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Language of Material: English
Contributing Institution: ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives, USC Libraries, University of Southern California
Title: Robert S. Basker papers
creator: Basker, Robert S. (Robert Sloane)
Identifier/Call Number: Coll2013.076
Physical Description: 4.8 Linear Feet4 archive boxes, 2 archive cartons.
Date (inclusive): 1931-2001
Abstract: Organizational records, correspondence, handwritten notes, published articles, awards, armed services papers, clippings, and photographs from Robert S. Basker (1918-2001). Born Solomon Sloane Basker in Harlem, Basker dedicated his life to progressive causes. He established or directed numerous gay rights groups including Mattachine Midwest, Gay Activist Alliance of Miami, and the Dade County Coalition for Human Rights. Basker also served as a committee member for numerous human rights organizations.

Biographical Information
Robert S. Basker was born Solomon Sloane Basker in Harlem, New York, 1918, to a Jewish family that had immigrated from Poland. He began his civil and political rights activism as a high school student about 1936. He was involved with progressive organizations, including the National Student League, American Students Union, Young Communist League, American Youth Congress, American League Against War and Fascism, American League for Peace and Democracy, the Civil Rights Congress, and the National Negro Congress.

After high school, Basker sought employment; however he encountered an anti-Semitic climate in New York. He dropped his first name and became Robert Sloane Basker, obtaining a job in the export business. After working in the export business he voluntarily served five years in the Army during World War II. Basker was a Technical Sergeant, Headquarters Company, 13th Port and held certificates for Marksman Carbine, Sharpshooter Rifle, and Sharpshooter Pistol 45 caliber. He was Honorably Discharged on November 27, 1945 and remained in Belgium as a civilian serving in the Engineer Section until he was granted relief on June 13, 1946.

Following his army service, Basker moved to the Midwest and worked as a salesman and district manager for Encyclopedia Britannica. In 1954, while living in Skokie, Illinois, he married Hedda Schmidt, who was fully aware that Basker was gay. He adopted her son and they had two children, a son and a daughter, during their seven years of marriage. They were involved in the Chicago Council of American-Soviet Friendship, as well as the racial integration movement, being directly responsible for the first black family to own a home in Skokie in 1961. Around this time, Basker and Schmidt divorced.

He began his gay activism in 1965, establishing the first Mattachine Society in Chicago under his first and middle names, Bob Sloane.

Basker moved to Miami in 1969 to be closer to his ex-wife and children, visiting them in Cuba for nine months. Returning to Miami, Basker took custody of his biological children. In 1971 he helped start the Gay Activist Alliance of Miami. In 1976 he established the Dade County Coalition for the Humanistic Rights of Gays (which would become the Dade County Coalition for Human Rights). This organization championed the passing of the Human Rights Ordinance in Miami which protected the rights of lesbians and gays in Dade County. In 1977 the Ordinance was challenged and repealed by the Save Our Children movement started by Anita Bryant.

In 1978 Basker moved to San Francisco where he would live for the remainder of his life. There, he co-founded the Alexander Hamilton Post 448 of the American Legion, catering to gay veterans. He served on numerous committees including the California Legislative Council for Older Americans, the San Francisco National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and the Board of the San Francisco In-Home Supportive Services Public Authority. In 1992 Basker changed careers, serving in a clerical position for District Attorney Terence Hallinan. His 1992 resume documents his expansive contributions to civil and political rights including involvement in racial equality, feminist issues, senior rights, prisoners’ rights, refugee rights, gay rights, democratic clubs, homeless and community services, and veterans’ organizations.


Source:
Box 1, Folder 26; Box 3, Folder 13; Box 3, Folder 18; Box 3, Folder 47; Box 4, Folder 6; Box 4, Folder 8; Robert S. Basker Papers, Coll2013.076, ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives, USC Libraries, University of Southern California.

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

Conditions Governing Use

Finding Aid to the Robert S. Basker Papers, 1931-2001
Coll2013.076
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**Acquisition**
Donor and date of acquisition unknown.

**Preferred Citation**

**Processing Information**
Formerly boxes #103-047, 103-228, 103-292, 104-035, 104-124. Collection processed by Danielle Perez-Granado, August 2013.

