

WOMEN at the CENTER

Sallie Bingham Center for Women's History and Culture
David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University

Issue 32, Fall 2017

Breaking Every Taboo: Remembering Kate Millett

Feminist icon Kate Millett passed away on September 6, 2017. In the wake of this loss, we have been reflecting on the significance of her contributions to the feminist movement, feminist theory, art, literature, LGBTQ activism, advocacy for mental health reform, and many other realms.



Kate Millett (1934-2017)

Her papers have been at the heart of the Bingham Center's collections since 2000, inspiring scholarship and enhancing our understanding of the world. The Kate Millett Papers provide rich documentation of Millett's activities as a feminist activist, artist, filmmaker, and author. These materials re-

flect the intensely personal nature of much of Millett's work and the frequent fusion of her personal, political, and professional interests. Materials in the collection also document feminism and social conditions for women around the globe, especially in France, Italy, and the Middle East—most notably Iran, where Millett traveled in the seventies.

A founding member of the Noho Gallery in New York City, Millett created the Women's Art Colony Farm in Poughkeepsie, NY in 1978, and showed her work internationally from 1963 to the end of her life. She was known for her sculpture and

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The Life and Loves of Una Vincenzo, Lady Troubridge

Contributed by Liz Adams, *Special Collections Cataloger*

When I open books, one of my favorite things to do is look for small signs of its previous owners, its provenance: Was the book a gift with a thoughtful note to the recipient? Did the owner write her name, big and bold, on a flyleaf? Sometimes there are so many signs that a separate story, that of the owner, begins to emerge. This was the case with Una Vincenzo, Lady Troubridge and her copy of *Knight Asrael: and Other Stories*, written by her aunt Una Ashworth Taylor, which we

acquired as part of the Lisa Unger Baskin Collection.

Una Vincenzo, Lady Troubridge was born in 1887 to a family steeped in literary culture. Her other aunt Ida wrote several novels and published biographies on Lady Jane Gray, Queen Hortense, and Madame Roland. Her grandfather, Sir Henry Taylor, was a well-known dramatist and poet. This literary heritage is felt early on in Una Vincenzo's copy of *Knight Asrael*. Una Ashworth Taylor wrote a deeply personal inscription to her nieces, one explicitly

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Recent Acquisitions & Additions

Lee Clark Johns Papers

Business and personal records of professional writing and communications consultant, Lee Clark Johns W64, including her community activism and philanthropy.

Eon de Beaumont, (Charles Geneviève Louis Auguste André Timothée d'). Documents, compiled by a transgender spy, presented as petitions in support of his plea to forsake his female persona in order to fight in the American Revolutionary War. Versailles and Paris. 1778-1779.

Charlotte Evans Page physician's day-book and journal

Account Ledger and Ephemera of 19th Century Female Doctor. Lowell Massachusetts: 1884-1898. Quarter leather Physician's Day Book and Journal with 29 items of ephemera laid in.

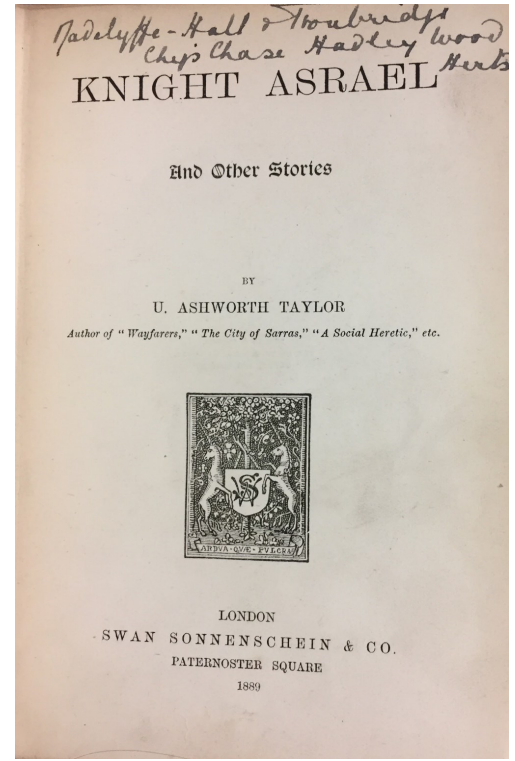
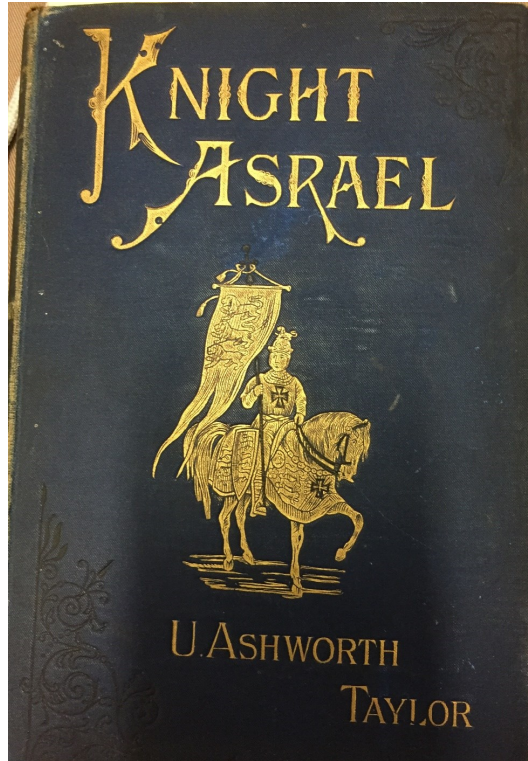
Judy Hogan Papers Addition

