Finding aid to Molly McKay and Davina Kotulski Marriage Scrapbooks Coll2013.029

Sana Shuja
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909 West Adams Boulevard
Los Angeles, California 90007
(213) 821-2771
askone@usc.edu
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Date (inclusive): 1998-2012
Abstract: Scrapbooks assembled by Molly B. McKay documenting her and Davina S. Kotulski’s experience as the “poster couple” for marriage equality rights in California, 1998-2012. This collection consists of portable document formats (PDFs) of the pages of McKay’s 22 scrapbooks of clippings, correspondence, organizational materials, and photographs relevant to the couple’s activism.

Biography
Davina S. Kotulski, Ph.D., and Molly B. McKay, J.D., met in a country-and-western bar in 1996. They decided to get married in 1998 before family and friends, setting the date for September of that year. In June 1998, Kotulski, a clinical psychologist, and McKay, an attorney, participated in the San Francisco Pride Parade, fully clad in wedding attire, which they would continue to don in many civil actions to come. They ended up on the front page of the following day’s edition of the San Francisco Examiner and would be featured on news outlets worldwide in the following fourteen years they spent together. Although both had been marriage equality activists since 1996, this feature marked the beginning of the pair’s role as a “poster couple” for the fight for marriage equality in California in the 2000s.

The couple became domestic partners on April 1, 2000, as soon as the California registry began. In 2001, they went to the San Francisco City Hall around Valentine’s Day to request a marriage license. After being denied the next two years, they returned on February 12, 2004, expecting to be turned away once more. However, they were surprised to learn Mayor Gavin Newsom had authorized issuance of marriage licences to same-sex couples earlier that day. The couple became the seventeenth same-sex couple to be married on what came to be known as Freedom to Marry Day. That same year, Kotulski published her first book posing arguments for marriage equality, Why You Should Give a Damn About Gay Marriage. These arguments would be used by California marriage equality activists when Newsom’s decision was challenged and lost. However, the San Francisco Superior Court later ruled that the state’s marriage laws were unconstitutional. This began a legal battle of court cases, legislation, and propositions in California. Kotulski and McKay were active field organizers at the time, as well as organizationally involved with Marriage Equality USA and Equality California, respectively.

On May 15, 2008, the California Supreme Court ruled that barring same-sex couples from marriage was unconstitutional. Shortly thereafter, marriage equality opponents introduced a ballot initiative to amend the California Constitution to define marriage as between a man and a woman. Kotulski and McKay participated in a heated campaign against the California Marriage Protection Act, or Proposition 8. The couple also married for the third time on their tenth anniversary on September 1, 2008, although their marriage was recognized only in California. In November, California voters passed Proposition 8. Three challenges filed the next day with the California Supreme Court. The court upheld the proposition in May 2009, but in February 2012, the Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals overturned it, ruling the proposition unconstitutional. McKay and Kotulski continued their activism, through Marriage Equality USA and other partnerships. After publishing her second book in 2011, Love Warriors: The Rise of the Marriage Equality Movement and Why it Will Prevail, Kotulski became a nationally known speaker and workshop leader for same-sex marriage rights. McKay continued as Media Director for Marriage Equality USA and also contributed to amicus curiae briefs for marriage equality cases. The pair continued to participate in civil actions for marriage equality, including the right to protections like community property and health care benefits through divorce.

As of March 2013, both Kotulski and McKay continue to be committed to equality for LGBT people and their families globally and continue to advocate for the end of all inequality and injustice against LGBT people and same sex couples.

Conditions Governing Access
The collection is open to researchers. There are no access restrictions.

Conditions Governing Use
All requests for permission to publish or quote from manuscripts must be submitted in writing to the ONE Archivist. Permission for publication is given on behalf of ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives at USC Libraries as the owner of the physical items and is not intended to include or imply permission of the copyright holder, which must also be obtained.

