

RORABACK, CATHERINE G., 1920-2007.
Catherine G. Roraback papers, 1900-2010, undated

Emory University
Emory Law Archives
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Descriptive Summary

Creator: Roraback, Catherine G., 1920-2007.
Title: Catherine G. Roraback papers, 1900-2010, undated
Call Number: L-028
Extent: 31.43 linear ft. (18 boxes) and 19 oversized papers (OP)
Abstract: Papers of attorney and civil rights activist Catherine G. Roraback including correspondence, printed material, notes, photographs, and memorabilia.
Language: Materials entirely in English.

Administrative Information

Restrictions on Access

Unrestricted access. Some material in Series 2: Case Files and Legal Documents and Series 7: Awards and Collected Material are restricted due to attorney-client privilege.

Terms Governing Use and Reproduction

All requests subject to limitations noted in departmental policies on reproduction.

Related Materials in This Repository

Feminism and Legal Theory Project Records, L-015.

Source

Gift, 2012.

Citation

[after identification of item(s)], Catherine G. Roraback Papers, Emory Law Archives, Hugh F. MacMillan Law Library, Emory University.

Processing

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Collection Description

Biographical Note

Catherine G. Roraback (1920-2007), attorney and civil liberties activist. She was born to the Rev. Albert and Gertrude Dittmars Roraback in Brooklyn, New York on September 17, 1920. Her father, a Congregational minister, came from a family of lawyers in Litchfield County, Connecticut. She graduated from Mount Holyoke College in 1941 with a degree in economics. In 1948 she graduated from Yale Law School, where she was the only woman in her class.

Roraback developed a civil and criminal trial practice in New Haven, Connecticut and later in Canaan, Connecticut, where she took over her uncle's practice upon his death in 1955. She helped to found the Connecticut Civil Liberties Union in 1948 and acted as legal counsel to Planned Parenthood of Connecticut. She was also active in the National Lawyers Guild, and she served on the board of the American Civil Liberties Union.

During her 50 year career, she litigated several major cases, including *Griswold v. Connecticut*, which overturned a Connecticut law that banned the prescription and use of contraceptives. *Griswold* established a constitutional right to privacy, and it laid the foundation for the landmark abortion rights case of *Roe v. Wade*.

In 1971 she defended Ericka Huggins, a Black Panther Party member accused of murdering a fellow party member in New Haven. Huggins was freed when a mistrial was declared because the jury could not reach a unanimous verdict; they had voted 10-2 for acquittal. Shortly thereafter, in 1974, Roraback defended Peter Reilly, a young Connecticut man, on a charge of murdering his mother. Roraback demonstrated that some of the evidence against Reilly was illegally obtained, and she was able to form the basis of an appeal which granted Reilly a new trial. This high-profile case revealed many abuses by the Connecticut State Police.

Roraback received many honors throughout her career, including awards from the National Abortion Rights Action League, Planned Parenthood of Connecticut, and the Connecticut National Organization for Women. She was inducted into the Connecticut Women's Hall of Fame in 2001.

Catherine Roraback died on October 17, 2007 in Salisbury, Connecticut.

Scope and Content Note

The Catherine G. Roraback papers include correspondence, printed material, notes, photographs, and memorabilia dating from 1900-2004. The bulk of the collection is collected printed material related to the Black Panthers and the trial of Ericka Huggins. Printed material from the 1970s pro-choice campaigns conducted by the American Civil Liberties Union is also present. There is relatively little material on the birth control cases of the late 1950s and early 1960s, but the collection contains some correspondence about *Griswold v. Connecticut* and *Trubek v. Ullman*.

Arrangement Note

Organized into eight series: (1) Biographical material, (2) Case Files and Legal Documents, (3) New Haven Black Panther Trials, (4) Publications, (5) Subject Files, (6) Photographs, (7) Awards and Collected Material, and (8) Audiovisual Material.