72 linear feet of writings; teaching, activist, and subject files; and family papers.

bell hooks (pseud. Gloria Jean Watkins)

And There We Wept: Poems. Los Angeles: Golemics, 1978. First, Limited Edition. One of 250 copies. Uncommon first book by the influential Kentucky author, feminist, and social activist.

The Life and Loves of Una Vincenzo *continued from page 1*



Cover and inscription of Vincenzo's copy of *Knight Asrael*

connecting baby Una and her older sister Violet to literature, to the power of reading: "Here are your stories, Violet, for you to listen to now, to read to yourself soon, & to tell to baby when she is old enough to hear them. September-1889."

On the front pages of *Knight Asrael*, there are exuberant blue drawings, signed by their artist: U.T. While these drawings might be some of the earliest known Una Vincenzo works, they are not the last. Una trained at the Royal College of Art and her bust of the famed Russian ballet dancer Vaslav Nijinsky resides at the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Una Vincenzo left one more sign in *Knight Asrael*, an inscription of her own on the title page: "Radclyffe-Hall & Troubridge, Chip Chase, Hadley Wood, Herts."

Radclyffe Hall is the author of several

novels, most notably *The Well of Loneliness*, an influential work in lesbian literature. She and Una met in 1915 and moved in together in 1919—after Una formally separated from her husband, Admiral Ernest Troubridge. Una and Radclyffe were romantic partners for 28 years, living together at Chip Chase and abroad, until Radclyffe's death in 1943. Una documented their lives together through photography and a biography published after Radclyffe's death. And even after death, Una continued to write letters to her beloved.

When the provenance in *Knight Asrael* is taken together, the life and loves of Una Vincenzo, Lady Troubridge begins to break through: her artistic endeavors, her literary nature, and her deep love for Radclyffe Hall.

Read more: blogs.library.duke.edu/rubenstein/2017/07/24/tales-provenance-una-vincenzo-revealed-three-inscriptions/

Jeanne Audrey Powers, Subversive To the End

Reverend Jeanne Audrey Powers, teacher, writer, campus minister, and United Methodist Church leader passed away on September 29. Her writings, speeches, correspondence, sermons, and other papers held by the Bingham Center document her personal history and extraordinary professional accomplishments.

Ordained as a deacon in 1958, Rev. Powers was one of the first women to be granted full clergy rights in the Methodist Church and the first to be nominated as a bishop.

Among other leadership roles, she was the Associate General Secretary of the



Reverend Jeanne Audrey Powers, (1932-2017)

General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns from 1972-1996. She was known for her ecumenical work including her contributions to the Reconciling Ministries Movement. Revealing her lesbian identity during a sermon she gave at their national gathering in 1995, Rev. Powers paved the way for others in the church. She was also involved in organizing the first Re-Imagining Conference, an historical inter-

faith gathering of clergy, laypeople, and feminist theologians in 1993.

It's fitting then that her tombstone reads "Subversive to the end."

