

Lilli Vincenz Papers
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2014

Contact information: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/mss.contact>

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Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms014015>

Prepared by Manuscript Division staff

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Revised 2023 July

Collection Summary

Title: Lilli Vincenz Papers

Inclusive Dates: 1879-2013

Bulk Dates: 1953-2013

ID No.: MSS85786

Creator: Vincenz, Lilli

Extent: 10,500 items

Extent: 32 containers plus 1 oversize

Extent: 12.8 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English with some French and German

Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm2013085786>

Summary: Gay rights activist, psychotherapist, and documentary film maker. Correspondence, journals, organizational files, speeches, writings, surveys and questionnaires, press clippings, printed matter, academic files, and other papers relating to Lilli Vincenz's life as a gay civil rights activist, her work to support and empower lesbians and gay men, and her documentation of the gay and lesbian civil rights movement.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

People

Davis, Nancy Ruth.

Kameny, Frank, 1925-2011.

Vincenz family.

Vincenz, Lilli.

Organizations

Community for Creative Self-Development.

Gay Women's Open House.

Program for Creative Self-Development.

Whitman-Walker Clinic. Empowerment Group for People Living with AIDS.

Subjects

Civil rights movements.

Civil rights.

Dating (Social customs)

Gay couples.

Gay men.

Gay newspapers--New York (State)--New York.

Gay rights.

Homophobia.

Homosexuality--Societies, etc.

Homosexuality.

Lesbians.

Political campaigns--Washington (D.C.)

Titles

GAY (New York, N.Y.)

Occupations

Documentary filmmakers.

Gay rights activists.

Psychotherapists.

Acquisition Information

The papers of Lilli Vincenz, gay rights activist, psychotherapist, and documentary film maker, were given to the Library of Congress by Vincenz via donor representative Charles C. Francis in 2013.

Processing History

The papers of Lilli Vincenz were arranged and described by Laura J. Kells with the assistance of Tammi Taylor in 2014.

Transfers

Items have been transferred from the Manuscript Division to other custodial divisions of the Library. Audiovisual materials have been transferred to the Motion Picture, Broadcasting, and Recorded Sound Division. Some photographs have been transferred to the Prints and Photographs Division. All transfers are identified as part of the Lilli Vincenz Papers.

Related Material

Related collections in the Manuscript Division include the Frank Kameny Papers (see <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms009068>).

Copyright Status

Copyright status in the unpublished writings of Lilli Vincenz in these papers and in other collections in the custody of the Library of Congress is reserved. Consult reference staff in the Manuscript Division for further information.

Access and Restrictions

Restrictions apply governing the use, photoduplication, or publication of items in this collection. Consult reference staff in the Manuscript Division for information concerning these restrictions. In addition, many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Lilli Vincenz Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

Date	Event
1937, Sept. 26	Born, Hamburg, Germany
1949	Immigrated to the United States with her mother and sister
1959	B.A., Douglass College, New Brunswick, N.J.
1960	M.A. in English, Columbia University, New York, N.Y.
1962-1963	Private, medical corpsman, Womens Army Corps, Fort Sam Houston, Tex., and Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Washington, D.C. Received a general discharge under honorable conditions because of her homosexuality
1963	Joined Mattachine Society of Washington

1965	Participated in homophile pickets at the White House, Pentagon, State Department, and U.S. Civil Service Commission
1966-1967	Editor, <i>The Homosexual Citizen</i> for the Mattachine Society of Washington
1968	Filmed, edited, and produced <i>The Second Largest Minority</i> , a short documentary film about the "Reminder Day Picket" at Independence Hall, Philadelphia, Pa.
1969-1971	Wrote biweekly column for <i>Gay</i> magazine
1970	Produced <i>Gay and Proud</i> , a short documentary film of the first Christopher Street Liberation Day Parade in New York, N.Y.
1971-1977	Hosted Gay Women's Open House in her home, Arlington, Va.
1971	Helped launch Frank Kameny's campaign for nonvoting delegate from the District of Columbia to the U.S. Congress
1976	M.A. in psychology, George Mason University, Fairfax, Va.
1976-2009	Psychotherapist in private practice, Arlington, Va.
1985-1988	Founder and leader with Nancy Ruth Davis, Empowerment Group for People Living with AIDS, Whitman-Walker Clinic, Washington, D.C.
1986	Married Nancy Ruth Davis, Key West, Fla.
1990	Ph.D. in human development, University of Maryland, College Park, Md.
1992-2004	Founder and director with Nancy Ruth Davis, Program for Creative Self-Development, later called Community for Creative Self-Development
2023, June 27	Died, Oakton, Va.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Lilli Marie Vincenz (1937-2023) span the years 1879-2013, with the bulk of the material dating from 1953 to 2013. While documenting Vincenz's work for gay civil rights and her efforts to support and empower gay men and women, they also chronicle the larger gay and lesbian civil rights movement. The papers are grouped by type of material into correspondence and journals; Community for Creative Self-Development file; films; interviews; speeches, writings and engagements; subject file; academic file; miscellany; and oversize. They are primarily written in English, but some German and French is present.

