



Archives and Records

Finding Aid

COLLECTION NUMBER: Coll. 5
TITLE: March on Washington / Gay & Lesbian Defense Committee Collection

COLLECTION SUMMARY

Creator: Sarah Holmes
Title: March on Washington / Gay and Lesbian Defense Committee Collection
Extent: 1 record carton
Date Span: 1979 – 1993 (Bulk: 1985 – 1988)
Repository: The History Project, Archives and Records Department

Finding aid prepared by The History Project, Archives and Records Department by Andrew Elder, Simmons College Intern from the Graduate School of Library and Information Science, under the supervision of Andrea Still, Fall 2006

SUBJECT TERMS

Subject Names:

Coalition for Choice
Couples, Inc.
Department of Social Services
Dukakis, Michael
Gay and Lesbian Defense Committee
Holmes, Sarah
March on Washington Committee, Inc.
National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF)
National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights
Planned Parenthood
Somerville (MA) Women's Center

Subject Topics:

Abortion – United States
AIDS (Disease)
Gay Liberation Movement – Massachusetts
Gay Liberation Movement – United States
Foster home care – Massachusetts
Foster parents – Massachusetts
Lesbian Rights – Massachusetts

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Terms of Use/Copyright: Unrestricted, though some items in the collection are copyrighted by individuals and/or organizations outside The History Project.

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HISTORICAL ABSTRACT

In 1987, hundreds of thousands of people marched on Washington for lesbian and gay rights. This large demonstration, like the first March on Washington in 1979, was a direct response to highly negative governmental and societal attitudes towards lesbian and gay individuals. In 1986, the Supreme Court of the United States ruled (5-4) in *Bowers v. Hardwick* that state sodomy laws were constitutional.¹ This same year, the proposed (and ultimately defeated) LaRouche Initiative in California would have placed AIDS on the state's list of communicable diseases and thus mandate reporting to public health officials of individuals known to have contracted AIDS or HIV. The events of this historic march included the unveiling of the AIDS Memorial Quilt by the NAMES Project and a civil disobedience demonstration at the Supreme Court protesting the recent sodomy decision.

Meanwhile, in Massachusetts, Governor Michael Dukakis was ignoring funding for AIDS research and education in his proposed state budget; moreover, Dukakis and the LGBT community of Massachusetts were battling over foster care policies. In 1985, Governor Dukakis had ordered the removal of two children from the care of their gay foster parents, and later that year announced a new foster care policy that would effectively prevent the placement of children in the foster care of lesbians and gay men. In response to these statewide efforts, the Gay and Lesbian Defense Committee formed in Boston, Massachusetts and, over the course of their existence, managed to play a vital role in the eventual defeat of these proposed legislations. Members of the Gay and Lesbian Defense Committee also helped to organize around other issues in Boston and Massachusetts, including reproductive rights and the Presidential campaigns of both Michael Dukakis and Jesse Jackson.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The materials in this collection – compiled by Boston-based activist Sarah Holmes – document the work of several national and local (to Boston, Massachusetts) lesbian and gay rights groups from 1977 to 1993, with the bulk of the materials pertaining to organizing efforts and events from 1985 to 1988. The materials in the collection are divided into three main categories: March on Washington (1987), Gay and Lesbian Defense Committee of Boston, Massachusetts, and Miscellaneous.

¹ United States Supreme Court, *Bowers v. Hardwick*, 478 U.S. 186 (1986)

Activist groups central to the collection include the National March of Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights Organizing Committee and its Boston sub-committees, and the Gay and Lesbian Defense Committee of Boston, Massachusetts.

Individuals central to the collection include activist Sarah Holmes and former Massachusetts Governor, Michael Dukakis.

Other groups and organizations represented in the collection include: the Coalition for Choice and Planned Parenthood; Couples Inc.; Department of Social Services (D.S.S.); *Gay Community News* (Boston, MA); Black and White Men Together; Mel King; Jesse Jackson; and the Stonewall Independent Democratic Club.

Through meeting agendas, minutes, and correspondence, as well as pamphlets, flyers, and various other materials, this collection provides evidence of activist work (specifically, Boston-area involvement in activist work) around various issues: AIDS/HIV research and health care access, Foster Care policies and equality as they relate to lesbians and gay men, abortion rights and access, and same-sex marriage.

DESCRIPTION OF SERIES

Series I: March on Washington (1987)

Span Dates: 1977 – 1993

Series I consists of materials pertaining to the planning of, and events surrounding, the 1987 National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights, as well as a few items pertaining to the earlier March on Washington, in 1979. This series also includes documentation of Holmes' involvement in planning at both the national and local levels for the March on Washington Organizing Committees, as well as the Civil Disobedience ("Out and Outraged: For Love, Life, and Liberation") Planning Committee.

Materials in **Series I** are arranged in chronological order within each folder. The folders in this series are in alphabetical order in regards to each folder's designated title.

