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Collection Summary

Repository: Archives and Special Collections Library, Vassar College Libraries

Creator: Lowe, Jeanne R.

Title: Jeanne R. Lowe Papers

Dates: circa 1941-1972

Quantity: 36.4 cubic feet (37 boxes)

Abstract: The collection consists of journalist and educator Jeanne R. Lowe's correspondence, writings, notes, and substantial research materials pertaining to urban renewal, urban housing, the role of women in the sciences, race, public housing, and community planning in the United States. Specific cities covered include New York, New Haven, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Miami, Sunnyvale (CA), Chicago, Rochester, and Washington, D.C.. Writings include drafts of Lowe's book *Cities in a Race with Time* (1967), as well as numerous other publications written for the Ford Foundation, the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, and other non-governmental organizations. Also included are personal and professional materials related to Lowe's life and career, including her work with academic organizations as a lecturer and organizer for Goucher College, Vassar College, and New York University.

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Biographical Note

Jeanne R. Lowe (1924-1972) was born in Pelham, NY, and attended the Horace Mann School for Girls. After she graduated from Vassar in December 1944 (Class of 1945-4), Lowe began a career in journalism. In time, her interests focused on urban affairs and she became known as an expert in that field. From 1959 to 1960, she directed Goucher College's seventy-fifth anniversary, a year-long program on urban society. She was a frequent lecturer on college and university campuses and spoke before numerous national organizations. A regular contributor to magazines such as *Harper's Magazine* and *The Nation*, Lowe's major publication was her book, *Cities in a Race with Time*, published in 1967. She was engaged as a consultant by many organizations, including the National Urban Coalition, the Fund for the City of New York, and the Ford Foundation. At the time of her death, Jeanne Lowe was a senior fellow at the Urban Center of New York University and a lecturer at the university's Washington Square campus.

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Chronology

1924 Jeanne R. Lowe is born in Pelham, NY.

- 1941 Graduated from Horace Mann School for Girls, New York City.
- 1941-1944 Attended Vassar College and graduated with a B.A. in Modern European History.
- 1944-1946 Editorial researcher at *TIME Magazine*, also worked on *LIFE* and *Fortune*.
- 1948-1949 Researcher-writer for *The Reporter Magazine*.
- 1949-1955 Account executive at Roger Brown, Inc.
- 1955-1957 Assistant public information manager for ACTION (American Council to Improve Our Neighborhoods)
- 1959-1960 Director of Goucher College's 75th anniversary program on "Human Values in the Emerging City." Papers commissioned for this project were published in 1963 by University of Pittsburgh Press as *Man and the Modern City*.
- 1964-1965 Conducted research study on business leadership in metropolitan affairs for the Committee on Economic Development (CED).
- 1966 Published a book-length report, *Urban Renewal in Flux: The New York View*.
- 1967 Published *Cities in a Race with Time*.
- 1967-1968 Expert witness and consultant for the National Commission on Urban Problems.
- 1967-1969 Senior editor at *McCall's Magazine*.
- 1969-1970 On commission from the New York City Housing Authority, prepared a history of the Authority. For the New York Urban Coalition with a grant from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, directed a study of corporate resources of NYC universities.
- 1970 Investigated urban planning in European countries as Writer in Residence for The American Academy in Rome.
- 1971 Conducted housing study for the Fund for the City of New York. Worked on a monograph for Syracuse University on its Maxwell School for Citizenship and Public Affairs. Worked on a book for middle school-age readers on the urban crisis, on contract from the MacMillan Company.
- 1972 Published *The Near Side of Federalism* for the Ford Foundation, reporting on Foundation-assisted projects.

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Scope and Content Note

The collection consists of journalist and educator Jeanne R. Lowe's correspondence, writings, notes, and substantial research materials pertaining to urban renewal, urban housing, the role of women in the sciences, race, public housing, and community planning in the United States. Specific cities covered include New York, New Haven, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Miami, Sunnyvale (CA), Chicago, Rochester, and Washington, D.C.. Writings include drafts of Lowe's book *Cities in a Race with Time* (1967), as well as numerous other publications written for the Ford Foundation, the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, and other non-governmental organizations. Also included are personal and professional materials related to Lowe's life and career, including her work with academic organizations as a lecturer and organizer for Goucher College, Vassar College, and New York University.

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Access and Use

Access

This collection is open for research according to the [regulations of the Vassar College Archives and Special Collections Library](#) without any additional restrictions.

Restrictions on Use

Permission to quote (publish) from unpublished or previously published material must be obtained as described in the [regulations of the Vassar College Archives and Special Collections Library](#).

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Related Material

Separated Materials

- [Jeanne Lowe's published monographs were removed from the collection and catalogued separately. They can be found by searching the Vassar College online catalog.](#)
- Nine boxes of publications were separated from the collection and discarded during processing, including those published by the U.S. Federal Government, the State of New York, and the United Nations. Issues of magazines including Architectural Forum and House & Home were also discarded.

