

The New York Public Library Manuscripts and Archives Division

Guide to the Michael Kennedy papers 1967-2014 [bulk 1980-2007] MssCol 29966

Processed by Matthew Snyder in 2021.

Summary

Creator: Kennedy, Michael J., 1937-2016

Title: Michael Kennedy papers

Date: 1967-2014 [bulk 1980-2007]

Size: 57.25 linear feet (139 boxes); 243 megabytes (27 computer files)

Source: Donated by Eleanora Kennedy, 2019.

Abstract: Michael Kennedy (1937-2016) was a criminal defense and civil rights lawyer known for defending radical political figures, drug smugglers, members of organized crime, and other people shunned by more mainstream legal counsel. An expert in First and Fourth Amendment law, his many notable clients included Huey Newton, Timothy Leary, Irish Republican Army and Weather Underground members, High Times magazine, the journalist Leslie Cockburn, and Mafia boss John Gotti. Kennedy's papers, dating from 1967 to 2014, document his legal career, mainly through case files, but also through writings, speeches, clippings, and biographical information.

Preferred citation: Michael Kennedy papers, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library

Language of the Material: English

Processing note: Processed by Matthew Snyder in 2021.

Creator History

Michael Kennedy (1937-2016) was a criminal defense and civil rights lawyer known for defending radical political figures, drug smugglers, members of organized crime, and other people shunned by more mainstream legal counsel. An expert in First and Fourth Amendment law, his many notable clients included Huey Newton, Timothy Leary, Irish Republican Army members, *High Times* magazine (for which he served as both legal counsel and chairman for decades), the journalist Leslie Cockburn, and Mafia boss John Gotti. Kennedy's favored causes were the First Amendment, human rights, and drug policy reform, mainly the decriminalization of marijuana, as well as the development of the hemp industry.

Raised in Spokane, Washington, Kennedy earned his bachelor's degree at the University of California, Berkeley, and his law degree from the Hastings College of Law, University of California, San Francisco. His first clients of note were Cesar Chavez and his farm worker's union. Later in the 1960s, he moved to New York, where he worked as staff counsel for the National Emergency Civil Liberties Committee, defending conscientious objectors, draft resisters, and deserters during the Vietnam War.

Kennedy opened his own practice in partnership with his wife, Eleanora. He assisted in Rennie Davis's defense during the trial of the Chicago Seven, and represented several Weather Underground members, including Bernardine Dohrn. He also defended Leslie and Andrew Cockburn when they published and produced exposés on the Central Intelligence Agency's drug trafficking in Central America; Dr. Mousa Mohammed Abu Marzook, a senior member of the Palestinian Nationalist group Hamas; Susan McDougal, a figure in the Whitewater investigations of President Bill Clinton; members of the Irish Republican Army; and Aaron Charney, a lawyer who accused his employer, the firm Sullivan and Cromwell, of bullying and firing him for being gay (he sued, but the case was settled out of court before it went to trial).

In the 1980s, Kennedy defended Gaetano Badalamenti in the "Pizza Connection" Mafia money laundering case (one of the longest criminal trials in American history), as well as John Gotti and his associates during the trial which ultimately sent the mobster to prison in the early 1990s. Kennedy used the proceeds from cases such as these to finance cheap or pro bono services for clients in cases involving constitutional rights and non-violent drug offenses.

At *High Times*, he conceived of a sister publication, *Hemp Times*, to cover and promote the burgeoning hemp business in the late 1990s, but it lasted only three years. Other prominent cases included Kennedy's successful push for clemency for Jean Harris, the convicted killer of Dr. Herman Tarnower (the "Scarsdale Diet" doctor); his representation of Ivana Trump during her divorce from Donald Trump; many lesser-known drug traffickers, such as John Knock; sex workers in San Francisco who demanded to be treated as employees of a strip club instead of as individual contractors; Warren M. Levin, a doctor who practiced alternative medicine; and Bernárd Lynch, a Catholic priest, known for his service to the LGBTQIA community, who was accused of sexual abuse.

Michael Kennedy died of pneumonia in 2016 in New York City.

