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LG MS 107 Karen Bye Papers

Katelynn Paul

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**Karen Bye Papers
LG-MS0107**

1973-1978

**Total Boxes: 2
Linear Feet: 0.75**

**By
Katelynn Paul**

**Portland, Maine
November 2022**

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Administrative Information

Provenance: The papers were donated in 2011 by Steven Bull.

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Cite as: Karen Bye Papers, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer+ Collection, Jean Byers Sampson Center for Diversity in Maine, Special Collections, University of Southern Maine Library.

Restrictions on access: This collection is open for research.

Biographical Note

Karen Bye was born and raised in Stonington, Maine on Deer Isle in 1952. Karen enrolled at the University of Maine's Orono campus, joining the class of 1975. Karen was a member of the queer community and went on to join Gay Support and Action (GSA), a community organization located in Bangor, Maine. Karen advocated for GSA to start a group at the university, but was initially denied. Nevertheless Karen persisted and continued to advocate, and eventually formed a group of students that would soon become the Wilde-Stein Club. Karen held the role of secretary, and had been known to say that the secretary is the most powerful person in the room. The Wilde-Stein Club became well known, and was often the subject of public attention and news publications. They eventually held the first Maine Gay Symposium at the Orono. Karen was also involved in the Maine Gay Task Force, and wrote for the monthly newsletter which began publishing in 1974. Karen's activism continued when she moved to Fresno, California, her home for the next forty years. Karen kept clippings of news regarding gay activism and community response both in Maine and California, and helped with the Wilde-Stein Democratic Club's formation in California. Karen passed away in 2013 in Portland, Maine.

Description of the Papers

The papers include chiefly newspaper clippings, and some brochures, voting guides, and flier, from 1973 to 1978. The collection chronologically captures both public perception and reception of the gay community during a time of expanding rights and conflict. The collection contains clippings from news articles about the formation of the Wilde-Stein Club in Maine, as well as reactions to the first ever Maine Gay Symposium. Letters to the editor show both support and dissent for the club and the symposium. The collection also holds clippings relevant to the Maine Gay Task Force, issues of religion, bisexuality, and celebrity involvement in opposition of gay student clubs. California voting issues around gay teachers, and gay advocates are detailed through voting guides, brochures, and articles. There are also several pamphlets on California and Maine gay bars, as well as opinion pieces on the impacts of gay bars on the community.

Box and Folder List

Box	Folder	Title/Description	Date Range
1	1	Clippings on Wilde-Steins, Abenaki Catalog	01/08/1973-01/01/1974
1	2	Clippings	03/01/1973-08/01/1975
1	3	Clippings on Wilde-Steins Conference	01/25/1974-02/07/1974
1	4	Clippings on Wilde-Steins, Public Reactions	02/07/1974-02/15/1974
1	5	Clippings on Wilde-Steins, UMO	02/15/1974-02/26/1974
1	6	Clippings	02/27/1974-03/07/1974
1	7	Clippings on UMO	03/07/1974-03/09/1974
1	8	Clippings, Symposium Schedule	03/09/1974-03/12/1974
1	9	Clippings	03/12/1974-03/14/1974
1	10	Clippings	03/14/1974-03/18/1974
1	11	Clippings	03/18/1974-03/20/1974
1	12	Clippings on Religion, Public Perceptions	03/21/1974-03/22/1974
1	13	Clippings	03/22/1974-03/25/1974
1	14	Clippings on UMO	04/04/1974-04/08/1974
1	15	Clippings	04/20/1974-04/23/1974
1	16	Clippings on Wilde-Stein Conference	04/26/1974-05/04/1974
1	17	Clippings on Wilde-Steins, Bisexuality, and UMO	05/07/1974-05/17/1974
1	18	Clippings on Amnesty, Opprobrium	05/18/1974-05/29/1974
1	19	Clippings, Flier from Wilde-Stein club	05/30/1974-11/03/1974
1	20	Clippings on National Gay Task Force, Wilde-Stein Conference	11/06/1974-04/08/1975

Box	Folder	Title/Description	Date Range
1	21	Clippings on Wilde-Steins Conference	12/20/1974-01/25/1975
1	22	Clippings on Letters to the Editor	04/08/1975-10/01/1976
1	23	Clippings, Lesbian Questionnaire Survey	10/15/1976-02/15/1977
1	24	Clippings	03/06/1977
1	25	Clippings, Flier from Gay People's Alliance, Counseling Center Maine, Brochure	04/20/1977-11/01/1977
2	26	Clippings on Anita Bryant, Flier from the Mainely Gays	01/13/1978-03/25/1978
2	27	Clippings, Flier from the Mainely Gays	03/28/1978-05/21/1978
2	28	Clippings on Religion, Flier from No on 6 Committee	05/22/1978-09/24/1978
2	29	Clippings, Fliers for Wilde-Stein Democratic Club, Pamphlet	09/25/1978-10/26/1978
2	30	Clippings, CA Voting Guide	10/03/1978-12/08/1978
2	31	Clippings on Prop. 6	10/26/1978-11/06/1978
2	32	Voter Guide, and Clippings on Prop. 6	11/01/1978-11/07/1978