**Scope and Contents**
The collection includes organizational records, correspondence, handwritten notes, published articles, awards, armed services records, clippings, and photographs, 1931-2001, from Robert S. Basker. The bulk of the collection consists of records pertaining to human rights organizations and committees including Mattachine Midwest, Freedom of Residence, Gay Activist Alliance of Miami, Gay Community Services of South Florida, Dade County Coalition for Human Rights, National Committee for Sexual Civil Liberties, Alice B. Toklas Democratic Club, Harvey Milk Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual Democratic Club, American Civil Liberties Union, National Organization for Women, and National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Also included in the collection are Basker’s World War II army service records, articles and interview correspondence documenting his life as a gay activist, photographs capturing his involvement with civil rights leaders, organizational paperwork, presentation notes, *Encyclopedia Britannica* employment correspondence, personal telephone messages, daily schedules, and correspondence regarding charitable contributions.

**Arrangement**
This collection is arranged in the following series:
Series 1. Human rights activism
Series 2. Personal papers

**Separated Materials**
The following publications have been separated from the Robert S. Basker collection and entered into the ONE Archives' periodical and program collections:

**Subjects and Indexing Terms**
Advertising fliers
Clippings (Books, newspapers, etc.)
Correspondence
Gay activists -- Florida
Gays -- Civil rights
Gays -- Political activity
Human rights advocacy
Veterans
Basker, Robert S. (Robert Sloane)
American Civil Liberties Union
Bryant, Anita
Dade County Coalition for Human Rights
Gay Activist Alliance
Gay Community Services of South Florida
Mattachine Midwest
National Association of Black and White Men Together
National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (U.S.)
National Organization for Women

**Human rights activism** Series 1. 1959-1998

**Scope and Contents**
This series contains organizational records and correspondence regarding the many civil rights groups and committees Basker participated in throughout his life. The bulk of this series contains his gay activism, specifically the work he did in Florida including the Gay Activist Alliance of Miami, Gay Community Services, and the Dade County Coalition for Human Rights. The remainder of the series contains other civil rights groups and movements with which he was associated.

**Arrangement**
This series is divided into two subseries: Subseries 1.1, containing gay activism documents; and Subseries 1.2, containing other civil rights documents that are not gay-specific. Both subseries are arranged alphabetically.

**Gay rights** Subseries 1.1.

- **Box 1, folder 1**
  - Alexander Hamilton Post 448 (San Francisco, California) 1997
- **Box 1, folder 2**
  - "Are there really any gay male athletes? an empirical survey" by Brian Garner and Richard W. Smith 1976
- **Box 2, folder 8**
  - Black and White Men Together 1980
- **Box 1, folder 29-31**
  - Chicago activism
- **Box 2, folder 30-31**
  - Mattachine Midwest 1965-1986

**Physical Description:** [2 folders]

**Cuba activism**

- **Box 5, folder 11**
  - Cuba correspondence 1994
- **Box 5, folder 12**
  - Cuba organizations 1993-1994
- **Box 5, folder 13**
  - Cuba trip 1994
- **Box 3, folder 21**
  - Cuba trip fundraising party 1994
- **Box 1, folder 25**
  - Queers for Cuba 1992

**Florida activism**

- **Box 1, folder 32-63**
  - Alliance for Individual Rights 1975-1976
- **Box 1, folder 34**
  - Affidavit - State of Ohio regarding aftermath of the Save Our Children campaign undated
- **Box 1, folder 35**
  - Bryant, Anita and Save Our Children 1977
- **Box 1, folder 36**
  - Campbell, Jack correspondence and clippings 1975-1978
- **Box 1, folder 37**
  - Chicago Sun-Times articles 1978
- **Box 5, folder 7**
  - Citizens for Human Rights Educator’s Task Force 1977
- **Box 1, folder 38**
  - Dade anti-discrimination court cases 1973-1977
- **Box 1, folder 39**
  - Dade County Democratic Executive Committee Minority Concerns Task Force 1973-1976
- **Box 1, folder 40**
  - Dade County Human Rights Ordinance 1977
  - Dade County Coalition for Human Rights 1977
### Civil rights, not gay-specific Subseries 1.2.