Scope and Content Note

The Michael Kennedy papers, dating from 1967 to 2014, document Kennedy's legal career, mainly through case files, but also through writings, speeches, clippings, and biographical information. The bulk of the collection dates from the early 1980s to 2007. The case files hold briefs, trial and hearing transcripts, depositions, summonses, evidence files, and other court records; notes and research of legal precedent; and correspondence with clients, other legal counsel, and judges. Some also hold audio and video recordings or photographs. The collection is arranged alphabetically by client or subject. Within that arrangement are three sub-groups of case types: Drug Cases and Drug Law Reform; First Amendment Cases; and Political Activism.

The most voluminous cases or subjects in the collection are filed under Drug Cases and Drug Law Reform. These include drug smuggling clients such as John Knock, Christopher Bianco, Ana Lucia Rosa, and Milton Robins; *Hemp Times* magazine, the files for which contain research and correspondence in the late 1990s regarding the emerging hemp industry in various states and how to best market to and serve it; and files regarding a Group Petition for Clemency for Pot Lifers, assembled

by Kennedy and others and sent to President Clinton.

The First Amendment section has three case files: Leslie and Andrew Cockburn; Dr. Mousa Mohammed Abu Marzook; and Susan McDougal.

The Cockburn files document a libel lawsuit filed against Leslie Cockburn, an investigative reporter who wrote the book *Out of Control* about the CIA's drug smuggling in Central America; the suit was brought by Major General Richard Secord of the United States Air Force (a figure in the Iran-Contra scandal), and eventually dismissed. The files include annotated drafts of the book, as well as video segments from the PBS series *Frontline* produced by Andrew Cockburn on the same topic. The Marzook files concern Marzook's arrest and deportation from the United States in 1995 at the request of the Israeli government and Kennedy's unsuccessful attempts to reverse it.

The Susan McDougal files document her legal battle and imprisonment after being held in contempt of court for refusing to testify against President Clinton for special prosecutor Kenneth Starr in the Whitewater affair, in 1996; Kennedy negotiated her eventual release. The files include correspondence between McDougal and Kennedy regarding her treatment in prison, and video recordings of her media appearances.

The Political Activism files mainly pertain to Weather Underground members and Irish Republican Army (IRA) figures. Kennedy represented Weather Underground leader Bernardine Dohrn and negotiated her surrender to authorities in 1980 after she spent 11 years in hiding; he also represented Judith Clark, Kathy Boudin, and David Gilbert, who participated in the 1981 robbery of an armored truck during which several law enforcement officers were killed. The case files include literature and political statements issued by the Weather Underground in the early 1970s, as well as the transcript of a 1974 Senate hearing on internal security and radical political groups.

The IRA files cover the cases of several men who were ultimately acquitted of illegally trading in firearms to supply the organization, including Michael Flannery and Eamon Peter Maguire. The Political Activism files also contain a folder regarding Huey Newton; Kennedy defended the Black Panther Party co-founder in a murder case that ended in a mistrial in 1979, but the collection contains only a book of clippings regarding the case, with no other documentation.

Other clients with significant or notable content in the collection include Timothy Leary, whose file holds letters and cards to the Kennedys from 1970 until his death in 1994; Aaron Charney, who accused the law firm Sullivan and Cromwell of firing him for being gay; Jean Harris, whose files document Kennedy's successful efforts to secure her clemency from New York Governor Mario Cuomo in 1993; Warren M. Levin, a doctor who practiced alternative medicine; the Catholic priest Bernárd Lynch; and the "Pizza Connection" and John Gotti Mafia cases. Two folders exist regarding Ivana Trump; they concern only monies owed by Trump to private investigators engaged by Kennedy on her behalf. The Mitchell Brothers files pertain mainly to a lawsuit brought by sex workers against a strip club owned by Jim Mitchell, a longtime client of Kennedy. The workers attempted to prove they were employees of the club, not independent contractors.

The Legal Practice files contain notes and texts for Kennedy's speeches on legal topics and his participation in legal forums and seminars; biographical information; and clippings. The speeches include such topics as "Defending the Unpopular Client," "Dissent is Good for You," "Ethical Considerations in Drug Cases," and "Some Thoughts on Closing Argument to the Jury." An essay by Kennedy, "Why I Decided To Pass On The Nineties Entirely," regarding the deterioration of the United States justice system caused by the Drug War, appears not in these files, but in the Drug Cases and Drug Reform files under the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML). The

biographical data in the Legal Practice files includes a detailed history of important cases argued by Kennedy from the mid-1960s to the 1990s. The clippings date from 1977 to 1993.

