



## Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum

[www.fordlibrarymuseum.gov](http://www.fordlibrarymuseum.gov)

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### CORE COLLECTIONS ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS, 1970s

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During the 1970s, debate over women's economic and civil rights, social role, and political power became a more prominent part of the public agenda. The Ford White House faced these issues in many guises: an Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, development of Title IX regulations barring sex discrimination in education, military academy admissions, abortion policy, and credit and property law, for examples. The substantive and the symbolic intertwined on such matters as the appointment of women, communication with women voters, and participation in the United Nations International Women's Year, 1975. First Lady Betty Ford was the focus of conflicting reactions and expectations for her candor on some social, political, and health issues. Throughout the Ford administration, women office-holders such as Housing Secretary Carla Hills, the first woman appointed to the Cabinet in 20 years, sought to exercise greater power on issues unrelated to gender.

Library (Ann Arbor) research room hours are 8:45 am to 4:45 pm, Monday through Friday except Federal holidays. The Library's website, [www.fordlibrarymuseum.gov](http://www.fordlibrarymuseum.gov), includes a rapidly growing **Digital Library** of materials scanned from our collections. The website also offers a comprehensive Guide to Collections, plus detailed inventories to all "open" collections.

Upon request, Library staff can provide detailed PRESNET database search reports locating files on specific topics. Call (734) 205-0555 or email [ford.library@nara.gov](mailto:ford.library@nara.gov).

#### **AMERICAN CITIZENS CONCERNED FOR LIFE, Inc.: Records, 1972-86**

The ACCL was a national membership organization with early ties to the National Right to Life Committee. These donated ACCL records focus on advocacy and education programs in especially the areas of abortion and women's health.

#### **DOMESTIC COUNCIL STAFF: Files, 1974-77**

Associate and assistant directors Judith Hope, Sarah Massengale, Kathleen Ryan, Pamela Needham, and Dawn Bennett-Alexander worked in the White House on a host of policy areas, a few of which, like Massengale's work on abortion and child welfare, were gender-related. Their colleague Richard Parsons worked closely on the first issuance of Title IX regulations. The microfilm papers of David Mathews, Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, are an important related collection.

#### **FIRST LADY'S STAFF: Files, 1974-77**

The varied political, ceremonial, and familial roles of the First Lady are recorded in the files of her staff: Sheila Weidenfeld (press secretary), Maria Downs (social secretary), Elizabeth

O'Neill (correspondence), Susan Porter (appointments), Russell Armentrout (state dinners, entertainment), and Frances Pullen (speechwriter).

*Our on-line **Digital Library** includes major portions of the Pullen Files, plus Mrs. Ford's activities calendar from the Susan Porter Files.*

Journal articles by two former Ford Library archivists highlight some of this material: Karen Rohrer, "If There Was Anything You Forgot to Ask...: The Papers of Betty Ford," *Prologue: Journal of the National Archives*, Summer 1987; and Leesa Tobin, "Betty Ford as First Lady: A Woman for Women," *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, Fall 1990

#### **POTTINGER, J. STANLEY: Papers, 1968-81**

Pottinger headed the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice. Earlier, he had headed the Office of Civil Rights at the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

#### **PRESIDENTIAL HANDWRITING FILE, 1974-77**

Materials composed or annotated by the President were retained by the Staff Secretary's Office and comprise this large collection. The folders "Human Rights-Women" are of direct interest, while material on the activities of appointed and elected women office-holders and the First Lady is scattered throughout this collection and most others.

#### **PRESIDENT FORD COMMITTEE: Records, 1975-78**

The PFC ran Ford's campaigns against Ronald Reagan to capture the Republican nomination and Jimmy Carter in the 1976 general election. Materials regarding women voters and related issues may be found here, as well as in many other campaign collections.

#### **WHITE HOUSE CENTRAL FILES (WHCF), 1974-77**

The WHCF was a vast file system shared by all White House staff. In the **WHCF-Subject File**, which is arranged under an alpha-numeric scheme, pertinent material is located under numerous headings. These include, for illustration: HU 2-5 Human Rights-Women; FG 399 International Women's Year; PP 5-1 Betty Ford; FA 3 Federal Aid-Education; and WE-3 Family Planning. In the **WHCF-Name File**, which is arranged alphabetically, one can search for material by name of person, corporation, or organization (exceptions include Federal Government agencies, appointed officials, and staff).

#### **WHITE HOUSE CENTRAL FILES (EAST WING)-Social Office & Bulk Mail Files, 1974-77**

Mrs. Ford promoted breast cancer awareness with groundbreaking candor about her own diagnosis and treatment; advocated passage for women of an Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution; and addressed controversial social issues in her CBS-TV *60 Minutes* interview and comments on pre-marital sex, marijuana, and abortion. An outpouring of public opinion mail gives voice, pro and con, to the reactions and concerns of everyday Americans.

#### **WHITE HOUSE COUNSEL'S OFFICE: Files, 1974-77**

The files of attorneys Kenneth Lazarus and Edward Schmults in part concern sex discrimination issues and the drafting of Title IX regulations. The Barry Roth Files extensively record a sex discrimination suit brought by a White House employee. The files of attorney Barbara Kilberg show her work on school desegregation, terrorism, Mideast trade, and other matters.

#### **WHITE HOUSE OFFICE OF WOMEN'S PROGRAMS: Files, 1974-77**

Presidential advisers Patricia Lindh and General Jeanne Holm successively directed this office. Their extensive files reflect their work as the main White House liaison with women's lobbies and organizations.

## **AUDIOVISUAL COLLECTIONS**

The White House Communications Agency (WHCA) videotaped, off-the-air, portions of network newscasts, public affairs programs, and news specials. WHCA also created audiotapes of many of Mrs. Ford's public remarks and all of the President's public remarks. White House photographers created a rich daily record of the Ford presidency in both public events and closed-door meetings. The President Ford Committee has left an extensive collection of campaign advertising. *All contact sheets of White House photos are available on-line in our **Digital Library**.*

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