

**PRELIMINARY INVENTORY  
S0197 (SA2459, SA2706, SA3981)  
REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH SERVICES RECORDS**

This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center- St. Louis](http://The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center- St. Louis). If you would like more information, please contact us at [stlouis@shsmo.org](mailto:stlouis@shsmo.org).

**Introduction**

Approximately 14.5 cubic feet

The Reproductive Health Services Records contain correspondence, brochures, reports, newspaper clippings, and scrapbooks pertaining to the organization's mission to provide reproductive healthcare to individuals. Subjects of interest include family planning, opposition to abortion, and birth control.

Reproductive Health Services, Inc. (RHS), was founded as the Pregnancy Consultation Services in 1970. It incorporated as Reproductive Health Services, a not-for-profit corporation, in April, 1973 a month after the U.S. Supreme Court legalized medical abortions during the first six months of pregnancy.

RHS organized to provide counseling, information, and other services to women who have undesired or problem pregnancies. Its goals have included educating women about adoption, single parenthood, and abortion. RHS has worked to inform women about their legal right to medically safe abortions and where to obtain them, providing out-patient services for abortions performed within the first twelve weeks of pregnancy. RHS' services have also included providing women with information on contraceptives, pelvic screenings, pregnancy testing, sonograms, community education, a resource library, and crisis-oriented counseling for women under stress because of problem pregnancy.

The Reproductive Health Services, Inc., staff has included trained volunteers and paid counselors. Its administration was organized to include an executive director, clinic administrator and directors of counseling, education, and nursing, as well as a complete medical staff. Reproductive Health Services has charged fees for medical services and received gifts and donations from clients and concerned individuals. RHS has not charged for its counseling services and abortion fees have been based on a sliding income scale.

Judith Widdicombe became the agency's first director in 1973. Widdicombe graduated from St. Luke's Hospital School of Nursing with an "Excellence In Pediatric Nursing Award." Recognized as a leader in both pro-choice political activism and abortion clinic services, Widdicombe was appointed Acting Director of the National Abortion Rights Action League (NARAL) in Washington, D.C. in 1981.

In 1977 Reproductive Health Services, in cooperation with the National Abortion Federation, created a pilot program at its facility entitled, "Involving Significant Others." A full-time health education specialist worked directly with friends and relatives of patients answering questions on abortion. By providing educational and counseling programs for both the woman seeking an abortion and those who accompany her, RHS sought to create a climate of personal and public acceptance of the validity of abortion as

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a personal choice. In 1979 RHS published a guide to help other abortion clinics start a program to involve significant others.

RHS also participated in the first St. Louis "Mini-Summit," sponsored by the National Organization for Women in 1979. The mini-summit opened dialogue between pro-choice and pro-life groups. A paper distributed to all summit participants entitled, "Seeking Common Ground: A Call for Dialogue" was drafted by Sylvia Hampton of RHS; Samuel Lee, a theology student at St. Louis University; Linda Hatch of Feminists For Life; and Maureen McCarthy, Executive Director of Abortion Rights Alliance. It called for the opposing sides of the abortion issue to engage in dialogue as a means of widening their perspectives. The groups agreed to stop the use of inflammatory rhetoric against each other and to support "capable, sensitive, and honest" candidates, not just those agreeing with their respective stands on abortion.

In 1981 Judith Widdicombe testified before the Senate Judiciary Sub-Committee on the Constitution against the proposed Hatch Amendment, which would have reversed the 1973 Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion by giving Congress and the state power to restrict abortions.

**Donor Information**

The records were donated to the University of Missouri by Sylvia Hampton on April 4, 1982 (Accession No. SA2559). Additions were made on July 16, 1985 by Sylvia Hampton (Accession No. SA2706) and on September 2, 2011 (Accession No. SA3981).

