

Guide to the Kathie Reilly Papers 2017.020

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English

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Local History & Genealogy Division

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Table of Contents

Summary Information	3
Biographical / Historical	3
Scope and Contents	4
Arrangement	5
Administrative Information	5
Controlled Access Headings	6
Bibliography	6
Collection Inventory	7

Summary Information

Repository:	Local History & Genealogy Division
Source:	Gay Alliance of Genesee Valley
Title:	Kathie Reilly papers
ID:	2017.020
Date [inclusive]:	1984-1991
Physical Description:	1.0 Cubic Feet 2 clam shell document boxes, 1 over sized box.
Language of the Material:	English
Mixed Materials [box]:	1-2
Graphic Materials [box]:	OS1
Abstract:	This collection consists of the papers collected by Kathleen Reilly, a women's rights activist and one of the seven women dubbed the "Rochester Topfree Seven" in 1986. The materials date between 1986 and 1991. The materials consist of news articles, newspapers, newsletters, notes, photographs, brochures, legal documents, publicity, membership information and reference for C.L.A.W. (Challenging Laws and Attitudes against Women), and reference for the Topfree movement.

Preferred Citation

Kathy Reilly Papers, [box#:folder#]. Local History and Genealogy Division, Central Library of Rochester and Monroe County N.Y.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Biographical / Historical

Kathleen Reilly was born on April 29, 1946. Reilly is a women's rights activist and part of the "Topfree 7", the group of women arrested for "exposure of a person" in 1986.

Topfree 7

On June 21, 1986, seven women removed their tops and bared their breasts in public during a picnic at Rochester, New York's Cobb Hill Park. They did so as an act of civil disobedience in protest against the state law that requires women to wear tops in public. The women felt the law was discriminatory since men can go topless in public. The 50 year old penal law 245.01, or "exposure of a person" law stated that women in New York State could breastfeed infants in public, but could only go topless in public in very specific circumstances that were deemed entertainment. It was illegal for women to show below the top of the areola. The law did not restrict men from doing this. The seven women – Nikki Craft, Kathleen Reilly, Ramona Santorelli, Mary Lou Schloss, Deborah Seymour, Elsie Joe Tooley, and Lynn Zicari were arrested at Cobbs Hill Park and charged with violating the law. They appealed. Six years later, on July 7, 1992, the seven were acquitted when the state's highest court reversed penal law 245.01. The court declared in unconstitutional and ruled that women have the right to go topless anywhere in public that men can.

C.L.A.W. was founded in 1990. Challenging Laws and Attitudes against Women was originally part of the Coalition for Topfree Equality. C.L.A.W. was formed because they wanted to focus on Topfree Equality as a feminist issue and to have women making the decisions on actions, legal defense, and publicity.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Scope and Contents

This collection consists of the papers collected by Kathleen Reilly, a women's rights activist and one of the seven women dubbed by the media as the "Rochester Topfree Seven" in 1986. The materials date between 1984 and 1991. The materials consist of news articles, newspapers, newsletters, notes, photographs, brochures legal documents, publicity, membership information and reference for C.L.A.W. (Challenging Laws and Attitudes against Women), and reference for the Topfree movement. The materials document the fight for women to be able to remove their shirts in the same way that men are legally allowed. It also documents the reasoning for why the women decided to protest the way that they did. The collection documents the public opinion on the movement at that time and the legal ramifications of the Topfree Seven's actions.

The bulk of the materials are news articles and newspapers regarding the Topfree movement. The articles consist of letters to the editor, coverage of the Topfree picnics, the trial of the "Rochester Topfree 7", and opinion pieces.

The materials also contain legal documents from the trial in 1986 and the appeal. The legal documents consist of briefs, decisions, and motions. Any legal documentation that contains correspondence to or from the Topfree 7's attorneys as well as, any trial preparation have been removed from their original location and placed in a restricted folder due to attorney-client privilege. These files will be restricted until 75 years after the creation date.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Arrangement

This collection consists of three boxes.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Administrative Information

Publication Statement

Local History & Genealogy Division

115 South Ave.
Rochester 14604
585-428-8370

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Immediate Source of Acquisition

This collection was donated by the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley, 100 College Avenue, Suite 100, Rochester, New York 14607 on August 11, 2016 [Acquisition number 2017.020].

Conditions Governing Access

Access to the restricted folders in this collection have been restricted by the Local History and Genealogy Division of the Central Library of Rochester and Monroe County N.Y. in order to protect attorney-client privilege for 75 years after the document creation date. Contact the Local History and Genealogy Division for information on access to the restricted folders of this collection.

Conditions Governing Use

Permission to publish, reproduce, distribute, or use in any current or future manifestations must be obtained in writing from the Rochester Public Library Local History and Genealogy Division.

Processing Information

This project was made possible by a grant from the Documentary Heritage Program of the New York State Archives, a program of the State Education Department.

Processing Information

This collection contained many duplicate newspaper articles. The archivist retained three copies of duplicate articles. All other duplicates will be returned to the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley as per the deed of gift form. All metal fasteners were removed from the collection. The archivist left the collection in the original order in which it was donated. The folders that were unlabeled had a title imposed by the archivist. There are two restricted folders in the collection. These folders contain materials prepared in anticipation of litigation such as attorney-client notes and correspondence, and testimony preparation and therefore will be restricted for 75 years from the creation date. The restricted files also contains a prisoner data report and bank statements. The prisoner data report and bank statements are restricted due to the personal information on them such as, social security numbers and bank account information.

