



Archives and Records

Finding Aid

COLLECTION NUMBER: Coll.21
TITLE: Robert P. Wheatly Collection

COLLECTION SUMMARY

Creator(s): Robert P. Wheatly
Title: Robert P. Wheatly Collection
Extent: 7 Linear Feet
Repository: The History Project, Archives and Records Department

Finding aid prepared for The History Project, Archives and Records Department by Amy Kennedy, under the supervision of Libby Bouvier and Andrew Elder, 2008.

SUBJECT TERMS

Subject Names:

AM TIKVA
Bay Windows Advisory Board
Briggs Initiative - California
Boston Gay Religious Coalition
Boston Institute for Gay Studies
Boston Lesbian and Gay Political Alliance
Boston Pride
Cambridge Lavender Alliance
Campaign to End Homophobia
Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts
Committee on Civil Liberties and Sexual Freedom
Dignity
Family Protection Act
Gay and Lesbian Speakers Bureau
GAY GA - Georgia
GAYLA (U.U Gay and Lesbian Association)
Gay Rights Legislation - Massachusetts
GLISTEN
Greater Boston Lesbian and Gay Interfaith Coalition (GBLGIC)
Human Rights Charitable Foundation
Kinsey Report
Men Against a Sexist Society
NGLTF - National Gay and Lesbian Taskforce
National Association for Lesbian and Gay Gerontology
New England Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Veterans
Prime Timers
Project 10

Project 10 East
Seacoast Gays
The Boston Coalition for GLBT Youth
Tri-City Defense
Unitarian Universalist Association (U.U.A.)
Unitarian Universalist Gay Caucus
Unitarian Universalist Office of Gay Concerns
Wheatly, Robert P.

Subject Topics:

Aging
Civil Unions - Gay
Clergy - Gay
Gerontology
Churches - Gay
Gay Liberation - General
Gay Liberation - Massachusetts - Boston
Religion - Gay
Religious Life - Gay
Youth - Gay

Document Types:

Articles
Bulletins
Letters
Magazine Articles
Newspaper Clippings (n.p.)
Photographs
Pamphlets

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

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

Contact The History Project for further information:

29 Stanhope Street
Boston, MA 02116
617.266.7733
info@historyproject.org
www.historyproject.org

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Rev. Robert P. Wheatly, b. 1919 d. October 31, 2002, was a Gay Unitarian Universalist Minister and social justice pioneer who lived and worked in Massachusetts from 1949 until his death in 2002. He moved to the Boston area to attend Harvard Divinity School but did not finish the coursework. He lived in Cambridge until his death and was active in several positions in the Unitarian Universalist Church, LGBT groups, specifically in Boston and

Cambridge and also groups related to aging and affordable housing groups. In 1998-2000 Rev. Wheatly had contacted THP concerning disposition of his collection of materials and papers related to LGBT issues. At his death, his partner, Kenneth J. English arranged with The History Project to receive his papers. Throughout his tenure as director of the Unitarian Universalist (U.U.) Office of Gay Concerns, he traveled extensively throughout North America to attend conferences and workshops, and speaking engagements associated with LGBT and church issues.

Wheatly's first church position was as an ordained minister in the Disciples of Christ where he worked at a church in Gainesville, Florida from 1942-1943. Following that position, he served in the Air Force from 1943-1946 stationed in Alaska. After World War II he returned to Florida and earned a B.A. degree from Stetson College. At this time, he became a Unitarian and served in U.U. churches. Wheatly served U.U. churches in Westboro, Lawrence and Manchester, N.H. He also attended Crane School of Religion at Tufts and graduated in 1968, prepared for the ministry in the U.U. churches.

Non-church positions held by Wheatly were in credit management and personal at Beth Isreal Deaconess and Childrens Hospital and other institutions and coordinator of services for the Cambridge Committee of Elders and executive director of the Cambridge Council on Aging. In 1977, he was appointed director of the U.U. Office of Gay and Lesbian Concerns. Wheatly retired from that position in 1987.

During his career, Wheatly traveled extensively to Unitarian Universalist conferences and churches presenting the case for new understandings, attitudes, rights and services for gay people. He lobbied at the State House in Boston, took part in the Annual Boston Gay Pride Parade, and gave leadership to Gay Pride Worship Services. He also compiled *A Planning Guide for a Same Sex Holy Union Ceremony*, published by his office in 1987. He officiated at gay and lesbian unions throughout his career. Wheatly was best known for exuding happiness and his good humor. He once gave a speech on *Groundhogs and Fairies* for Groundhog Day.