Kennedy was an active participant in national and local legal organizations, such as the American Bar Association (ABA). The ABA files include documentation of Kennedy's planning of and participation in a West Bank Mock Arbitration program held at the ABA's annual meeting in 1990, focused on the human rights and international law implications of the First Palestinian Intifada. The files include transcripts of the event; correspondence between Kennedy and the other program participants; writings on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by Francis Boyle; notes and memos; and a participant list with resumes.

Kennedy was active with the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights and maintained files of research on the topic. The Human Rights Issues files cover such nations as Nicaragua, South Africa, and Portugal. Most of the files pertain to Nicaragua, as Kennedy served as a legal advisor to the Sandinista government.

The collection also contains copies of Michael and Eleanora Kennedy's FBI files, dating from the late 1960s to the late 1970s. Portions of the files are redacted.

Arrangement: The collection is arranged alphabetically by client or topic. Kennedy arranged three classes of clients together: Drug Cases and Drug Law Reform; First Amendment Cases; and Political Activism. All other clients appear in the general alphabetical listing.

Key Terms

Subjects

Civil rights Civil rights lawyers Criminal defense lawyers Drug Control Hemp industry Human rights Human rights -- Nicaragua Law -- United States Lawyers -- United States Mafia Practice of law Whitewater Inguiry, 1993-2000

Titles

High Times

Occupations

Lawyers.

Names

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b. 87 f. 8	"Government Drugs" Episode
b. 87 f. 9	Lieberman, Steve A memo to Kennedy regarding off-the-record portions of interviews.
b. 87 f. 10-11	Memos
b. 87 f. 12	Palmer, Michael
b. 87 f. 13	Plumlee, Robert
	Wilson, Edwin
b. 87 f. 14	Egyptian-American Transport and Services Corporation Memo
b. 88 f. 1-3	Sworn Statements
	Marzook, Dr. Mousa Mohammed Abu 1995-1996
	60 Minutes: "Is It Torture?" 1996
b. 88 f. 4	Transcript

	First Amendment Cases (cont.) Marzook, Dr. Mousa Mohammed Abu (cont.)
b. 88 f. 5	Appeal
b. 89 f. 1-4 b. 90	
b. 89 f. 5-7	Extradition
b. 91 f. 1	Immigration and Naturalization Service
b. 91 f. 2	Medical Records
b. 91 f. 3	Notice of Motion for Hearing
b. 91 f. 4	Transcription Corrections
b. 91 f. 5-6 b. 92-93	Writ of Habeas Corpus
b. 94 f. 1	Writ of Mandamus
	McDougal, Susan 1996-1998
b. 94 f. 2-5 b. 95 f. 1-4	Briefs
b. 95 f. 5-6 b. 96 f. 1-6 b. 97 f. 1-4	Correspondence and Memos
b. 97 f. 5	Drafts of Motion and Memorandum
b. 98 f. 1-3	Grand Jury Subpoena
b. 98 f. 4	Legislative History
b. 99 f. 1	Letters from Prison
b. 99 f. 2	Letters Requesting Case Materials
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b. 99 f. 3	Kennedy Preparation for Geraldo Rivera Show
b. 99 f. 4-5	Clippings and Related Letters
b. 99 f. 6-7	Television Appearance Transcripts
b. 100 f. 1-5 b. 101 f. 1-2	Motion to Vacate Civic Contempt
b. 101 f. 3	Research on Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr
b. 101 f. 4	Response to McDougal on Motion for Public Proceedings
	Gotti, John
b. 101 f. 5-6	Eavesdropping Warrants and Transcripts 1984-1986
b. 102 f. 1-3	Indictments
	LoCascio, Frank
b. 102 f. 4	Notices of Motion 1992
b. 102 f. 5 b. 103 f. 1-3	Jury Issues 1992
b. 103 f. 4-6	LoCascio, Salvatore 1997-1999
b. 103 f. 7	National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers Brief of Amici Curiae 1992
b. 103 f. 8-9	1991-1993
	Harris, Jean
b. 104 f. 1-2	Alexander, Shana 1981-1989
b. 104 f. 3	Appeal 1985
b. 104 f. 4	Children of Bedford 1986-1989
b. 104 f. 5-13	Clemency 1986-1989

