

Victoria Granacki Papers 1966-2024, undated

Creator: Victoria Granacki (1947-)

Extent: 2.29 linear feet

Language: English, Polish, and French

Repository: Women and Leadership Archives, Loyola University Chicago. Please contact WLArchives@luc.edu regarding use.

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions: None

Usage Restrictions: None

Preferred Citation: Item, date of item, Box #, Folder #, Victoria Granacki Papers, Women and Leadership Archives, Loyola University Chicago.

Provenance: Victoria Granacki donated her collection of papers to the Women and Leadership Archives on September 29, 2019, and March 5, 2024. Includes accessions WLA2019.52 and WLA2024.12.

Processor: Chanelle Davis, September 2025

Processing Information: Finding aid updated in November 2025 to include separations information.

Separations: < 0.25 linear feet of extraneous materials were removed from the collection during processing. Some duplicate materials from accession WLA2019.52 were removed and added to the Mundelein College Paper Records.

Biographical History

Victoria Ann Granacki was born in 1947 to Myrtle Meyer and Leon Granacki in Chicago, Illinois. Raised as a Polish Catholic, Granacki has been a lifelong resident of Chicago and was a graduate of Mundelein College. She describes herself as “a distant granddaughter of Chicago Polonia”, stating she did what she could to continue the traditions and pride shared by her father and family, but it wasn’t until her adult life that she was drawn into the work of Chicago’s Polish American community history.

President of the River West Association in 1987 and on the Board of Directors of the Near North Montessori (NNM) elementary school, Granacki was led to the heart of Chicago’s historic Polish Downtown as NNM resettled in a large building just a block away from the Polish Triangle. In

Women and Leadership Archives
Loyola University Chicago

1992, her historic preservation consulting career officially started, and she began researching buildings of historic and cultural value. For nearly 20 years, Granacki led the preservation planning and consulting firm, Granacki Historic Consultants.

Additionally, Granacki served on the Board of Directors of the Landmarks Preservation Council of Illinois throughout the 1980s. The creation of Chicago's Polish Downtown walking tour was facilitated by her involvement in the Landmarks Preservation Council, and she led the first tour in 1997. Granacki has also held leadership positions on the Executive Committee and Board of Directors at the Polish Museum of America (PMA) since the early 2000s. In 2004, Granacki had her first book, *Chicago's Polish Downtown*, published by Arcadia Press as part of the Images of America series. She worked closely with the archives and individuals at the PMA for this publication. She traveled across Chicago and Poland to give lectures and presentations at conferences on her book and other subject matters.

Granacki later became a noted scholar of Chicago's Polish Catholic Church architecture, the Chicago northside, and Ignacy Jan Paderewski. Paderewski was a Polish pianist and statesman who advocated for an independent Poland and raised money for war victims during World War I. He toured in the United States and presented several political addresses in Chicago, earning the title "Honorary Citizen of Chicago" in 1932 by former mayor, Anton Cermak. Granacki has written and given conference presentations about Paderewski throughout her career. Her article "Ignacy Jan Paderewski: A Pianist and his Passion for Poland come to Chicago" was featured in the *Journal of Illinois History* in 2012.

Some of her more recent work includes contributions to the Chicago History Museum's "Back Home Polish Chicago" 2023 exhibit and her 2024 book, *An Artist Goes to War: Leon Granacki in the South Pacific WWII*.

Scope and Content

The Victoria Granacki papers consist of 2.29 linear feet and span the years 1966-2024. The materials are arranged alphabetically within series and subseries. Original provenance was maintained wherever possible. The bulk of materials relate to tours and presentations given by Granacki, her published works and other writings, and materials from her involvement with the Paderewski Association and Polish Museum of America. While most items are in English, there are some materials in Polish. Folders containing documents in Polish have been noted as such in the folder title. The collection also contains some digital and audiovisual content, including presentation recordings on CDs and digital images.

Series 1: Personal and Academic, 1966-2024, undated, Box 1

Contains biographical information about Granacki and the collection, as well as materials from her time at Mundelein College.

Subseries 1.1: Biographical, 2009-2024, undated, Box 1

Women and Leadership Archives
Loyola University Chicago

Contains Granacki's biography, a document detailing her life journey, a summary and outline of the collection written by Granacki, and a flashdrive containing digital versions of some of the materials included in the collection.

Subseries 1.2: Mundelein College, 1966-2009, Box 1

Contains ephemera from Granacki's time as a Mundelein College student, including flyers and programs from choral concerts, recitals, student productions, exhibits, and events. This subseries also includes a red garter from the Red Garter, a local bar that was popular among Mundelein College students in the 1960s. See also [Ladies' Night: The Bars that Shaped Mundelein College | Women and Leadership Archives](#). Also included are Mundelein College publications that feature photos of and artwork by Granacki, a commemorative booklet celebrating the legacy and history of Mundelein at the start of its affiliation with Loyola in 1991, news articles and clippings that mention Granacki or Mundelein College, student directories containing handwritten notes, and materials from Granacki's participation in the Upward Bound program.

