. Sue Hiatt was hired as their Suburban Missioner. In the Philadelphia suburbs there were white people who were progressively realizing that more things needed to be changed and who wanted to help those changes come about. Sue was almost immediately effective in quietly gathering, focusing, and stimulating an increased sensitivity to social issues especially among the women that she encountered (Pennimam, 6).

The 1970 General Convention of the Episcopal Church met and voted down, by a narrow margin in the clergy order, a resolution to admit women to all Holy Orders, priesthood and the episcopate. However, the convention did vote to admit women to the diaconate, this being the first rung on the ladder to priesthood. This was a separate vote from the earlier defeat for women priests and bishops.

After the defeat in 1970, advocates of women's ordination – including Hiatt – redoubled their efforts to have the measure approved at the next General convention in 1973. Hiatt felt that it would be worth the delay to have the ordinations irrefutably legal. In the interim, Hiatt remained a postulant and met all the requirements for diaconal and priestly ordination. On June 19th, 1971, she was ordained a deacon.

Over the course of the next two years, Hiatt worked to organize support for a measure to admit women to the priesthood at the 1973 General Convention in St. Louis, Missouri. Opposition to women's ordination was greater than expected. Despite great efforts by many people, the measure was defeated.

There were a number of false starts over the course of the next few months to ordain women to the priesthood, with or without the blessing of the church. Bishop Bob DeWitt (one time editor of *The Witness*, and retired bishop of the diocese of Pennsylvania) proposed ordaining Hiatt at the Episcopal Theological School (ETS) in December 1973. Despite the support of the Dean, the Very Rev. Harvey Guthrie, and most of the students and faculty, a few trustees and faculty members were able to dissuade them on the grounds that it would mean the demise of the seminary. Then in January 1974, the diocesan bishop of Delaware, the Right Rev. William (Bill) Mead resolved to ordain a woman in his diocese. As Hiatt prepared to transfer to his diocese, he died suddenly in February. Also during these months, five women deacons from New York presented themselves along with men for ordination. When the bishop would not lay hands on them, the women, their presenters, and part of the congregation walked out in protest.

These experiences galvanized a number of women deacons and a small group of bishops. Bishop DeWitt, along with the Rt. Rev. Edward R. Welles (a retired

bishop from West Missouri) and the Rt. Rev. Daniel Corrigan (a retired bishop from Colorado) were becoming more willing to risk displeasure from their fellow bishops and take action by ordaining a woman to the priesthood. In June 1974, three prominent individuals issued a challenge to the Church in three sermons. On June 6, Dan Harvey Guthrie of ETS announced in his commencement day sermon that he would resign unless the trustees came up with the money to hire an ordained Anglican woman for the faculty immediately. On June 9, one of those trustees, Dr. Charles V. Willie, the highest ranking layperson in the Episcopal Church, called for the immediate ordination of women to the priesthood by whatever bishops would do it. On June 15, the Very Rev. Edward Harris, dean of the Philadelphia Divinity School, preaching at the diaconal ordinates of the diocese of Pennsylvania also called forcefully for the immediate ordination of women deacons called to priesthood.

By the middle of 1974 the struggle for women to be ordained had been going on for at least four years. That summer a large number of people from many different parts of the church came to the conclusion that there was no question that women would be ordained. It was only a question of when.

On July 10, 1974, a meeting was held in Philadelphia to plan an ordination. Among those attending were five bishops, seven priests, six deacons and four laypeople, including two sympathetic journalists. "July 29 was chosen from an array of women saints' days within the next six weeks," remembered Sue Hiatt. "Others considered were Mary Magdalene (July 22), the Virgin Mary (August 15), the nativity of the Virgin (September 7). July 29 seemed best in terms of timing (not too soon to get ready but not a long wait for word to leak out).

Word of the ordinations did leak out. On July 19, Bishop Lyman Ogilby, the Bishop of Pennsylvania, who had attended the July 10th meeting and was the lone voice trying to dissuade the group, called Bishop DeWitt to inform him that the clergy in the Pennsylvania diocese would be receiving a mailing telling them about the impending ordination. In a preemptive move, the women broke the story to the press on July 19th. The group spent the day of July 20th duplicating statements from the women and the ordaining bishops.