Existence and Location of Originals
Molly McKay retains ownership of the physical marriage scrapbooks.
Acquisition

Processing Information
Collection processed by Sana Shuja, March 2013.
McKay and Kotulski requested some pages not be copied for the collection from scrapbooks numbers 6, 8, 15, and 20.

Preferred Citation

Scope and Content
This collection consists of portable document format (PDFs) of the pages of the 22 scrapbooks assembled by Molly McKay over the course of McKay and Davina Kotulski's joint and individual efforts to attain marriage equality in California from 1998-2012. The scrapbooks consist of personal and organizational e-mail correspondence and letters exchanged between the pair, among their organizers' circle, and within the organizations each was involved in, primarily Equality California and Marriage Equality USA. They also document demographical data and organizing tips that were compiled or accessed by the couple or by their colleagues to formulate arguments for marriage equality. The scrapbooks also contain clippings, either by or about the couple, their fellow activists, or about marriage equality in California, as well as photographs from events and private gatherings. They also have brochures for the organizations McKay and Kotulski were involved in, event programs and flyers, speeches and their drafts, and rallying chants and songs.

Arrangement
The scrapbooks are arranged chronologically.

Related Materials
The physical scrapbooks have been donated to the Gay and Lesbian Center, San Francisco Public Library.
Molly McKay and Davina Kotulski marriage scrapbooks (GLC 96), Gay and Lesbian Center, San Francisco Public Library.

Subjects and Indexing Terms
Same-sex marriage -- California.
Lesbian activists -- California -- San Francisco
McKay, Molly B.
Kotulski, Davina
McKay, Molly B.

McKay and Kotulski marriage scrapbooks 1998-2012

Scrapbook 1 June 1998-September 2003

Scope and Contents
Chronicles when the pair began to get heavily involved in San Francisco marriage equality activist community. Documents actions during March 2000 Defense of Marriage Act proposal and passage; February 2001 California Assembly Bill 1338 proposal, to establish a civil union system similar to Vermont’s in California; April 2001 Vermont case for full marriage rights; October 2001 passage of California Assembly Bill 25, granting domestic partners 12 additional rights; January 2002 effects of one year death anniversary of Dianne Whipple, including Sharon Smith civil case granting 11 more rights to domestic partners and vigil/march organized by McKay, Kotulski, and Marriage Equality California; 2003 Lawrence v. Texas United States Supreme Court decision, giving LGBT individuals sexual privacy rights; and the September 2003 passage of California Assembly Bill 205 by Governor Gray Davis, granting domestic partners nearly all of the state rights accorded only to spouses at that point.
Scrapbook 2 September 2003-April 2004
Scope and Contents
Documents September 2003 challenge to California Assembly Bill 205; November 2003 Massachusetts legalization of same-sex marriage; February 12, 2004, "Freedom to Marry Day" and its local and national challenges; February 2004 Just Married Tour; and March 12, 2004, California Supreme Court halting and invalidating same-sex weddings performed in San Francisco.

Scrapbook 3 February 2004-September 2004
Scope and Contents

Scrapbook 4 June 2004-May 2005
Scope and Contents

Scrapbook 5 August 2004-November 2005
Scope and Contents
Documents the October 2004 National Marriage Equality Express Caravan to Washington, D.C.; March 2005 overturn of California ban on gay marriage by San Francisco County Superior Court Judge Richard Kramer; November 2005 Equality California Field Work Update; 2005 California Assembly Bill 849, the Religious Freedom and Civil Marriage Protection Act; speaking engagements for Kotulski; event flyers; and rally photographs.

