

## Container List for the Bruce Rodgers papers, 1942-2009 (#2010-03)

### Scope and Content of Collection

The collection contains materials from Bruce G. Rodgers, author of *The Queens' Vernacular: A Gay Lexicon* (San Francisco: Straight Arrow Books, 1972). The book was later republished as *Gay Talk: A (Sometimes Outrageous) Dictionary of Gay Slang* (New York: Paragon Books, 1979). The book was the first serious dictionary of gay slang and the definitive gay American jargon resource. The collection contains materials related to the publication of the book as well as other research materials on Romani, Hebrew, Polari, and other languages and slang. Included are notes, contracts, photographs, artifacts, poems, illustrations, ephemera and personal belongings. In addition, there is extensive professional and personal correspondence reflecting Rodgers' affection for language and gay slang.

#### Series 1: Correspondence, 1960-2007, bulk 1960-2001.

**Physical Description:** Carton 1; Carton 2, Folders 1-5; Carton 9, Folders 1-7

**Arrangement:** Mostly incoming correspondence arranged chronologically by decade, unsorted within each decade.

**Scope and Content Note:** Personal correspondence with family and friends, in particular his father Sylvester Rodgers, his sister Deborah A. Millett, his partner Joe Jenkins, and his friend Richard F. Knablin; professional correspondence reflects Rodgers' interest in languages, the Romani culture and gay vocabulary. Professional correspondents include Vii Putnam, author of a tale of Gypsy adventuring—*Hard Hearts are for Cabbages, a Novel*—and Ian Hancock, professor at the University of Texas at Austin and active member of the International Romani Union. One folder includes correspondence between Hancock and others re: racism against "Gypsies" and includes a letter from Noam Chomsky about Elie Wiesel.

Carton 1, Folder 1-7	1960s
Carton 1, Folder 8-11	1970s
Carton 1, Folder 12-13	1980s
Carton 9, Folder 1	1980s
Carton 9, Folder 2	Hancock, Ian, 1987-1990
Carton 9, Folder 3	1990s
Carton 9, Folder 4	1990s
Carton 9, Folder 5	1990s
Carton 9, Folder 6	Correspondence, undated
Carton 9, Folder 7	Correspondence, undated
Carton 2, Folder 1	1990s
Carton 2, Folder 2	2000s
Carton 2, Folder 3-4	Undated
Carton 2, Folder 5	Jenkins, Joe

#### Series 2: *The Queens' Vernacular/Gay Talk* and Other Publications, 1967-2001.

**Physical Description:** Carton 2, Folders 6-11

**Scope and Content Note:** Correspondence, research materials, and documents relating to the publication of both versions of Rodgers' book, *The Queens' Vernacular: A Gay Lexicon* (1972), and *Gay Talk: A (Sometimes Outrageous) Dictionary of Gay Slang* (1979). These include reviews and royalty payments. The later version was published without Rodgers' permission or knowledge. This series also contains Rodgers' other publications.

Carton 2, Folder 6	Correspondence, research materials, <i>The Queens' Vernacular</i> , <i>Gay Talk</i> , 1967-2001
Carton 2, Folder 7-8	Correspondence, royalty statements, reviews, research materials, publication material, 1970-1979
Carton 2, Folder 9	Correspondence, publication agreement, reviews, 1971-1995
Carton 2, Folder 10	File cards of gay terms, undated
Carton 2, Folder 11	Other publications, 1974 and undated

### **Series 3: Research Materials and Notes, 1960s- 1990s.**

**Physical Description:** Carton 2, Folders 12-15; Carton 3; Carton 9, Folders 8-10

**Scope and Content Note:** Word lists, word derivations, definitions. Subjects include gay slang, African-American words, prison slang, Romani, Ladino, Hebrew, Yiddish and Calo. Also included are research materials on Polari, a gay slang language comprised of words from Italian, English, Yiddish and Romani that was used by British merchant sailors in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century. Publications by others on languages and folklore can also be found in this series.