The ordination would take place in The Church of the Advocate, Philadelphia, PA, which was Hiatt's local parish. The site was suggested during the July 10th meeting, and its rector, Father Paul Washington agreed.

African-American youths from the church served as acolytes, and women served as security marshals. Early arrivals to the church got seats and programs, but by the time the service started at 11am, hundreds of others lined the walls and strained to see from the doorways. Gathered from the fringes of society – women, African-Americans, and youth – the crowd of 2,000 waited in expectation. These were not merely the curious, but supporters of 'the cause' – women's ordination and human rights. About 100 clergy participated in the ceremony. Many other members of the clergy were mingled throughout the audience.

An intense struggle followed for the next eighteen months. During a special emergency meeting at O'Hare Airport in Chicago, the House of Bishops declared the ordinations invalid. The newly ordained priests were forbidden to exercise their rights as priests. They could not bless the sacraments and it was suggested to sympathetic male priests that they would be brought up on charges if they allowed the women priests to celebrate the Eucharist in their churches.

The Church Without Walls (an Episcopal Church that did not have property or paid clergy) from its beginning was familiar with a certain degree of irregularity as it championed validity. It was in this spirit that consensus was reached to invite the Rev. Suzanne Hiatt to celebrate the Eucharist in the Church Without Walls. Two of the clergy who allowed the newly ordained women priests to celebrate the Eucharist in their parishes were brought to ecclesiastical trial: the Rev. Peter Beebe and the Rev. William Wendt. Hiatt, however, was not a participant in those occurrences.

At the General convention in 1976, the Episcopal Church voted to open the priesthood and episcopate to women. The House of Deputies concurred with the House of Bishops in that vote. Each bishop would then decide whether or not to recognize the women as priests, 'regularizing' their ordination. The six ordained priests who attended the convention all agreed that they would not submit to any 're-ordination.'

After leaving her position as the Suburban Missioner for the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania in 1972, Hiatt became a consultant for the Episcopal Consortium for Theological Education in the Northeast (ECTENE). Philadelphia Divinity School, General Theological Seminary and Episcopal Theological School made up the consortium. While at the three seminaries, Hiatt taught women studies courses as well as supervised and conducted research on the status of women.

In January 1975, Hiatt was hired as an Associate Professor of Pastoral Theology at Episcopal Divinity School (EDS) in Cambridge, Massachusetts, a position she shared with Carter Heyward. She was Associate Professor from 1977-81. She was a tenured full professor from 1981 to 1993. From 1993 until her retirement in 1999, Hiatt was the John Seely Stone Professor of Homiletics and Pastoral Theology. In 1997 she became the Acting Director of the Congregational Studies Program. In May 2002, Suzanne Hiatt died of cancer at the age of 65.

A major area of study and research for Hiatt was the ordination of women and the history of women in the clergy. She was also extensively involved in the deployment of women clergy within the Episcopal Church. Hiatt was co-author, with Emily Hewitt, of *Women Priests:* Yes or No? (1993). She wrote chapters for No Easy Peace: Liberating Anglicanism: A Collection of Essays in Memory of William John Wolf and Women's Ministries and Leadership in American Jewish, Christian, and Islamic Institutions. She was also author of numerous articles and book reviews.

Hiatt was a panelist at Radcliffe College, a guest-lecturer, consultant, and visiting scholar throughout the country, and did supply clergy work in the northeast.

Hiatt received an honorary doctoral degree from Regis College in Weston, Massachusetts in 1988.

Collection Scope and Content Note

The Hiatt Papers contain correspondence, academic course materials, publications and other material documenting the career of Suzanne Hiatt, including the battle for ordination of women clergy in the Episcopal Church.

