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## Carol Farley Kessler papers, 1949-2015

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Description is written in: English.

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Maine Women Writers Collection

Abplanalp Library

University of New England

716 Stevens Avenue

Portland, Maine 04103

[mwwc@une.edu](mailto:mwwc@une.edu)

URL: <https://library.une.edu/mwwc/>

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository:</b>	Maine Women Writers Collection
<b>Creator:</b>	Kessler, Carol Farley
<b>Title:</b>	Carol Farley Kessler papers, 1949-2015
<b>ID:</b>	0064
<b>ID [aspace_uri]:</b>	/repositories/3/resources/40
<b>Date [inclusive]:</b>	1949-2015
<b>Physical Description:</b>	11.5 linear feet 294 folders
<b>Language of the Material:</b>	English .

### Preferred Citation

Carol Farley Kessler papers, Maine Women Writers Collection, University of New England, Portland, Maine.

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## Biographical / Historical

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Carol Farley Kessler was born May 9, 1936, in Grove City, Pennsylvania, where her father Louis Riley Farley, D.O. (1907-1962) was completing a surgical residency. Kessler's mother was Emily Josephine Puder Farley (1908-2004), a former Latin teacher from Wilmington, Delaware. Kessler's sister Janet Farley Jones was born November 13, 1938. In January 1939, the family moved to Portland, Maine where Dr. Farley joined the staff of the Osteopathic Hospital of Maine on Brighton Avenue. Kessler graduated from Deering High School in 1954, from Swarthmore College in 1958, and from Harvard Graduate School of Education in 1959. She taught two years at East High School, in Rochester, New York, then married Swarthmore classmate Dietrich Kessler in 1962 (divorced in 1989), and taught two more years at West High School, in Madison, Wisconsin. The couple had two children: Jonathan and Melissa.

Kessler completed a Ph.D. in 1977 with a dissertation titled 'The Woman's Hour': Life and Novels of Elizabeth Stuart Phelps (1844-1911). She filled several adjunct positions before accepting a tenure track assistant professorship at Penn State's Mont Alto campus for two

years, then received an NEH grant to research U.S. women's utopias at the Library of Congress, before she settled on the Delaware County [now Brandywine] campus for the remainder of her Penn State University career, retiring in 2001. She published two editions of an anthology of U.S. women's utopian writing, *Daring to Dream* (1984, 1995), and a study of the sources of Charlotte Perkins Gilman's utopian writing (1995). She contributed the Phelps selection to the *Heath Anthology of American Literature* (1989).

Over her career, Kessler received one American Philosophical Society and four NEH research grants, as well as a Fulbright lectureship. She was active in the Modern Language Association, especially its Division of Women's Studies in Language and Literature, in the Society for Utopian Studies, where she served a term as head, and the National Women's Studies Association. At Penn State she served as the Women's Studies liaison among the Commonwealth Campuses. During her final year at Penn State Brandywine, she received the Women's Commission Woman of the Year Award and the Madlyn L. Hanes Faculty Award for Achievement as Teacher, Scholar, Advisor, and Leader.

After Kessler's 2001 return to Portland, she served as the MWWC's Acting Healy Professor during 2007-2008. Jennifer S. Tuttle and Kessler co-edited *Charlotte Perkins Gilman: New Texts, New Contexts*, appearing in 2011.

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## Scope and Contents

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The papers include manuscripts, correspondence, articles, reviews, research papers and background materials, photographs and artifacts.

Series I. Biography includes transcripts, statement of purpose, curriculum vitae (C.V.), a record of citations of Kessler's research, and her first 7th & 8th grade publications.

Series II. Research includes drafts and publications of research articles on: Elizabeth Stuart Phelps (1844-1911) and her mother of the same name (1815-1852), including a set of slides to accompany a lecture documenting locales relevant to the Phelpses; Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1860-1935); and on U.S. women writers of utopias, as well as correspondence concerning the publications resulting from the research. Concerning Phelps, there are data cards recording her correspondence, with the technical tools for creating and using the cards, as well as note cards for each of her many serial publications and each story in her five collected volumes of short stories. There is a substantial amount of primary source material concerning utopist Mary Griffith (1772-1846, dates newly discovered and corrected by Kessler). This series also includes research on the Maine Women Writers Collection for the 50th Anniversary, as well as for a history of the collection, which Kessler did not write.

Series III. Teaching includes miscellaneous materials for courses in U.S. literature—especially by women and marginalized ethnicities, in American Studies, and in Women's Studies. Among these are two sets of slides (quilts made by women and advertisements exhibiting

sexism), syllabi, teaching notes for several women writers (L.M. Alcott, W. Cather, J.W. Howe, S.O. Jewett, H.B. Stowe), dossier for promotion to Professor, teaching materials for a Senior Fulbright Lectureship in Presov, Slovakia, 1995-1996, and Penn State appreciations at retirement. Also included are several articles on strategies of pedagogy that Kessler favored.

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## Arrangement

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The collection is organized as three series: 1) Biographical; 2) Research; 3) Teaching.

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## Administrative Information

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### Publication Statement

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University of New England

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### Conditions Governing Access

Collection is open for research.

### Conditions Governing Use

For permission to reproduce or publish, please contact the Curator of the Maine Women Writers Collection.

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## Related Materials

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### Related Materials

Louis Riley Farley, D.O. (1907-1962), New England Osteopathic Heritage Center, Ketchum Library, University of New England, Biddeford, Maine [This archive was compiled by Kessler and her sister.]

### Related Materials

Carol Farley Kessler, Faculty Publications, Paterno Library, Eberly Family Special Collections, University Archives, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pennsylvania

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## Controlled Access Headings

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- United States -- History
- Teaching
- Manuscripts
- Correspondence
- Photographs
- Slides
- Clippings
- Ward, Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, 1844-1911
- Gilman, Charlotte Perkins, 1860-1935
- Griffith, Mary, -1846