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AGNES M. WALDRON FILES, 1976-77

Collection Type

White House Office Files

Extent

8.4 linear feet (ca. 16,800 pages)

Record Type

Textual

Access

Open. Some items are temporarily restricted under terms of the donor's deed of gift, a copy of which is available on request, or under National Archives and Records Administration general restrictions (36 CFR 1256).

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Processed by

William H. McNitt, January 1982

Biography

Agnes M. Waldron

1924 - Born

1942-46 - B.S. (Sociology), University of Connecticut

1947-49 - M.A. (Social Work), Catholic University Work)

1950-51 - Case-worker, Diocesan Bureau of Social Services, Hartford, CT

1951-57 - Social worker engaged in disaster relief services for the American Red Cross

1962-63 - Research Assistant, Stanford Research Institute

1963-66 - Research Assistant, American Enterprise Institute. Developed a news summary for A.E.I.

1966-67 - Research Assistant, House Republican Conference Committee

1968-70 - Special Assistant to Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare Robert Finch

1970-74 - Assistant to White House Press Secretary Ronald Ziegler

1974-76 - Director, Research Office, White House Editorial Staff

1976-77 - Director of Research, White House Office of Communications; Editor, President's news summaries

1977-Present - Staff Member, Senate Republican Policy Committee

Scope and Content Note

The Waldron files cover her work from June 1976 to the end of the administration. The bulk of the collection documents the production of "News & Comment", the White House news summary, but some materials on her research work are also included. The news summary was a compilation and distillation of printed and electronic media news articles, distributed daily to ca. 150 White House staff.

The first three series consist of news summaries, draft news summaries and clippings. The news summaries, which appear to be complete, allow researchers to study editorial opinion on the Ford administration from a variety of sources, and to ascertain how the media covered various issues and activities of the President and administration officials. The drafts and clippings are useful for studying the editorial process involved for only part of the period in which Waldron served as editor.

Although some of the material in the subject file relates to the operation and administration of the news summary, the bulk of that file concerns Waldron's research projects on the 1976 campaign. Many folders contain nothing but printed materials, especially political newsletters, or such routing materials as summaries of previous party platforms and state of the union addresses. Some folders, however, contain memoranda and briefing materials for the President, David Gergen or Michael Raoul-Duval (who coordinated preparations for the debates) that she wrote after completing her research. These materials will allow researchers to study this one aspect of the White House effort to win the 1976 campaign.

Waldron held several positions with research institutions and the government doing research and editorial work before joining the White House staff in June 1970 as an assistant to press secretary Ronald Ziegler. She spent four years with the White House press office doing research on such topics as congressional activities and legislation and then became director of research for the White House Editorial Staff in July 1974. In this position she directed and conducted research for presidential speeches, public statements and veto messages.

In June 1976, Waldron returned to the press office as director of research for the Office of communications. She continued to direct and conduct research used in the preparation of some Presidential speeches and public statements and provided a factual basis for the President's question and answer briefing books. Around August 1, 1976, she also assumed the position of editor of the President's daily news summary. Waldron inherited editorial duties for the news summary from James B. Shuman, who shifted to other responsibilities within the office. In her work Waldron was responsible to David Gergen, who headed the Office of Communications, although she was not directly supervised by him in her day-to-day duties.

Since Waldron re-joined the press office in the midst of the 1976 election campaign, much of her research work involved proving the accuracy of statements by President Ford and the inaccuracy of some statements by his rivals, Ronald Reagan and Jimmy Carter. She also researched the records of these two men and supplied background material on issues and on members of the media who served as panelists for the campaign debates.

In her role as news summary editor Waldron was aided by a staff of from three to five assistants and a typist. The staff edited news wire stories, wrote summaries of television news stories, and excerpted newspaper and magazine articles to compile the news summary. Each staff function, including editing, was rotated among the staff. The editor of each edition reviewed excerpted articles, corrected errors, rewrote stories if necessary, and assembled the edited articles and cartoons into the news summary. During the fall campaign they produced two editions a day on weekdays and one on Saturday.

Related Materials (January 1982)

Related materials from the press office include the files of David Gergen (director of the Office of Communications), James B. Shuman (former editor of the news summary), and Wanda Phelan (who maintained clippings and research files for the press office). Other related materials include: the files of Charles H. McCall, who succeeded Waldron as director of research for the Editorial Staff and inherited her files from that office; over a foot of material in the Barry Roth Collection relating to a lawsuit against the Ford administration by a former member of the news summary staff; and White House Central Files subject file category PR 16-3 (Presidential News Analysis).

Last Modified Date

2025-03-14

News & Comment, 1976-77.

