

History of Sexuality:
Guide to Resources in Manuscripts and Archives
Yale University Library

19th century

**Charles McLean Andrews papers, 1723-1967 (inclusive), 1885-1956 (bulk) (MS 38)*

Evangeline Holcombe Walker Andrews' (1869-1962) voluminous letters to Charles are interesting as examples of middle-class language of courtship and romance in the late nineteenth-century.

[Finding aid](#)

**Beecher Family papers, 1704-1964 (inclusive), 1795-1948 (bulk) (MS 71)*

Annie Beecher Scoville (1866-1953) material includes correspondence from Katharine Lee Bates. Bates and Scoville maintained an intimate friendship for most of their adult lives. The two women met in the late 1880s at Wellesley College, where Scoville was a student and Bates a professor. Their correspondence in its early years (ca. 1883-1890) is filled with emotionally effusive expressions of desire, longing, betrayal, and secrecy. By the turn of the century, though, this ardor seems to have dissipated. Bates and Scoville's relationship evolved into a friendship centered around intellectual pursuits and the shared experience of being single, educated, independent women who did not define themselves according to conventional ideologies of family and gender.

Henry Ward Beecher (1813-1887) material includes correspondence, church records, and other materials relating to the Beecher-Tilton adultery scandal.

[Finding aid](#)

Albert Dodd papers, 1836-1844 (inclusive) (MS 1343)

Diary kept by Albert Dodd while at Yale College (1836-1837) describing his relations with men and women, a manuscript of his poetry (with printed engravings of Hoboken and Manhattanville), and three letters to his family from Bloomington, Illinois (1841-1844), where he had gone to practice law. The letters describe modes of travel, hunting, the habits of wolves, and conditions of health and hygiene in the area. Included also is Dodd's obituary from the Hartford Daily Times, June 1844.

[Finding aid](#)

Sheffield, Edward Chase papers, 1857-1858 (in Yale Miscellaneous Manuscripts MS 1258)

Includes a journal kept by Sheffield while a student at Yale in which he describes an intimate friendship with another male student.

[Finding aid](#)

John William Sterling papers, 1858-1918 (inclusive) (MS 1097)

The papers consist chiefly of journals (1853-1864) begun in Sterling's home in Stratford, Connecticut and including three of his years at Yale College, with loose sheets for the period April to July 1860, his freshman year. Sterling was a life-long bachelor, known to have lived with James Orville Bloss for fifty years. The journals pre-date the relationship, but have been referenced as evidence of Sterling's sexuality for one entry in the fall 1863 journal which reads "Last night I slept with John Mitchell..."

Early 20th century (ca. 1900-1959)

Louise Bryant papers (MS 1840)

Bryant, the left-wing journalist and writer, was a major figure among intellectual circles and bohemian communities in Paris and New York in the 1910s-1930s. An advocate of socialism, woman suffrage, and free love, she consciously sought to transgress conventional gender roles in her personal as well as professional life. She was married twice, first to journalist John Reed and then to diplomat William Bullitt. Bryant's heterosexual romances – which were filled with turbulence and emotional intensity – are also extensively documented in the collection. See, particularly, the folders for John Reed and Eugene O'Neill. She also had a long-term lesbian relationship with a sculptor named Gwen Le Gallienne, which led (in part), to the breakup of her marriage with Bullitt. Although this relationship is not extensively documented, Bryant's papers provide fascinating glimpses into lesbian & gay life in expat Paris during the 1920s – see, especially, the letters of Claude McKay and Richard McAlmon. [Bryant's relationship to Le Gallienne, not well documented in her papers, is documented in the William C. Bullitt papers (MS 112): see papers documenting his divorce from Bryant.]

[Finding aid](#)

**Donaldson Family papers, 1870-1971 (inclusive) (MS 1699)*

Virginia Louise "Midge" Donaldson (1919-1960) materials includes letters from several women including Sarah "Sally" Spock Trueblood, sister of Dr. Benjamin Spock (Series V, Box 11, Folders 11 and 12). Sally's Vassar letters contain lengthy, detailed discussions of dating, first sexual experiences, masturbation, and sex education; they also richly describe female friendships. Her adult letters, mostly written after she married, discuss marriage, adultery, free love, and divorce; psychoanalysis and couples' therapy; menstruation, birth control, and gynecological problems; and her dissatisfaction with traditional gender roles, especially her loneliness and boredom at being a housewife. Letters from "Ruth" (Series V, Box 11, Folder 15): Ruth, last name unknown, appears to have been an actress, a lesbian, and seems to have had a romantic relationship with Midge.

