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## Alfred J. Kahn Papers 8386417

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository:</b>	Rare Book and Manuscript Library
<b>Creator:</b>	Kahn, Alfred J., 1919-2009
<b>Title:</b>	Alfred J. Kahn Papers
<b>ID:</b>	8386417
<b>ID:</b>	MS#1549
<b>Date [inclusive]:</b>	1919-2009
<b>Physical Description:</b>	11.76 linear feet 28 document boxes
<b>Language of the Material:</b>	English .
<b>Abstract:</b>	This collection consists of papers relating to the personal life, military service, and academic career of Columbia University professor Alfred J. Kahn.

### Preferred Citation

Identification of specific item; Date (if known); Alfred J. Kahn Papers; Box and Folder; Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University Library.

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## Biographical / Historical

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Alfred J. Kahn was a pioneer in the field of social work and served as a member of the Columbia University faculty for fifty-seven years. Born in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, in 1919, Kahn spent much of his early life in the Bensonhurst neighborhood. His parents, Meyer and Sophie Kahn, raised their children in the Jewish faith. Kahn remained interested in his Jewish heritage through his college years, enrolling concurrently in the secular City College and in the Jewish Theological Seminary and graduating from both programs by 1940.

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## Biographical / Historical

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Kahn's interest in social work as a field of study developed during his college years. At City College, Kahn became active in the Zionist student organization called Avukah. As a student leader of Avukah, Kahn organized a national survey of Jewish college students in an effort to understand the particular needs and challenges of that community. This experience, along with a few courses in social work, convinced Kahn that this would be his vocation. After an initial rejection, Kahn was accepted into the M.S. program at the New York School of Social Work in 1941. He also remained engaged with the Jewish community through an administrative role in Avukah and a post as a Hebrew Sunday school teacher.

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## Biographical / Historical

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Kahn studied at the School of Social Work until 1942, when he entered the military. Stationed at the Air Force Drew Field Mental Health Unit in Florida-the first unit of its kind in the United States military-Kahn screened incoming patients and observed their patterns of adjustment and maladjustment. He also provided informal advice to soldiers (and occasionally their wives) through a column entitled "What's Your Problem?" Ultimately, he published a scholarly article based on his experiences at Drew and collected material that would help to launch his early career.

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## Biographical / Historical

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Upon his discharge from the military at the end of World War II, Kahn completed his M.S. at the New York School of Social Work and began his doctoral studies at Columbia University. He would maintain an affiliation with Columbia for the rest of his life. Kahn received the first doctorate in social work to be conferred at Columbia and, indeed, in the state of New York. He remained at Columbia, helping to develop the doctoral program and to shape the academic field of social work, particularly in the areas of family and child welfare, social service planning, and comparative international analysis.

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## Biographical / Historical

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In addition to his work as a professor, Alfred Kahn served as a consultant for federal, state, and local agencies as well as philanthropic organizations, in the development of social policy. His work in this capacity began very early in his career at the Citizen's Committee for Children. Kahn contributed to the CCC from 1948 to 1972, publishing a number of major studies on juvenile justice under CCC auspices. These publications drew Kahn onto the national stage in the 1950s as an expert on juvenile delinquency. He continued to serve as a policy advisor through the 1960s and 1970s, contributing to the shaping of Lyndon Johnson's Great Society programs.

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## Biographical / Historical

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Kahn remained interested in children and family structure throughout his long career. Over time, the geographic scope of his interest expanded. Along with his frequent collaborator Sheila Kamerman, Kahn embarked on comparative studies of European and American families and social policies. This research provided the basis for Kahn's increasingly frequent critiques of United States policies in the late 1970s and 1980s, and his advocacy for European-style socialized services to aid underprivileged Americans. At Columbia, Kahn and Kamerman established and co-chaired the Cross-National Studies research program, promoting comparative international scholarship.

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## Biographical / Historical

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Alfred J. Kahn received numerous honors and awards throughout his career and received several honorary degrees. Kahn retired in 1989 and continued to teach as a Professor Emeritus until 2004. He died in 2009, survived by his daughter, Nancy.

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## Summary

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This collection consists of a range of materials, relating primarily to Alfred Kahn's education, military service, and professional life. The materials include lesson plans and drafts, publications, reviews, research notes, conference proceedings, and correspondence. There is also one box of video and audio tapes, including a video interview and some of Kahn's lectures at Columbia and elsewhere. In addition, the collection includes a small amount of personal correspondence and several photographs.

