

## Finding Aid to the Sylvia Morgan Papers

### Morgan, Sylvia, 1930-

Sylvia Morgan Papers, 1964-2008

1 linear ft.

Collection number: Mss 286

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[Biography](#)

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### OVERVIEW

**Links:** Oral history interview (2010) on Digital Horizons

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### BIOGRAPHY

Sylvia Morgan was born October 30, 1930 in Oakes, North Dakota. Her parents were George Michael (Mike) and Caroline Erickson Morgan. Ms. Morgan grew up in Oakes, leaving to attend Northwestern University for her bachelor's (1952) and master's (1954) degrees. In 1954 she married Eugene Kruger of Edgeley, North Dakota. Upon his completion of the J.D. from University of North Dakota Law School, they moved to Fargo, where Eugene had work. Ms. Morgan taught English and speech at North Dakota State University from 1956 to June 1961. The couple had two daughters, Kristin Marlene and Hallie

Eugenia. In 1962 she began teaching at Minnesota State University Moorhead. She taught in humanities and coordinated the Women's Studies Program for fifteen years after teaching the first class for the program in the spring of 1971 (see MSUM Archives). She retired in 1994.

Ms. Morgan was particularly active politically with the Democratic-NPL Party in the 1960s until 1972. She attended the 1968 National Democratic Convention in Chicago as a North Dakota delegate and supporter of Eugene McCarthy. Ms. Morgan was a member of the Rules Committee at the time. The matter of Unit Rule and majority and minority reports were discussed at their pre-convention meetings. For the next four years, Ms. Morgan was on the executive committee of the North Dakota Democratic Party, but resigned from the committee shortly after the 1972 election.

She and Eugene Kruger divorced in 1979, and she took the name Morgan soon afterwards. Eugene died December 11, 1981. Their daughters both became attorneys and Hallie is a judge. Ms. Morgan remained active in the community, especially in speaking to women's groups about her work in women's studies. She also spoke to seventeen area organizations about her experiences in China. She is now retired, living in Fargo.

A more detailed biography on Sylvia Morgan appears in *Who's Who in the Humanities*, 1992-1993.

## SCOPE AND CONTENT

The **Sylvia Morgan Papers** includes correspondence, personal papers, publications and newspaper clippings on her political activities in Fargo and North Dakota from 1964 until the 1972 election and her establishment and development of the Women's Studies program at Minnesota State University Moorhead. She attended the Democratic National Convention at Chicago in 1968 as a delegate. The majority of the convention papers is from the Rules and Order of Convention Committee, where she represented North Dakota's opposition to Unit Rule voting and support of withdrawal from Vietnam. Of particular interest is a copy of a letter to her sister, Marlene, about the convention. The newspaper clippings file contains staff writer clippings from the *Fargo Forum* coverage of the convention and the conflict between war protestors and Chicago police. Other subjects in the files include the Antiballistic Missile System (ABM), candidates Eugene McCarthy and George McGovern, the North Dakota Democratic Party, and women's issues of the 1980s. There is a file on Alice Olson, a North Dakota political figure, who was a student of Ms. Morgan. Alice and Ms. Morgan were roommates at the Chicago Convention. There is a gap of several years in significant papers. The papers have been organized into four series: 1968 National Democratic Convention, Women's Studies Program, MDUM, Political, and Topical Files.

The oral history interview with Sylvia Morgan was conducted in December 2010. It documents the early years of women becoming involved in the North Dakota Democratic Party, her attendance at the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago, her teaching at NDSU and Moorhead State University where she established the Women's Studies program. The file also includes the list of questions developed by the interviewer, Christi Kracht. The oral history and transcript are available on Digital Horizons.

The [1968 National Democratic Convention Series](#) contains correspondence, committee meeting reports, expenses, newspaper clippings, and press releases. The correspondence is from June through September of 1968. Of particular interest is the letter written by Sylvia Morgan to her sister, Marlene, written September 4, 1968. It is a copy of the five page typewritten letter which gives her views of the convention. She describes the committee meetings, meetings over meals with a variety of people, events inside and outside of the convention and people involved in the memorable convention. She and Wayne Lubenow walked in Grant Park after the initial conflict on Thursday, August 29. His record of the evening is recorded in the convention newspaper clippings.

Ms Morgan was a member of the Rules Committee which tackled the challenged Unit Rule on voting at convention. They also decided which planks of the party platform would be brought forward to the convention as majority or minority reports. The files are organized alphabetically by topic. There are also some handwritten notes from meetings.

The [Women's Studies Program, MSUM Series](#) documents Sylvia Morgan's leadership in establishing and developing this program at Minnesota State University Moorhead. The correspondence files are quite extensive and are excellent source for Morgan's work with the program including many talks she gave in its support. In addition there are syllabi for the course she taught, a copy of her external studies booklet one of the courses, and several items regarding her being honored in 1991 for her work on this program.

The [Political Series](#) contains a variety of documents from later donations and cover a wide spectrum of political related topics in which Sylvia Morgan was interested and active. In addition to a fair amount of correspondence is an important file related to the implementation of the McGovern rule within the North Dakota Democratic – NPL Party regarding proportional delegate representation.

