



ArchivesSpace

a community served by †Lyrasis

Justine Wise Polier papers4079230

This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on January 15, 2025.

Description is written in: English.

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Butler Library, 6th Floor
Columbia University, Mail Code 1127
535 W. 114th St.
New York, NY 10027

Business Number: (212) 854-5153

Fax Number: (212) 854-1365

rbml@libraries.cul.columbia.edu

URL: <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/indiv/rbml/index.html>

Table of Contents

Summary Information	3
Biographical Note	3
Summary	4
Arrangement	4
Administrative Information	5
Related Materials	6
Controlled Access Headings	6
Other Finding Aids	7
Collection Inventory	7
Series I: Justine Wise Polier papers	7

Summary Information

Repository:	Rare Book and Manuscript Library
Creator:	Polier, Justine Wise, 1903-1987
Title:	Justine Wise Polier papers
ID:	4079230
ID:	MS#1015
Date [inclusive]:	1970-1976
Physical Description:	4.17 linear feet 10 document boxes
Language of the Material:	English .

Preferred Citation

Identification of specific item; Date (if known); Justine Wise Polier papers; Box and Folder; Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University Library.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Biographical Note

Justice in the Domestic Relations Court of New York City, 1934-1962, Judge of the New York State Family Court, 1962-1973. Polier was affiliated with the Children's Defense Fund and the Field Foundation (Barnard A.B., 1924).

Justine Wise Polier (1903-1987) was born in Portland, Oregon to Louise Waterman Wise, founder of the Free Synagogue Child Adoption Committee (1916) and Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, a leading Jewish communal figure and founding member of both the NAACP (1914) and the American Jewish Congress (1918). She attended Bryn Mawr College from 1920-1922 and Radcliffe College from 1922-1923, before finally completing her BA at Barnard College in 1924. She then attended Yale Law School and received her degree in 1928.

From 1929-1934, Wise Polier worked for the Workmen's Compensation Counsel, and in 1935, New York Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia appointed her judge in the Domestic Relations Court (now known as the New York State Family Court). At this time, Justine Wise Polier, only 32 years old, was the first woman to hold a judgeship in New York--in fact, the first woman in New

York State to hold judicial office above magistrate--a position which she maintained for 38 years.

For more than 30 years she was president of Louise Wise Services, the adoption agency founded by her mother which became a voluntary agency serving children and families. She was also vice president of the Citizens Committee for Children, founder and president of the Wiltwyck School for Boys -- the first nonsectarian and interracial agency that cared for and educated neglected and troubled youth in New York--, board member and later president of the Field Foundation and a member of the Institute of judicial Administration of the American Bar Association. After she retired, she headed the office of juvenile justice of the Children's Defense Fund. The distinguished jurist and activist for children's rights and civil liberties died in 1987.

In 1989 Columbia University established the annual Justine Wise Polier Memorial Lecture. Each year the lecture, sponsored by the School of Social Work, the Law School and the psychiatry department's division of child psychiatry, was given by a distinguished expert in law, child advocacy or mental health.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Summary

Legal briefs, opinions, depositions, notes, memoranda, correspondence, and miscellaneous printed material of Polier. The materials are primarily photocopies of court documents which Polier assembled in the course of monitoring legal precedents for the Children's Defense Fund and the Field Foundation. Among the topics covered in the files are abortion, discrimination, education, foster care, juvenile justice, mental health, and parental rights.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Arrangement

This collection is arranged in one series: Series I: Justine Wise Polier papers.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Administrative Information

Publication Statement

Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Butler Library, 6th Floor

Columbia University, Mail Code 1127

535 W. 114th St.

New York, NY 10027

Business Number: (212) 854-5153

Fax Number: (212) 854-1365

rbml@libraries.cul.columbia.edu

URL: <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/indiv/rbml/index.html>

Revision Description

PDF replaced with full finding aid (JR) 2020-04-10

Restrictions on Access

This collection is located off-site. You will need to request this material at least three business days in advance to use the collection in the Rare Book and Manuscript Library reading room.

Restrictions on Access

This collection has no restrictions.

Accruals

Materials may have been added to the collection since this finding aid was prepared. Contact rbml@columbia.edu for more information.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Source of acquisition--Field Foundation. Method of acquisition--Gift; Date of acquisition--1981. Accession number--M-81.

Reproduction Note

Type of reproduction--Photocopies

Processing Information

Cataloged Christina Hilton Fenn 08/--/1989.

Terms Governing Use and Reproduction

Reproductions may be made for research purposes. The RBML maintains ownership of the physical material only. Copyright remains with the creator and his/her heirs. The responsibility to secure copyright permission rests with the patron.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Related Materials

Related Materials

Additional Juliet Wise Polier can be found in the following collections: [Carnegie Council on Ethics & International Affairs records, 1914-1996](#), [Charles W. Poletti papers, 1920-1991 \(MS#1013\)](#), [Gerald E. Markowitz and David Rosner Papers, 1923-1999 \(MS#1615\)](#), [Herbert H. Lehman Papers, 1878-2002 \(MS#0763\)](#), [School of Social Work Records, 1898-circa 2000s \(UA#0099\)](#), and [Wiltwyck School for Boys records, 1942-1981 \(MS#1418\)](#).

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Controlled Access Headings

- Law -- New York (State)
- Abortion -- New York (State)
- Discrimination -- New York (State)
- Civil rights -- New York (State)
- Education -- New York (State)
- Foster home care -- Law and legislation -- New York (State)
- Juvenile justice, Administration of -- New York (State)
- Mental health laws -- New York (State)
- Parent and child (Law)
- Children -- Legal status, laws, etc
- Courts -- New York (State)
- Courts -- New York (State) -- New York
- Judges
- New York (State). Domestic Relations Court (New York)

- New York (State). Family Court (City of New York)
- Children's Defense Fund (U.S.)
- Field Foundation (New York, N.Y.)

Other Finding Aids

[Legacy finding aid](#)

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Collection Inventory

Series I: Justine Wise Polier papers	
Title/Description	Instances
Abortion	box 1
Adoption	box 1
Aid to Families with Dependent Children	box 2
Banishment	box 2
Contempt Powers	box 2
Counsel, Right to	box 2
Cruel and Unusual Punishment	box 2
Cruel and Unusual Treatment	box 3
Discrimination	
Wilder vs Sugarman	box 3
Player vs Alabama	box 4
Education	box 4
Public Welfare (Roe vs Norton)	box 4
Education	
General	box 4
Corporal Punishment	box 4
Handicapped	box 5
School Suspensions arid Exclusions	box 5

Foster Care	
General	box 5
Payments to Non-Financially Liable Relatives	box 5
Rights of Relations	box 5
Rights of Parents	box 6
Funding	
Indian Children	box 6
Juvenile Justice	
Detention	box 6
Due Process	box 7
Indefinite or Extended Sentence	box 7
Jails and Lock-ups	box 7
Treatment, Right to	box 7
Mental Health	
Mental Retardation	box 7
Right of Patients to Commit Voluntarily	box 8
Miscellaneous	box 8
Parental Rights	box 8
Parental Rights	box 9
Persons in Need of Supervision	box 9
Placement, Out of State	box 9
Treatment, Right to	box 10
Waiver	box 10

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)