Catherine G. Roraback papers, 1900-2010, undated

Emory University
Emory Law Archives
Hugh F. MacMillan Law Library
1301 Clifton Road
Atlanta, GA 30322
404-727-0059

Descriptive Summary

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
Processed by Joanna C.D. Rogers, 2012.
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
Description of Series

Series 1: Biographical material, 1971-2001, undated
Series 2: Case Files and Legal Documents, 1942-2010, undated
Series 5: Subject files, 1965-1993
Series 6: Photographs, circa 1900-1990, 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box</th>
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<th>Content</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Correspondence, 1971-1989</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Correspondence, 1995-2001, undated</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Curriculum vitae, undated</td>
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<td>Transcript of interview with Roraback, undated</td>
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<td>OP1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Newspaper articles, 1932</td>
</tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Newspaper articles, 1961-1978</td>
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<td>Newspaper articles, 1982-1987</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Newspaper articles, 1994-2004, undated</td>
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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

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<td><em>Maher v. Roe</em>, 1975-1984</td>
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<td>Peter Reilly case, 1974-1977</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td><em>Trubek v. Ullman</em>, 1959-2010, undated</td>
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<td><em>Women’s Health Services v. Maher</em>, 1979</td>
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</table>

Legal Documents

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<tr>
<td>2</td>
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<td>&quot;Current Status of Birth Control in the U.S.,&quot; appendix to testimony of Harriet F. Philpel, Planned Parenthood, 1964</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>State of Connecticut, New Haven county court briefs, 1942-1943</td>
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<td>State of Connecticut, New Haven county court briefs (1 of 2), 1959</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>State of Connecticut, New Haven county court briefs (2 of 2), 1959</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>State of New Jersey court brief: <em>Young Women’s Association of Princeton v. Kugler</em>, 1970</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>New York State Court of Appeals briefs, 1972</td>
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<td>United States Supreme Court briefs, 1942, 1959-1960</td>
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<td>United States Supreme Court briefs, 1970-1973</td>
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<td>United States Supreme Court brief: <em>Roe v. Wade</em>, 1971</td>
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<td>United States Supreme Court brief: <em>Doe v. Bolton</em>, 1971</td>
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<td>United States Supreme Court briefs, 1975</td>
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<td>United States Supreme Court briefs, 1975-1976</td>
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Series 3
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.

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<td>Court brief with Roraback's notes, 1970 October 30</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Ephemera and other papers, circa 1970</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Essays, 1988, 1992</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Newspaper clippings, 1969 June-November</td>
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<td>Newspaper clippings, 1969 November-December</td>
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<td>Newspaper clippings, 1970 January-February</td>
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<td>Newspaper clippings, 1970 February-March</td>
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<td>Newspaper clippings, 1970 April</td>
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<td>Newspaper clippings, 1970 April-May</td>
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<td>Newspaper clippings, 1970 May-June</td>
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<td>Newspaper clippings (1 of 2), 1971</td>
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<td>OP3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Publication: &quot;The Black Panther: Black Community News Service,&quot; 1969 August-September</td>
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OP4  2  October
OP4  3  November
OP5  1  December-1970 January
OP5  2  February-March
OP5  3  1970 March-April
OP5  4  May
OP6  1  June
OP6  2  July
OP6  3  August
OP6  4  September
OP6  5  October
OP7  1  December-1971 January
OP7  2  February
OP7  3  March-April
OP8  1  "Committee to Defend the Panthers," circa 1970
OP8  3  Hartford Courant, 1971-1972
OP8  4  Modern Times, 1971 February
OP9  1  New Haven Register, 1971 May
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.