b. 104 f. 5-13 Clemency 1986-1989

	Harris, Jean (cont.)
b. 104 f. 14	Corrections Officer Complaint 1990
b. 105 f. 1-4	Correspondence 1982-1990 Most is between Harris and Kennedy, but some is between Harris or Kennedy and judges or other counsel.
b. 105 f. 5-6 b. 106 f. 1	Crime Victims Board, State of New York 1986-1987
b. 106 f. 2	Dove, James Edward (Writ of Habeas Corpus) 1986
b. 106 f. 3-4	Estate of Herman Tarnower 1986 Research notes and legal documents.
b. 106 f. 5	Expenses 1983-1985
b. 106 f. 6	Jean Harris Defense Committee 1983-1989
b. 106 f. 7	Jean Harris Defense Fund 1985
b. 106 f. 8	Letters from the General Public 1983-1987
b. 106 f. 9-12	Media Clippings and Letters 1983-1990 Includes statements by Kennedy and Harris, and the text of a speech by Kennedy about Harris's case.
b. 107 f. 1-9 b. 108 f. 1	Medical Issues 1980-1989 Contains evaluations of Harris's mental and physical state by multiple doctors, and Kennedy's notes.
b. 108 f. 2	Presentence Report 1983
	Statement of Jean Harris 1985 October 28
b. 108 f. 3	Photographs of Harris with Kennedy
b. 108 f. 4	Trial Memos 1980-1983 From Harris's trial lawyers, not Kennedy.
	Writing and Publishing by Harris
b. 108 f. 5	Essay Memoirs
b. 108 f. 6	Short Stories and Article 1985
b. 108 f. 7-8	Stranger In Two Worlds Dispute 1985-1987
b. 108 f. 9	A Tune for Bears to Dance To (Typescript.)
b. 108 f. 10	Hauptmann, Anna 1982
b. 109 f. 1-2	Hill, Edward, and Frank Barnabee 1987-1988
	Human Rights Issues
b. 109 f. 3-7	Israel - Palestine 1988-1990 Research and writing by the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights See also American Bar Association West Bank Mock Arbitration Program.
b. 109 f. 8	Kuwait and Egypt 1990 Research and testimony by the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights.
	Nicaragua
b. 109 f. 9	Agendas International 1986-1990
b. 109 f. 10	Correspondence with Other Lawyers and Lawmakers 1985-1989
b. 110 f. 1	Embargo and Economic Sanctions 1985
b. 110 f. 2	Forum on Democracy and Revolution, Managua 1989 Kennedy attended and spoke at this event.
b. 110 f. 3	Fundraising 1989
b. 110 f. 4	Hemisphere Initiatives 1989