Wheatly was a founding member in 1987 of Prime Timers, a group of older gay men, now a worldwide organization with thousands of members. Upon his death, he was survived by his life's partner of 45 years, Kenneth J. English, who died in 2006.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection totals 7 document boxes (1-4, 5a-5b, 6) of Wheatly's professional papers that relate to LGBT issues, and primarily span during his tenure as Unitarian Universalist clergy and Director of the Boston Unitarian Universalist Office of Gay Concerns. His papers and correspondence relating to religious subjects but not LGBT were donated by Wheatly and THP to the Harvard Divinity School Archives.

There are extensive materials on U.U. and LGBT related conferences that Wheatly attended. Also included with these materials are notes and drafts of sermons, speeches, and workshops that Wheatly presented. Some of the notes of Wheatly's speeches and sermons were scribbled on pieces of scrap paper, which are included in the collection.

Included in the collection are materials from various conferences, like Jacksonville, Florida, Huntington, Long Island, Mobile, Alabama, and Norfolk, VA., Houston and Dallas, Texas, as well as conferences local to Massachusetts and New England. Most of the out of state

conferences were U.U. Gay related conferences named the Gay and Lesbian Association, (GAYLA), or the U.U. Gay Caucus.

The collection includes several photographs, mostly of Wheatly, dating back to the 1930's, as a youth, at his ordination, at Pride Marches, and with the Cambridge Council on Aging. Wheatly collected materials on the Kinsey Report and on Religion and the Kinsey Report. More extensive are materials on the Greater Boston Lesbian and Gay Interfaith Coalition (GBLBIC), begun in 1976, which spans from its foundation to the 1990's. The GBLBIC protested at various events during its tenure, such as responding to the arrests of gay men for public sex in the Boston Public Library (BPL) restroom from the late 1970's to the protests over the including of sexual orientation in the state Hate Crimes law in 1988. Wheatly held a peaceful candlelight vigil at the statehouse, while other protesters chained themselves to the Senate Gallery railing to protest the legislature's inaction on the bill. There are extensive materials on memorial services that Wheatly officiated mostly from the 1980's and 1990's. In one instance, Wheatly officiated for a couple's holy union and also, in years later, the memorial service of one of the couple.

DESCRIPTION OF SERIES (BOXES)

Series I: Various documents and literature on various subjects (AIDS, Bisexuality, General literature about homophobia, misc.

Series II: LGBT marriage, pamphlets on LGBT youth, Advocate article on Bob Wheatly, photos, newspaper clippings.

Series III: Christian distortions and sexuality, Boston Pride Service 1986, Am Tikva, Dignity Boston, various conference materials and U.U. Church materials from cities across the United States.

Series IV: Religion and Kinsey Report, Homophobia (includes religion and homophobia), Massachusetts Gay Rights Bill.

Series Va: Memorial Celebrations and Services 1980's – 1990's.

Series Vb: Greater Boston Lesbian/Gay Interfaith Coalition, Project 10 materials, documents pertaining to APA, homosexuality and psychology and psychiatry, general articles on sexuality, some newsprint (np), Massachusetts U.U. A church materials.

Series VI: Framed illustrations/service bulletins, materials on the Church and Social Problems (general), Campaign to End Homophobia materials, Boston LGBT organizations (Primetimers, Coalition on LGBT Youth).

SERIES AND FOLDER LIST

Box 1

Series I: Various documents and literature on various subjects (AIDS, Bisexuality, General literature about homophobia, misc.

- Folder 1-3: AIDS
- Folder 2: Alcoholism (LGBT focus)
- Folder 3: Bay Windows Advisory Board
- Folder 4-6: Bisexuality

- Folder 7: Family Protection Act
- Folder 8: Human Rights Charitable Foundation
- Folder 9: Boston Institute for Gay Studies
- Folder 10: Boston Lesbian/Gay Political Alliance
- Folder 11: Ferry Beach and GAYLA 90 Conference
- Folder 12: Unitarian Universalist Association
- Folder 13: Homophobia
- Folder 14: Ceremony of Separation
- Folder 15: Counseling/Counselors (transsexuals)
- Folder 16: C.L.U.M. Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts

Miscellaneous Literature (not in folders)

Box 2

Series II: LGBT marriage, pamphlets on LGBT youth, Advocate article on Bob Wheatly, photos, newspaper clippings.

