

Inventory of the Donna Hitchens Papers

(#1991-02)

Note: This document is a preliminary inventory, not a completed finding aid. The collection is surveyed but not processed, and its organization and composition are subject to change. This inventory is intended to help researchers better understand the general scope and content of the collection.

Repository: Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society

Collection Title: Donna Hitchens papers

Collection Number: 1991-02

Physical Description: 2.5 linear feet (two cartons)

Creator: Donna Hitchens

Date (inclusive): 1950-1990, bulk 1975-1990

Language of Material: English

Abstract: Donna Hitchens was the United States' first openly lesbian elected judge and the founder of the National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR). This collection contains materials related to Hitchens' professional career prior to her election as San Francisco Superior Court judge in 1990.

Preferred Citation:

[Identification of item], Donna Hitchens papers (1991-02), The Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society.

Conditions Governing Access:

Collection is open for research.

Publication Rights:

For the status of the rights to this material, please contact the GLBT Historical Society archives.

Acquisition Information:

For this material's acquisition information, please contact the GLBT Historical Society archives.

Processing Information:

Finding Aid created by Isaac Fellman in 2020, based on an extensive preliminary inventory created by Marjorie Bryer in 2011. Funding for processing this collection was provided by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC).

This inventory uses terminology for LGBTQ people that was in current use at the time of its creation. Descriptive language for queer identities evolves quickly and some of these terms may now be dated or even offensive. Finding aids are themselves historical documents; they reflect the moment in which they were written and often reflect the terms that subjects used for themselves. Please contact the GLBT Historical Society Archivist with questions or comments.

Biographical/Organizational History Note: Donna Hitchens was the United States' first openly lesbian elected judge and the founder of the National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR). Hitchens graduated from the University of California, Berkeley's Boalt Hall School of Law in 1977, and founded the organization that became the NCLR immediately afterward. Initially focused solely on issues of concern to lesbians – including custody, adoption, and employment – it now represents gay, bisexual, and transgender clients as well. In 1990, Hitchens was elected to the San Francisco Superior Court, and in 2002 she became its Presiding Judge. She retired from the bench in 2010.

Scope and Content: This collection contains materials related to Hitchens' professional career prior to her election as San Francisco Superior Court judge in 1990. These include law course materials, subject files, reports, conference and board materials, newsletters, publications, a small amount of correspondence, and audiotapes related to LGBT civil rights issues. Prominent topics include AIDS and lesbian parenting; organizations represented include Lambda Legal Defense Fund, National Center for Lesbian Rights (formerly the Lesbian Rights Project), and the National Education Foundation for Individual Rights.

Indexing Terms:

Lesbians

Law

Politics and elections

Container Listing**Carton 1:**

Donna Hitchens Resume

Correspondence, 1975-1983

Lambda Legal Defense Fund, "Gays and the Law: A Guide for Laypeople," 1982

Lambda Legal Defense Fund and Education Fund—Index to Files, 1982

Lambda Legal Defense Fund, Stay of License of Elisa Test (HIV Test), 1985

Lambda Legal Defense Fund, “Lesbians Choosing Motherhood”
Legal documents (pleadings and memoranda) regarding pornography case, 1980-1981
Papers and Publications, circa 1978-1983
GLAAD directories and resources, 1984
Golden Gate University instructor evaluation
San Francisco Commission on Status of Women resignation, 1983
Employment Discrimination, 1950-1978
Equal Rights Advocates, Davis, et al., vs. City and County of SF—Women and Minority Firefighters, 1984
Gay Law Students vs. Pacific Telephone and Telegraph, 1987
Lesbian Rights Project Pamphlets and Manuals (edited and written by Hitchens), correspondence, 1980-1983, including “Lesbian Mother Litigation Manual”
Richards vs. Richards—Amicus Brief from Lesbian Rights Project – custody and visitation rights of gay father, 1982
Lesbian Rights Project/National Center for Lesbian Rights, 1988-1989
Lavender Law Conference, 1988
Golden Gate University—Individual Human Rights (Gay) Course, 1982
Coursework—Human and Gay Rights Legal Classes, 1981-1982
Women’s Rights Litigation Clinic and Institute for Research on Women: “Reproductive Law for the 1990s” briefing handbook
Oberlin Dance Collective, circa 1979
Legal cases: Lesbian/Gay Freedom Day Committee, Inc., et al., v. US INS, et al.; Briggs; and other gay cases
National Lawyers Guild/Gay Rights Taskforce: Gay Rights Skills Seminar, 1979
National Lesbian and Gay Law Association, 1990
National Educational Foundation for Individual Rights, Inc., 1989-1990
National Women and the Law Association and 20th National Conference on Women and the Law, 1986-1990
Hitchens for Superior Court Judge, 1990

Carton 2:

Includes the following subject files (some have primary documents, such as correspondence, notes):

Women/Minority Business Enterprise
Sexual preference litigation and commentary
Pornography—California Assembly/Senate Bills
Military recruitment discrimination case
Lesbian mother court cases, LGBT parent legal articles
Reproductive technology
Lesbian/gay legal dissolutions
LaRouche initiative
Gay rights
Donor insemination
SF Human Rights Commission
Surrogate mothers
Bay Area Career Women

Bay Area Lawyers for Individual Freedom (BALIF)
LAPV referrals
Civil liberties
Child sexual abuse
Brinkman remand
AIDS
Adoption
Lesbian mother custody article by Hitchens
Clippings
Student groups
Sodomy
BALIF/AIDS Panel, 1986
NCLR Board meeting minutes
Lesbian Agenda conference
Class notes and correspondence regarding sperm bank agreement
Lesbian Rights Project Advisory Board
National Educational Foundation for Individual Rights
Cassette tapes—HAI, 1/2/1987, Donna Hitchens; “Is He a donor or a father,” 1985, Women’s
Educational Media