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## Arrangement

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This collection is arranged in three series.

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## Administrative Information

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### Publication Statement

Rare Book and Manuscript Library

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535 W. 114th St.  
New York, NY 10027

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### Revision Description

xml document instance created by Lea Osborne xml document instance updated by Catherine C. Ricciardi xml document instance updated by Carrie Hintz (reflects integration of 2011 accession) EAD was imported spring 2019 as part of the ArchivesSpace Phase II migration. 2011-01-26 2011-04-21 2011-04-21 2019-05-20

### **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**

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### **Immediate Source of Acquisition**

Source of acquisition--Nancy V. Kahn. Method of acquisition--Gift; Date of acquisition--2010.

### **Processing Information**

Papers processed Eve Mayer, Pratt SILS 2011 2010 December.

### **Processing Information**

Cataloged Lea Osborne 2011/01/21.

### **Accrual**

No additions are expected

### **Accruals**

Materials may have been added to the collection since this finding aid was prepared. Contact [rbml@columbia.edu](mailto:rbml@columbia.edu) for more information.

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## **Controlled Access Headings**

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- Child welfare -- Government policy -- New York (State)

- Child welfare -- Government policy -- United States
- Conference proceedings
- Congressional committee records
- Family policy -- United States
- Judaism and social problems -- United States
- Juvenile delinquency -- New York (State) -- New York
- Juvenile delinquency -- United States
- Social policy
- Social work education
- Soldiers -- Mental health -- United States
- United States -- Social policy
- New York (State) -- Social policy
- Clippings (Information Artifacts)
- Military records
- Syllabi
- Kahn, Alfred J., 1919-2009
- Kamerman, Sheila B.
- Avukah, American Student Zionist Federation
- Citizens' Committee for Children of New York
- Columbia University. School of Social Work
- Columbia University. School of Social Work. Cross-National Studies Research Program
- Jewish Board of Guardians

## Collection Inventory

### Series I: Personal, 1919-2009

#### Scope and Contents

This series contains mixed materials relating to the family life, education, and military service of Alfred J. Kahn. The subjects covered include awards and honors, including honorary degrees. There are also personal records from Kahn's college and graduate career, including early statements of his interest in social work and documentation of his participation in the Avukah Zionist student organization. There are also materials pertaining to Kahn's family life, several photographs, and transcripts of eulogies from Kahn's memorial services in 2009.

#### Scope and Contents

The series also documents Kahn's military service at the Air Force Drew Field Mental Health Unit during World War II. The Drew MHU, in Florida, was the first of its kind, and the material included from this period of Kahn's life provides insight into the early diagnosis and treatment of mental illness among soldiers. Kahn began research at Drew that contributed directly to his professional development and, as a result, some of the materials in this section are of a professional as well as a personal nature. One folder of patient interview notes has been restricted due to the personal nature of its contents.

Title/Description	Instances	
General, 1919-1989	box 1	folder 1



Awards and Honors, 1967-2005 <u>Physical Description:</u> (2 Folders)	box 1	folder 2 to 3
Education		
1939-1945	box 1	folder 4
1946-1949	box 1	folder 5
1950	box 1	folder 6
1951	box 1	folder 7
1952-1953	box 1	folder 8
Family, undated, 1920-1984	box 1	folder 9
Memorial, 2009	box 1	folder 10
Military, 1942-1945		
"What the Soldier Thinks,", 1944	box 1	folder 11
Personal Records, 1942-1945 <u>Physical Description:</u> (2 Folders)	box 1	folder 12 to 13
Articles, 1944	box 2	folder 1
"What's Your Problem?," 1944-1945	box 2	folder 2
Drew MHU Study, 1944-1947	box 2	folder 3
Drew MHU Manual, 1944	box 2	folder 4
Drew MHU Consultations, 1945 <u>Conditions Governing Access:</u> <b>Conditions Governing Access</b> [Restricted until 2050]	box 2	folder 5
Avukah Manual, 1941	box 27	

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## Series II: Professional, 1942-2008

### Scope and Contents

This series consists of materials documenting Alfred J. Kahn's career and professional activities. The content includes published writing as well as drafts, lecture notes, press clippings, and conference proceedings. Kahn's associations with non-academic organizations and his contributions to city, state, and federal policy are also documented here.

### Scope and Contents

The majority of materials in this series pertain to Kahn's teaching and research activities, as well as his professional publications. Syllabi and lecture notes provide insight into Kahn's teaching methods. The

series also includes records of Kahn's televised lectures on CBS as part of a 1968 Columbia University public education initiative.