Among the correspondence and journals is a grouping of personal correspondence that includes letters received from friends and family and some letters written by Vincenz. The correspondence between Lilli Vincenz and her parents is written in German. Special correspondence is comprised of letters relating to Vincenz's work in the gay community, her educational outreach on topics relating to homosexuality, her films, and her role as a pioneer in the gay rights movement. Similar correspondence can be found in files relating to her films and speaking engagements. The journals section is comprised of loose pages of notes from various periods in the 1960s and 1970s. Some of the most descriptive entries date from 1961 when Vincenz traveled to Provincetown, Massachusetts, and visited a gay bar for the first time. The entries from the 1970s are dream journals.

Files relating to the Community for Creative Self-Development, an empowerment group for gay men and women that Lilli Vincenz founded and directed with her partner, Nancy Ruth Davis, are some of the most comprehensive. Documents include meeting minutes, event flyers, and materials relating to conferences, retreats, courses, and workshops with titles such as "Lovefreeing: A New Approach to Wholeness," "Loneliness and You," and "Shedding Light on the Shadow Side of Relationships," and covering topics such as gay dating, gay history, homophobia, and psychic development.

Vincenz made two 16-millimeter films that recorded early gay rights events. *The Second Largest Minority* documents the "Reminder Day Picket" at Independence Hall in Philadelphia, on July 4, 1968, and *Gay and Proud* records the first Christopher Street Liberation Day Parade in New York, held on June 28, 1970, to commemorate the first anniversary of the Stonewall Riots. Files concerning these films pertain to the rentals of the film by various groups and the use of the footage in numerous documentaries on aspects of the gay rights movement.

Lilli Vincenz's thoughts and experiences are recorded in interviews, in the texts and remarks given at meetings and receptions, and in speeches with titles such as "Visibility, Empowerment, Liberation, and Self Actualization," and "The Love that Celebrates its Name." Among her writings are typescripts of the column she wrote for *GAY* newspaper in New

York. In the 1960s she often wrote under the pseudonym Lily Hansen. Her efforts to advocate for homosexuals and educate the public through guest lectures at universities, television and radio appearances, and participation in panel discussions at meetings and public events are also represented. Among this material is a transcript of a panel discussion on the "Lifestyle of Non-Patient Homosexual" conducted at the annual meeting of the American Psychiatric Association in 1971.

Subject files document the work and concerns of early homophile organizations and the empowerment groups founded by Vincenz. Others feature press coverage of homosexuality and the experiences of gays and lesbians spanning roughly fifty years. Files concerning pioneers in the gay rights movement include those relating to Frank Kameny and the Kameny for Congress Campaign that Vincenz helped launch in 1971. Files relating to the Gay Women's Open House, which Vincenz held in her home to provide a social gathering place for lesbians every Wednesday from 1971 to 1977, include advertisements, lists of discussion topics, and notes from attendees. Among the materials relating to the Whitman-Walker Clinic Empowerment Group for People Living with AIDS, founded by Vincenz and Nancy Ruth Davis in the mid-1980s, are notes on interviews with new members and issues of their newsletter written by and for people living with AIDS.

The academic file contains material relating to Lilli Vincenz's education and training from high school through post-graduate continuing education. Among the material relating to her studies in psychology and human development are questionnaires completed as part of a survey she conducted in 1972 on the attitudes and aspirations of lesbians and research for her study, "Personality Profiles of Psychologically Adjusted Lesbian and Heterosexual Women".

