

Guide to the **Marriage Equality Collection**

The History Center in Tompkins County

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COLLECTION DESCRIPTION

The struggle for LGBT rights has been a long and arduous one, and no issue exemplifies this as much as the fight for marriage equality. Tompkins County is nationally known as a welcoming community for LGBT people, but that wasn't always the case. Decades of activism by LGBT residents helped produce the results we see today.

Ithaca was the home of the "Ithaca 50" – a group of local gay and lesbian couples who sued the City of Ithaca to issue marriage licenses to them, a case that began in the Tompkins County Supreme Court in 2004, and was ultimately defeated on appeal at the New York State Court of Appeals. But the arc of the moral universe did indeed bend toward justice, and in June 2011 the Marriage Equality Bill was passed by the New York State Legislature, enabling same sex couples to marry in New York State. And in June 2015 the case of *Obergefell v. Hodges* was decided in the United States Supreme Court, extending marriage rights to same-sex couples everywhere in the country.

These records examine the history of local people who were a part of this transformation.

CONTAINER LIST

Folder 1

1. "A Legal History of LGBT Civil Rights and the Struggle for Marriage Equality in Tompkins County, New York" by Mariette Geldenhuys, Attorney and Mediator, 2015.
2. "Local Sexual Orientation Non-Discrimination Laws: A Means of Community Empowerment" by Kristine Shaw, 2001.
3. Cornell's Human Sexuality Collection: List of archival holdings
4. 7/9/2015 – Speech by Jason Hungerford (Ithaca 50 plaintiff) from the Supreme Court's decision celebration at the Space @Greenstar
5. "A Personal Domestic Partnership Experience" by Sandra Pollack