Wives, Mothers, and the Red Menace

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These ladies have been with me a long time. They’ve seen me through tenure and marriage and a baby. They’ve taken me to archives across the country and introduced me to interesting people. They helped me earn promotion. They have also refused to fit neatly into any of the preconceived packages I created for them. Every time I thought I had a handle on how to get their story out, they wouldn’t quite cooperate with my methodology. Finally, I had to give up and let them have their say.

Along the way, I have accumulated debts too numerous to mention, but I will try. When you work on a project for over a decade, you have to have a significant support system holding you up and keeping you going. The administration at Texas State University–San Marcos provided both financial assistance with a Research Enhancement Grant and departmental travel funds as well as much-needed
time for research through a developmental leave. The Margaret Chase Smith Library also generously awarded me grant monies for two visits to their beautiful facility. Archivist Angela Stockwell deserves special mention for her willingness to share her time and memories with me. I was also privileged to receive a travel grant from the American Heritage Center at the University of Wyoming. Wherever I traveled I was fortunate to encounter archivists and librarians who were generous with their time and knowledge. I especially appreciated their willingness to chat with a lonely stranger. Dawn Letson of the Woman’s Collection at Texas Woman’s University floored me by sending unsolicited information she found that she thought would be useful for my study. Back here in Texas, I was fortunate to work with the ever-ready and amazingly diligent Margaret Vaverek, reference librarian at the Alkek Library. Margaret never found my requests for obscure information anything but challenging.

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Two of my colleagues deserve special thanks. Vikki Bynum has been colleague, mentor, and friend as well as ruthless editor. Perhaps most important, she started all of this in the first place when she suggested I investigate Joe McCarthy’s wife. If Vikki initiated the project, Ken Margerison provided the final push to get it done. As I struggled with revisions, he volunteered to read through the entire manuscript, giving up a good part of his summer to work with me. Ken’s and Vikki’s thorough editing, insightful questions, and relent-
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