The collection is divided into five series:

- <u>Series I: Course Notes and Syllabi, 1975-1998 (4.0 linear ft..)</u> This series contains syllabi, lecture notes, student papers, correspondence, bibliographies, and class handouts from the courses taught by Hiatt. The arrangement is alphabetical by topic.
- <u>Series II: Episcopal Divinity School (EDS), 1975-1998 (5.5 linear ft..)</u> This series consists of correspondence, brochures, newsletters, faculty minutes, and various other items pertaining to Hiatt's career at EDS. Arrangement is alphabetical by topic.
- <u>Series III: People, 1963-1998 (3.0 linear ft..)</u> This series consists of files of various people in Hiatt's life, including colleagues in the church and at EDS, students, and friends. Correspondence and papers or articles written by others make up the majority of the series. Arrangement is alphabetical by topic.
- <u>Series IV: Popular Press (magazines), 1966-1986 (2.0 linear ft.)</u> Magazines are predominant in this series. The articles describe the events as well as the participants in the 1974 ordination. Arrangement is alphabetical by magazine title.
- <u>Series V: Women's Ordination, 1966-1986 (12.5 linear ft.)</u> This series consists of information about events leading up to the ordination of the "Philadelphia 11," the ordination itself, and its aftermath.

Also included are files of similar situations elsewhere in the Anglican Communion. Arrangement is alphabetical by topic.

Processing

When the Burke Library acquired Hiatt's papers, an attempt was made to maintain the original order she imposed throughout the course of her career. The collection remains in the arrangement created by Hiatt, following her alphabetical schema.

Folded materials were flattened. Newspaper clippings were photocopied on acid free paper. Staples, rubber bands, and metal clips were removed and replaced with plastic clips. All materials were placed in acid-free folders and boxes.

Contents List

Series I: Course Notes and Syllabi, 1975-1998

Box 1

- PT 112-Beginning Homiletics-Fall 1977
- PT 115-Basic Principles & Practices of Preaching-Spring 1996 (with John Hooker)
- PT 1151-Voices Unbound: Intro to Preaching...Fall 1997 (with Suzanne Ehly)
- PT 144-Polity and Canon Law-Fall 1980
- PT 144-History, Polity and Canon Law ECUSA Spring 1985
- PT 150-Intro. to Preaching...Feminist Liberation Theology Perspective-Spring 1993 (with Fredrica Harris Thompsett)

Box 2

PT 1770-Pastoral Response to Death and Dying-Spring 1995

PT 1770-Pastoral Response to Death and Dying-Spring 1995

PT 1770-Pastoral Response to Death and Dying-Spring 1998

PT 1770-Pastoral Response to Death and Dying-Spring 1998

Box 3

PT 180-Social Action and the Contemporary Church-Spring 1984

PT 180-Social Action and the Contemporary Church-Spring 1992

- PT 180-Social Action and the Contemporary Church-Spring 1993
- PT 180-Social Action and the Contemporary Church-Spring 1997
- PT 180-Social Action and the Contemporary Church-resources

Box 4

- PT 182-Varieties of Ministry-Spring 1979
- PT 184-Aging-Fall 1978, Spring 1986 and 1988
- PT 185-Family Violence-Fall 1987 (with Ann Franklin)
- PT 188-Addictions-Spring 1994

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PT 190-Women in the Church-Fall 1983 and Spring 1986

PT 190-Women in the Church-Spring 1986 and 1991

PT 190-Women in the Church-materials

PT 190-Women in the Church-resources

T/PT-196-Women's Ordination: After Minneapolis-Fall 1976 (with Carter Heyward)

T/PT 199-Women's Reading-Spring 1977

PT 204-Global Crisis-Fall 1978

PT 258-Marriage Counseling-Spring 1980

PT 272-Church and City-Fall 1980 (with Ed Rodman)

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CH 250-The Church in America-Spring 1983 CH 250-The Church in America-Fall 1989 CH 250-The History, Polity and Canon Law of the ECUSA-Fall 1991 CH 250-The History, Polity and Canon Law of the ECUSA-Fall 1993 CH 250-The History, Polity and Canon Law of the ECUSA-Fall 1993 PT 158-Religion in American Society-Spring 1979 (with Bass)

Box 7

CH 2500-The History, Polity and Canon Law of the ECUSA-Fall 1997 CH 2500-The History, Polity and Canon Law of the ECUSA-Fall 1997 CH 2500-The History, Polity and Canon Law of the ECUSA-Fall 1997