[Finding aid](#)

**Elizabeth Page Harris papers, 1808-1978 (inclusive), 1907-1969 (bulk) (MS 771)*

Elizabeth Page Harris (1889-1969), graduate of Vassar College, writer, and pacifist, remained single until her sixty-sixth year, when she married Dr. Herbert Taylor Harris. Page Harris had several intimate relationships with women that are well-documented in her correspondence. See for example the letters of Hope Avery and Helen Drusilla Lockwood. Hope Avery was one of Elizabeth Page Harris' childhood friends. Her letters, written while she was touring and studying in Europe, describe the girl-girl crushes known as "raves" in the parlance of the time. Helen Lockwood (1898-1971) was a friend of Harris from the Vassar class of 1912. Lockwood never married, and it is difficult to discern much about her private life from her letters, which tend to be highly intellectual. However, a few examples from 1915-1916 make intriguing allusions to intense desires that need to be repressed. Although it is unclear whether Lockwood and Harris were romantically involved, it does seem that they shared and discussed such desires. Because of their oblique, coded language, these letters are difficult to interpret.

[Finding aid](#)

* *Anna Strunsky Walling papers, 1880-1968 (inclusive) (MS 1111)*

The collection might be of interest to someone writing about sexuality among the mid-20th-century bohemian New York left. Anna's relationships with Jack London, William English Walling, and Leonard Abbott exemplify many of the contradictions inherent in the New York left's ideal of "free love" (for one, the fact that free love tended to benefit men rather than women, who were still expected to raise children and adhere to accepted standards of female propriety, at least in public). See, especially, the Leonard Abbott folders: his letters (and some of hers) contain lengthy discussions about the nature of their relationship, especially in relation to the social benefits of marriage vs. free love.

[Finding aid](#)

Donald Crossley Vining papers, 1926-1985 (inclusive), 1926-1958 (bulk). (MS 524)

The papers consist of the diaries of Donald Crossley Vining for the years 1932-1958 and for 1971-1985, as well as typed transcripts from his diaries for 1926-1927. The diaries provide a detailed account of the life of an intellectual, homosexual man in the 1940s and 1950s. Vining, who spent most of his adult life in New York, took a great interest in the arts, and his diaries contain descriptions of operas and plays which he attended; outlines of his current writing projects and theater activities; and details of his daily life and personal relationships. Typescripts of several one and two act plays are included in the papers.

[Finding aid](#)

Records of the Department of University Health, Division of Student Mental Hygiene, Yale University, 1926-1969 (inclusive), 1930-1955 (bulk). (RU 109)

Includes documentation on WWII related projects that studied the effects of military service on Yale and Harvard men and the identification and suitability of homosexuals, psychoneurotics, and psychopaths in the military.

[Finding aid](#)

Late 20th century (ca. 1960-2000)

Bruce Cratsley papers, 1975-1998 (inclusive), 1980-1995 (bulk) (MS 1836)

Photographic prints including photographs of gay and lesbian culture in New York City.

[Finding aid](#)

Harvey Fierstein papers, 1896-2006 (inclusive), 1971-2006 (bulk) (MS 1864)

The collection documents Harvey Fierstein as author, actor, and gay activist. The papers include scripts, professional correspondence, publicity materials, clippings, legal documents, scrapbooks, photographs, audio recordings, and videotapes.

[Finding aid](#)

AIDS collection, 1973-2004 (inclusive) (MS 1834)

Collection consists of printed materials, including reports, newsletters, pamphlets, and flyers, related to the prevention, treatment, and status of AIDS in various countries.

[Finding aid](#)

Lesbian and Gay Liberation collection, 1941-2005 (inclusive), 1970-1979 (bulk) (MS 1846).

The collection includes publications and ephemera related to the gay and lesbian liberation movements.

[Finding aid](#)

Gay Comics collection, 1976-1994 (inclusive) (MS 1851)

The collection contains assorted gay and lesbian comic publications dealing with issues such as coming out, depression, and gay and lesbian liberation. Some magazines appear to be self published.