The [Topical Files Series](#) contains papers gathered from 1964 through 1988, on debated political issues, activists, Democratic candidates for President, and Democratic party activities in North Dakota and nationally. Ms. Morgan continued her involvement with the Democratic Party in North Dakota after the 1968 election by accepting a position on the executive committee. She acted as co-chair of McGovern for President for the 1972 election. After the 1972 election, Ms. Morgan resigned from the executive committee.

Her later papers focus on women's issues, which include formation of a women's caucus in North Dakota. There is a file on abortion, which includes a petition to bring a bill before the voters of North Dakota in 1972. The Equal Rights Amendment file reflects the work of the North Dakota Women's Coalition. It also includes a number of newspaper clippings on the national level.

The files on activists John Bond, Kathy Cota, Alice Olson, and Brian Coyle are interesting for their diversity of issues. John Bond's file contains the remarks from a public hearing for his removal from the Fargo City Civil Service Commission. Kathy Cota, with her sister Lois Cota, Sue Schniederhan, and Chuck Perry, attended the Chicago Convention as a peace protestor. She was in Grant Park on August 29. Kathy and her companion came before the North Dakota caucus to speak to withdrawal from Vietnam. Alice Olson was an alternate delegate to the convention and nominee for a North Dakota legislative seat

until she was arrested for crossing the police line on Michigan Avenue. Brian Coyle was a former colleague of Ms. Morgan's at MSUM and a well-known draft protestor in Fargo-Moorhead and in the Twin Cities.

The ABM site in Nekoma, North Dakota was protested in 1970. There is a clipping, a letter to the editor by Ms. Morgan, and information on ABM missiles. The 'History of Red River Women's Clinic' is notes of a talk given by Sylvia Morgan at a dinner honoring Jane Bovard for her work and the Red River Women's Clinic 'for the Women's Network of the Red River Valley.' It also includes a chronological listing from 1981 to 1995 of 'Some of the Fargo Women's Health Organization legal Activities.'

Of special note is the file containing Morgan's reminiscences about her part-time teaching position at Minnesota State University Moorhead and the related salary issue as a married woman. It includes copies of two letters from the time period and an article from the 1971 *Moorhead Independent News* that includes quotes from her.

The Vietnam file contains two comments by Senator Milton Young stating opposition to the war. Testimony is found in the *Congressional Record* – Senate of May 15, 1967 and his constituent letter of May 18, 1971 states his opposition to the war in Southeast Asia.

## **BOX AND FOLDER LIST**

1/1 Finding aid, and Biographical material  
 1/1a Transcript of oral history interview, 2010

### **1968 National Democratic Convention Series**

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 1/3 Committee on Rules  
 1/4 Expenses  
 1/5 Majority Reports  
 1/6 Eugene McCarthy supporters  
 1/7 Minority Reports  
 1/8 Newspaper clippings including "Riot" in Grant Park  
 1/9 Press releases by candidates  
 1/10 Unit Rule

### **Women's Studies Program MSUM Series**

1/11 Correspondence, 1971-1980, 1987  
 1/12 Correspondence, 1971-1980, 1987  
 1/13 Correspondence on talks, responses by students, 1972-1991  
 1/14 Articles, 1971, 1985-1986  
 1/15 Brochure for program minor  
 1/16 *Guide to External Studies Program Humanities 310: Women's Studies*, by Sylvia Morgan

- 1/17 *Land of the Burnt Thigh* book review by Sylvia Morgan, 1987
- 1/18 Sylvia Morgan honored, 1991
- 1/19 Poetry, articles and other resource publications
- 1/20 Syllabi
- 1/21 Syllabi for Humanities and Women Studies courses, 1970s-1980s
- 1/22 Syllabi for Humanities and Women Studies courses, 1970s-1980s

**Political Series**

- 1/23 Correspondence, 1983-1986
- 1/24 McGovern rule on proportional delegate representation, 1972
- 1/25 Miscellaneous, 1972-1974

**Topical Files Series**

- 1/26 Abortion, 1969-1972
- 1/27 Antiballistic Missile System (ABM), 1969-1970
- 1/28 Sylpha Beyer, 1972, 1987
- 1/29 John Bond, 1966
- 1/30 Kathy Cota, 1968-1970
- 1/31 Brian John Coyle, 1968-1970
- 1/32 Equal Rights Amendment, 1973-1974
- 1/33 Hearings on Delegate Selection, 1969
- 1/34 'History of the Red River Women's Clinic' by Sylvia Morgan, 2008
- 1/35 Hubert H. Humphrey, 1968
- 1/36 Eugene McCarthy, 1968
- 1/37 George McGovern, 1970-1972
- 1/38 North Dakota Democratic Convention, 1968
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- 1/40 Alice Olson, 1968-1987
- 1/41 Reminiscence by Sylvia Morgan on her 1965-1966 experiences regarding  
MSUM part-time work and salary issues, 1998
- 1/42 Vietnam, 1967-1972
- 1/43 Women's Issues, 1984-1988