Among a group of miscellany are curriculum vitae and other biographical information on Lilli Vincenz and family papers relating to her parents and extended family in Romania. The latter includes documents pertaining to her efforts to assist a cousin trying to immigrate to the United States from Romania.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged by type of material, and alphabetically and chronologically therein.

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1	Correspondence and journals
BOX 1	Journals, 1960-1967, 1976-1977, 2007 (6 folders)
BOX 1	Personal correspondence
BOX 1	1953-1956 (5 folders)
BOX 2	1957-1963 (9 folders)
BOX 3	1964-1972 (10 folders)
BOX 4	1973-2001, 2007-2013, undated (14 folders)
BOX 5	Special correspondence, 1964-2011, undated (17 folders)
BOX 6	Community for Creative Self-Development file
BOX 6	Calendars, 1992-1998
BOX 6	Conferences and workshops, 1992-2000 <i>See also Oversize</i> (7 folders)
BOX 7	Courses, 1992-2000 (10 folders)
BOX 8	Flyers, 1992-2013
BOX 8	Meetings
BOX 8	Agendas, 1991-2003
BOX 8	Minutes, 1991-2003 (2 folders)
BOX 8	Miscellany, 1992-2002
BOX 8	Membership, 1999-2003 (2 folders)
BOX 8	Miscellany, 1991-2010 (2 folders)
BOX 9	(4 folders)
BOX 9	Retreats, 1991-2003 (3 folders)
BOX 10	(5 folders)
BOX 10	Résumés, 1992-1996
BOX 10	Reunions and parties, 2002-2013
BOX 11	Web site, 1997-2000 (2 folders)
BOX 11	Films
BOX 11	<i>Gay and Proud</i> and <i>Second Largest Minority</i>
BOX 11	Miscellany, 1969-1980s (2 folders)

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 11	Rentals and purchases, 1970-2011 (2 folders)
BOX 11	Vincenz v. Bono Films and Video, 2005-2006
BOX 11	<i>Gay Pioneers</i> , 2001-2005 (2 folders)
BOX 11	<i>Gay USA</i> , 1977-1978
BOX 11	Miscellany, 1969-2010
BOX 12	Interviews
BOX 12	With Vincenz, 1973, 1992, 1999-2010 (2 folders)
BOX 12	With others, and related material from <i>Gay Today</i> , 1997-2003 (4 folders)
BOX 13	Speeches, writings, and engagements
BOX 13	Panel discussions, speaking engagements, and workshops, 1971-2011 (6 folders)
BOX 13	Speeches and remarks, 1971-1982, 1992-2009
BOX 14	Writings
BOX 14	<i>GAY</i> newspaper, New York, N.Y., 1969-1973 (3 folders)
BOX 14	Letters to the editor, 1967, 1975-1977, 1983, 1997-2001
BOX 14	Miscellaneous, 1957-1967, 1972, 1982-1995, undated (2 folders)
BOX 14	Notes and jottings, 1965, 1989-1999, undated
BOX 14	Subject file
BOX 14	American Psychiatric Association, 1971-1974
BOX 14	Anthroposophy, 1904-1945, 1981-2013 (3 folders)
BOX 14	Art, 1960s
BOX 15	Books and literature, 1958-1982 (2 folders)
BOX 15	Death and dying, 1968, 1976-1992
BOX 15	Demonstrations and celebrations, 1965-1978, 1990-2009
BOX 15	East Coast Homophile Organizations, 1963-1965
BOX 15	Empowerment Group for People Living with AIDS, 1987-1991 (4 folders)
BOX 15	Equality Forum, 2004-2009 (2 folders)
BOX 15	Gay Women's Open House, 1972-1979, 2012 (3 folders)
BOX 16	Gittings, Barbara, 1960s, 1976, 1997-2005
BOX 16	Homophobia, 1970-1971, 1978-1984, 1994
BOX 16	Homosexuality and gay life, 1957-2009 (5 folders)
BOX 17	Kameny, Frank
BOX 17	Campaign for United States Congress, 1971
BOX 17	Miscellany, 1966-1970, 1981, 1999-2011