Breaking Every Taboo *continued from page 1*

installation works in addition to pen and ink drawings. Millett's Columbia University Ph.D. dissertation, *Sexual Politics*, published by Doubleday in 1970, placed her at the forefront of the women's movement. Millett's ten books each combine deeply felt personal revelation with trenchant political analysis. In these works Millett gave her readers the analytical tools and inspiration for creating a revolution.

On October 24, we hosted a program, co-sponsored by The Program in Gender, Sexuality & Feminist Studies and the Forum for Scholars and Publics, honoring Kate Millett's legacy. Rubenstein Library director Naomi Nelson welcomed attendees and introduced Kimberly Lamm, Associate Professor, Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies, who opened the program with a reflection on Millett's groundbreaking work in *Sexual Politics*. Bingham Center graduate assistant Heather McGowan, who worked with Laura Micham to assemble a slideshow of photographs and documents from Millett's papers, gave a reading of Millett's prose. Professor Kathy Rudy added a

chapter from *Sexual Politics* on abortion to the syllabus for her class on Reproductive Rights this semester, and invited her students to share passages from that chapter along with personal reflections. Professor Toril Moi then offered rare insight into the academic world within which Millett wrote *Sexual Politics*. Kelly Wooten read a remembrance from former Bingham Center director Cristina Favretto who worked with Millett to place her collection here in 2000. Sylvia Herbold, Archive of Documentary Arts graduate assistant, recalled her experience of moderating a discussion with Kate Millett following a screening of Millett's film *Three Lives* in New York. Finally, Laura Micham shared an edited version of an article in *The Hindu* about an emotional reading Millett gave in Bangalore, India in 2002. After the program, attendees were invited to view some of Millett's papers and drawings on exhibition in the Stone Gallery.

Kate Millett clearly lived out her own call to "dare everything, write your life, and break every taboo" and the impact of her life and work cannot be overstated.

Read more: blogs.library.duke.edu/rubenstein/2017/09/12/breaking-every-taboo-remembrance-kate-millett-1934-2017/

Fall Instruction

Condoms and Counseling
Duke House Course on sexual health

Feminist Theory
UNC Women's Studies

Girls Go Global
Gender, Feminist, and Sexuality Studies

Mad Men: Gender and Work
Gender, Feminist, and Sexuality Studies

Queer Cinema
Visual Studies

Women in the Economy
Economics

Fall Presentations

Duke LGBTQ Alumni Weekend

Laura Micham welcomed attendees and shared highlights from of LGBTQ collections on exhibit this fall during the inaugural LGBTQ Alumni Weekend, October 27-28.

Zine Machine

The Bingham Center co-sponsored and tabled at the 3rd Zine Machine in Durham, NC, held November 4. Kelly Wooten gave a talk on the history of women and zines.

StoryLab at Duke

On December 6 Kelly Wooten gave a talk at the Franklin Humanities Institute on "Publishing It Yourself: Pamphlets, Zines, and Riot Grrls" followed by a zine-making workshop.

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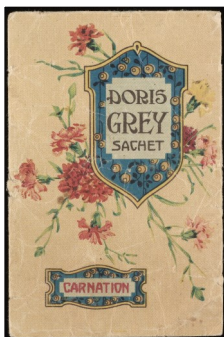
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Just Published: Two Digital Exhibits

The Bingham Center, in collaboration with the Hartman Center for Sales, Advertising & Marketing History and the John Hope Franklin Research Center for African and African American History and Culture, has recently completed two digital collections providing greater access to unique resources in the Rubenstein Library.

Cosmetics Trade Samples and Sachets



Doris Grey Sachet, Chicago Sachet Works, Chicago. 1900s.

With the Hartman Center we have published a collection of labels from seventy five American, Canadian, and French trade samples and sachets of cosmetics, powders, makeup, and soaps from the 1890s to the 1930s. These ornately illustrated packages include poems and testimonials from Ethel Barrymore, Kate Greenaway, Mrs. Leslie Carter, and others.

Elizabeth Johnson Harris Memoir, 1923



Elizabeth Johnson Harris, ca. 1922

With the Franklin Center we have rescanned and published one of our first digital collections. Originally posted in the middle 1990s, this 85-page handwritten memoir of poet and writer Elizabeth Johnson Harris of Augusta, GA, daughter of formerly enslaved parents, includes photographs and clippings of articles by Johnson Harris offering her reflections on race relations as well as the importance of religion, education, and music in her life.

Exhibits available via the Duke Digital Repository: <https://repository.duke.edu/>