(Boxes 1-12, 4.8 linear feet)

Copies of the news summaries produced by Waldron and her staff from August 2, 1976 to January 19, 1977. Included are morning and afternoon editions for weekdays, morning editions for Saturdays, once weekly magazine supplements, and occasional Sunday editions and special topical editions. After President Ford lost the 1976 election, the staff cut back to one edition on weekdays, none on Saturdays and suspended publication for several days around holidays.

Arranged chronologically by date of publication.

Box 1 - News & Comment

Status	Title
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OPEN Aug. 2-14, 1976

Box 2 - News & Comment

Status Title

OPEN Aug. 16-28, 1976

Box 3 - News & Comment

Status Title

OPEN Aug. 30 - Sept. 8, 1976

Box 4 - News & Comment

Status Title

OPEN Sept. 9-16, 1976

Box 5 - News & Comment

Status Title

OPEN Sept. 17-28, 1976

Box 6 - News & Comment

Status Title

OPEN Sept. 29 - Oct. 7, 1976

Box 7 - News & Comment

Status Title

OPEN Oct. 8-15, 1976

Box 8 - News & Comment

Status Title

OPEN Oct. 16-23, 1976

Box 9 - News & Comment

Status Title

OPEN Oct. 25 - Nov. 1, 1976

Box 10 - News & Comment

Status Title

OPEN Nov. 2-19, 1976

Box 11 - News & Comment

Status Title

OPEN Nov. 22 - Dec. 15, 1976

Box 12 - News & Comment

Status	Title
OPEN	Dec. 16, 1976 - Jan. 19, 1977

News & Comment - Rough Drafts, 1976.

(Boxes 13-17, 2.0 linear feet)

Heavily edited presswire, newspaper and magazine articles; typed summaries of broadcast stories; and logs of television news shows. These materials are often in handwritten, rough typed or cut and paste form. The drafts cover from August 1, 1976 to November 18, 1976 only. No later drafts have been discovered. There is usually a one day difference between dates on the folders in this series and those in the previous series because the news summary for any morning was compiled the night before.

Arranged chronologically by the date the draft was compiled.

Box 13 - News & Comment - Rough Drafts

Status	Title
OPEN	Aug. 1-18, 1976

Box 14 - News & Comment - Rough Drafts

Status	Title
OPEN	Aug. 19 - Sept. 13, 1976

Box 15 - News & Comment - Rough Drafts

Status	Title
OPEN	Sept. 14 - Oct. 6, 1976

Box 16 - News & Comment - Rough Drafts

Status	Title
OPEN	Oct. 7-25, 1976

Box 17 - News & Comment - Rough Drafts

Status	Title
OPEN	Oct. 26 - Nov. 18, 1976

News & Comment - Clippings, 1976.

(Box 18, 0.4 linear feet)

Newspaper and magazine articles clipped for use in the news summary. Because articles did not always come to the attention of the news summary staff on the day

they were published in the newspaper, the clippings for any edition of the news summary might cover several days. This file covers only August 1-24, September 2 and 12, and October 3, 1976.

Arranged chronologically by the date they were clipped.

Box 18 - News & Comment - Clippings

Status	Title
OPEN	Clippings (1)-(18)

Subject File, 1976-77.

(Boxes 19-21, 1.2 linear feet)

Memoranda, briefing material, reports, press releases, political newsletters and especially publications concerning Waldron's research work on the 1976 election campaign and the production of the news summary. Subjects include: Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, convention delegates, President Ford's statements on the Nixon pardon, and the operation of the news summary office.

Arranged alphabetically by subject.

Box 19 - Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	American Political Report
OPEN	Carter, Jimmy
OPEN	Catholic Vote
OPEN	Chronological File (1)-(6)
OPEN	Commerce, Department of
OPEN	Congress
OPEN	Dole, Senator Robert
OPEN	Evans - Novak Political Report
OPEN	Ford, Gerald R. - Civil Rights Record
OPEN	Ford, Gerald R. - Delegate Support Materials (1)-(2)
OPEN	Ford, Gerald R. - Statements on the Nixon Pardon (1)-(3)

Box 20 - Subject File

Status	Title
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OPEN	Ford, Gerald R. - Statements on the Nixon Pardon (4)-(5)
OPEN	Ford, Gerald R. - Two Year Report
OPEN	Gallup Polls
OPEN	Kissinger, Henry - Poll Results
OPEN	Labor
OPEN	Lincoln, Abraham - Acceptance Speech
OPEN	Medal of Freedom
OPEN	Media Report
OPEN	National Journal (1)

Box 21 - Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	National Journal (2)
OPEN	News Summary Office
OPEN	Political Animal
OPEN	Political Platform Summaries, 1960-72
OPEN	Reader's Digest Questions
OPEN	Reagan, Ronald
OPEN	Resumes
OPEN	Revenue Sharing
OPEN	State of the Union Addresses - Summaries, 1961-75
OPEN	Watergate - Gerald Ford and the Patman Investigation
OPEN	Women in the Labor Force