Description of Series

[Series 1: Biographical material, 1971-2001, undated](#)

[Series 2: Case Files and Legal Documents, 1942-2010, undated](#)

[Series 3: New Haven Black Panther Trials, 1967-1992](#)

[Series 4: Publications, 1942-1989](#)

[Series 5: Subject files, 1965-1993](#)

[Series 6: Photographs, circa 1900-1990, undated](#)

[Series 7: Awards and Collected Material, 1975-2001](#)

[Series 8: Audiovisual Material, 1971-2004, undated](#)

Series 1
Biographical material, 1971-2001, undated
Box 1, OP 1

Scope and Content Note

This series contains programs correspondence, a curriculum vitae, and a transcript of an interview with Roraback.

Arrangement Note

Arranged alphabetically and chronologically therein.

Box	Folder	Content
1	1	Correspondence, 1971-1989
1	2	Correspondence, 1995-2001, undated
1	3	Curriculum vitae, undated
1	4	Transcript of interview with Roraback, undated
OP1	1	Newspaper articles, 1932
OP1	2	Newspaper articles, 1961-1978
OP1	3	Newspaper articles, 1982-1987
OP1	4	Newspaper articles, 1994-2004, undated

Series 2
Case Files and Legal Documents, 1942-2010, undated
Boxes 1-4

Scope and Content Note

This series contains files from court cases in which Roraback participated or researched, as well as court briefs from Connecticut, New Jersey, New York, and the United States Supreme Court. Some material has been removed due to the restriction regarding attorney-client privilege, including notes from the case *Abele v. Markle* and the 1979 agreement between Women's Health Services and Yale University.

Arrangement Note

Arranged alphabetically and chronologically therein.

Case Files

Box	Folder	Content
1	5	<i>Griswold v. Connecticut</i> , 1963-1990
1	6	<i>Maher v. Roe</i> , 1975-1984
1	7	Peter Reilly case, 1974-1977
1	8	<i>Trubek v. Ullman</i> , 1959-2010, undated
1	9	<i>United States v. Saxe</i> , 1975-1976
1	10	<i>Women's Health Services v. Maher</i> , 1979

Legal Documents

2	1	"Current Status of Birth Control in the U.S.," appendix to testimony of Harriet F. Philpel, Planned Parenthood, 1964
2	2	State of Connecticut court briefs, 1954, 1973
2	3	State of Connecticut, New Haven county court briefs, 1942-1943
2	4	State of Connecticut, New Haven county court briefs (1 of 2), 1959
2	5	State of Connecticut, New Haven county court briefs (2 of 2), 1959
2	6	State of Connecticut, New Haven county court briefs, 1960-1963
2	7	State of Connecticut, New Haven county court briefs, 1964-1986
2	8	State of New Jersey court brief: <i>Young Women's Association of Princeton v. Kugler</i> , 1970
2	9	New York State Court of Appeals briefs, 1972
3	1	United States Supreme Court briefs, 1942, 1959-1960
3	2	United States Supreme Court briefs, 1960
3	3	United States Supreme Court briefs (1 of 2), 1964
3	4	United States Supreme Court briefs (2 of 2), 1964
3	5	United States Supreme Court briefs, 1970-1973
4	1	United States Supreme Court brief: <i>Roe v. Wade</i> , 1971
4	2	United States Supreme Court brief: <i>Doe v. Bolton</i> , 1971

- 4 3 United States Supreme Court briefs, 1975
- 4 4 United States Supreme Court briefs, 1975-1976
- 4 5 United States Court of Appeals brief, *United States v. Bornemann*, 1968

Series 3
New Haven Black Panther Trials, 1967-1992
Box 5; OP 2-10, 19

Scope and Content Note

This series consists primarily of printed material related to the trial of Black Panther member Ericka Huggins. Roraback defended Huggins in this high-profile murder case, which took place in New Haven, Connecticut. Black Panther chairman Bobby Seale was Huggins' co-defendant. Huggins was freed in 1972. The bulk of the series is made up of Black Panther newspapers; other items include posters, flyers, and pamphlets.

Arrangement Note

Arranged alphabetically by material type.