Carton 2, Folder 12	Research materials and notes, undated
Carton 2, Folder 13	Romani, circa 1960s and undated
Carton 2, Folder 14	Hebrew, Calo, Ladino, etc., circa 1960s and undated
Carton 2, Folder 15	Gay slang, etc., circa 1970s-1990s
Carton 3, Folder 1	Ladino, Hebrew, etc., undated
Carton 3, Folder 2	Prison argot, African American terminology, gay slang, undated
Carton 3, Folder 3	Gay slang, Creole, Ladino, undated
Carton 3, Folder 4	Gay terminology, Romani, etc., circa 1970s-2000
Carton 3, Folder 5	Various languages, undated
Carton 3, Folder 6	Judezmo, Hebrew, Romani, circa 1960s
Carton 3, Folder 7	Notes, notebooks on various languages, undated
Carton 3, Folder 8	Hebrew, Chinese, etc., undated
Carton 3, Folder 9	Romani, Gypsy, Polari, undated
Carton 3, Folder 10	Gay word lists, article reprints, 1960-1981
Carton 3, Folder 11	Romani word lists, etc., undated
Carton 3, Folder 12	Various languages, undated
Carton 3, Folder 13	African and Caribbean, undated
Carton 3, Folder 14	Hawaiian, undated
Carton 9, Folder 8	Research and Notes, undated
Carton 9, Folder 9	Neil Jacobs' essay on Yiddish, undated
Carton 9, Folder 10	Native American word list, undated

### **Series 4: Personalia, 1960-1996.**

**Physical Description:** Cartons 4-5; Carton 9, Folders 11-13

**Scope and Content Note:** Includes resume, letters of recommendation, employment records, diary entries, Rodgers' autobiography and retirement information; also includes poetry and prose written

mostly by Rodgers and illustrations and cut-outs created by him. There is a folder of Joe Jenkins personalia, including writings reflecting his interest in George Washington and his personal photographs.

Carton 4, Folder 1	Biographical materials, 1963-1996
Carton 4, Folder 2-5b	Poetry and prose, 1960-1970 and undated
Carton 4, Folder 6	Album of illustrations
Carton 4, Folder 7-7a	Illustrations and cutouts, undated
Carton 4, Folder 8	Joe Jenkins personalia, circa 1970s-1980s
Carton 4, Folder 9-10	5-1/4" floppy disks, some labeled "Bruce's word processing," undated
Carton 9, Folder 11	LGBT Ephemera
Carton 9, Folder 12-13	Non-LGBT Ephemera
Carton 5	Various textiles and beads, including denim jacket, scarves, shawl, vest, band uniform, undated

### **Series 5: Photographs, circa 1940s-2006.**

**Physical Description:** Carton 6-8; Carton 9, Folders 14-15

**Scope and Content Note:** There are some prints of friends and family but the bulk of the photographs are (mostly) black-and-white snapshots of various events and people dating from the 1980s. Places mentioned include Santa Clara, Hillsborough, Mountain View, Pleasanton, Los Gatos and San Mateo; documented events include public ones like the San Mateo County Fair (1988), the San Jose Fair (1982), and the Gay Parade, as well as more intimate portraits of Rodgers' partner Joe Jenkins' memorial tribute in 1989. The series also includes a scrapbook and a photo album. There is also an extensive collection of photographs of anonymous men's rear ends (circa 1960s-1970s), one carton of unsorted negatives, and one of unsorted photographs.

Carton 6, Folder 1	Scrapbook (Photos)
Carton 6, Folder 2-3	Photo album, circa 1950-1960s, undated
Carton 6, Folder 3a	Photographs from photo album
Carton 6, Folder 4	Photographs, 1940s-2006
Carton 6, Folder 5-9	Family and friends, undated
Carton 7	Unsorted photographs, circa 1960s-2000s
Carton 8	Unsorted negatives, circa 1980s-1990s
Carton 9, Folder 14	Family, Friends, undated
Carton 9, Folder 15	Miscellaneous Photographs, undated