- **Box 2, folder 1**  
  Activists events 1977-1996
Box 2, folder 2  
Activist and organizational correspondence 1975-1997  
Box 2, folder 3  
Adams, Jane research and correspondence 1988-1997  
Box 2, folder 4  
American Civil Liberties Union 1977-1979  
Box 2, folder 5  
American Civil Liberties Union human rights bill 1974  
Box 2, folder 6  
American Civil Liberties Union nazi defense 1977  
Box 2, folder 7  
American Civil Liberties Union publications 1978-1979  
Box 2, folder 8  
Alice B. Toklas club 1979-1996  
Box 2, folder 9  
California Legislative Council for Older Americans 1997-1998  

Box 2, folder 10  
Charitable contributions 1995-1998  

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Box 2, folder 14  
Committee on Africa 1976  
Box 2, folder 15  
Correspondence regarding Ben Chavis 1979  
Box 2, folder 16  
Death penalty 1976-1978  
Box 2, folder 17  
Democratic party 1973-1978  
Box 2, folder 18  
Democratic Women’s Forum of San Francisco 1982  
Box 2, folder 19  
Dunn, Marvin correspondence 1978  
Box 2, folder 20  
Federal Bureau of Investigation materials 1980  
Box 2, folder 21  
Feminist Men’s Alliance 1987  
Box 2, folder 22  
Fortune Society 1972-1977  
Box 2, folder 23  
Freedom of Residence 1963-1975  

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Box 2, folder 25  
Committee on Africa 1976  
Box 2, folder 26  
Correspondence regarding Ben Chavis 1979  
Box 2, folder 27  
Death penalty 1976-1978  
Box 2, folder 28  
Democratic party 1973-1978  
Box 2, folder 29  
Democratic Women’s Forum of San Francisco 1982  
Box 2, folder 30  
Dunn, Marvin correspondence 1978  
Box 2, folder 31  
Federal Bureau of Investigation materials 1980  
Box 2, folder 32  
Feminist Men’s Alliance 1987  
Box 2, folder 33  
Fortune Society 1972-1977  

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Box 2, folder 34  
Freedom of Residence speaking engagements 1963  
Box 2, folder 35  
Fulani, Dr. Lenora B. 1992  
Box 2, folder 36  
Haiti trip 1982  
Box 2, folder 37  
Haitian refugees 1975-1978  
Box 2, folder 38  
Hamilton, Richard R. MD - committee to halt the advancement of sexually transmitted epidemics correspondence 1982-1983  
Box 2, folder 39  
Hodge, G. Reid 1976  
Box 2, folder 40  
Hospitality House 1983-1985  
Box 2, folder 41  
Human Rights Foundation 1980  
Box 2, folder 42  
Human rights law 1973  
Box 2, folder 43  
Lambda legal defense and education fun newsletters and correspondence 1976-1979  
Box 2, folder 44  
Medical marijuana 1996  
Box 2, folder 45  
Metropolitan Community Church 1973-1975  
Box 2, folder 46  
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People of San Francisco 1996-1998  
Box 2, folder 47  
National Alliance Against Racial and Political Repression 1970-1974  
Box 2, folder 48  
Northern Californians Against Repressive Legislation 1974-1979  
Box 2, folder 49  
Box 2, folder 50  
People’s Party - Miami 1971-1972  
Box 2, folder 51  
Pitts and Lee correspondence and clippings 1975-1978  
Box 2, folder 52  
Political correspondence 1974-1997  
Box 2, folder 53  
Rosenberg case 1974-1978  
Box 2, folder 54  
S-1 correspondence and clippings for defeating the federal bill 1975-1978  
Box 2, folder 55  
San Francisco Feminist Democrats 1979-1980  
Box 2, folder 56  
San Francisco commission hearing on hate speech and talk radio 1996  
Box 2, folder 57  
Sexual Law Reporter incorporation 1974-1976  
Box 3, folder 1  
Skokie records and clippings 1959-1963  
Box 3, folder 2  
Skokie clippings 1961-1963  
Box 3, folder 3  
Skokie newspaper articles 1961  
Box 3, folder 4  
Southern Organization Committee 1974-1979  
Box 3, folder 5  
Supreme Court of Florida brief of applicant Robert Frances Eimers 1977  
Box 3, folder 6  
Transition, Inc. - Miami 1974-1978  
Box 4, folder 7  
United Farm Workers - Miami 1976
**Human rights activism Series 1.1959-1998**

Civil rights, not gay-specific Subseries 1.2.