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**Box List**

**Box 1**

Abortion Case Histories, 1981  
Abortion medical procedures, no date  
Boyd, Diane, correspondence, 1981-1982  
Clients, correspondence, 1979-1981  
Counselor's Manual, c. 1970-1989 (4 folders)  
Hampton, Sylvia, correspondence, 1977-1981  
Hatch Amendment hearings, press release, 1981  
Media, 1974-1982  
Missouri Abortion Laws, Challenge of 1835, St. Louis County Circuit Court  
    Anti-Abortion Statute, pp. 1-120, 1971 (2 folders)  
Missouri Abortion Laws, Challenge to abortion law passed in 1979 by Missouri General  
    Assembly, 1979  
Pamphlets, 1970-1989 (2 folders)  
Political, correspondence, 1978-1981

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Potential counselors, correspondence, 1970-1989  
Pro-Choice groups, 1978-1983  
Research, 1973-1981  
Right-To-Life groups, 1978-1982  
St. Louis Mini-Summit on Abortion, 1979  
Second Trimester Abortions, April-June, 1980  
Significant Other Program, 1979  
United Way, 1978  
Visitor opinion polls, 1977-1980 (7 folders)  
Wasserman, Ilene, correspondence, 1979-1980  
Oral history, Judith Widdicombe, Director of Reproductive Health Services, interviewed  
by Rose Jonos, May 3, 1974 (T-352)

**Box 2**

Three-ring binders  
    Sit in file, 1985  
    Sit in and incident file, 1986  
    Field Guide to Anti-Abortion Extremists, no date  
    Newspapers, magazines, and reports, 1981-1992

**Box 3**

*Abortion Law Reporter*, 1976, 1980-1981 (3 binders)

**Box 4**

Photographs, no date  
"In Your Interest," Adoptive Associates, Vicki Barshis, no date  
What's the Common Ground on Abortion, no date  
First Trimester Abortion Consent, film preview  
Second Trimester Abortion consent, film preview, no date (1 16mm film)

**Box 5**

"Unfinished Story," film on illegal abortion, 1960-1969 (1 16mm film)  
Banner tarp for Reproductive Health Services, no date  
Adoption Associates flag  
Slide show carousel, Abortion: A Rational Approach, no date

**Box 6**

Slides, no date  
"The Sacrament of Abortion," no date (2 audio cassettes)  
Video tapes  
    "The Silent Scream" Planned Parenthood, no date  
    NBC Affiliate in St. Louis, Adoption Associates, June 5, 1994  
    BJ All Staff Meeting, no date  
    Adoption Associates Closing, June 5, 1994  
    The 1989 March for Women's Equality and Women's Lives, no date  
    "Crossroads of Choice," no date

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Channel 2 News, October 26-27, 1993  
American Agenda, January 21, 1992  
Donahue Re: Webster w/JW, 1989  
Arrests and demonstration, July 3, 1990  
The Birth Mother Speaks, September 14, 1991  
48 Hours, "Choosing Sides," no date  
Arrests, April 14, 1990  
Conceived in Liberty, no date  
McNeil-Lehrer, congressional hearing, March 6, 1985  
Gateway St. Louis, no date  
Channels 2 and 5 News, no date  
MCL mailing, parents complain, no date  
Demonstration and Arrests of Pro-Life demonstrators in front of Reproductive  
Health Services, January 27, 1990  
Pre-Mother's Day Protest, May 12, 1990  
*ABC World News Tonight*, January 21, 1992  
*CBS This Morning*, March 5, 1992  
*CBS Evening News*, March 10, 1992  
Sonja Live, February 1993  
Japanese TV ASAHI, June 30, 1992  
First Trimester Consent Video, no date  
Wonderful World of Adoption & 1991 BACK/Waiting Children

**Box 7**

Procedure Policy Manual, Version 2, Administration, no date  
Counseling brochure, no date  
Adoption Associates Manual, no date  
Personnel Policies, Revised January 1984  
Primary Volunteer Policy and Procedure Manual, no date  
Sit In File, 1985  
Photographs, no date  
Volunteer training photographs, January 1993

**Box 8**

Newspaper clippings, 1969-1983 (10 folders)

**Box 9**

Newspaper clippings, 1984-1988 (6 folders)

**Box 10**

Newspaper clippings, 1989-1990 (2 folders)

**Box 11**

Newspaper clippings, 1990-1991

**Box 12**

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Newspaper clippings, 1992-1993 (4 notebooks)

**Box 13**

Newspaper clippings, 1994

Adoption Associates, 1992-1994

*St. Louis Review*, 1992-1993; *The Wanderer*, 1992-1994

**Box 14**

Newspaper clippings, January 1992-July 1992

**Box 15**

Newspaper clippings, July 1992-December 1992

**Microfilm Cabinet 1, Drawer 6**

Microfilm

Roll 1

Scrapbooks, 1969-1984 (10 volumes)