

# **An Annotated Inventory of the Diana McCourt Collection, 1958, 1969-1982**

**Archives & Special Collections  
College of Staten Island Library, CUNY  
2800 Victory Blvd., 1L-216  
Staten Island, NY 10314**

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## **Overview of the Collection**

**Collection No. :** WSSM-7

**Title:** Diana McCourt Collection

**Creator:** Diana McCourt

**Dates:** 1958, 1969-1982

**Extent:** ½ Linear Foot

**Abstract:** Diana McCourt became involved in the efforts to expose and improve the conditions at Willowbrook State School after her daughter, Nina, was placed at the institution in 1971. She was involved as a parent organizer and advocate of the institution's closure, and remains involved in promoting individualized day and living options for people who need 24 hour support. She also worked for many years as a contractor, and co-founded Womanshare, a skills and service exchange program for women, in the early 1990's.

The collection contains materials related not only to these efforts

but also to the hepatitis program and the lawsuits against New York State over Willowbrook and compliance with the 1975 consent order. The folders are arranged alphabetically.

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## **Administrative Information**

### **Preferred Citation**

Diana McCourt Collection, Archives & Special Collections,  
Department of the Library, College of Staten Island, CUNY, Staten  
Island, New York.

### **Acquisition**

The collection was donated to the College of Staten Island by  
Diana McCourt in May 2005.

### **Processing Information**

Collection processed by Catherine N. Carson.

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## **Restrictions**

### **Access**

Access to this record group is unrestricted.

### **Copyright Notice**

The researcher assumes full responsibility for compliance with laws  
of copyright. Requests for permission to publish material from this  
collection should be discussed with the Coordinator of Archives &  
Special Collections.

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## **Index Terms**

*This collection is indexed under the following terms.*

## Willowbrook State School

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### Container Listing

(The following box/folder inventory is in the form of a table. If you are visually impaired and using a pdf reader you may need assistance and should contact the Archives at 718-982-4128)

<b>Box#</b>	<b>Folder#</b>	<b>Title</b>
1		Audiotapes, c.1972, 1975  - There are two audiotapes. The first is a 1975 presentation of the consent decree by Bruce Ennis, Esq. The second is an undated tape labeled, "PAC Conference" that is probably from 1972 or 1973. PAC stands for Policy and Action Committee for the Handicapped.
1	1	Correspondence, 1971-1976  - Various correspondence on Willowbrook and other related issues. A few items of the correspondence are by McCourt, other items are copies of correspondence by others.
1	2	Correspondence - Responses to the Dick Cavett Show, 1972  - Diana McCourt appeared on the Dick Cavett Show in 1972. The folder contains five viewer responses to her appearance.
1	3	Handouts & Newsletters, c. 1972-1975  - This includes several undated handouts that were probably distributed during 1972-1973. These handouts are related to the anticipated dismissal of Dr. Hammond, administrative problems and the conditions at Willowbrook. There are also handouts of a few news articles from the same period. There is also a copy of the July 1975 newsletter of the Benevolet Society for Retarded Children.
1	4	Hepatitis Program, 1958, 1969-1979  - This folder contains correspondence, articles, newsclippings and other items about hepatitis and the hepatitis program at the Willowbrook State School. There are also some records related to the experience of McCourt's daughter, Nina, at the school.

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|-----------|-----|--|
| 1         | 5   | <p>Lawsuits – Willowbrook, 1975-1976</p> <p>- This folder contains various legal documents related to NYSARC &amp; Parisi et al vs. Hugh Carey et al, 1975-1976. The consent judgement and related items can be found in the "Willowbrook Consent Decree" folder.</p>  |
| 1         | 6   | <p>Lawsuits - Willowbrook, 1982</p> <p>- This folder contains various legal documents related to Judge Bartel's ruling that the state was not in compliance with the Consent Order.</p>  |
| 1         | 7   | <p>Lawsuits - Other, 1972-1980</p> <p>- This folder contains legal documents related to other lawsuits over the treatment of the mentally ill and developmentally disabled. The folder includes the memorandum of agreement for Wyatt vs. Stickney (Alabama), an appeal from The Little Neck Community Association et al. vs. WORC and an article entitled, "Institutions and the Right to Live in the Community: The Impact of the Pennhurst Case."</p> |
| 1         | 8   | <p>News Clippings, c. 1972-1973, 1978</p> <p>- Various clippings related to the Willowbrook State School. Archives &amp; Special Collections did not keep clippings that duplicated clippings contained in the Willowbrook State School News Clippings Collection.</p>   |
| 1         | 8.1 | <p>Photograph, c. 1972</p> <p>- Photograph of child at Willowbrook. Print uses a white bar to obscure the child's face. A photograph of the same children from a different angle was published in the Village Voice.</p>   |
| 1         | 9   | <p>Policy and Action Committee for the Handicapped (PAC), 1972-1973</p> <p>- Contains reports, correspondence and other materials related to the PAC's activities. The four oversized newsletters from this folder have been removed and placed in a larger box.</p>   |
| Oversized |     | <p>Policy and Action Committee for the Handicapped (PAC) - Newsletters, 1972-1973</p>  |
| 1         | 10  | <p>Policy Memoranda - Due Process, 1976-1977</p>   |

- Policy memoranda covering due process procedures for transfers, demands for placement and appeals to developmental plans.

1            11            Testimony - New York State Legislature Committee for the Mental and Physical Handicapped, February 17, 1972

- William Bronston's testimony on Willowbrook as reprinted in Burton Blatt, *Souls in Extremes*. Boston: Allyn Bacon, 1973.

1            12            Willowbrook Consent Decree, 1975

- This folder contains the 1975 Final Judgment and Order for NYSARC & Parisi et al vs. Hugh Carey et al. There are also a few related memoranda.