

University of British Columbia Library Rare Books and Special Collections

Finding Aid - Helen Potrebenko fonds (RBSC- ARC-1695)

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University of British Columbia Library Rare Books and Special Collections

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Helen Potrebenko fonds

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Summary information

Repository:	University of British Columbia Library Rare Books and Special Collections
Title:	Helen Potrebenko fonds
ID:	RBSC-ARC-1695
Date:	1972 - 2010 (date of creation)
Physical description:	23.5 cm of textual material.
Dates of creation, revision and deletion:	

Administrative history / Biographical sketch

Note

Helen Potrebenko was born June 21, 1940 on a farm in Woking, Alberta. She moved to Vancouver in order to attend university and with the intention of becoming a teacher, but instead went on to earn a sociology degree. She held various jobs including taxi driver, lab technician, office temp, legal secretary, and bookkeeper, but is best known as a published author.

Her early writing appeared in "Pedestal," Canada's first women's liberation newspaper, and she has published numerous books, including short stories, poems, plays, and novels.

Considered "one of Vancouver's most uncompromising feminist writers," and a self-described "working-class feminist," Potrebenko deals primarily with the realities and challenges faced by working-class women in the 1970s and 1980s. Her second book, "No Streets of Gold" (1977) is a social history of Ukrainians in Alberta.

Potrebenko was also very involved with labour activism and unions, particularly with SORWUC (the Service, Office, and Retail Workers' Union of Canada). She participated in meetings and picket lines, including the protest to obtain a first contract by workers of The Muckamuck restaurant on Davie Street, Vancouver. These issues and events also feature prominently in some of her work.

Scope and content

Fonds consists primarily of correspondence, published materials, and other documentation related to Potrebenko's writing career and publications. Also included are materials she accumulated in relation to her involvement with local labour activism.

The arrangement by the records' creator of series and file order within series has been respected.

Notes

Title notes

- **Source of title proper:** Title based on contents of the fonds.

Conditions governing use

Literary rights are retained by Potrebenko.

Related material

See also the Service, Office and Retail Workers Union of Canada (SORWUC) fonds at Rare Books and Special Collections.

Other notes

- **Publication status:** published

Series descriptions

Correspondence and reviews related to publications

Date: 1975 - 2012 (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Series consists primarily of correspondence and reviews relating to Potrebenko's published works. Various publications, reports, and proceedings of conferences that used her work are also included. This series also contains an essay written by university student Nicola Vulpe on Potrebenko's book "Sometimes They Sang" (1986), and a contract between Potrebenko and Lazara Press regarding a work entitled "Running Uptown Downtown."

Physical description: 15 cm of textual material.

File / item list

Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
RBSC-ARC-1695-1-1	File - Walking Slow	1985 - 1995		
RBSC-ARC-1695-1-2	File - A Flight of Average Persons	1980 - 2001		
RBSC-ARC-1695-1-3	File - Riding Home	1995 - 1997		
RBSC-ARC-1695-1-4	File - Sometimes They Sang	1986 - 1993		
RBSC-ARC-1695-1-5	File - Hey, Waitress	1985 - 1993		
RBSC-ARC-1695-1-6	File - No Streets of Gold	1977 - 2001		
RBSC-ARC-1695-1-7	File - Life, Love and Unions	1987 - 2003		
RBSC-ARC-1695-1-8-9	File - Taxi!	1975 - 2009		

RBSC-ARC-1695-1-10	File - General Correspondences	1975-2012		
Academic writing				
<u>Date:</u> 1971 (date of creation)				
<u>Scope and content:</u>				
Series consists of Potrebenko's Honours paper from Simon Fraser University, "Blessed are the Cynical: a clinical investigation of the function of the medical profession in Canada."				
<u>Physical description:</u> 0.5 cm of textual material.				
File / item list				
Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
RBSC-ARC-1695-1-11	File - Blessed are the Cynical	1971 -		
Writing publicity				
<u>Date:</u> [between 1975 and 2013] (date of creation)				
<u>Scope and content:</u>				
Series consists of posters, brochures, and invitations for readings, workshops, performances, festivals, and other events. Readings of Potrebenko's work feature in many of them.				
<u>Physical description:</u> 3 cm of textual material.				
File / item list				
Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
RBSC-ARC-1695-1-12	File - Posters and ephemera related to writing	[between 1980 and 2000]		
RBSC-ARC-1695-1-13	File - Ukranian Community Related Materials	1975-2013		
Labour Activism				
<u>Date:</u> [1972-20-] (date of creation)				
<u>Scope and content:</u>				
Series consists of pamphlets, brochures, posters, handbooks, illustrations, correspondence, and other documentation related to Potrebenko's involvement with unions and labour activism. Also included is a laminated SORWUC charter establishing Local #One.				
<u>Physical description:</u> 7 cm of textual material.				
File / item list				
Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
RBSC-ARC-1695-2-1-2	File - Posters and documents related to labour activism	[1972-198-?]		
RBSC-ARC-1695-2-3	File - My Life in SORWUC Memories of a Feminist Union	• [2007-?]		

Manuscripts

Date: 1974-1976, 2010 (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Series consists of Potrebenko's manuscript for "No Streets of Gold," as well as several rejection letters from publishers and an explanatory note by Potrebenko.

Physical description: 4 cm of textual material.

File / item list

Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
RBSC- ARC-1695-2-4-6	File - No Streets of Gold	1974-1976, 2010		