



# Guide to the Ruth Zalph Papers, 1980-2024

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## Summary

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**Collection Title:**

Ruth Zalph papers, 1980-2024

**Creator:**

Zalph, Ruth

**Source:**

Sallie Bingham Center for Women's History and Culture

**Abstract:**

Ruth Zalph is a Chapel Hill-based activist for peace, a founding member of the Triangle Raging Grannies, and a member of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), Triangle Chapter. Collection documents Ruth Zalph's activism and humanitarian work from the 1980s to 2024. It contains documents, newspaper clippings, photographs, and audiovisual and electronic materials related to her participation in pacifist and antinuclear protests and organizations, her civil rights and economic justice advocacy, and her travels for Habitat for Humanity. Acquired as part of the Sallie Bingham Center for Women's History and Culture.

**Extent:**

4.75 Linear Feet (5 boxes, 1 oversize folder)  
2.7 Gigabytes  
26 items

**Language:**

Materials in English.

**Collection ID:**

RL.13002

**Permalink:**

<https://idn.duke.edu/ark:/87924/m1z73h>

**Preferred Citation**

[Identification of item], Ruth Zalph papers, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University.

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## Background

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### Scope and Content

This collection documents Ruth Zalph's activism and humanitarian work from the 1980s to 2024. It contains documents, newspaper clippings, photographs, and audiovisual and electronic materials related to her participation in pacifist and antinuclear protests and organizations, her civil rights and economic justice advocacy, and her travels for Habitat for Humanity. The collection also contains a number of files that reflect Zalph's ongoing interest in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Many of the collection materials are annotated by Zalph. Topics and organizations in this collection include: nuclear weapons and the antinuclear movement, corporate power and economic justice, civil rights and equality, pacifism, Jewish identity, Quaker faith, Raging Grannies, Habitat for Humanity, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, and International Peace Walk.

The Activism Papers series consists of documents, newspaper clippings and printed materials, and other items related to Zalph's activism and interests. Materials include arrest records, files for different organizations and protests, letters to the editor and other writings, travel files, and files about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Also of interest are autobiographical narratives that provide details about the history of Zalph's activism.

The Activism Photos and Scrapbooks series contains scrapbooks and photo albums, most of them disbound, that feature photos from peace summits, protests, and Habitat for Humanity trips to build houses in places such as India, Nicaragua, and Papua New Guinea. Both the scrapbooks and the photo albums contain additional materials such as pamphlets, clippings, and notes related to the trip or subject. Also included in the series are personal photos of Zalph and her friends and family.

The Audiovisual Materials series and the Electronic Records series consist of microcassettes, computer disks, and USB drives that contain Zalph's reflections on her activism and humanitarian work, Habitat for Humanity house dedications, interviews, and files from Zalph's travels.

### Biographical/Historical

Ruth Zalph was born July 17, 1930 and grew up in Brooklyn, N.Y. She holds a B.A. in Education from the University of Miami and retired from teaching in Dade County School systems in 1990 after 20 years of serving elementary children with reading disabilities. She began her activism and humanitarian work in the 1980s with multiple trips abroad, including trips to India and Papua New Guinea to participate in Habitat for Humanity's house construction and

community outreach. She also participated in the International Peace Walk in 1988 in Ukraine from Odesa to Kiev. Ruth moved to North Carolina in the late 1990s with her son and his wife after they received a job transfer to IBM. After moving to Chapel Hill, N.C., Ruth became a founding member of Triangle Raging Grannies and a member of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) Triangle chapter. She continues to be politically active in protests with the Raging Grannies and WILPF, and most recently she was arrested in 2018 protesting the nomination and confirmation of Brett Kavanaugh to the United States Supreme Court. Zalph's Jewish identity and Quaker faith are central to her activism, along with a spiritual commitment to peace, non-violence, and justice with special attention to the Israel/Palestine conflict.

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## Arrangement

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Arranged into the following series: Activism Papers, Activism Photos and Scrapbooks, Audiovisual Materials, Electronic Records.

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## Administrative Information

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### Publication Statement

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URL: <https://library.duke.edu/rubenstein/>

### Access Restrictions

Access note. Some materials in this collection are electronic records that require special equipment. Contact Research Services with questions.

Access note. Collection contains original audiovisual items that may need to be reformatted before use. Contact Research Services for access.

### **Use Restrictions**

The copyright interests in this collection have not been transferred to Duke University. For more information, consult the Rubenstein Library's Citations, Permissions, and Copyright guide.

### **Acquisition Information**

The Ruth Zalph Papers were received by the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library as a gift from Ruth Zalph in 2021 and 2024.