Human Rights Issues (cont.) Nicaragua (cont.) b. 110 f. 5 Reports by Non-Governmental Organizations 1984-1990 b. 110 f. 6 United Fruit and Notes on Meeting with Daniel Nunez 1984 b. 110 f. 7 Portugal 1990 b. 110 f. 8 South Africa 1989-1990 b. 110 f. 9 The Institute for Innocence: A Healing Forum for Irish Catholics 1993 b. 110 f. 10 International Conference on Extradition 1989 b. 110 f. 11 Kennedy v. United States of America et al 1998 A lawsuit regarding the Kennedys' property in East Hampton, New York. b. 110 f. 12-13 Leary, Timothy 1970-1994, 1996 b. 111 f. 1 Contains letters from Leary to Eleanora and Michael Kennedy; Michael Kennedy's dedication to Leary following his death; and a photograph of Leary with an unidentified woman. Legal Practice b. 112 f. 1 Arguments (Notes On) b. 112 f. 2 Biographies and History of Cases 2013 b. 112 f. 3 Clippings 1977-1993 Includes an interview with Kennedy published in High Times. b. 112 f. 4 "The Erosion of the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Amendments" 1982 Manuscripts of an article written for The Journal of the Section of Litigation, American Bar Association. b. 112 f. 5-7 Intensive Trial Advocacy Programs 1988-1992 The files pertain to workshops conducted by Kennedy at the Cardozo School of Law and the University of Texas School of Law. b. 112 f. 8 International Conference on Terrorism 1986 Includes Kennedy's notes. b. 112 f. 9 Jury Selection Forum, Northwestern University 1990 b. 112 f. 10 Law Against the People Correspondence 1968-1973 A book to which Kennedy contributed an essay, "The Civil Liberties Lie." Notes b. 112 f. 11 Li Yang 1980s b. 113 f. 1-4 1980s-1990s Speeches b. 113 f. 5 Atlanta Superstar Criminal Defense Seminar 1983 b. 113 f. 6 Arguments 1982 b. 113 f. 7-8 Death Penalty Forum, American Bar Association Meeting, San Francisco 1988-1989 b. 113 f. 9 "A Defendant's Decision to Testify: Some Legal Considerations" 1983 b. 114 f. 1 "Defending the Unpopular Client" 1981 b. 114 f. 2 "Dissent is Good for You" 2000s b. 114 f. 3 "Ethical Considerations in Drug Cases" 1979, 1990 b. 114 f. 4-5 Ethics 1988-1990 Texts and notes for more than one speech. b. 114 f. 6 "Evidence and the Trial of a Criminal Case" Seminar, New York State Bar Association 1991 Kennedy spoke on the topic of Summation.

- b. 114 f. 7 "Gideon v. Wainright 25 Years Later" 1988
- b. 114 f. 8 National Emergency Civil Liberties Committee 1988

	Legal Practice (cont.) Speeches (cont.)
b. 114 f. 9	New York City Bar Association Forum on Erosion of Legal Rights 1981
b. 114 f. 10	"Opening Up the Opening Argument" For the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws.
b. 114 f. 11	"Political Correctness"
b. 114 f. 12	"Putting Your Client on the Stand" 1982
b. 114 f. 13	"The Solution to Crime in America" 1991 Delivered at a conference of the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers.
b. 115 f. 1	"Some Thoughts on Closing Argument to the Jury"
b. 115 f. 2	"Some Thoughts on Jury Selection in a Drug Case and and Imagined Monologue with Twelve Imaginary Jurors" 1982, 1988 Delivered to the New York State Defenders Association.
b. 115 f. 3	"Videos are Dangerous to Justice" 1992
b. 115 f. 4	"A View from a City Lawyer" - Trial With Style Conference 1988 No text included.
b. 115 f. 5-6	"Virtual Reality in the Courtroom: Combating Prosecutorial Junk Science" 1995
	For the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers Big Apple Seminar.
b. 115 f. 7-8	Notes Notes for multiple speeches, most without finished texts. Topics include racism, prisons, crime, the right to counsel, snitches, justice for the rich versus the poor, failures of the justice system, and "why defend criminals?"
	Levin, Warren M
b. 116 f. 1	Appeal Correspondence 1994
b. 116 f. 2-6 b. 117 f. 1-2	Brief of Amici Curiae 1992-1993
b. 117 f. 3	Brief of the Respondent
	Correspondence
b. 117 f. 4	Kennedy, Michael 1993
b. 117 f. 5-6	Levin, Warren 1992-1993
b. 117 f. 7	Open Dialogue 1993
b. 117 f. 8	List of Documents Comprising the Record in the Matter of Warren M. Levin, M.D 1992
b. 117 f. 9	New York State Legislative Hearing 1993 Written testimony.
b. 117 f. 10-11	Notes
b. 117 f. 12	Penalty Imposed 1994
b. 117 f. 13	Petitioner's Reply Brief 1993
b. 117 f. 14-16 b. 118 f. 1-3	Research Files and Notes Research on medical and legal case law.
	State of New York Department of Health State Board for Professional Medical Conduct
b. 118 f. 4-12 b. 119 f. 1-4 b. 120 f. 1-5	Hearing Transcripts 1989-1990
b. 120 f. 6 b. 121 f. 1	Report of the Hearing Committee 1993
b. 121 f. 2	Statement of Charges 1989