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PT 260-Crisis Counseling-Fall 1979, 1982, 1984 PT 260-Crisis Counseling-Spring 1987 PT 260-Crisis Counseling PT 260-Crisis Counseling-Spring 1993 PT 260-Crisis Counseling-Spring 1996

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PT 270-The Church at the end of the 20th Century-Spring 1980 PT 270-The Church at the end of the 20th Century-Spring 1981 PT 270-The Church at the end of the 20th Century-Spring 1984

Series II: Episcopal Divinity School (EDS), 1975-1998

Box 9

Aging Course Alumni lectures Book-by Jackson Carroll Book-Women of the Word Boston Theological Institute Brochures Church and Society: A proposal by Rt. Rev. Robert L. DeWitt, D.D. Continuing Education Copied book chapters Copied book chapters

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Correspondence Correspondence Course Adjuncts Course Copies Series II: Episcopal Divinity School (EDS), 1975-1998

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Course Correspondence Course Correspondence

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Course Material Course Materials Curriculum Conference 78-79 Curriculum Conference 79-80 Curriculum Conference 80-81 EDS-EDS-academic handbook EDS-alumni/ae EDS-board

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EDS-Board #2 EDS-Continuing education #1 EDS-Continuing Education #2 EDS-Continuing Education EDS-Correspondence #1 EDS-Correspondence #2 EDS-Correspondence #3

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EDS-Correspondence #4 EDS-Correspondence #5 EDS-Dean Harvey Guthrie EDS-Dunkley affair-Weston EDS-Faculty/Carroll book EDS-Faculty #1 EDS-Faculty #2 EDS-Faculty #3 EDS-field education EDS-Gay Activities-EDS/ECUSA

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EDS-Women's Ordination EDS-Women's Ordination/Faculty ETS-Alumni-1966 ETS-1972/73 ETS-Fall 1973

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ETS-Hiatt, papers 1961-64 Eddington, Rose Episcopal Church Publishing Company Faculty-chapel schedule Faculty meetings Feminism and Women's Issues Feminist Institute Feminist Liberation and Ministry Program-1985 Feminist Liberation and Ministry Program-1996

Box 16

Feminist Study Action Guide Fund for Theological Education Health Benefits, Licensing, Taxes The Rev. Sue Hiatt Honorary Degree-1997 Independent Studies Kellogg Group-Sp. 94-Cards, programs Kellogg Group-Sp. 94-Correspondence Miscellaneous #1 Miscellaneous #2 Miscellaneous #3

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Miscellaneous #4 Miscellaneous #5-correspondence Newsletter Notes Nyce, D. Women in 19th Century Pulpit Ministry Pay Records, CPF, etc. Personal stuff-Sue Hiatt PDS (Philadelphia Divinity School) teaching Philadelphia Theological Institute Policy Statement and miscellaneous EDS stuff Same-sex marriage

Series II: Episcopal Divinity School (EDS), 1975-1998

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Senior resumes-1980 Senior resumes-1982-83 Senior Tutorials Sermons, misc. Sermons, newsletters Sermons from St. John's Chapel Women's course Women's course notes Women's ordination 1973 Women and resources audit 1986

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Jeanette Piccard and Wayne State James Pike Bishop Jose Antonio Ramos David Richards Henry Rightor Betty Rosenberg Rosemary Ruether Betty Schiess Barbara Schlachter Richard Smith Robert R. Spears William Stringfellow Katrina Swanson #1 Katrina Swanson #2

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Swanson-recognition & move 1977 Swanson Trial Diane Tichell Paul Washington Bishop Edward Welles Edward Welles William Wendt Rev. Williams and Bishop Spong Charles Willie

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Series IV: Popular Press (magazines), 1966-1986