Series I is further divided into five subseries:

Subseries A, containing **General** and more administrative information pertaining to the National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights, as well as mailings and flyers.

Subseries B, containing materials pertaining to **Meetings, Agendas, and Minutes** and the National March on Washington.

Subseries C, which contains materials related to the planning of the **Civil Disobedience, "Out and Outraged"** action at the Supreme Court of the United States and in connection with the National March on Washington.

Subseries D, which contains **Newspaper Clippings** from both the 1979 and 1987 marches on Washington, as well as clippings leading up to the 1987 march.

Subseries E, which contains **Post-March on Washington Materials**: evaluations, newspaper clippings, and correspondence.

Series II: Gay and Lesbian Defense Committee
Span Dates: 1983 – 1988

The items in **Series II** document the formation of the Gay and Lesbian Defense Committee and its involvement in campaigns relating to foster care policies proposed by then Massachusetts Governor, Michael Dukakis, and by other members of the General Court. In 1985, Massachusetts Governor, Michael Dukakis, ordered the removal of two children from the home of their gay foster parents; soon after, Dukakis announced a new state foster care policy that would effectively prevent the placement of foster children in the homes of lesbian and gay people and couples. In response to these efforts, members of the Boston and Massachusetts LGBT community formed the Gay and Lesbian Defense Committee.

Also included in **Series II** are materials documenting the involvement of the Gay and Lesbian Defense Committee with other national and local organizations and activist groups such as the Coalition for Choice and Planned Parenthood.

Materials in Series II are first arranged alphabetically by topic or title, and then chronologically.

Series II consists of three subseries:

Subseries A, containing materials pertaining to activism in Massachusetts around **Reproductive Rights** and the involvement of members of the Gay and Lesbian Defense Committee, including Sarah Holmes.

Subseries B, which contains materials pertaining to the formation of the Gay and Lesbian Defense Committee, issues of **Foster Care Equality**, and the negative policies introduced statewide by Governor Michael Dukakis.

Subseries C, containing **Miscellaneous** materials related to the Gay and Lesbian Defense Committee and to the Foster Care Equality campaign.

Series III: Miscellaneous
Span Dates: 1980 – 1989

The items in **Series III** are only tangentially related to both the March on Washington and the Gay and Lesbian Defense Committee.

Series III consists of two subseries:

Subseries A, containing materials related to the operations and activism surrounding the **Somerville Women's Center**. Members of the Women's Center were involved in both the March on Washington and Gay and Lesbian Defense Committee.

Subseries B, containing **General** information that, while it may not be directly associated with either the March on Washington or with the Gay and Lesbian Defense Committee, provides further contextual information.

SERIES AND FOLDER LIST

Box 1

Series I: March on Washington (1987)

Subseries A: General

- Folder 1: Budgets, 1986-1987
- Folder 2: Contact Lists
- Folder 3: Flyers and Pamphlets (including drafts)
- Folder 4: Job Descriptions – Resumes
- Folder 5: Mailing Materials – National and New England March on Washington Committee
- Folder 6: Miscellaneous Newsletters and Official Correspondence, 1986-1987
- Folder 7: Miscellaneous Poems, Correspondence, Tickets, and Drafts
- Folder 8: National and New England March on Washington Committees, Letters and Press Releases, 1987
- Folder 9: New England Regional Committee for the March on Washington – Grant Applications, 1987
- Folder 10: Organizing Kit, October 11, 1987
- Folder 11: Program Guides, 1987 and 1993
- Folder 12: Proposed Line of March, 1987
- Folder 13: Vision Statement (including drafts), n.d.

Subseries B: Meetings, Agendas, Minutes

- Folder 14: Boston/New England March on Washington Committee, 1986-1987
- Folder 15: National Organizing Committee, 08/1986 – 09/1987

Subseries C: Civil Disobedience, “Out and Outraged”

- Folder 16: Civil Disobedience (C.D.) Handbook, 1987
- Folder 17: C.D./Nonviolence Training Packet, 1987
- Folder 18: Flyers and Pamphlets (including drafts)
- Folder 19: Information and Check-in Packet, 1987

Subseries D: Newspaper Clippings

- Folder 20: *Bay Windows*, October 15-21, 1987
- Folder 21: *Gay Community News*, August 2-8, 1987
- Folder 22: Newspaper Clippings, First National March on Washington, 1979
- Folder 23: Newspaper Clippings, n.d. 1987-1988
- Folder 24: Resist Newsletter and Task Force Report, 1987

Subseries E: Post-March on Washington Materials

- Folder 25: Post-March Materials, Meetings, and Evaluations, 1987-1988

Series II: Gay and Lesbian Defense Committee

Subseries A: Reproductive Rights (1986)