	Levin, Warren M (cont.) State of New York Department of Health State Board for Professional Medical Conduct (cont.)
b. 121 f. 3	Testimony of Warren M. Levin 1989-1990, 1992
b. 121 f. 4	State University of New York Report of the Regents Review Committee 1994
b. 121 f. 5	Lewis, Jamie 1996
	Lynch, Bernárd
b. 121 f. 6	Correspondence 1988-1990, 2003, 2009
b. 121 f. 7	Cross-Examination of John A. Shaefer, Jr 1989
b. 122 f. 1	Federal Bureau of Investigation Reports and Interviews 1987-1989
b. 122 f. 2-3	Indictments, Motions, and Court Transcripts 1989
b. 122 f. 4-5	Mount Saint Michael Academy Yearbooks 1986-1987
b. 122 f. 6	Notes and Research
b. 122 f. 7	Statute of Limitations 1989
b. 123 f. 1	Witness Statements 1987
b. 123 f. 2	Will 1995
b. 123 f. 3	Maull, Brian 1997
	Mitchell Brothers
	Vickery, et al. v. Cinema Seven, Inc. dba The Mitchell Brothers O'Farrell Theatre.
b. 123 f. 4	Burgess v. United States of America Trial Transcript 1995
b. 123 f. 5-6	Correspondence and Notes 1996
b. 123 f. 7	Court Orders and Notices 1996
b. 124 f. 1	Depositions 1995
b. 124 f. 2-3	First Set of Inspection Demands from Defendant Dancers Guild International 1996
b. 124 f. 4-8 b. 125 f. 1-5	Interrogatories 1996
b. 126 f. 1	Proofs of Document Service 1996
b. 126 f. 2-4	Requests for Admission 1996
b. 126 f. 5	Second Amended Class Action Complaint 1995
b. 126 f. 6	Writ of Supersedeas
	Pizza Connection Case (United States v. Badalamenti et al.) Notes, motions, wiretap transcripts, hearing transcripts, and clippings.
b. 126 f. 7-9 b. 127 f. 1-7 b. 128 f. 1-5	Badalamenti, Gaetano 1983-1986
b. 129 f. 1-5	Lamberti, Giuseppe 1994
b. 129 f. 6 b. 130 f. 1-5	Notes 1983-1986
	Political Activism
b. 130 f. 6	Black Panthers v. New Black Panthers 2002
b. 131 f. 1	Burns, Hayward 1998
	Irish Republican Army
	Federal Bureau of Investigation Files
b. 131 f. 2	Auld, Gregory J 1981
b. 131 f. 3	Colleton, Charles J 1980-1981
b. 131 f. 4	DeMeo, George 1969-1970, 1982

	Political Activism (cont.) Irish Republican Army (cont.) Federal Bureau of Investigation Files (cont.)
b. 131 f. 5	Winslow, John 1967, 1981
b. 131 f. 6	Flanagan, Martin 1981
b. 131 f. 7-11 b. 132 f. 1-9 b. 133 f. 1-6 b. 134 f. 1-6 b. 135 f. 1-8 b. 136 f. 1-2	Flannery, Michael 1980-1982
b. 136 f. 3-6	Harrison, George 1981-1982
b. 136 f. 7-8	Maguire, Eamon Peter 1989
b. 136 f. 9-10	National Conference on the Nicaraguan Constitutional Process 1986
b. 137 f. 1	Newton, Huey 1979
	Weather Underground
b. 137 f. 2	Boudin, Kathy 1995-1996
	Clark, Judith, Kathy Boudin, and David Gilbert Participants in the 1981 robbery of a Brink's armored truck.
b. 137 f. 3-4	Correspondence and Court Documents 2006-2008
er. 1	Indictments and Trial Transcripts 1983 (27 computer files 243 megabytes)
b. 137 f. 5-7 b. 138 f. 1-6	Dohrn, Bernardine 1982-1983, 2003
b. 138 f. 7	Jones, Jeffrey 1980-1981
b. 138 f. 8 b. 139 f. 1	Political Statements and Literature 1970s
b. 139 f. 2	Transcript of Senate Subcommittee on Internal Security Hearing 1974
b. 139 f. 3	Romer, Steve 1998
b. 139 f. 4	Sartisky, Michael 1997
b. 139 f. 5-6	Trump, Ivana 1990-1991