Box	Folder	Content
5	1	Court brief with Roraback's notes, 1970 October 30
5	2	Ephemera and other papers, circa 1970
5	3	Essays, 1988, 1992
5	4	Newspaper clippings, 1969 June-November
5	5	Newspaper clippings, 1969 November-December
5	6	Newspaper clippings, 1970 January-February
5	7	Newspaper clippings, 1970 February-March
5	8	Newspaper clippings, 1970 April
5	9	Newspaper clippings, 1970 April-May
5	10	Newspaper clippings, 1970 May-June
5	11	Newspaper clippings (1 of 2), 1971
5	12	Newspaper clippings (2 of 2), 1971
5	13	Newspaper clippings, undated
5	14	Publication: New York Magazine, 1970 November 16
OP2	1	Publication: "The Black Panther: Black Community News Service," 1967-1968
OP2	2	Publication: "The Black Panther: Black Community News Service," 1969 January-February
OP2	3	Publication: "The Black Panther: Black Community News Service," 1969 March
OP2	4	Publication: "The Black Panther: Black Community News Service," 1969 April
OP3	1	Publication: "The Black Panther: Black Community News Service," 1969 May- June
OP3	2	Publication: "The Black Panther: Black Community News Service," 1969 July- August
OP3	3	Publication: "The Black Panther: Black Community News Service," 1969 August-September
OP4	1	Publication: "The Black Panther: Black Community News Service," 1969 September

- OP4 2 Publication: "The Black Panther: Black Community News Service," 1969
October
- OP4 3 Publication: "The Black Panther: Black Community News Service," 1969
November
- OP5 1 Publication: "The Black Panther: Black Community News Service," 1969
December-1970 January
- OP5 2 Publication: "The Black Panther: Black Community News Service," 1970
February-March
- OP5 3 Publication: "The Black Panther: Black Community News Service," 1970 March-
April
- OP5 4 Publication: "The Black Panther: Black Community News Service," 1970 May
- OP6 1 Publication: "The Black Panther: Black Community News Service," 1970 June
- OP6 2 Publication: "The Black Panther: Black Community News Service," 1970 July
- OP6 3 Publication: "The Black Panther: Black Community News Service," 1970 August
- OP6 4 Publication: "The Black Panther: Black Community News Service," 1970
September
- OP6 5 Publication: "The Black Panther: Black Community News Service," 1970
October
- OP7 1 Publication: "The Black Panther: Black Community News Service," 1970
December-1971 January
- OP7 2 Publication: "The Black Panther: Black Community News Service," 1971
February
- OP7 3 Publication: "The Black Panther: Black Community News Service," 1971 March-
April
- OP8 1 Publication: "Committee to Defend the Panthers," circa 1970
- OP8 2 Publication: "Counter Attack: New Haven Panther Defense Committee," circa
1970
- OP8 3 Hartford Courant, 1971-1972
- OP8 4 Modern Times, 1971 February
- OP9 1 New Haven Register, 1971 May
- OP9 2 New Haven Journal-Courier, 1970-1971
- OP10 1 New York Times, 1971
- OP10 2 Yale Daily News, 1970 November 23
- OP10 3 Yale Daily News, 1970 November 24
- OP19 Rolled item: poster for the John Huggins Free Breakfast Program, circa 1970x

Series 4
Publications, 1942-1989
Boxes 6-7

Scope and Content Note

This series contains a collection of publications related to family planning and women's rights, including several editions of *Women's Rights Law Reporter* and *Family Planning/Population Reporter*.

Arrangement Note

Arranged alphabetically, and chronologically therein.