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Subject Headings

Names:

- Gruen, Victor, 1903-1980
- Moses, Robert, 1888-1981

Organizations:

- Alfred P. Sloan Foundation
- American Council to Improve Our Neighborhoods
- Committee for Economic Development
- Ford Foundation
- Fund for the City of New York
- Goucher College
- National Urban Coalition (U.S.)
- New York University
- Vassar College

Subjects:

- City planning--United States
- Housing policy--United States
- Housing--United States
- Public housing--United States
- Racism--United States
- Urban policy--New York (State)

- Urban policy--United States
- Urban renewal--New York (State)
- Urban renewal--United States
- Women authors, American
- Women college teachers
- Women journalists

Places:

- Chicago (Ill.)--Social conditions
- Miami (Fla.)--Social conditions
- New Haven (Conn.)--Social conditions
- New York (N.Y.)--Social conditions
- Philadelphia (Pa.)--Social conditions
- Pittsburgh (Pa.)--Social conditions
- Rochester (N.Y.)--Social conditions
- Sunnyvale (Calif.)--Social conditions
- Washington (D.C.)--Social conditions

Document Types:

- Clippings (information artifacts)
- Conference proceedings
- Correspondence
- Drafts (documents)
- Newsletters
- Notes (documents)
- Printed ephemera
- Publications (documents)
- Reports

VCL Categories:

- Economics
- Journalism
- Literature and Writing
- Politics
- Vassar College

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Encoded by Emma Gronbeck, April 2024.

[Top](#)**Administrative Information****Preferred Citation**

Jeanne R. Lowe Papers, Archives and Special Collections Library, Vassar College Libraries.

Processing Information

The collection was processed by Emma Gronbeck, April 2024.

Acquisition Information

Gift of Joseph Lowe, 1972. Additional materials gifted by Ruth L. Bookman, May 1973.

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Series List

[Series I. Personal and Professional Papers, circa 1941-1972 \(Boxes 1-2, 36\)](#)

This series consists of material related to Jeanne Lowe's personal and professional life, including biographical information, correspondence, teaching materials, Goucher College 75th anniversary planning materials, and Vassar College materials related to Lowe's time as an undergraduate and her participation in the college's 100th anniversary.

Arranged alphabetically by title.

[Series II. Writings, 1946-1972 \(Boxes 2-14, 37\)](#)

This series consists of drafts, notes, research materials, correspondence, publicity material, reviews, printed editions, and other material related to Jeanne Lowe's writings, including articles, reports, speeches, and books. Major works include Lowe's 1967 book, *Cities in a Race With Time*; her publication on Washington D.C.'s Southwest Project, *The City Rebuilders*; her 1971 report for the Sloan Foundation on continuing education for women; drafts for a middle-school book on cities for the MacMillan Company; her report for the Ford Foundation on projects they had funded, *The Near Side of Federalism*; and a survey of secondary schools for New York University.

Arranged into seven subseries: *Cities in a Race With Time* (1967), *The City Rebuilders*, *Continuing Education for Women: Report for the Sloan Foundation* (1971), MacMillan Book, *The Near Side of Federalism* (Ford Foundation Report), New York University Survey of Secondary Schools, and Other Writings.

[Series III. Projects and Research by City, 1943-1972 \(Boxes 14-27\)](#)

This series consists of Jeanne Lowe's writing drafts, notes, research materials, and correspondence related to particular cities in the United States, particularly New York City; New Haven, Connecticut; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and Sunnyvale, California. New York City subjects include public official and urban planner Robert Moses, the Fund for the City of New York, the New York Housing and Development Board, the New York Urban Coalition, and the National Urban Coalition. Research materials include newspaper clippings, pamphlets, reports, newsletters, proposals, and other material produced by government, non-profit, and corporate entities.

Arranged alphabetically by city.

[Series IV. Subject Files, 1951-1972 \(Boxes 27-31, 37\)](#)

This series consists of Jeanne Lowe's writing drafts, notes, research materials, and correspondence related to various topics around city planning and urban renewal. Significant topics include European urban development, the planning of new towns, public housing, the suburbs, and architect Victor Gruen. Research materials include

newspaper clippings, pamphlets, reports, newsletters, proposals, and other material produced by government, non-profit, and corporate entities.

Arranged alphabetically by subject, with miscellaneous files at the end of the sequence.

Series V. Jeanne Lowe Research Library, 1948-1972 (Boxes 31-36)

This series consists of Jeanne Lowe's collected publications on topics related to city planning, urban renewal, race, and housing. Material types include reports, proposals, and other publications produced by non-governmental organizations, including the Committee for Economic Development (CED); local and state government publications related to policy, redevelopment, and analysis of various aspects of city planning; and other published materials related to urban renewal.

Arranged alphabetically by subject, with miscellaneous publications filed at the end of the sequence.

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- Folder 1.2 American Academy in Rome - Fellowship in Environmental Design, 1968-1970
- Folder 1.3 "Barry Gray Show" #242, featuring Jeanne Lowe, undated [audio reel]
- Folder 1.4 Job searching, 1966-1969
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- Folder 1.7 Lowe, clippings, 1967, 1969
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- Folder 12.19 "Adequate, Open Housing in Metropolis: Comprehensive Area Management's Challenge to the Business Community (National Association of Manufacturers, Area Industrial Problems Committee), drafts, 1967-1968
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- Folder 12.21 "Balanced [Neighborhoods]," notes and drafts, circa 1961
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- Folder 12.31 "Federal Renewal Program Aids in Slum Clearance" (*Syracuse Herald-Journal*), clipping, undated
- Folder 12.32 Film proposal - "New Life for American Cities: A Case Study - New Haven, CT," draft with correspondence, 1958
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- Folder 12.36 "Hofstra College and Long Island," draft, 1957
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