**Finding Aid to the Robert S. Basker Papers, 1931-2001**

Coll2013.076

| Box 3, folder 5 | United States v. Robert Basker citation #G140661 1988 |
| Box 3, folder 6 | Women's International League for Peace and Freedom 1983 |
| Box 3, folder 7 | Women's Political Caucus - Florida 1976-1978 |

**Personal papers Series 2. 1931-2001**

**Scope and Contents**

This series contains correspondence and documentation of Basker including his early life, World War II army documentation, correspondence, awards, photographs, telephone message notes, and handwritten daily schedules. Noteworthy are his 1992 resume, articles written by and about Basker, awards, and photographs.

**Arrangement**

Series 2. Personal papers are arranged alphabetically.

**Box 3, folder 8**

The 15 Association 1988

**Box 5, folder 1**

Advocate article on Basker June 15, 1977

**Box 5, folder 2**

Angola clippings 1975-1976

**Box 5, folder 5**

Army 201 personal life 1943

**Box 3, folder 9**

Articles on Basker 1978-1997

**Box 3, folder 10**

Awards 1963-1995

**Box 3, folder 11**

Basker, Wayne correspondence and childhood events 1982-1984

**Box 3, folder 12**

Block, Gil clippings 1991

**Box 3, folder 13**

Birth certificate copy and high school correspondence 1933-1940

**Box 3, folder 14**

Birthday events and correspondence 1993-1998

**Box 3, folder 15**

Chicago records and clippings 1960-1963

**Box 3, folder 16**

Christmas greeting cards 1985-1995

**Box 3, folder 3**

Clippings 1975-1996

**Box 3, folder 17**

Columbia University 1951

**Box 3, folder 18**

Correspondence with John D'Emilio 1980

**Box 3, folder 19-20**

Correspondence and miscellaneous papers 1970-1993

**Physical Description:** [2 folders]

**Box 3, folder 22-23**

Cuba trip 1966-1967

**Physical Description:** [2 folders]

**Box 6, folder 1-6**

Daily schedules 1988-1994

**Physical Description:** [6 folders]

**Box 3, folder 24**

Encyclopedia Britannica correspondence 1958-1960

**Box 3, folder 25**

Encyclopedia Britannica tele-wats correspondence 1961-1975

**Box 3, folder 26**

Friends publications and mailers 1975-1976

**Box 3, folder 27**

Florida International University cultural and human interaction center tri-ethnic bilingual program 1977

**Box 5, folder 4**

Hate mail 1977

**Box 3, folder 28**

Ida B. Wells High School dedication 1992

**Box 3, folder 29**

In-Home Support Services Public Authority 1997

**Box 3, folder 30**

Invitations to organizational functions 1995-1998

**Box 3, folder 31**

The League 1976-1979

**Box 3, folder 32**

Miami-Dade Community College life lab notebook 1975-1976

**Box 3, folder 33**

New College 1982-1984

**Box 3, folder 34**

New College coursework 1981-1984

**Box 3, folder 35**

New York City College transcript 1936-1942

**Box 3, folder 36**

Nomenus organizational minutes 1985-1992

**Box 6, folder 7**

Notes and telephone messages 1972-1993

**Box 3, folder 37**

Obituary of Robert S. Basker 2001

**Box 3, folder 38**

Organizational pamphlets 1975-1994

**Box 3, folder 39**

People's World 1982-1987

**Box 3, folder 40**

Personal friends 1978-1994

**Box 3, folder 41**

Personal notes 1970-1977
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<td>42</td>
<td>Photographs 1944-1995</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>Political clippings 1975-1978</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Presentation notes 1976-1991</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>Publications correspondence and articles 1963-1983</td>
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<td>San Francisco Community Advisory Board 1981-1985</td>
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