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Series IV: Popular Press (magazines), 1966-1986 Box 28 (cont'd) New Life December 1974 Women's Yellow Pages First Edition Women's Liberation Notes from the Third Year Women A Journal of Liberation Spring 1970 Box 29 Concern Winter 1978 Seven Days March 10, 1978 Twin Citian May 1966 The Washington Monthly July 1970 Colloquy November 1970 Ramparts December 1970 The Ecumenist July/Aug. 1973 **General Convention** Louisville 1973 The Tower (Union Theological Seminary alumni magazine) Do Women Belong In The Church? National Organization for Women August 1977 Reflection Report of the Advisory Council on Public Welfare June 1966 Philadelphia magazine August 1974 Renewal February 1966 Colloquy October 1973 Brochures/Pamphlets/Booklets Education and Work Planned Continuing Christian Education for Clergy and Laity Parish Minister's Guide to Planning...for Continuing Education Changing Patterns of the Church's Ministry in the 1970's

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Selection, Screening and Evaluation of Applicants for Holy Orders
Black Ministries "Including a Directory of Black Clergy in the Episcopal Church" 1981
New Perspectives on Episcopal Seminaries
The Blake Schools Annual Report 1985-86
The Liberated woman's appointment calendar 1976

Series V: Women's Ordination, 1966-1986

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A-cross AIDS-Karl L. Alexandria conference-statement & address-Oct. 1971 Anglican Church of North America-Breakaway from Ro

Anglican Church of North America-Breakaway from Rome Anglican Church of North America-Post 1976 schism, St. Louis meeting Anglican Consultative Council Anglican/Episcopalian Anglican Women from Pittsfield, 2/4/96 Anna Howard Shaw Center Anti-women's ordination

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Bishops meeting-Port St. Lucie, FL-1977 Bishops meeting-Kansas City, MO-1978 Board of Inquiry Board of Theological Education Breakfast meeting California-April 1975 Canada/Anglican women's conference-Winnipeg, May 1982

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English Church-M.O.W., LEAP, etc. English Church-M.O.W., LEAP, etc Episcopal Church-WRO Episcopal Covenant with Evangelical Lutherans EPIS women's caucus EPIS women's caucus EPIS women's clerical directory listing, pre-1977 women priests EPIS poll of Bishops 5/71 EPIS poll of Bishops 2/72 ECPC (Episcopal Church Publishing Company)

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ETS (Episcopal Theological Seminary) Southwest, Austin **ERIE** diocese-Mary Beale Evans-BPS survey Feminism in Philadelphia by Mark. W. Wastler Forum-South Bend Gay Issues GTS-women Grailville, Ohio, May 1994 Graymoor-Houston caucus GTU (General Theological Union) Berkley women's program Bev Harrison-"Some Ethical Issues in the Women's Movement" Emily Hewitt-"Women's Ministry and Education" Hoffman-Wood's Hole Hong Kong and miscellaneous Anglican provinces Hood Conference 1970 House of Bishops-1972 Houston Convention-Oct.1970-ordination of women

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Phyllis Tribble-" Depatriarchalizing in Biblical Interpretation" Updating-after Wendt United Methodist Church Urban Bishops Coalition-2/80 VTS (Virginia Theological Seminary) women VTS conference-3/73 Vocational conference-East, 11/73 Vocational conference-West, 11/73 Wendt Trial-St. Stephens Wessinger Book-1992-96 (Women's Ministries & Leadership in Am. Jewish... Which way Women. Mennonite Central Committee The Witness J. Philip Wogaman-"Abortion: Shall we return to absolutism?"

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Women's Conference-Jan. 1984 Women Deacons-Post July 29th Women in the Episcopate Women's History Conference 1982 Women's liberation-general

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Women's movement and the church: a selected bibliography WCC consultation on women-9/70 W.O.N. (Women's Ordination Now)

Box 53

Women's Ordination-1977 Women's Ordination Women's Ordination Conference- Roman Catholic Pro Women's ordination Women's Ordination Questionnaire Women Priests in PECUSA (1979-80) Women Priests, 74-75-Post Mlps recognition Women Priests-worldwide Women's Theological Center Women in Theological Education 5/74

Box 54

W.O.N.
Women and Religion
Women and Religion
The Word/Voices (Newsletter of EDS Feminist Liberation Theology/Min.
Working Papers #1
Working Papers #2
World Council of Churches
WTC board 1988-90
Writings-Philip Holliday