- Folder 26: Coalition for Choice – Correspondence, 1986
- Folder 27: Flyers and Pamphlets
- Folder 28: Miscellaneous Minutes
- Folder 29: Newsletters, 1986
- Folder 30: Newspaper Clippings, 1983 – 1986
- Folder 31: Rosie Jimenez Day Committee – March and Rally to Defeat Anti

Abortion Amendment

Subseries B: Foster Care Equality

- Folder 32: Babets vs. Government of Commonwealth of Massachusetts Memorandum, 1986
- Folder 33: Child Abuse Prevention, 1986
- Folder 34: Commonwealth of Massachusetts: Resolution Concerning Foster Care Placement, 1985
- Folder 35: Correspondence (including drafts), 1985-1987
- Folder 36: Denmark Campaign – Press and Contact Lists, n.d.
- Folder 37: Denmark Campaign – Miscellaneous
- Folder 38: Department of Social Services (D.S.S.) – Foster Care Recruitment Campaign, 1986
- Folder 39: Department of Social Services (D.S.S.) Foster Care Policy, 1985
- Folder 40: Department of Social Services (D.S.S.) Public Hearing, 1985
- Folder 41: Department of Social Services (D.S.S.) Public Hearing (miscellaneous), 1985
- Folder 42: Endorsements – Dukakis Campaign, Foster Care Equality, n.d.
- Folder 43: Facts of Interest concerning proposed D.S.S. Foster Care policy, n.d.
- Folder 44: Flyers and Pamphlets (drafts)
- Folder 45: Flyers and Pamphlets (including drafts)
- Folder 46: Gay and Lesbian Defense Committee (GLDC) Newsletters, 1985-1986
- Folder 47: Gay and Lesbian Defense Committee (GLDC) Speakers Fact Sheets, 1985
- Folder 48: Grant Applications, 1988
- Folder 49: Homophobia Forum, May 1986
- Folder 50: Information Packet/Newspaper Clippings: "Appointment Questioned..."
- Folder 51: Information Packet/Newspaper Clippings: "Dukakis is No Friend..."
- Folder 52: Information Packet/Newspaper Clippings: "Gays vs. Dukakis"
- Folder 53: Information Packet/Newspaper Clippings: "Insurance Chief..."
- Folder 54: Legislative Subcommittee on Foster Care, 1985?
- Folder 55: Letterhead, n.d.
- Folder 56: Mailing Lists, n.d.
- Folder 57: Meetings Minutes, 1985-1986
- Folder 58: Miscellaneous Press Releases and Statements, 1985-1986
- Folder 59: New Department of Social Services (D.S.S.) Regulations, 1986
- Folder 60: Newspaper Clippings, 1983 – 1985
- Folder 61: Newspaper Clippings, 1986 – 1990
- Folder 62: Newspaper Clippings – compiled by the Stonewall Independent Democratic Club, 1987
- Folder 63: Newspaper Clippings – Dukakis Campaign, 1987
- Folder 64: Photographs – Debbie Rich (and unknown), 1986
- Folder 65: Press Lists
- Folder 66: Press Releases, 1985-1986
- Folder 67: Press Releases/Information – Denmark Campaign, 1986-1987
- Folder 68: Questions for Governor Michael Dukakis, 1985
- Folder 69: Resource Guide on Homophobia, 1988
- Folder 70: Jesse Jackson Campaign, 1988
- Folder 71: "A short quiz for people who care about foster children..." n.d.
- Folder 72: Songs and Chants

Folder 73: Special Commission on Foster Care, 1986
Folder 74: Special Commission on Foster Care – A Final Report, 1987
Folder 75: Speech, undated, authorship unknown (draft) on Gay and Lesbian Defense Committee
Folder 76: Statements from Government officials and others, 1985
Folder 77: Stickers, n.d.
Folder 78: Social Services Study of Foster Care, 1976
Folder 79: Thomas W. Concannon, Paper on Foster Care Policies, 1987
Folder 80: "What is the Gay and Lesbian Defense Committee?" 1987

Subseries C: Miscellaneous

Folder 81: General Organizational Notes, n.d.

Series III: Miscellaneous

Subseries A: Somerville Women's Center

Folder 82: Father's Day Naming Project, 1989
Folder 83: Flyers and Newspaper Clippings
Folder 84: Grant and Funding Applications, 1980
Folder 85: Letters, endorsements, etc., 1982-1983
Folder 86: Women's Center Information, 1980

Subseries B: General

Folder 87: Boycott Coors Taskforce, 1985-1986
Folder 88: Flyers and Pamphlets
Folder 89: *Gay Community News* (GCN) – Proposal to Open Meadows (draft), n.d.
Folder 90: Miscellaneous – New Right
Folder 91: Sarah C. Holmes – Resume, 1984?
Folder 92: Socialist Feminism

Multiple copies of items from the collection in two folders, "March on Washington" and "Gay and Lesbian Defense Committee." Folders 93 and 94.