### Scope and Contents

Many of the publications that Kahn produced over the course of his career are also present in this series, either in draft or final form. The series also includes some of the raw material Kahn collected in the form of notes from his research trips to Europe with frequent collaborator Sheila Kamerman.

### Scope and Contents

In addition to teaching and research, Kahn contributed to public discourse about social policy in an advisory role. These include community organizations such as the Citizens' Committee for Children (CCC). The series features extensive records of CCC communications and publications, including some of the work that Kahn published under CCC auspices. The series also features records of Kahn's congressional testimony and his contributions to official reports and committees. One issue of note is juvenile delinquency, an early area of expertise for Alfred Kahn that initiated his involvement with federal policy in the 1950s.

Title/Description	Instances	
General, 1953-2001 <u>Physical Description:</u> (3 Folders)	box 2	folder 6 to 8
Biographies, undated, 1959-2008	box 2	folder 9
Photographs, 1953-1980	box 3	folder 1
Publication Lists, undated, 1953- 2004, undated, 1953-2004	box 3	folder 2
Resumes, undated, 1959-1963, undated, 1959-1963	box 3	folder 3
"Growth and Development of AICP and COS," 1942 <u>Physical Description:</u> (3 Folders)	box 3	folder 4 to 6
Citizens' Committee on Children		
General, undated <u>Physical Description:</u> (2 Folders)	box 3	folder 7 to 8
1949-1950	box 3	folder 9
1951-1953	box 3	folder 10
Proposal to Judge John Warren Hill, 1951	box 3	folder 11
1954	box 4	folder 1
1955	box 4	folder 2
1956	box 4	folder 3
"Major CCC Documents 1956-1957," 1956-1957 <u>Physical Description:</u> (4 Folders)	box 4	folder 4 to 7
1957 January-April	box 4	folder 8
1957 May-December	box 4	folder 9

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"For Children in Trouble", 1957	box 5	folder 1
"Major CCC Documents 1957-1958", 1957-1958 <u>Physical Description:</u> (3 Folders)	box 5	folder 2 to 4
1958	box 5	folder 5
1959	box 5	folder 6
"The Planning and Coordination of Services for Children and Youth in New York City", 1957	box 5	folder 7
1960	box 5	folder 8
"When Children Must Be Committed", 1960	box 5	folder 9
1961	box 5	folder 10
1962	box 5	folder 11
"New York City Schools and Children Who Need Help", 1962	box 5	folder 12
1963	box 6	folder 1
1964 January-February	box 6	folder 2
1964 March December	box 6	folder 3
"Creating an Informed Community Presence", 1964 <u>Physical Description:</u> (2 Folders)	box 6	folder 4 to 5
1965-1967	box 6	folder 6
1968-1970	box 6	folder 7
1971-1972	box 6	folder 8
1973-1974	box 6	folder 9
Basic CCC Documents, 1953-1956	box 27	
Conferences and Lectures, undated, 1945-2004, undated, 1945-2004		
General, undated	box 6	folder 10
1945-1946	box 6	folder 11
1947	box 6	folder 12
1948	box 7	folder 1
1949-1952	box 7	folder 2
1953-1954	box 7	folder 3
1955-1959	box 7	folder 4
"Social Science Theory and Social Work Research", 1959	box 7	folder 5
1960		

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	box 7	folder 6
1961-1962	box 7	folder 7
"Panel Meeting on the Development of New Approaches to Community Mental Health Services," 1962 <u>Physical Description:</u> (2 Folders)	box 7	folder 8 to 9
1963	box 8	folder 1
1964	box 8	folder 2
"Key Services for Unmarried Mothers," 1964	box 8	folder 3
Institute for Training in Community Psychiatry, 1964 <u>Physical Description:</u> (3 Folders)	box 8	folder 4 to 6
1965	box 8	folder 7
"Daycare as a Social Instrument," 1965 <u>Physical Description:</u> (3 Folders)	box 8	folder 8 to 10
1966 January-August	box 9	folder 1
1966 September-December	box 9	folder 2
1967	box 9	folder 3
"After Fifty Years" Minnesota School of Social Work, 1967	box 9	folder 4
1968	box 9	folder 5
1969	box 9	folder 6
"Income Maintenance Alternatives," 1969	box 9	folder 7
La Programmazione Sociale, 1969	box 9	folder 8
1970	box 9	folder 9
1971-1972	box 10	folder 1
1973	box 10	folder 2
1974-1976	box 10	folder 3
1977	box 10	folder 4
"Cleveland's Human Services," 1977	box 10	folder 5
Conference on Family Policy Proceedings, 1977	box 10	folder 6
1978-1979	box 10	folder 7
Family Policy Conference, 1979	box 10	folder 8
1980	box 11	folder 1
1981	box 11	folder 2
"The 80's: A New Decade For Social Work," 1982	box 11	folder 3