Processing Information

According to deed of gift, any duplicates or items found unsuitable to the RPL collections and not retained should be returned to the donor. Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley, 100 College Ave., Suite 100, Rochester, New York 14607.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Controlled Access Headings

- Rochester (N.Y.) -- Social conditions
- Women's rights -- New York (State) -- History
- Women -- Social conditions -- 20th century
- Women -- Political activity -- New York (State) -- History.
- Women -- Legal status, laws, etc. -- New York (State) -- History
- Gay Alliance of Genesee Valley
- Challenging Laws and Attitudes against Women (Rochester, NY)
- Coalition for Topfree Equality (Rochester, N.Y.)

Bibliography

Smith, Merrill D. *Cultural Encyclopedia of the Breast*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Collection Inventory

Title/Description	Instances	
C.L.A.W. finances, 1990	box 1	folder 1
C.L.A.W correspondence, 1990	box 1	folder 2
"Clothed with the Sun", 1984, 1986-1987	box 1	folder 3
"The New Yorker", March 19, 1990	box 1	folder 4
"The Event", December 1986-February 1987	box 1	folder 5
'89, 1989	box 1	folder 6
News articles, 1989	box 1	folder 7
Susan David, 1986-1987, 1990	box 1	folder 8
C.L.A.W brochures, Undated	box 1	folder 9
Challenging Laws and Attitudes against Women, 1990, undated	box 1	folder 10
[Court decision], 1989	box 1	folder 11
Topfree, June 1987	box 1	folder 12
TBF, 1986-1987	box 1	folder 13
Proud's peanut letter and ed, 1988	box 1	folder 14
TF speaks, 1988	box 1	folder 15
[Topfree Seven article draft], Undated	box 1	folder 16
Invite letters, May 27, 1987	box 1	folder 17
D&C article on appeal and response letter, March 21, 1987-April 2, 1987	box 1	folder 18
"California Naturalist" essay, Winter 1987	box 1	folder 19
Walz decision, December 1986	box 1	folder 20
Inaccurate editorial, December 19, 1986	box 1	folder 21
D & C on Relin appeal, December 20, 1986	box 1	folder 22
December 17, 1986, December 17, 1986	box 1	folder 23
December 16, 1986, December 16, 1986	box 1	folder 24
"Bare in Mind" An essay in feminism, October 1986	box 1	folder 25
Supp.mem., October 6, 1986		

	box 1	folder 26
Supplemental Memorandum - Mary Lou, October 6, 1986	box 1	folder 27
T-U letter, October 20, 1986	box 1	folder 28
TE revised letter, October 10, 1986	box 1	folder 29
Times-Union misquote, September 17, 1986	box 1	folder 30
D&C first article, June 19, 1986	box 2	folder 1
T-U article, June 25, 1986	box 2	folder 2
T-U letters to the editor, July 3, 1986	box 2	folder 3
D&C, June 21-24, 1986	box 2	folder 4
Page 1B, July 9, 1986	box 2	folder 5
Letters D&C, July 10, 1986	box 2	folder 6
S13 D&C and press release, 1986	box 2	folder 7
T-U, September 7-8, 1986	box 2	folder 8
D&C front, September 18, 1986	box 2	folder 9
Times-Union and D&C articles, October 28-29, 1986	box 2	folder 10
Mass article, Undated	box 2	folder 11
"Naturist Rochester" newsletter, June-August 1986	box 2	folder 12
Open Forum (misc. - crank calls), 1986	box 2	folder 13
Downtowners, June 25, 1986	box 2	folder 14
Downtowners, July 2, 1986	box 2	folder 15
Relin on female attorneys, September 1986	box 2	folder 16
Affadavit - David, July 18, 1986	box 2	folder 17
Briefs - September (David), August 13, 1986	box 2	folder 18
Brief; September - Mary Lou, August 12, 1986	box 2	folder 19
T.E (arguments in general), 1986-1988	box 2	folder 20
Topfree Equality Performance Picnic program, June 23, 1990	box 2	folder 21
Newspaper copies, 1988-1989	box 2	folder 22
Briefs, 1990-1991	box 2	folder 23
Surveys and polls, 1986	box 2	folder 24
Brochures, 1986, undated	box 2	folder 25
5/23 to legislatures, 1988, undated	box 2	folder 26
Notice of motion and notice of appeals, 1989-1990	box 2	folder 27

Memorandums of law, 1986	box 2	folder 28
Court documents, 1986	box 2	folder 29
Walz decision, 1986	box 2	folder 30
Correspondence, 1986-1991	box 2	folder 31
Susan David notebooks, Undated	box 2	folder 32
Restricted access - correspondence, 1989	box 2	folder 33
Restricted access - (my) testimony, September 17, 1986	box 2	folder 34
"The struggle for equal rights..." sign, Undated	box OS1	item 1
Newspapers, July 1989	box OS1	folder 2
"The Empty Closet", December 1989-January 1990	box OS1	folder 3
"City Newspaper", June 1991-July 1991	box OS1	folder 4
"City Newspaper", October 1986-March 1987	box OS1	folder 5
"Downtown - The Unbound Magazine", July 16, 1986	box OS1	folder 6
"The Bulletin" The American Sunbathers Association, July 1986-September 1988	box OS1	folder 7
"Monroe Doctrine", October 20, 1986-December 8, 1986	box OS1	folder 8
"Bare in Mind", November - December 1986	box OS1	folder 9