- Folder 1: LGBT Marriage (planning guide Same Sex Holy Union, photos of Wheatly with wedding couples).
- Folder 2: Unitarian Universalist Association (U.U.A) general information
- Folder 3: Lesbian/Gay youth (pamphlets)
- Folder 4: Advocate Article on Bob Wheatly (November 1, 1978)
- Folder 5: Travel Information (Advertisements for gay clubs and bathhouses in various cities)
- Folder 6: Florida LGBT (gay rights, gay publications)
- Folder 7: Bob Wheatly (article "Out Front" Pittsburgh, PA, biographical notes on Wheatly)
- Folder 8: Photographs (general church functions, contact sheets)
- Folder 9: B&W Photographs Fenway Gay/Lesbian
- Folder 10: B&W Photographs Cambridge (Housing for the Elderly)
- Folder 11: Bob Wheatly Photographs (from 1938-, as a youth, Council on Aging, ordination, march)
- Folder 12: Washington March 1987 (U.U.A. presence at National March on Washington)
- Folder 13: Violence Against Gays and Lesbians (NGLTF anti-violence project)
- Folder 14: Lesbian/Gay Veterans (New England Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Veterans)
- Folder 15: Marco Vass (articles by Vass on Sexuality)
- Folder 16: Gay/Lesbian Clippings (misc. articles on G/L issues nationwide).
- Folder 17: Gay/Lesbian Clippings (most on violence/aging – needs photocopying and preservation)
- Folder 18: Wisconsin Speech by Wheatly (Wheatly's notes and speech on "Groundhogs and Fairies").

Box 3

Series III: Christian distortions and sexuality, Boston Pride Service 1986, Am Tikva, Dignity Boston, various conference materials and U.U. Church materials from cities across the United States.

- Folder 1: Christian Distortions and Sexuality (includes Wheatly Bio from Florida Newspaper; Dignity lawsuit against Catholic Archdiocese of Minneapolis).
- Folder 2: Boston Gay Pride Service (1986).

- Folder 3: An Orange Tree Grows in England (fight for human rights in England, note on homophobia).
- Folder 4: Gay Parenting
- Folder 5: Berdache (various articles)
- Folder 6: Gay Male Spirituality
- Folder 7: Am Tikva (LGBT Jewish Organization, Kol Am Tikva Newsletter 1991)
- Folder 8: Albany (1970's) (conferences and speeches)
- Folder 9: Atlanta (1970's) (materials)
- Folder 10: Dignity Boston (1985)
- Folder 11: Brewster, MA (1983)
- Folder 12: Briggs Initiative California
- Folder 13: Chicago (1989)
- Folder 14: Cleveland, Ohio (1979)
- Folder 15: Columbus, Ohio (1980)
- Folder 16: Concord, NH (1980)
- Folder 17: De Land, Fla (1983)
- Folder 18: Harvard University (Gay Awareness Day)
- Folder 19: Gay Seminarians Conference (1979)
- Folder 20: Falwell Harvard Speech
- Folder 21: Holyoke U.U.C. (1983)
- Folder 22: Houston, TX (1978)
- Folder 23: Houston/Dallas, TX (1981)
- Folder 24: Iowa City
- Folder 25: Jacksonville, FL
- Folder 26: Leominster (1982)
- Folder 27: Huntington, Long Island
- Folder 28: Mobile, AL (1985)
- Folder 29: Norfolk, MA (1979) (Gay Going on Grey)
- Folder 30: Norfolk, MA Conference (1980)
- Folder 31: Unitarian Universalist Gay Caucus (Norfolk 1976)

Box 4

Series IV: Religion and Kinsey Report, Homophobia (includes religion and homophobia), Massachusetts Gay Rights Bill.

- Folder 1: Kinsey 1948 Report (Religion and Kinsey Project)
- Folder 2: Misc. Correspondence
- Folder 3: Misc. Publications on Homosexuality
- Folder 4: Misc. LGBT Newspaper Articles
- Folder 5: A Crisis of Conscience: Homosexuals and the Church
- Folder 6: Homophobia
- Folder 7: Religion and Homosexuality
- Folder 8: 1970-1980 Gay Manifestos
- Folder 9: A Theology for Gays: Good Samaritan and the Gays
- Folder 10: U.U.A. Board Homophobia Workshop
- Folder 11: Humanism (Boston connection)
- Folder 12: National Interfaith LGBT Materials
- Folder 13: Arlington Street Church: Kim Crawford Harvie
- Folder 14: Kinsey Scale
- Folder 15: U.U.A. Lesbian/Gay Concerns
- Folder 16: Dallas (1990)
- Folder 17: U.U.L. Gay Concerns (Dallas 1990)
- Folder 18: U.U.L. Gay Concerns (Houston 1985)

- Folder 19: U.U.L.G.C. (Gay Concerns) Coordinating Committee
- Folder 20: U.U.L.G.C. Clergy Committee (March 1984)
- Folder 21: Massachusetts Legislation (1990)
- Folder 22: MA Lesbian/Gay Political Caucus
- Folder 23: Legislation 1989 (Gay Rights Bill)

Box 5

Series Va: Memorial Celebrations and Services 1980's – 1990's.