Box	Folder	Content
6	1	"A Survey of Research on Reproduction Related to Birth and Population Control," by the U.S. Department of Health, 1963
6	2	ACLU Speakers Manual on Abortion, 1982
6	3	ACLU Women's Rights Report, 1981
6	4	Alert: Women's Legislative Review, 1973
6	5	Citizens Advisory Council on the Status of Women, 1970, 1972
6	6	Connecticut Women's Political Caucus, 1973 June 6
6	7	"The Development of Commonwealth Abortion Laws," 1979 July
6	8	<i>Family Planning/Population Reporter</i> , 1976-1978 August
6	9	<i>Family Planning/Population Reporter</i> , 1978 October-1979
6	10	<i>Family Planning/Population Reporter</i> , 1980-1981
6	11	"Griswold and Women's Health: What Have We Learned?" by Frederick S. Jaffe, 1975
6	12	" <i>Griswold v. Connecticut</i> : A Brief Case History," 1989
6	13	New York Law Forum: "The Phoenix of Abortional Freedom," by Cyril C. Means Jr., 1971
6	14	"Nine Justices in Search of a Doctrine," by Thomas Emerson, 1965
6	15	Ohio Northern University Law Review, 1989
6	16	Sister: New Haven Women's Liberation newsletter, 1973 March
6	17	"Techniques of Conception Control," by R. L. Dickinson, 1942
7	1	<i>Women's Rights Law Reporter</i> , 1971, 1977
7	2	<i>Women's Rights Law Reporter</i> , 1978
7	3	<i>Women's Rights Law Reporter</i> , 1979
7	4	<i>Women's Rights Law Reporter</i> , 1979-1980
7	5	<i>Women's Rights Law Reporter</i> , 1981-1982
7	6	<i>Women's Rights Law Reporter</i> , 1982

Series 5
Subject files, 1965-1993
Boxes 8-13

Scope and Content Note

This series contains material related to Catherine Roraback's involvement in civil liberties and women's rights organizations including the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), Connecticut Civil Liberties Union (CCLU), and Planned Parenthood of Connecticut. Also included are documents from conferences and speaking engagements Roraback attended, and general subject files on Robert Bork, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, and Catherine MacKinnon.

Arrangement Note

Arranged alphabetically by subject.

Associations and Organizations

Box	Folder	Content
8	1	ACLU Affirmative Action Committee, 1979-1982
8	2	ACLU Board of Directors, 1973-1980, undated
8	3	ACLU Constitutional Convention, 1971-1980, undated
8	4	ACLU Regional Pro-Choice Strategy, 1978, undated
8	5	ACLU Reproductive Freedom Project, 1976-1982
8	6	ACLU Women's Rights Committee, 1975-1978, undated
8	7	CCLU Board of Directors, 1977-1978
8	8	CCLU Legislative Hearings, 1972-1981, undated
8	9	CONN-NARAL, 1979-1980, undated
8	10	Connecticut International Women's Year Committee, 1982
8	11	Connecticut Women's Education and Legal Fund, 1979-1980
8	12	National Committee on the Observance of International Women's Year, 1977
8	13	Planned Parenthood of Connecticut, abortion clinic protests, 1977-1978
9	1	Planned Parenthood of Connecticut, Griswold anniversary, 1990
9	2	Planned Parenthood of Connecticut, Oral History Project, 1997-1998
9	3	Womenpower Coalition, 1980

Biographical Files

9	4	Bork, Robert, 1987
9	5	Ginsburg, Ruth Bader, 1993
9	6	MacKinnon, Catherine (1 of 2), 1985-1993
9	7	MacKinnon, Catherine (2 of 2), 1985-1993

Conferences and Speaking Engagements

9	8	Association for the Study of Connecticut History, 1999
9	9	Connecticut Public Television, 1993-1994

- 9 10 *Griswold v. Connecticut* symposium, 1991
- 9 11 National Lawyers Guild (1 of 2), 1977-1992
- 9 12 National Lawyers Guild (2 of 2), 1977-1992
- 9 13 Preparing Women for the 90s (conference), 1981
- 9 14 Redefining Motherhood Conference, 1993
- 9 15 Women and the Law, 1975
- 9 16 Women and the Law, 1976
- 9 17 Women and the Law, 1977, 1989
- 9 18 Women in Litigation, 1994
- 10 1 Women in the Legal Profession, 1995 November

Feminism and Legal Theory Project

- 10 2 Direction and Distortion: The Centrality of Sexuality in the Shaping of Feminist Legal Theory, summer conference, 1994 June
- 10 3 Discrimination and Inequality, workshop, 1998 November
- 10 4 Feminism Confronts Economic Theory, workshop, 1995 February
- 10 5 Feminism Confronts Economic Theory, workshop, 1996 November
- 10 6 Feminism Confronts Economic Theory, workshop (1 of 2), 1997 March
- 11 1 Feminism Confronts Economic Theory, workshop (2 of 2), 1997 March
- 11 2 Feminism, Law, and the Media Conference, 1993 December
- 11 3 Feminist Economic Theory and the Difference it Makes, workshop, 1997 December
- 11 4 Economic Discourse and the Family, workshop, 1998 March
- 12 1 Parents and Children: Evolving Issues in Reproductive Rights and Relationships, workshop, 1994 March
- 12 2 Re-Exploring Questions of Essentialism, workshop, 1994 November
- 12 3 Women, Children, and Poverty, workshop, 1995 June
- 12 4 Women in the Academy, workshop, 1996 March

