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Guide to the Rosalie Hankey Wax Papers 1967-1998



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Descriptive Summary

Identifier	ICU.SPCL.WAXRH
Title	Wax, Rosalie Hankey. Papers
Date	1967-1998
Size	0.25 linear feet (1 box)
Repository	Special Collections Research Center University of Chicago Library 1100 East 57th Street Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.

Abstract Rosalie Hankey Wax (1911-1998), Anthropologist, wrote her dissertation about the field work she had conducted in California at the internment camps for people of Japanese descent during World War II. She taught at the University of Chicago and at the suggestion of the anthropologist Sol Tax she and her husband, Murray Wax, began conducting field work in the schools for American Indians on the Pine Ridge Reservation.

Information on Use

Access

The collection is open for research.

Citation

When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Rosalie Hankey Wax. Papers, [Box #, Folder #], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

Biographical Note

Rosalie Amelia Hankey was born in Des Plaines, Illinois, in 1911, to a family that needed her stabilizing presence throughout her childhood and during the depression. As a child, Wax was able to learn to read and to sing, but delayed her own secondary education to raise her siblings. Once Wax placed all of her sibling in schools of higher education she was able to embark on her own educational path.

Wax's academic abilities were quickly acknowledged and with the help of the Phoebe Hearst scholarship she enrolled in the Department of Anthropology at the University of California (Berkeley) where she studied with Alfred Kroeber and Robert Lowie.

During World War II, Wax was employed by the University of California Evacuation and Resettlement Project, to conduct fieldwork at the Gila River and Tule Lake relocation camps for Japanese Americans interned by the United States government. Tule Lake opened May

26, 1942, holding persons of Japanese descent found living in western Washington, Oregon and Northern California. Tule Lake was the largest of the camps and it was regarded as a high-security segregation center, ruled under martial law and occupied by the Army. The fieldwork work was tense and problematic, and Wax clashed with her project supervisor. She was eventually expelled from the project and accused of transmitting information to the Department of Justice.

Following Wax's experience at Tule Lake, she entered the University of Chicago where she wrote her dissertation about the work she had conducted at the internment camp. She received her PhD in 1951 and was hired to teach in the College, winning the Quantrell Award for undergraduate teaching and eventually serving as chair for Social Sciences II.

Rosalie Hankey married fellow anthropologist Murray Wax in 1949. They later divorced. Although she had been promised further promotion and tenure, a new university administration ruled that as a woman with a salary earning husband she did not need to be employed.

In 1959 and 1960, anthropologist Sol Tax hired the Waxes to run summer workshops for American Indian College students. This led to extensive fieldwork, studying schools for Native Americans and the publication of *Formal Education in an American Indian Community* (1964).

Wax conducted her dissertation work during the World War II and her later field work during the Cold War and became known for pursuing knowledge under difficult conditions. Her experience led her to write, *Doing Fieldwork: Warnings and Advice*, which is regarded as the earliest reflexive account of anthropological fieldwork.

Wax continued to teaching; first at the University of Kansas and then at Washington University. In St. Louis, Wax passed away on her 87th birthday, November 4, 1998. It was reported to Murray Wax, that "she started to sing, then lay down on her bed, and passed peacefully away."

Scope Note

The collection includes a biography of Rosalie Hankey Wax by her former husband, Murray Wax, her curriculum vitae, three administrative letters and the unpublished manuscript for her 1980 book about the Tule Lake internment camp.

Related Resources

The following related resources are located in the Department of Special Collections:

<http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/spcl/select.html>

Subject Headings

- Wax, Rosalie H.
- Anthropology
- Japanese Americans -- Evacuation and relocation, 1942-1945
- Anthropologists

INVENTORY

Box 1

Folder 1

Biography

- Biography by Murray Wax, 1998
- Curriculum Vitae, 1974

Box 1

Folder 2

Correspondence, 1967-1971

- Francis Heller, 1970, 1971
- George McGovern, 1967

Box 1

Folder 3

"Tule Lake Survivors," copy of manuscript, circa 1980