



[if possible, left align cityhall.jpg here with text aligned to right edge of photo]

Opinionated.

Brash.

Colorful.

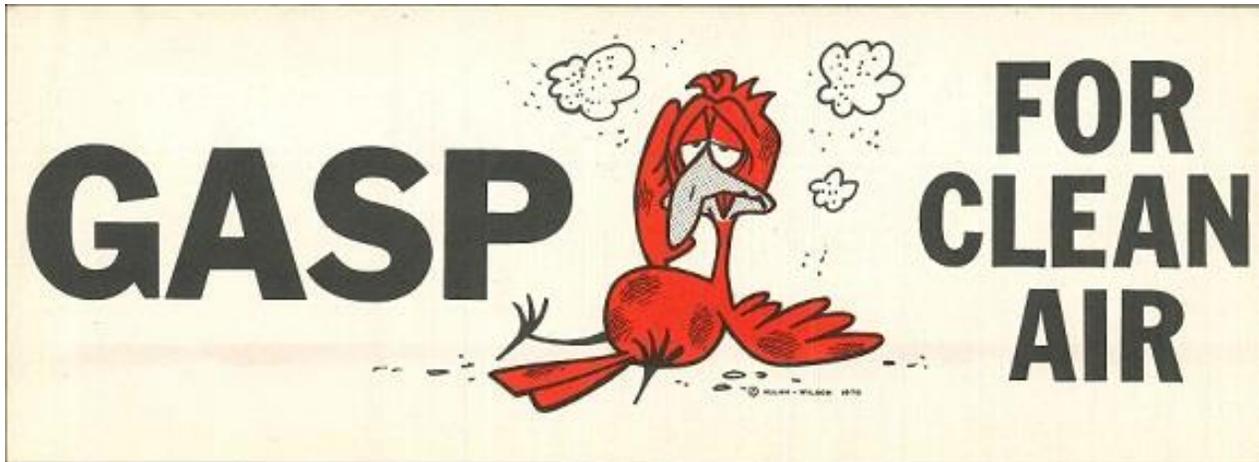
Feisty.

Blunt.

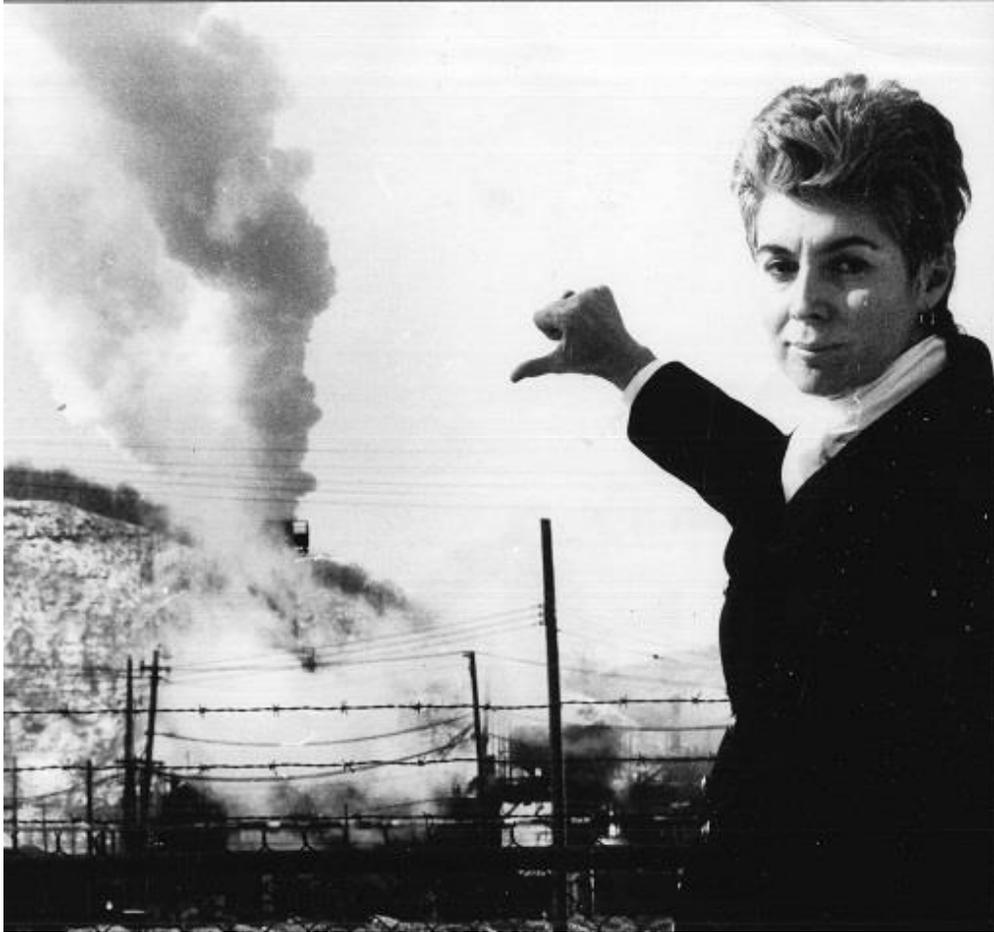
Several other words we can't post here, because we're a family tumblr account.

Michelle Madoff heard those words, and many more, to describe her work as an environmentalist and politician in Pittsburgh through the latter part of the 20th century. As a co-founder of the [Group Against Smog and Pollution](#), Madoff embarked on a crusade to clean up Pittsburgh's air and water. She and GASP leveraged Pittsburgh's scientists and politicians against well-funded institutions such as Jones & Laughlin Steel and US Steel's Clairton Coke Works. The Pitt Archives & Special Collections are pleased to feature Michelle Madoff as part of Women's History Month.

[insert bumpersticker.jpg]



[insert thumbsdown.jpg]



After resigning from GASP, Madoff served on several private and public pollution oversight committees, including the [Allegheny County Bureau of Air Pollution Control](#). In the early 1970s, Madoff began to pursue elected office. Her initial runs for seats on the Pittsburgh City Council and Allegheny County Board of Commissioners ended in defeat. However, her fortunes changed when Richard Caligiuri ascended to the Mayor's office in 1977. Madoff won the special election for Caligiuri's former seat and was sworn into her first term as a Councilmember in May 1978. As a Councilmember, Madoff retained her straightforward attitude and made connections at the state and national levels of her party.

[insert biden.jpg]



Madoff lost her bid for a fifth term in Pittsburgh City Council in 1993. She later retired to Peoria, Arizona, where she continued her environmental activism. She died on October 12, 2013.

[insert books.jpg]



In 1978, the University of Pittsburgh was honored to receive Madoff's personal papers related to her early environmental activism. We received an additional deposit of her papers from her widower, Fred Scheske, after her death. We have integrated documents from Madoff's time in City Council as well as her later environmental activism into that initial collections. The [Michelle Madoff Papers, 1969-2013 \(AIS.1978.03\)](#) is an invaluable asset for researchers interested in Pittsburgh's environmental activism, second-wave feminism, and (of course) Madoff's contributions to Pittsburgh's history.