Teaching Material

- 12 5 Concepts of Public and Private: The Individual and the Law, Professors Jean Cohen and Martha Fineman, Volume 1, 1996
- 13 1 Concepts of Public and Private: The Individual and the Law, Professors Jean Cohen and Martha Fineman, Volumes 2 and 3, 1996
- 13 2 Concepts of Public and Private: The Individual and the Law, Professors Jean Cohen and Martha Fineman, Volume 4, 1996
- 13 3 Concepts of Public and Private: The Individual and the Law, Professors Jean Cohen and Martha Fineman, Volume 5, 1996
- 13 4 Concepts of Public and Private: The Individual and the Law, Professors Jean Cohen and Martha Fineman, Volume 6, 1996

- 13 5 Concepts of Public and Private: The Individual and the Law, Professors Jean Cohen and Martha Fineman, Volume 7, 1996
- 13 6 Concepts of Public and Private: The Individual and the Law, Professors Jean Cohen and Martha Fineman, Volume 8, 1996
- 13 7 Concepts of Public and Private: The Individual and the Law, Professors Jean Cohen and Martha Fineman, Volume 9, 1996
- 13 8 Concepts of Public and Private: The Individual and the Law, Professors Jean Cohen and Martha Fineman, general notes, 1996

Other Papers

- 13 9 Unsorted material, 1975-1994

Series 6
Photographs, circa 1900-1990, undated
Box 14

Scope and Content Note

The collection includes a small number of photographs, mostly from the 1960s and 1970s. This series contains both amateur snapshots and professionally produced images.

Arrangement Note

Arranged chronologically.

Box	Folder	Content
14	1	View of Canaan, Connecticut, circa 1900
14	2	Roraback with Estelle Griswold at police station (reproduction), 1961
14	3	Roraback with Thomas Emerson, 1968
14	4	Roraback at her desk (reproduction), 1970
14	5	Bobby Seale outside courtroom with press and police, 1971
14	6	Roraback with Ericka Huggins embracing a supporter, 1972
14	7	Ericka Huggins with two supporters, circa 1972
14	8	Roraback receiving award from Connecticut Bar Association, 1975
14	9	Roraback with colleagues at the National Lawyers Guild Convention, 1980, 1990
14	10	Roraback receiving award, undated
14	11	Thomas Emerson, undated

Series 7
Awards and Collected Material, 1975-2001
Boxes 14-17; OP11-18

Scope and Content Note

This series includes certificates, plaques, and trophies awarded to Roraback for her contributions to women's rights and human rights. Pins, medals, artwork, and textiles are also contained here.

Arrangement Note

Arranged by size.

Box	Folder	Content
14	12	Award: Hardcover compilation of correspondence presented to Roraback at a reception in her honor, 1968 May 23
14	13	Awards, 1978-1998
14	14	Awards, 2001-2002, undated
14	15	Flyers, 1970
14	16	Book, <i>If They Come in the Morning</i> , by Angela Y. Davis, 1971
14	17	Abortion pamphlets, circa 1980
14	18	Bumper stickers, undated
14	19	"Women Who Dare" knowledge cards, produced by the Library of Congress, undated