Series 2: Professional, 1966-2023, undated, Boxes 1-6

Contains tour scripts, routes, maps and notes; lecture, conference, and presentation materials; a copy of and materials related to the book *Images of America: Chicago's Polish Downtown*; research materials; event and program promotional materials; administrative documents; and correspondence.

Subseries 2.1: Chicago's Polish Downtown and Catholic Churches, 1966-2023, undated, Boxes 1-2

Contains CDs related to Chicago's Polish Downtown tours, an interview with Granacki and We're Chicagoland's Ethnic Voice (WCEV) 1450 AM on audiocassette, lecture and conference materials related to Chicago Polish Downtown history and tours, and tour scripts, routes, maps, and notes. Also includes materials about the Polish Triangle Coalition, such as meeting correspondence, digital design mockups, and a report by the Metropolitan Planning Council. Additional materials include news clippings, newsletters, and correspondence related to research on Chicago's Polish Catholic churches, a Chicago Tribute Markers of Distinction pamphlet, a Main Street Lockport tour pamphlet, and the manuscript of and correspondence related to Granacki's contribution to the *Polish Heritage Travel Guide to USA and Canada* (2019).

Subseries 2.2: Ignacy Jan Paderewski, 2001-2023, undated, Boxes 2-3

Contains drafts of "Ignacy Jan Paderewski: A Pianist and his Passion for Poland come to Chicago" and related correspondence, and a copy of the *Journal of Illinois History*, volume 14, number 3. Also includes lecture, conference, and event materials from programs in which Granacki attended or gave presentations on Paderewski. Additional materials include board meeting agendas, meeting minutes, correspondence, and event

Women and Leadership Archives
Loyola University Chicago

planning materials from the Paderewski Association; and a list of Paderewski items at the PMA donated by Granacki, a gift acknowledgement and receipt, and email correspondence with translations of Paderewski's letters.

Subseries 2.3: Images of America: Chicago's Polish Downtown, 2003-2012, Boxes 3-4

Contains administrative documents related to the publishing of *Images of American: Chicago's Polish Downtown* by Granacki; a digital image of the book cover, a copy of the book; letters and emails from readers expressing their reactions to the book; photographs from a book event; book-related event, presentation, and lecture materials; and book advertisements.

Subseries 2.4: Polish American Fraternal Organizations, 1994-2018, undated, Box 4

Contains lecture materials from a talk given by Granacki at a Polish American Medical Society symposium, and brochures and newsletters from the Polish Women's Alliance of America, the Polish National Alliance, and the Polish Roman Catholic Union of America. Also included are application materials, email correspondence, and announcements related to the Polish Roman Catholic Union of America historic landmark designation from the National Register of Historic Places.

Subseries 2.5: Polish Museum of America 2004-2023, undated, Boxes 4-6

Contains a digital image of the cover of a PMA guide; annual gala booklets, flyers, and other ephemera from the galas; and administrative documents from the Board of Directors including exhibit proposals and budget applications, email correspondence, event planning materials, a letter welcoming Granacki to the board, and an analysis of PMA strategic plan outcomes. Also included are curriculum planning materials and email correspondence from a Chicago Public Schools and PMA partnership; flyers and programs from the Helena Modjeska exhibit, Jan Karski events, Pulaski Day programming, and more; PMA newsletters; presentation materials about the history of the PMA; PMA information guides; exhibit text, policy drafts, and other writings by Granacki for PMA; and 80th anniversary presentation and event materials.

Subjects:

Architecture of Polish Catholic Churches in Chicago

Chicago's Polish Downtown

Ignacy Jan Paderewski

Mundelein College

Polish Museum of America

Polish Roman Catholic Union of America

Women and Leadership Archives
Loyola University Chicago

Abbreviations:

PMA - Polish Museum of America

*Women and Leadership Archives
Loyola University Chicago*

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Dates</u>
		Victoria Granacki Papers, 1966-2024	
		Series 1: Personal and Academic, 1966-2024, undated	
		Subseries 1.1: Biographical, 2009-2024, undated	
1	1	Biography	undated
1	2	Collection Summary and Other Files [flash drive]	2009-2024
1	3	“My Life Journey into Chicago’s Polonia” and Outline of Collection	2024
		Subseries 1.2: Mundelein College, 1966-2009	
1	4	Ephemera	1966-1979
1	5	Mundelein College Chicago Booklet	circa 1970s
1	6	<i>Mundelein College Review</i>	1969
1	7	Mundelein Reunion Book	2009
1	8	News Articles and Clippings	1967-1970
1	9	Sixty Years of Mundelein College Commemorative Booklet	1991
1	10	Student Directories	1966-1968
1	11	Upward Bound Photos	1967
1	12	Upward Bound Administrative, Programming, Promotional, and Travel Materials	1967-1977
		Series 2: Professional, 1966-2023, undated	
		Subseries 2.1: Chicago’s Polish Downtown and Catholic Churches, 1966-2023, undated	
1	13	Chicago’s Polish Downtown [7 CDs]	2009, undated
1	14	Ethnic Churches [CD]	2012
2	1	Interview with Victoria Granacki and We’re Chicagoland’s Ethnic Voice (WCEV) 1450 AM [audiocassette]	2004
2	2	Lecture and Conference Materials [1 of 2] [some materials in Polish]	2012-2019
2	3	Lecture and Conference Materials [2 of 2] [some materials in Polish]	2012-2019
2	4	Polish Triangle Coalition	2009-2018

Women and Leadership Archives
Loyola University Chicago

2	5	Research Materials: News Clippings, Newsletters, and Correspondence [some materials in Polish]	1966, 1997-2023
2	6	Tour Scripts, Routes, Maps, and Notes [some materials in Polish]	1991-2023
2	7	Travel Guides	1998-2005, 2019
Subseries 2.2: Ignacy Jan Paderewski, 2001-2023			
2	8	“Ignacy Jan Paderewski: A Pianist and his Passion for Poland come to Chicago” by Victoria Granacki: Drafts and Correspondence	2011-2012
2	9	<i>Journal of Illinois History</i> , Vol. 14, No. 3, featuring Victoria Granacki article [journal]	2012
3	1	Lecture, Conference, and Event Materials [1 of 2] [some materials in Polish]	2010-2023
3	2	Lecture, Conference, and Event Materials [2 of 2] [some materials in Polish]	2010-2023
3	3	Paderewski Association [some materials in Polish]	2001-2011
3	4	Paderewski Historical Collection at PMA and Research Materials [some materials in Polish and French]	2009-2018
3	5	Presentations and Images [4 CDs]	2009-2011
Subseries 2.3: <i>Images of America: Chicago’s Polish Downtown, 2003-2013</i>			
3	6	Administrative/Publishing Materials and Contract	2003-2005
3	7	Book	2004
n/a	n/a	Book Cover [digital image]	2004
3	8	Book Sales, Reactions, and Reviews [some materials in Polish]	2004-2012
3	9	Event Photographs, April	2012
3	10	Lecture and Book Signing Materials [some materials in Polish]	2004-2012
4	1	Marketing and Promotional Materials [some materials in Polish]	2004-2005
4	2	PowerPoint Presentation Materials	2013
Subseries 2.4: Polish American Fraternal Organizations, 1994-2018, undated			
4	3	Lecture and Conference Materials [some materials in Polish]	2018

*Women and Leadership Archives
Loyola University Chicago*

4	4	Organizational Brochures, Booklets, and Newsletters [some materials in Polish]	1994-1998, undated
4	5	Polish Roman Catholic Union of American National Register of Historic Places [some materials in Polish]	2004-2013
		Subseries 2.5: Polish Museum of America, 2007-2023, undated	
n/a	n/a	“A Guide to the Polish Museum of America” Cover [digital image]	undated
4	6	Annual Gala Booklets and Event Materials [1 of 4] [some materials in Polish]	2012-2023
4	7	Annual Gala Booklets and Event Materials [2 of 4] [some materials in Polish]	2012-2023
4	8	Annual Gala Booklets and Event Materials [3 of 4] [some materials in Polish]	2012-2023
4	9	Annual Gala Booklets and Event Materials [4 of 4] [some materials in Polish]	2012-2023
5	1	Board of Directors Administrative Materials	2007-2017, undated
5	2	Curriculum Partnership: Chicago Public Schools and PMA	2012-2013
5	3	Exhibits and Programs [1 of 4] [some materials in Polish]	2009-2019, undated
5	4	Exhibits and Programs [2 of 4] [some materials in Polish]	2009-2019, undated
5	5	Exhibits and Programs [3 of 4] [some materials in Polish]	2009-2019, undated
5	6	Exhibits and Programs [4 of 4] [some materials in Polish]	2009-2019, undated
5	7	Newsletters [some materials in Polish]	2014-2018
6	1	PMA History and Challenges Presentation Materials	2015-2016
6	2	PMA Information Guides [some materials in Polish]	2004-2016, undated
6	3	Writings by Victoria Granacki for PMA	undated
6	4	80 th Anniversary Presentation and Event Materials [some materials in Polish]	2017