Scrapbook 6 February 2004-June 2004
Scope and Contents
Documents February 12, 2004, “Freedom to Marry Day” in San Francisco; 2004 Just Married Tour; court cases challenging constitutionality of ban on same-sex marriage; 2004 San Francisco Equality Awards Dinner program; April 2004 Lesbian News story on Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon; April 2004 Cowgirl’s Roundup, an LGBT dance benefit; April 2004 California Assembly Judiciary Committee passes Assembly Bill 1967; June 2004 Fresno pride parade; June 2004 California Assembly passes five separate pieces of legislation granting LGBT rights; Equality California press releases; Equality California correspondence; clippings on awareness raising efforts and same-sex couples; event flyers; photographs of Gatto family; and protests.
Scrapbook 7 March 2003-September 2006
Scope and Contents
Documents social events and Equality California and Marriage Equality California rallies from 2003-2005 in photographs, flyers, and informational documents; the official endorsement of gay marriage by Sebastopol, California; Assemblyman Mark Leno’s withdrawal of California Assembly Bill 167, or the Same-Sex Marriage Bill; April 2004 feature of Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon in Lesbian News; various San Francisco Pride parades in photographs and articles; July 2004 Senate voting out a gay marriage ban; Marina Gatto activism in photographs and articles; August 2004 California Supreme Court voiding San Francisco same-sex marriage licenses; postcards from children urging Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger to endorse California Assembly Bill 849; and 2006 Equality California Institute, Inc. v. L. J. Carusone.

Scrapbook 8 June 2003-April 2005
Scope and Contents
Documents May 2004 Running to the Altar 5K Run; July 2003 Newsweek article on same-sex marriage following Lawrence v. Texas ruling; 2003 clippings on San Francisco Pride; November 2004 Outword clippings; clippings and photographs of Gatto family; October 2004 National Marriage Equality Express clippings; 2005 San Francisco Equality Awards & Gala program; July 2004 documentary Flowers From the Heartland; 2004 San Francisco Pride guide; August/September 2004 Outword photographs; September 2004 Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signs Assembly Bill 2208; 2004 Attorney General Bill Lockyer defends California gay marriage ban; February 2005 clippings on gay adoption; February 2005 German article on California battle for marriage equality; August 2004 California Supreme Court invalidates same-sex licenses; Equality California correspondence; photographs of same-sex marriages at San Francisco City Hall; Lambda Legal guide to registering as domestic partners; speaking engagements of McKay and Kotulski; and event flyers.

Scrapbook 9 March 2005-December 2005
Scope and Contents
Documents March 2005 Judge Richard Kramer’s overturn of California ban on gay marriage; San Mateo and Alameda Counties Boards of Supervisors backing California Assembly Bill 19; clippings and flyers of Pursuit of Equality documentary; flyers for Kotulski’s book signings and speaking engagements; 2005 San Francisco Pride guide; July 2005 California Assembly Bill 849 revision; 2005 Outfest ticket stubs, festival guide, documentary flyer, and reaction-to-film survey; Spain and Canada’s legalization of same-sex marriage; Equality California training and canvassing; Equality California Field Work presentation; June 2005 California Marriage Protection Act; September 2005 California Assembly Bill 849 Assembly vote tabulation and passing; September 2005 Governor Schwarzenegger’s veto of California Assembly Bill 849; November 2005 marches for LGBT veterans; November 2005 National LGBT Conference; and rally photographs.
Scrapbook 10 January 2006-October 2006

Scope and Contents
Documents December 2005 death and funeral of Nathan Christoffersen; 2006 Equality Awards; Valentine’s Day marriage actions; February 2006 Willits City Council resolution supporting marriage equality; Queer Youth Advocacy Day 2006 flyers, photographs, articles; March/April 2006 Liberty for All Tour; McKay’s April 2006 departure from Equality California; endorsements for McKay’s nomination for 2006 James Irvine Foundation Leadership Award; Marriage Equality USA promotional materials for June 2006 Bridge Walk for Marriage Equality; October 2006 California Court of Appeals ruling that same-sex marriage ban constitutional, overturning Richard Kramer’s ruling; October 2006 Marriage Equality USA Chapter Leaders and Outreach Directors; event flyers; Equality California pamphlets; Kotulski and McKay’s speaking engagements programs, flyers, and clippings; and weddings of friends of McKay and Kotulski.