- Folder 1: U.U.A. Gay World Church Organization (District Conference Materials)
- Folder 2: Memorial Celebration: Robert McGill, Jr/Jake Vartabedian
- Folder 3: Memorial Celebration: Samuel Boraks
- Folder 4: Memorial Celebration: Arthur Bailey (6/12/1990)
- Folder 5: Memorial Celebration: Kenneth Bedeau/Tom Henkalin (3/1/1986)
- Folder 6: Memorial Celebration: Jane Chambers (poet, playwright, novelist) (2/19/1983)
- Folder 7: Memorial Celebration: Marion Latner (9/20/1989)
- Folder 8: Memorial Celebration: Melvina Grace (11/1/1993)
- Folder 9: Commitment Ceremony: Melvina Grace and Rollins Edwards (5/25/1984)
- Folder 10: Memorial Service: Clark Richardson (3/21/1978)
- Folder 11: Memorial Service: Curt Miller, Terry Sawyer, Dean McDowell, Jr., Richard Miller
- Folder 12: Memorial Service: Jeff Barmeyer (7/9/1979)
- Folder 13: Memorial Service: Burton Ross Pierce (12/6/1986)
- Folder 14: Memorial Service: Craig Miller (9/13/1988).
- Folder 15: Memorial Service: William Rogers (8/7/1986)
- Folder 16: Memorial Service: Seth Steeves (8/16/1987)
- Folder 17: Memorial Service: Thomas Conners III (8/21/1988)
- Folder 18: Memorial Service: Robert L. Donner (9/10/1988)
- Folder 19: Memorial Service: Charles Howard
- Folder 20: Memorial Service: Russell Koning (8/13/1989)
- Folder 21: Memorial Service: Hiram Nickerson (1/28/1987)
- Folder 22: Memorial Service: David Tatum (7/25/1986)
- Folder 23: Memorial Service: Katherine Peirce (8/22/1987)
- Folder 24: Memorial Service: Tillie Moore (3/24/1988)
- Folder 25: Memorial Service: Edith Shaffer (2/1/1986)
- Folder 26: Memorial Services: DeWolfe, Cross, Blair, Johnson)
- Folder 27: Memorial Service: Mark DeWolfe
- Folder 28: Memorial Service: Marilyn Drew (8/25/1989)
- Folder 29: Memorial Service: Ian Johnson (4/15/1989)
- Folder 30: Memorial Service: Allyn Amundson (3/1/1975)

Box 6

Series Vb: Greater Boston Lesbian/Gay Interfaith Coalition, Project 10 materials, documents pertaining to APA, homosexuality and psychology and psychiatry, general articles on sexuality, some newsprint (np), Massachusetts U.U. A church materials.

- Folder 1: Greater Boston Lesbian/Gay Interfaith Coalition (1994/1996)
- Folder 2: Greater Boston (LGBIC) Interfaith Coalition (1991/1992)
- Folder 3: Greater Boston (LGBIC) Interfaith Coalition (1977-1993 not inclusive)