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Container	Contents
BOX 17	<i>The Ladder</i> , 1963-1968 (3 folders)
BOX 17	"Lesbian and Gay DC: Identity, Emotion, and Experience in Washington, DC's Social and Activist Communities (1961-1986)," dissertation by Rebecca C. Dolinsky, 2010
BOX 17	Lesbians and lesbianism, 1965, 1971-1981, 2001-2004 (2 folders)
BOX 18	Mattachine Society of Florida, Richard Inman letters, 1966-1967
BOX 18	Mattachine Society of New York, 1965
BOX 18	Mattachine Society of Washington
BOX 18	<i>The Homosexual Citizen</i>
BOX 18	Correspondence, 1965-1967
BOX 18	Issues, 1966-1967
BOX 18	Miscellany, 1963-1971, 1986
BOX 18	Music
BOX 18	Miscellany, 1950s, 1974, 1995, undated
BOX 18	Performances by Vincenz, 1972-1976, 2003-2010
BOX 18	National Organization for Women, Washington Metropolitan Area Chapters, Sexuality Task Force, Directory of Therapists for Lesbians, 1975-1976 (2 folders)
BOX 18	Nichols, Jack, 1975, 1997, 2005
BOX 18	Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gay Men of the Washington Metropolitan Area, 1991-1997
BOX 18	Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1961-1962
BOX 18	Rainbow History Project, 2007-2008
BOX 19	Saint Elizabeths Hospital Partial Hospitalization Program - Oasis, Washington, D.C., 1975-1981 (2 folders)
BOX 19	Sex education, sexuality, and family life, 1955-1984 (4 folders)
BOX 19	Ulrich, Otto H., 1964-1973, 2001
BOX 19	Whitman-Walker Clinic Empowerment Group for People Living with AIDS <u>See Container 15, Empowerment Group for People Living with AIDS</u>
BOX 19	Women, 1960-2005 (2 folders)
BOX 20	Academic file
BOX 20	Columbia University, New York, N.Y., 1960 (3 folders)
BOX 20	Continuing education, 1979-2008 (5 folders)
BOX 21	(7 folders)
BOX 22	Douglass College, New Brunswick, N.J., 1955-1959 (6 folders)
BOX 23	Famous Writers School, Westport, Conn., 1964-1967 (4 folders)
BOX 23	Fort Lee Junior-Senior High School, Fort Lee, N.J., 1949-1955, 1994-1995, 2004-2005 (3 folders)
BOX 24	(3 folders)
BOX 24	George Mason University, Fairfax, Va.

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 24	Course work, 1972-1983 (3 folders)
BOX 25	(4 folders)
BOX 25	Miscellany, 1973-1980
BOX 25	Study, "Personality Profiles of Psychologically Adjusted Lesbian and Heterosexual Women," 1974-1975 (2 folders)
BOX 26	(3 folders)
BOX 26	Graduate school applications, 1977-1982
BOX 26	Northern Virginia Community College, Northern Virginia, survey, "Attitudes and Aspirations of Lesbians," 1972 (3 folders)
BOX 27	United States Army, Women's Army Corps training, 1962 (2 folders)
BOX 27	University of Maryland, College Park, Md.
BOX 27	Course work, 1982-1987 (5 folders)
BOX 28	(5 folders)
BOX 28	Dissertation, "Development of the Vincenz Empowerment Scale," 1989-1990 (1 folder)
BOX 29	(4 folders)
BOX 30	(1 folder)
BOX 30	Miscellany
BOX 30	Biographical material, circa 1940-2012 (3 folders)
BOX 30	Certification and licensure file, 1979-1981, 1990 (2 folders)
BOX 30	Family papers
BOX 30	Miscellany, circa 1895, 1928-1982, undated
BOX 31	Vincenz, Gustav (father), 1879-1939 (3 folders)
BOX 31	Vincenz family in Romania
BOX 31	Miscellaneous, 2007-2008
BOX 31	Vincenz, Andrei (cousin), 1966-1980 (4 folders)
BOX 32	Westhoff, Johanna (mother)
BOX 32	Condolence letters and related correspondence, 1999
BOX 32	Estate, 1982, 1999
BOX 32	Miscellany, 1928, 1957
BOX 32	Horoscopes, 1966-1971
BOX 32	Jungian type inventory, undated
BOX 32	Oddments, 1928-2012 (2 folders)
BOX 32	Sketches and artwork, 1967, 2004, undated
BOX OV1	Oversize
BOX OV 1	Community for Creative Self-Development
BOX OV 1	Conferences and workshops, 1994 (Container 6)