Textiles

OP11	Canvas bag - National Abortion Rights Action League (NARAL)
OP11	T-Shirt - American Civil Liberties Union
OP11	T-Shirt - Connecticut Women's Education and Legal Fund
OP11	T-Shirt - International Women's Year, 1975
OP11	T-Shirt - New Haven Women's Liberation, 2000 October 7
OP11	T-Shirt - Planned Parenthood
OP11	T-Shirt - Thelma and Louise Finishing School Graduate
OP11	T-Shirt - Women's Emergency Services, Inc.
OP11	T-Shirt - Women's Rights National Historical Park
OP11	T-Shirt - 11th National Conference on Women and the Law, San Francisco, 1980 February 28-March 2
OP11	T-Shirt - 12th National Conference on Women and the Law
OP11	T-Shirt - 20th National Conference on Women and the Law, Oakland, California, 1989 March 30-April 2

Awards

15	Connecticut Women's Hall of Fame Inductee Award, 2001
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- 15 National Lawyers Guild 55th Annual Convention Banquet Honoring Past Women Presidents, 1992 August 8
- 15 Honorary award commemorating the 40th anniversary of *Griswold v. Connecticut*, presented by the National Family Planning and Reproductive Health Association
- 15 Planned Parenthood of Connecticut appreciation award, 1985
- 15 Honorary award presented by the Women in the Law Committee of the Connecticut Bar Association Young Lawyers Section, 2005 June 15
- 16 Desk pen holder, from the Planned Parenthood League of Connecticut, 1965 June 7
- 16 National Lawyers Guild Founder glass plaque, circa 1987
- OP12 Citation from the Connecticut Bar Association Committee on the Status of Women, 1975 October 23
- OP12 Equality Award presented by the Connecticut Chapters UNA-USA, International Woman's Year Award, 1975
- OP13 Certificate of Honor presented by the Soroptimist International of the Americas, Women of Distinction, 1993 June 7
- OP13 Certificate of Honor presented by the Soroptimist International of the Americas, Women Helping Women, 1993 June 7
- OP14 Catherine Roraback Award, established by the Connecticut National Abortion Rights Action League, 1980 January 20
- OP14 Feminist Leadership Award, presented by the Connecticut National Organization of Women, 1998 March
- OP15 Distinguished Service Award to the State Bar, presented by the Editorial Board of the Connecticut Law Tribune, 1992 April 1
- OP15 Susan B. Anthony Award, presented by the South Central Chapter of the National Organization of Women, 1985 February 15
- OP16 Honorary award presented by the National Lawyers Guild of Northern Connecticut, 1987 October
- OP16 *Griswold v. Connecticut* commemorative award presented by the Planned Parenthood League of Connecticut, 1977
- OP17 Fifth Annual Award for Distinguished Service to the State Bar, presented by the Connecticut Law Tribune, 1992
- OP17 "In Honor of Past Women Presidents," from the National Lawyers Guild Child Care, 1992

Other Material

- 17 Memorabilia pins and medals,
- OP18 Peace, Equality, Development: in celebration of distinguished women in the State of Connecticut, from Ella Grasso, 1976 January 28
- OP18 Framed cartoon, reads "Being Legal Isn't Enough," undated

Series 8
Audiovisual Material, 1971-2004, undated
Box 18

Scope and Content Note

Contains 14 audio cassette tapes related to Catherine Roraback's career and women's rights, as well as interviews with Roraback.

Arrangement Note

Arranged alphabetically by title.

Box	Folder	Content
18		Cassette: "Catherine Roraback," Yale Divinity School symposium, circa 1971-1972
18		Cassette: "CT Bar Foundation," 2004 May 4
18		Cassette: "Ericka's poetry," 1971 May
18		Cassette: "KFRU, Columbia, MO, Catherine Roraback, Supreme Court Vacancy," 2005 July 8
18		Cassette: "Redefining Motherhood," Hanover, tape 2, 1993 May
18		Cassette: "Redefining Motherhood," Hanover, tape 10, 1993 May
18		Cassette: "Roots of Roe radio series, up to 1965 - Griswold," undated
18		Cassette: "Sex Discrimination - Jury Selection," (2 cassettes) undated
18		Cassette: "WKZE, Side A., Dale Jones Interview, Abortion," 1992 August 14
18		Cassette: "Women as Criminal Lawyers," undated
18		Cassette: "Women as Criminal Lawyers, with Barbara Babcock?" undated
18		Cassette: "Women in Trial Practice, Women and Law," 1976
18		Cassette: "20th National Conference on Women and the Law," undated