<table>
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<td>ACLU Speakers Manual on Abortion, 1982</td>
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<td>ACLU Women's Rights Report, 1981</td>
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<td>Alert: Women's Legislative Review, 1973</td>
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<td>Connecticut Women's Political Caucus, 1973 June 6</td>
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<td>&quot;The Development of Commonwealth Abortion Laws,&quot; 1979 July</td>
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<td>Family Planning/Population Reporter, 1976-1978 August</td>
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<td>&quot;Griswold and Women's Health: What Have We Learned?&quot; by Frederick S. Jaffe, 1975</td>
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<td>&quot;Nine Justices in Search of a Doctrine,&quot; by Thomas Emerson, 1965</td>
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<td>Ohio Northern University Law Review, 1989</td>
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<td>Sister: New Haven Women's Liberation newsletter, 1973 March</td>
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<td>&quot;Techniques of Conception Control,&quot; by R. L. Dickinson, 1942</td>
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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

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<td>ACLU Affirmative Action Committee, 1979-1982</td>
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<td>ACLU Board of Directors, 1973-1980, undated</td>
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<td>ACLU Constitutional Convention, 1971-1980, undated</td>
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<td>ACLU Regional Pro-Choice Strategy, 1978, undated</td>
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<td>ACLU Reproductive Freedom Project, 1976-1982</td>
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<td>ACLU Women's Rights Committee, 1975-1978, undated</td>
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<td>CCLU Board of Directors, 1977-1978</td>
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<td>CCLU Legislative Hearings, 1972-1981, undated</td>
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<td>CONN-NARAL, 1979-1980, undated</td>
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<td>Connecticut International Women's Year Committee, 1982</td>
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<td>Connecticut Women's Education and Legal Fund, 1979-1980</td>
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<td>National Committee on the Observance of International Women's Year, 1977</td>
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<td>Planned Parenthood of Connecticut, abortion clinic protests, 1977-1978</td>
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<td>Planned Parenthood of Connecticut, Griswold anniversary, 1990</td>
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<td>Womenpower Coalition, 1980</td>
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Biographical Files

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<td>9</td>
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<td>Bork, Robert</td>
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<td>Ginsburg, Ruth Bader</td>
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<td>MacKinnon, Catherine (1 of 2)</td>
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<td>MacKinnon, Catherine (2 of 2)</td>
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Conferences and Speaking Engagements

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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Association for the Study of Connecticut History</td>
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</table>
9  11  National Lawyers Guild (1 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  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**

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**Other Papers**

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<td>13 9</td>
<td>Unsorted material, 1975-1994</td>
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**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.

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

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<td>Award: Hardcover compilation of correspondence presented to Roraback at a reception in her honor, 1968 May 23</td>
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<td>Awards, 1978-1998</td>
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<td>Awards, 2001-2002, undated</td>
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<td>14</td>
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<td>Flyers, 1970</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
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<td>Book, <em>If They Come in the Morning</em>, by Angela Y. Davis, 1971</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Abortion pamphlets, circa 1980</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>Bumper stickers, undated</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
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<td>&quot;Women Who Dare&quot; knowledge cards, produced by the Library of Congress, undated</td>
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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 - 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
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
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 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box</th>
<th>Folder</th>
<th>Content</th>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
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<td>Cassette: &quot;CT Bar Foundation,&quot; 2004 May 4</td>
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<td>Cassette: &quot;Ericka's poetry,&quot; 1971 May</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<td>Cassette: &quot;KFRU, Columbia, MO, Catherine Roraback, Supreme Court Vacancy,&quot; 2005 July 8</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<td>Cassette: &quot;Redefining Motherhood,&quot; Hanover, tape 10, 1993 May</td>
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<td>Cassette: &quot;Roots of Roe radio series, up to 1965 - Griswold,&quot; undated</td>
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<td>Cassette: &quot;Sex Discrimination - Jury Selection,&quot; (2 cassettes) undated</td>
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<td>Cassette: &quot;WKZE, Side A., Dale Jones Interview, Abortion,&quot; 1992 August 14</td>
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<td>Cassette: &quot;Women as Criminal Lawyers,&quot; undated</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<td>Cassette: &quot;Women as Criminal Lawyers, with Barbara Babcock?&quot; undated</td>
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<td>Cassette: &quot;20th National Conference on Women and the Law,&quot; undated</td>
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