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1982-1983	box 11	folder 4
1984	box 11	folder 5
1985	box 11	folder 6
1986	box 11	folder 7
1987-1988	box 11	folder 8
1989 January-May	box 11	folder 9
1989 June-December	box 12	folder 1
1990-1991	box 12	folder 2
1992	box 12	folder 3
1993-1994	box 12	folder 4
1995-1997	box 12	folder 5
1998	box 12	folder 6
1999	box 12	folder 7
2000-2004	box 12	folder 8
"Towards An Australian Family Policy," 1980	box 28	
Correspondence		
1939-1959	box 12	folder 9
1960-1969	box 12	folder 10
1970-1979	box 13	folder 1
1980-1989	box 13	folder 2
1990-2006	box 13	folder 3
Jewish Board of Guardians		
General, undated	box 13	folder 4
1944-1946	box 13	folder 5
1947	box 13	folder 6
Press		
General, undated	box 13	folder 7
1950-1952	box 13	folder 8
1953	box 13	folder 9
1954	box 13	folder 10 to 12
<u>Physical Description: (3 Folders)</u>		
1955-1959	box 14	folder 1

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1960-1962	box 14	folder 2
1963	box 14	folder 3
1964	box 14	folder 4
1965-1966	box 14	folder 5
1967-1968	box 14	folder 6
1969	box 14	folder 7
1970-1971	box 14	folder 8
1972-1973	box 14	folder 9
1974-1975	box 14	folder 10
1976	box 14	folder 11
1977	box 14	folder 12
1978	box 15	folder 1
1979	box 15	folder 2
1980	box 15	folder 3
1981	box 15	folder 4
1982	box 15	folder 5
1983	box 15	folder 6
1984-1985	box 15	folder 7
1986-1987	box 15	folder 8
1988	box 15	folder 9
1989	box 15	folder 10
1990-1994	box 15	folder 11
1995-2002	box 15	folder 12
Reports		
1940-1949	box 16	folder 1
1950-1954	box 16	folder 2
1955	box 16	folder 3
"The Use of Dog Guides in the Rehabilitation of the Blind," 1956	box 16	folder 4
1956-1959	box 16	folder 5
"New York City Boys Committed to State Training Schools in 1957 and 1958," 1959, 1957, 1959	box 16	folder 6
New Jersey Youth Study Commission, 1960	box 16	folder 7

1960-1964	box 16	folder 8
1965	box 16	folder 9
1966	box 17	folder 1
1967-1969	box 17	folder 2
"Development of Social Work Manpower and Knowledge in Relation to Critical Illness," 1968	box 17	folder 3
"Social Planning in Pittsburgh," 1969	box 17	folder 4
"Social Policy and the Distribution of Income," U.N. Report, 1969	box 17	folder 5
Interim Report to the Ford Foundation, 1970 <u>Physical Description:</u> (2 Folders)	box 17	folder 6 to 7
1970-1971	box 17	folder 8
1972 <u>Physical Description:</u> (2 Folders)	box 17	folder 9 to 10
1973-1975	box 18	folder 1
"Social Services in New York City," 1973	box 18	folder 2
Task Force on "State of the Child," Report, 1974	box 18	folder 3
1976	box 18	folder 4
1977-1979	box 18	folder 5
1980-1982	box 18	folder 6
1983-1984	box 18	folder 7
1985 <u>Physical Description:</u> (2 Folders)	box 18	folder 8 to 9
"Tax Policies: How Do Families Fare?," 1985	box 18	folder 10
1986-1987	box 19	folder 1
"Mother-Only Families in Western Europe," 1987	box 19	folder 2
1988	box 19	folder 3
Federal Role In Child Care Hearing, September 22, 1988	box 19	folder 4
1989	box 19	folder 5
"Hearings Before the Committee on Education and Labor," 1989	box 19	folder 6
"Social Services for Children, Youth and Families in the U.S.," 1989	box 19	folder 7
"Social Services for Children, Youth and Families: The New York City Study," 1990	box 19	folder 8