Scrapbook 11 October 2006-September 2007

Scope and Contents
Documents October 2006 California Court of Appeals ruling same-sex marriage ban constitutional; October 2006 New Jersey Supreme Court ruling for the creation of an alternative to marriage for same-sex couples; November 2006 clippings in reaction to California and New Jersey rulings; Kotulski’s February 2007 abdication of Executive Director position at Marriage Equality USA; 2007 Valentine’s Day protest photographs; June 2007 Massachusetts ruling maintaining legalization of same-sex marriage; May 2007 International Festival on Gender and Sexuality clippings, flyers, and correspondence; May 2007 Star Wars Celebration IV; 2007 San Francisco Pride guide; 2007 Peace Calendar; May 2007 Marriage Equality USA Bridging the Gap Walk-a-Thon; Marriage Equality USA advisement of Wedding Wars made-for-TV film; Marriage Equality USA events, flyers, and programs; Kotulski and McKay’s speaking engagements; and personal correspondence.

Scrapbook 12 July 2007-April 2008

Scope and Contents
Documents August 2007 Marvin Burrows winning right to deceased partner’s pension; September 2007 actions to encourage Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger to sign California Assembly Bill 43, the Religious Freedom and Civil Marriage Protection Act; California Assembly Bill 43 fact sheet; October 2007 Governor Schwarzenegger’s veto of California Assembly Bill 43; September 2007 Maryland court denial of same sex marriage and civil unions; August 2007 brief validation of same-sex marriages in Iowa; 2008 Valentine’s Day actions; February 2008 Freedom to Marry Public Service Announcements on Clear Channel radio stations; Sundance Saloon event flyers; McKay and Kotulski’s speaking engagements; personal correspondence; Marriage Equality USA personnel correspondence; and cards.

Scrapbook 13 February 2008-May 2008

Scope and Contents
Documents May 2008 California Supreme Court overturning gay marriage ban; amicus curiae briefs for the case; clippings and photographs leading up to the Supreme Court ruling; background information and detailed positions of the Supreme Court Justices; McKay and Kotulski’s speaking engagements flyers and clippings; speech draft; Marriage Equality USA correspondence; and personal correspondence.
Scrapbook 14 May 2008-July 2008
Scope and Contents
Documents details of same-sex marriage in California per May 2008 California Supreme Court ruling; clippings on opponent backlash and proponents’ celebrations after California Supreme Court ruling; Marriage Equality USA “Couples Across California: Stories of Same-Sex Couples Getting Married”; Marriage Equality USA documents about civil actions, weddings, and wedding announcements; resistance on the part of some California County Clerks to perform marriages; 2008 San Francisco Pride; Marriage Equality USA correspondence; and personal correspondence.

Scrapbook 15 June 2008-November 2008
Scope and Contents
Documents Summer 2008 Pink issue; 2008 Marriage Card Project; September 2008 Marriage Equality USA Bridge Walk and rally; Duży Format article on couple; October 2008 McKay awarded Community Service Individual Award from Toklas LGBT Democratic Club; August 2008 death of Del Martin; June 2008 Norway legalizes same-sex marriage; November 2008 Standing on the Side of Love program; Marriage Equality USA Leadership Retreat materials; Marriage Equality USA Leadership Retreat polling data by California county; promotional materials for “No on 8” campaign, against Proposition 8, which aimed to define marriage as between a man and a woman in California; chants for “No on 8” rallies; clippings regarding “No on 8” campaign; online comments responding to editorials on Proposition 8; Marriage Equality USA correspondence; McKay’s speaking engagements; event flyers; wedding photographs; wedding invitations; invitation to Kotulski and McKay’s third wedding; speech drafts; personal correspondence; and the couple’s Oakland County marriage certificate.

Scrapbook 16 June 2008-July 2008
Scope and Contents
Documents campaign to vote “no” on Proposition 8, “No on 8”; campaign promotional materials; statistical information and outreach tips for organizers; event flyers; grassroots action plan; and Marriage Equality USA and campaign correspondence.