### **Processing Information**

Processed by Shiloh Jines, May 2023

Accession 2024-0147 added and collection updated by Reina Henderson and Leah Tams, October 2025

Accessions described in this collection guide: 2021-0101, 2024-0147.

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## **Related Materials**

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### **Related Material**

Researchers may also be interested in the following collections at the Rubenstein Library:

Triangle Raging Grannies records.

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom records.

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## Names and Subjects

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- Political activists -- North Carolina
- Peace movements -- United States
- Women political activists -- United States
- Israel -- Foreign relations -- Palestine
- Women pacifists -- United States
- Antinuclear movement -- North Carolina
- Palestine question (1948-)
- Humanitarian assistance
- Zalph, Ruth
- Raging Grannies. Triangle Region
- Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. Triangle Branch
- Habitat for Humanity International, Inc.
- Sallie Bingham Center for Women's History and Culture

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## Collection Inventory

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### Activism Papers, 1980-2024

#### Scope and Contents

Series consists of documents, newspaper clippings and printed materials, and other items related to Zalph's activism and interests. Materials include arrest records, files for different organizations and protests, letters to the editor and other writings, travel files, and files about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Also of interest are autobiographical narratives that provide details about the history of Zalph's activism.

Arranged alphabetically.

Activism and Political Info, 1980s-2020s	Box 1
Arrest Records: D.C., 2012-2019	Box 1
Arrest Records: Florida, 1997 October	Box 1
Arrest Records: Senate Pres. Phil Berger's Office , 2018 May 21	Box 1
Autobiographical narratives, 2008-2020	Box 1

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Buttons by Ruth, circa 2012	Box 1
<b>Scope and Contents</b>	
"Celebrate Diversity, Stop Hate" pin made by Ruth Zalph	
<hr/>	
Challenge Corporate Power, Assert People's Rights Campaign for International League of Women's Peace and Freedom, circa 1998	Box 1
<hr/>	
CPL vs RZ, 2011-2003	Box 1
<b>Scope and Contents</b>	
Carolina and Power Light Company vs Ruth Zalph court records, brief, direct examination transcriptions, and lawyer statements.	
<hr/>	
DC Protests, 2002 April 22	Box 1
<hr/>	
Emails and correspondence , 2010-2024	Box 1
<hr/>	
Habitat for Humanity: News and Research, 1980s-2000s	Box 1
<hr/>	
Interfaith Docs, 1987-2015	Box 1
<hr/>	
International Peace Walk Inc. Orientation Packet, 1988	Box 1
<hr/>	
Israel/Palestine, 2011-2021	Box 1
<b>Physical Description:</b> 8 folders	
<b>Scope and Contents</b>	
Materials related to the Israel-Palestine conflict.	
<hr/>	
Letters to the Editor, 1996, 2009-2020	Box 1
<b>Physical Description:</b> 3 folders	
<b>Scope and Contents</b>	
Includes Ruth Zalph's letters to the editor, as well as newspaper clippings and copies about Khazakstan, the Soviet Union, and nuclear power.	
<hr/>	
Middle Passage, circa 2015	Box 1
<hr/>	
NC Arrests, 2001-2017	Box 1
<hr/>	
Newsletters and reports, 1999-2021	Box 1

Newspaper clippings, 1988-2002, 2013-2017 <b>Physical Description:</b> 2 folders	Box 1
Newspapers from India, 1990	Box 1
Notebook, circa 2015	Box 1
Notes, writings, and interviews, 1990-2020	Box 1
Pamphlet for Women's March for Choice, 2004 April 25	Box 1
Poor People's Campaign, 2018-2020	Box 1
Poor People's Campaign: The Soul of Poor Folk, 2018	Box 1
Raging Grannies Article in the Chapel Hill Herald newspaper, 2004	Oversize-folder 1
Research and Travel: China, 2012	Box 1
Research and Travel: Cuba, 2015	Box 1
Resurrection March for Moral Healthcare, Belhaven NC, 2016	Box 1
Russia trip, 1996	Box 2
School of the Americas, 2010-2011	Box 2
Selma to Montgomery march, 2015	Box 2
Soviet American Walk: Walker Information Manual, 1988	Box 2
Soviet Life Magazine, 1990	Box 2
Various protests, 2000-2020	Box 2
Womens International League for Peace and Freedom, 2010-2011 <b>Physical Description:</b> 3 folders	Box 2

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## Activism Photos and Scrapbooks, 1980-2021

### Scope and Contents

Series contains scrapbooks and photo albums, most of them disbound, that feature photos from peace summits, protests, and Habitat for Humanity trips to build houses in places such as India, Nicaragua, and Papua New Guinea. Both the scrapbooks and the photo albums contain additional materials such as pamphlets, clippings, and notes related to the trip or subject. Also included in the series are personal photos of Zalph and her friends and family.