1990-2002	box 19	folder 9
"Mental Health and Social Services", 1975	box 28	
Research, undated, 1946-2000		
General	box 19	folder 10
1946	box 19	folder 11
"A Program of Research in Juvenile Delinquency", 1956	box 19	folder 12
1959	box 20	folder 1 to 3
<u>Physical Description:</u> (3 Folders)		
1963-1964	box 20	folder 4
1972-1973	box 20	folder 5
Bound Interviews and Reports--Europe, 2000 March	box 20	folder 6
Europe, 1999 Summer	box 28	
Teaching		
General, undated	box 20	folder 7
1947-1950	box 20	folder 8
1951	box 20	folder 9
1952-1965	box 20	folder 10
1966	box 20	folder 11 to 12
<u>Physical Description:</u> (2 Folders)		
1966	box 21	folder 1
1966-1967	box 21	folder 2
1968	box 21	folder 3 to 5
<u>Physical Description:</u> (3 Folders)		
1969	box 21	folder 6
1970-1976	box 21	folder 7
1977-1978	box 21	folder 8
1979	box 21	folder 9
1980	box 21	folder 10
1981-1982	box 21	folder 11
1983 Binder, 1983	box 21	folder 12
1983	box 22	folder 1 to 2
<u>Physical Description:</u> (2 Folders)		
1983		



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	box 22	folder 3
1984	box 22	folder 4
1985	box 22	folder 5
1986	box 22	folder 6
1987	box 22	folder 7
1988-1989	box 22	folder 8
1990-1995	box 22	folder 9
1998-1999	box 23	folder 1
2000	box 23	folder 2 to 3
<u>Physical Description: (2 Folders)</u>		
2001-2002	box 23	folder 4
2004	box 23	folder 5
Writings		
"Miscellaneous Reprints or Unpublished Papers," 1944-1995	box 23	folder 6 to 8
<u>Physical Description: (3 Folders)</u>		
1938-1944	box 23	folder 9
1945-1949	box 23	folder 10
"The Psychopath in the Armed Forces," 1946	box 24	folder 1
1950	box 24	folder 2
1951-1953	box 24	folder 3
1954-1955	box 24	folder 4
1956-1959	box 24	folder 5
1960-1961	box 24	folder 6
1962-1964	box 24	folder 7
1965-1966	box 24	folder 8
1967-1969	box 24	folder 9
1970-1972	box 25	folder 1
1973-1974	box 25	folder 2
1975-1977	box 25	folder 3
"European Family Policy Currents"--Draft, 1976	box 25	folder 4
"Government and Family in the U.S."--Draft, 1977	box 25	folder 5
"Government Structure Versus Family Policy"--Draft, 1979	box 25	folder 6

1978-1979	box 25	folder 7
1980-1982	box 25	folder 8
1983-1984	box 25	folder 9
1985-1989	box 25	folder 10
"Contracting for Child & Family Services", 1999	box 25	folder 11
1990-2008	box 25	folder 12

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### Series III: Audiovisual Material, 1977-2004

#### Scope and Contents

This Series consists of video and audiotapes, as well as one DVD interview of Dr. Kahn. The videotapes document Kahn's lectures from Columbia University course 8801, "Comparative Histories of Social Welfare and Social Work," during his last year of teaching. The audiotapes include a number of taped lectures Kahn gave at various organizations in the United States.

Title/Description	Instances
Videos	
"Comparative Histories of Social Welfare and Social Work", 2004 <u>Physical Description:</u> (52 videotapes)	box 26
"Necessary Lightness", 1993 <u>Physical Description:</u> VHS tape	box 26
Interview with Alfred J. Kahn-- Columbia University School of Social Work Pathfinder Series, 2003	box 26
Audio Cassettes	
Perspectives on National Family Policy, undated	box 29
Conversations About Children: International Developments, 1977	box 29
Center for Philadelphia Studies, Health and Human Services, 1981 <u>Physical Description:</u> (2 tapes)	box 29
CW Lecture, 1984	box 29
Public Social Services, Philadelphia, 1988	box 29
Child Care, 1996	box 29

**Scope and Contents**

(Tape is marked 3 of 4)

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Child Welfare and Welfare Reform, 1998 box 29

**Scope and Contents**

(Tape is marked 1 of 3)

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Cleveland Case Study, undated box 29

**Scope and Contents**

(Tape is marked 3 of 3)

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Unmarked Tapes box 29

Physical Description: (4 Tapes)

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