Scrapbook 17 November 2008-April 2009
Scope and Contents
Documents November 2008 passing of Proposition 8 by California voters and subsequent filing of lawsuits challenging its constitutionality; clippings on the implications and reactions to the proposition; Marriage Equality USA’s message framework for the proposition; Milk film release posters and clippings; criticism of the “No on 8” campaign; January 2009 Equality Summit; February 12, 2009, marriage actions; February 2009 Uniting American Families Act; March 2009 California Supreme Court hearing case against Proposition 8; actions and rallies during case arguments; Marriage Equality USA correspondence; and personal correspondence.

Scrapbook 18 June 2009-November 2009
Scope and Contents
Documents 2009 San Francisco Pride, with McKay and Kotulski as grand marshals, photographs, clippings, guide, flyers; Marriage Equality USA “Get Engaged Tour Community Gathering Tool Kit”; initial divide in LGBT community about Proposition 8 challenge case, which eventually reached U.S. Supreme Court; October 2009 Bridge Walk for Equality; October 2009 Defying Inequality benefit concert program, clippings, timeline, poster, photographs, budget; “No on 1” campaign against Maine proposition to deny marriage equality; November 2009 Wedding March on the Capitol; Keeping the Faith coalition and events; speech drafts; and personal correspondence.
Scrapbook 19 March 2009-June 2009

Scope and Contents
Documents Marriage Equality USA’s “Road Map for Grassroots Movement”; McKay and Kotulski’s speaking engagements; March 4, 2009, March Forth for Justice; April 2009 People article on Shirley Tan and Jay Mercado, highlighting plight of binational same-sex couples; April 2009 Iowa legalization of same-sex marriage; April 2009 Vermont legalization of same-sex marriage; May 2009 Sweden legalization of same-sex marriage; May 2009 Camp Courage Bay Area; May 2009 California Marriage Equality Poll Results; May 2009 Marriage Equality USA “Day of Decision Tool Kit”; May 2009 California Supreme Court upholding Proposition 8; amicus brief from LGBT legal groups for Perry v. Schwarzenegger; personal correspondence; and rally songs and chants.

Scrapbook 20 September 2009-June 2010

Scope and Contents

Scrapbook 21 June 2010-November 2010

Scope and Contents
Documents August 2010 federal declaration rendering Proposition 8 unconstitutional; 2010 San Francisco Pride; June 2010 community gathering on the day of closing arguments for Proposition 8 case; Prop 8 Love Stories program; August 2010 rally on day of decision of Proposition 8 case; clippings and photographs of August 2010 day of decision; reactions from proponents and opponents of Proposition 8 to ruling; highlights from Justice Vaughn Walker’s ruling; national and international responses to decision; Femme 2010 program; release of Kotulski’s book, Love Warriors: The Rise of the Marriage Equality Movement and Why It Will Prevail; reviews of the book; speaking engagements for Kotulski and McKay; and personal correspondence.

Scrapbook 22 November 2010-February 2012

Scope and Contents
Documents reviews of Kotulski’s book, Love Warriors: The Rise of the Marriage Equality Movement and Why It Will Prevail; profile of justices deciding Perry v. Brown on U.S. Court of Appeals on the Ninth Circuit; statement by Reverend Jesse Jackson opposing Proposition 8; December 2010 Rally for Global Gay Rights; January 2011 election of Victoria Kolakowski to Superior Court Judge; Kotulski book signings and speaking engagements; January 2011 LA Weekly article on the development of Equality California and Geoffrey Kors’ departure from Executive Director position; February 2011 bills in Maryland and Rhode Island and efforts to ban same-sex marriage across the country; February 2011 Marriage Equality USA newsletter; 2011 national Valentine’s Day actions; February 2011 Obama administration ceases support of Defense of Marriage Act; February 2012 U.S. Court of Appeals on the Ninth Circuit declares Proposition 8 unconstitutional; excerpts from Ninth Circuit ruling; personal correspondence; and marriage equality carols.