[Finding aid](#)

Homophobia collection, 1961-1989 (inclusive) (MS 1852)

The collection includes assorted publications documenting homophobia in the United States.

[Finding aid](#)

Physique collection, 1953-1997 (inclusive) (MS 1850)

The collection includes assorted publications that document changes in the codes, standards, and aesthetics of the male body.

[Finding aid](#)

Queer Zines, Magazines, and Newspapers collection, 1948-2004 (inclusive) (MS 1847).

The collection includes printed ephemera and publications documenting the development of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer communities in their own voices. Includes mass circulation and small press publications.

[Finding aid](#)

Radical Sex and Leather collection, 1972-1999 (inclusive), 1981-1992 (bulk) (MS 1849)

The collection includes assorted illustrated publications and ephemera, generally produced by the radical sex and leather communities, documenting the development of a wide array of sexual practices, costumes, and communities.

[Finding aid](#)

Transgender collection, 1942-2003 (inclusive) (MS 1848)

The collection includes illustrated publications and printed ephemera that chronicle transgender communities, performance, and identities ranging from transvestism to transsexual surgery. The collection references a range of perspectives on transgenderism from within and without its communities.

[Finding aid](#)

Max Lerner papers, 1927-1992 (inclusive) (MS 322)

The papers consist of correspondence, speeches, writings, and other papers (including research and teaching materials, photographs, memorabilia, newspaper and periodical clippings, books, and radio and television tapes) of Max Lerner, an American educator, author, lecturer, historian, and political scientist. The papers include documentation on his controversial writings on homosexuality. Correspondence from the 1950s documents Lerner's interest in national politics and homosexuality. Prominent correspondents include Alfred C. Kinsey in 1954, criticizing Lerner's interpretation of his work.

[Finding aid](#)

David Benjamin Mixner papers, 1924-2006 (inclusive), 1958-2005 (bulk) (MS 1862)

The papers consist of personal materials, correspondence, clippings, subject and writing files, and audiovisual materials that document David Mixner's life as a gay male, leader in the gay rights movement, author, and political consultant and advisor. [The papers are closed until January 1, 2031, unless researchers receive permission in writing to access them from the donor, the person holding power of attorney for the donor, or the executor of the estate of the donor.]

[Finding aid](#)

New Haven and Connecticut Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender collection, 1983-2000 (inclusive) (MS 1878)

The New Haven and Connecticut Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Collection includes publications and ephemera related to LGBT people and culture in New Haven and Connecticut.

[Finding aid](#)

Christopher Phillips papers, 1950-2005 (inclusive), 1950-1991 (bulk) (MS 1830)

The papers are comprised of writings, collected ephemera, correspondence, book and article research materials, audiovisual materials, and photographs documenting the personal and professional lives of Christopher Phillips, who was active in the gay liberation movement beginning with the founding of the first Yale gay group in October 1969. He worked full time at the Gay Community Services Center in Los Angeles (1973-75), and lived with other Center gay activists in the Highland Park Collective. [Series

XV, Diaries, is closed until January 1, 2060, unless researchers receive written permission to access the diaries from the donor or his executor.]

[Finding aid](#)

Matthew Charles Rosenblum papers, 2001-2006 (inclusive) (MS 1883)

The digital images consist of Cherry Grove celebrities and royalty at various functions, including teas, beauty contests, and the annual Invasion of the Pines. The images are crafted using the digital equivalents of photography, stage makeup, and cosmetic surgery.

[Finding aid](#)

Candida Scott Piel papers, 1950-2005 (inclusive) (MS 1831)

The Candida Scott Piel Papers document a socially active gay and lesbian culture, centered in New York City, around the turn of the twenty-first century. The papers include subject files, printed materials, writings, ephemera, and audiovisual materials. There is particularly substantive material on AIDS and AIDS treatments, gay clubs and "the circuit" culture, the Jewel Box Revue, and events organized by Piel, mainly as fundraisers for organizations such as the American Foundation for AIDS Research.

[Finding aid](#)

* One of several collections analyzed as part of an ongoing project in Manuscripts and Archives focused on uncovering materials that document women's non-familial, intimate, same-sex relationships from the 1880s to the 1920s.