- Folder 4: A Workshop on Prejudice Materials and Training
- Folder 5: Project 10 Materials; National; (1992) (includes Boston info on LGBT high school students, Project 10 East)
- Folder 6: Pornography/Obscenity Articles (all n.p.)
- Folder 7: Promiscuity
- Folder 8: Psychology/Psychiatry (includes info on APA; some n.p.)
(Newsletter of Gay Caucus has been removed temporarily)
- Folder 9: Committee on Civil Liberties and Sexual Freedom (Boston)
- Folder 10: Sex Role/Sexuality (includes 1975 Teachers Guide on Sex Role Stereotypes; 1942 Guide on Contraception Techniques; Alfred Kinsley article "Sexual Behavior in the Human Female.")
- Folder 11: Bisexuality
- Folder 12: Homophobia/Gay Weddings
- Folder 13: Office of Gay Concerns: Quotables and Letters (Acolades) (includes hate letter to U.U. World).
- Folder 14: U.U.A. Sharing for Growth
- Folder 15: Northborough, MA U.U.A.
- Folder 16: Northeast District U.U.A.
- Folder 17: North Shore Gay and Lesbian Alliance (5/26/81)
- Folder 18: Seacoast Gays, Portsmouth, NH (includes anti-gay tract sent to Wheatly)
- Folder 19: Wisconsin Sex Course, Racine, Wisconsin
- Folder 20: Raleigh, NC COLGE (4/1982)
- Folder 21: Eliot Church, Roxbury (1982/1987)
- Folder 22: Tallahassee, FL (1980)
- Folder 23: Somerville, NJ (1979)
- Folder 24: St. Lawrence District Meeting (1979)
- Folder 25: Tri-City Defense (2 folders A/B) (includes assault in city ordinances by conservative groups in St. Paul, Wichita, Eugene; some n.p.)
- Folder 26: U.U.A. Kings Chapel (1977/1982)
- Folder 27: Washington State (1978)
- Folder 28: Inadequacy of Individualism (includes some n.p. Reference to Kent State U. Shootings during Vietnam Era)
- Folder 29: On being Hep on Religion; Westborough (1969)
- Folder 30: West Newton (1986)
- Folder 31: Winchester, MA U.U.A.M.A. (1984/1985)
- Folder 32: WOR TV New York City (1982) (U.U.A. On the Air; Talk Show: *Religion on the Line*)
- Folder 33: Worcester Dignity Meeting (1984/1986)

Box 7

Series VI: Framed illustrations/service bulletins, materials on the Church and Social Problems (general), Campaign to End Homophobia materials, Boston LGBT organizations (PrimeTimers, Coalition on LGBT Youth).

Framed Illustration, Stonewall Riots by Andrea Natalie (Adam, Eve and Steve)
Framed Bulletin, Boston Gay Religious Coalition (1st Interfaith Gay and Lesbian Worship Service)

- Folder 1: Gay Rights Legislation, Massachusetts 1987/1988 (includes n.p., includes information on state legislators, Globe articles, arrest of gay

- protesters at MA Senate, Statement in "Support of the Gay Rights Bill—A Statement of Clergy, Rabbis, and Religious Professionals)
- Folder 2: LGBT Parenting
- Folder 3: Ministerial Responsibility for Social Concerns (some materials from 1960's, includes n.p.) (Flag for Possible Exclusion from Wheatly LGBT Collection)
- Folder 4: The Church and Social Problems (1960's) (Flag for Possible Exclusion from LGBT Materials)
- Folder 5: The South (Flag for Possible Exclusion from LGBT Materials)
- Folder 6: South Boston and St. Patrick's Day Parade/Gay Rights dispute (1992)
- Folder 7: Campaign to End Homophobia (materials, Cooper Thompson)
- Folder 8: TV Evangelists (includes clippings on Tammy Faye and Jim Bakker)
- Folder 9: GLSEN Conference (includes materials on LGBT Youth)
- Folder 10: Drag (limited to one page)
- Folder 11: 1st Church of Unitarian Universalist, MA
- Folder 12: Barney Frank (controversary over personal assistant (1989)
- Folder 13: Gay GA and GAYLA Conferences (1990's)
- Folder 14: National Association for L/G Gerontology (1980's)
- Folder 15: Lesbian and Gay Gerontology Conference (Carson, CA. 1980's)
- Folder 16: Harwick Case (includes NGLTF map of states with sodomy laws; Bowers v. Hardwick 478 U.S. _____, 106 S.Ct.2841 (1986)
- Folder 17: Freedom to Marry Coalition (includes signers to the declaration of religious support, May 2001)
- Folder 18: BAGLY (include materials from early 1990's, some n.p.
- Folder 19: BUUGL – Boston Unitarian Universalist Gays and Lesbians (includes some correspondence to Wheatly)
- Folder 20: Cambridge Lavender Alliance (includes materials on domestic partnership ordinance, some n.p.)
- Folder 21: Prime Timers (includes membership rosters from 1990's-2000's, aging materials, Boston aging concerns, by-laws)
- Folder 22: Gay and Lesbian Speakers Bureau (includes *The Speaker* newsletter, Speakers Bureau Manual, 1984, and training materials)
- Folder 23: The Boston Coalition for GLBT Youth (A) (includes some n.p., clipping of Virginia Uribe, Project 10, 1990, foster care ban lifting, Echos History Journal – Special Issue *Perspectives on Gay History and Homophobia*)
- Folder 24: The Boston Coalition for GLBT Youth (B) (New England)
- Folder 25: LGBT Veterans (limited to 2 items)
- Folder 26: Above Ground Records, Inc. Materials Bob Wheatly, sponsor