Arranged alphabetically.

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Abolition NYC, 2000	Box 5
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**Processing Information:**

Album disbound by processor.

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"Activison" scrapbook, 1987-1988	Box 4
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Cape Canaveral; Florida Coalition for Peace and Justice, 1996-1997	Box 5
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**Processing Information:**

Album disbound by processor.

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Duplicate Photos: Nevada, 1988 March 11	Box 5
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**Processing Information:**

Title transcribed from photo envelope.

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General Photos, 1980s-2020s	Box 5
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**Physical Description:** 2 folders

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Habitat for Humanity: India , 1990 August	Box 5
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**Physical Description:** 2 folders

**Processing Information:**

Album disbound by processor.

---

Habitat for Humanity: New River Valley, circa 1987 August	Box 5
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Habitat for Humanity: Nicaragua, 1999 August  
05-19 Box 5

**Processing Information:**

Album disbound by processor.

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Habitat for Humanity: Papua New Guinea,  
Guam, Honolulu, 1989-1990 Box 5

**Physical Description:** 3 folders

**Processing Information:**

Album disbound by processor.

---

IFCO Pastors for Peace: Cuba, 2000 October 24-  
November Box 5

**Scope and Contents**

Photographs capture a variety of Zalph's experiences in Cuba as a part of the "Caravanistas" including protests, interfaith services, and meeting Assata Shakur (Black activist and member of the Black Panther Party and Black Liberation Army who sought asylum in Cuba; also the godmother and step-aunt of rapper Tupac Shakur).

**Processing Information:**

Album disbound by processor.

---

King's Bay, 2000 Box 5

**Processing Information:**

Album disbound by processor.

---

Lenten Desert Experience, 1989-1997 Box 5

**Physical Description:** 2 folders

**Scope and Contents**

Photographs also capture the following events: The Land Institute Prairie Festival in Salinas, Kansas (1996 May 24-26); Zalph hosting a Japanese student named Yashiki Morimoto at the Raleigh Museum of Art and Carytown Mall (1997 August 3-9); Ann Deagon's Cabin in Climax, NC (1996 October); Peace Action Table at Umstead Festival with Ellen Canavan and Vincent Chung (1997 August 30); Protest, Arrest, and Trial at King's Bay in Brunswick, GA (1989 October 8-9); Sightseeing with John at Bald Branch (1996 September).

**Processing Information:**

Album disbound by processor. Title transcribed from album cover.

---

International Peace Camp; SOA, 2002 July-  
November

Box 5

**Processing Information:**

Album disbound by processor.

---

Three D.C. rallies, 2002 April-2003 January

Box 5

**Processing Information:**

Album disbound by processor.

---

Untitled scrapbook (disbound), 1990-2014

Box 4

**Scope and Contents**

Contents of a disbound scrapbook compiled by Zalph, containing mostly newspaper clippings related to her anti-nuclear, pacifist, and other activism. Also includes a booklet about the 1990 Kazakhstan Walk that Zalph participated in, a written; first-person narrative about Zalph and the development of her activist ideologies; and a few other personal items.

**Processing Information:**

Scrapbook disbound by processor.

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## **Audiovisual Materials, 1988-2000**

**Scope and Contents**

Series consists of 26 microcassettes, several of which are related to Zalph's work with Habitat for Humanity and the International Peace Walk.

**Access Restrictions:**

Access note. Series contains original audiovisual items that may need to be reformatted before use. Contact Research Services for access.

Habitat, My Walk, Reflections; Habitat for  
Humanity, My Walk and Build, 1988 August 09

Box 3 > Audio-cassette  
RL13002-MCS-0017

International Peace Walk, 1988 August-September	Box 3 > Audio-cassette RL13002-MCS-0010
Sing-Sing, Papua, New Guinea; Minichs and house dedication, 1990 January 03	Box 3 > Audio-cassette RL13002-MCS-0012
Jimmy Carter, Habitat for Humanity, Tijuana, Mexico, 1990 June	Box 3 > Audio-cassette RL13002-MCS-0002 Digital-materials RL13002-SET-0002 > Audio-file RL13002-MCS-0001_01.wav
Koovappally, India, Habitat for Humanity; celebration, completion of 100 houses, 1990 August 25	Box 3 > Audio-cassette RL13002-MCS-0011
Papua, New Guinea; David Minich, 1990	Box 3 > Audio-cassette RL13002-MCS-0003
World Womens Conference for a Healthy Planet, Miami, 1991 November 12	Box 3 > Audio-cassette RL13002-MCS-0015
Conversation with Sam Phillips regarding real estate dispute, 1994 April	Box 3 > Audio-cassette RL13002-MCS-0001
Habitat for Humanity; Papua, New Guinea; house construction; experiences, 2000 December	Box 3 > Audio-cassette RL13002-MCS-0006
Papua, New Guinea; David Minich, 2000 December	Box 3 > Audio-cassette RL13002-MCS-0007
Zalph!, undated	Box 3 > Audio-cassette RL13002-MCS-0004
R to M, undated	Box 3 > Audio-cassette RL13002-MCS-0005

Zalph!, undated	Box 3 > Audio-cassette RL13002-MCS-0008
Music, undated	Box 3 > Audio-cassette RL13002-MCS-0009
Last Sing-Sing, undated	Box 3 > Audio-cassette RL13002-MCS-0013
IPW [International Peace Walk], undated	Box 3 > Audio-cassette RL13002-MCS-0014
Habitat for Humanity, undated	Box 3 > Audio-cassette RL13002-MCS-0016
untitled, undated	Box 3 > Audio-cassette RL13002-MCS-0018
untitled, undated	Box 3 > Audio-cassette RL13002-MCS-0019
untitled, undated	Box 3 > Audio-cassette RL13002-MCS-0020
untitled, undated	Box 3 > Audio-cassette RL13002-MCS-0021
untitled, undated	Box 3 > Audio-cassette RL13002-MCS-0022
untitled, undated	Box 3 > Audio-cassette RL13002-MCS-0023
untitled, undated	Box 3 > Audio-cassette RL13002-MCS-0024
untitled, undated	Box 3 > Audio-cassette RL13002-MCS-0025
untitled, undated	Box 3 > Audio-cassette RL13002-MCS-0026

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## Electronic Records, 2004-2015

**Scope and Contents**

Series consists of computer disks and USB drives that contain document, still image, and audio files related to Zalph's activism and travels.

**Access Restrictions:**

Access note. Series contains electronic records that require special equipment. Contact Research Services with questions.

My Doc 2, 2004 April 01

Digital-materials RL13002-  
SET-0001  
Folder 1 > Disk RL13002-  
OP-0001

**Physical Description:** 47 Megabytes  
191 files

**Scope and Contents**

Includes document, still image, audio files

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Forward Together, Not One Step Back, undated

Digital-materials RL13002-  
SET-0001  
Folder 1 > Disk RL13002-  
OP-0002

**Physical Description:** 701 Megabytes  
1 file

**Scope and Contents**

Contains a video file

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School of the Americas, 2006

Digital-materials RL13002-  
SET-0001  
Folder 1 > Disk RL13002-  
OP-0003

**Physical Description:** 123 Megabytes  
115 files

**Scope and Contents**

Contains still image files.

---

School of the Americas, 2006

Digital-materials RL13002-  
SET-0001  
Folder 1 > Disk RL13002-  
OP-0004

**Physical Description:** 106 Megabytes

91 files

**Scope and Contents**

Contains still image files.

---

Unlabeled optical disc, 2012

Digital-materials RL13002-  
SET-0001  
Folder 1 > Disk RL13002-  
OP-0005

**Physical Description:** 500 Megabytes  
2 files

**Scope and Contents**

Contains audio files. Track 1: Ruth Zalph interviewed by Miranda Curtis  
2012 November 03, Track 2: Raging Grannies perform song commemorating  
Susan B. Anthony and Pauli Murray at Still Walking for Justice rally

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Trip to Columbia, 2011-2013

Digital-materials RL13002-  
SET-0001  
Folder 1 > Disk RL13002-  
USB-0001

**Physical Description:** 114 Megabytes  
31 files

**Scope and Contents**

Includes still image, document, and database files.

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I Photo Palestine/I, 2014

Digital-materials RL13002-  
SET-0001  
Folder 1 > Disk RL13002-  
USB-0002

**Physical Description:** 794 Megabytes  
104 files

**Scope and Contents**

Includes still image, document, and database files.

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Palestine/Israel trip PowerPoint I, 2013-2015

Digital-materials RL13002-  
SET-0001  
Folder 1 > Disk RL13002-  
USB-0003

**Physical Description:** 237 Megabytes  
1 file

**Scope and Contents**

Includes still image, document, and database files.

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