

CSWupdate
2013

Making Invisible Histories Visible:

***Preserving the Legacy of Lesbian Feminist
Activism and Writing in Los Angeles***

**SPECIAL ISSUE ON THE NEH/MAZER PROJECT, A COLLABORATION BETWEEN
CSW, THE UCLA LIBRARY, AND THE JUNE L. MAZER LESBIAN ARCHIVE**

PRESERVING THE HISTORY OF LESBIAN WRITERS AND PUBLISHERS IN LOS ANGELES

A UNIQUE PARTNERSHIP—between CSW, the UCLA Library, and the June L. Mazer Lesbian Archives—is making the materials related to the history of lesbian writers and publishers in Los Angeles available for scholars, researchers, and the public.

The project is “Making Invisible Histories Visible: Preserving the Legacy of Lesbian Feminist Activism and Writing in Los Angeles.” Funded in part by an NEH grant, the project is a

three-year effort to arrange, describe, digitize, and make physically and electronically accessible two major clusters of collections related to West Coast lesbian/feminist activism and writing since the 1930s. Principal Investigators are Kathleen McHugh, CSW Director and Professor in the Departments of English and Cinema and Media Studies at UCLA and Gary Strong, University Librarian at UCLA.

This project, which continues CSW’s partnership with the Mazer

Lesbian Archives and the UCLA Library, grew out of CSW’s two-year “Access Mazer: Organizing and Digitizing the Lesbian Feminist Archive in Los Angeles” project, which was supported in part by the UCLA Center for Community Partnerships. This project processed five collections: Connexus/Centro de Mujeres Collection, Margaret Cruikshank Collection, Lillian Faderman Collection, Southern California Women for Understanding (SCWU) Collection, and Women

Against Violence Against Women (WAVAW) Collection).

The Mazer Lesbian Archives is the sole archival repository on the West Coast dedicated to preserving lesbian and feminist history. Its holdings include over 3500 books, 1000 unique video and audio recordings, and close to a hundred unprocessed.

This project will process and make accessible paper collections and recordings documenting lesbian political acts and effects in their communities, and materials documenting the lives and literary imagination of this burgeoning community. In addition to providing crucial materials to humanities scholars and historians, the project will also grow the Mazer's infrastructure, preserving content that exists now

while ensuring the future of the Mazer and its collections. Currently, the Mazer does not have the physical space to grow. Moving collections to the UCLA Library gives the Mazer the capacity to

Finding Aids are available at the Online Archive of California

collect new materials and will enhance UCLA's holdings in two significant areas of interest: LGBT archives and Los Angeles collections. Scholars and historians throughout the world will benefit directly from the primary research materials this project will make available.

In this special issue, we share an interview with Ann Giagni, President of the Board of the Mazer, an interview with Angela Brinskele, a member of the Mazer's Board and a well-known photographer whose photos are included in the Mazer's collections. In addition, we provide overviews of some of the collections that are now available for researchers. Finding aids for 27 of the collections that are to be processed under the project are now available

Finding Aids and digitized materials are available at the UCLA Library's website.

through the Online Archive of California (<http://www.oac.cdlib.org/>) and at the UCLA Digital Library (<http://digital2.library.ucla.edu/mazer/>):

Women's Building Records

Daughters of Bilitis Records

Terri de La Pena Papers

Diane Germain Papers

Marie Cartier Papers

Linda Garber Papers

Lesbian Nurses of Los Angeles Records

Elaine Mikels Papers

Bunny MacCulloch Papers

Jewish Feminist Conference Records

Lesbian Visibility Week Records

Kitty Tsui Papers

National Lesbian Feminist Organization Records

Tyger-Womon Papers

Lesbian Schoolworkers Records

Red Arobateau Papers

Lesbian Catholics Together Records

Joan Robbins Papers

Ruth Reid & Kent Hyde Papers

Linda Farin Papers

Robin Ruth Linden Papers

Marion Zimmer Bradley Papers

Barbara Guest Papers

Judy Freespirit Papers

Margaret Amanda Porter Papers

Broomstick Magazine Records

Barbara Grier Periodical Collection

The UCLA Digital Library includes digitized materials as well.

For updates on this project, visit <http://www.csw.ucla.edu/research/projects/making-invisible-histories-visible>.

For more information on the activities of the Mazer, visit <http://www.mazer-lesbianarchives.org> or <https://www.facebook.com/pages/The-June-Mazer-Lesbian-Archives/51347743934?fref=ts>

INTERVIEW WITH ANN GIAGNI

President of the Board recalls how her history and the Mazer's intertwined



Celebration of the launch of the partnership between UCLA Center for the Study of Women, UCLA Library, and the June L. Mazer Lesbian Archives, November, 2009: left to right, Kathleen McHugh; Ann Giagni; Sheila J. Kuehl; Abbe Land; Gary E. Strong; and April De Stefano.

ANN GIAGNI demonstrated many talents and had various careers before becoming president of the board of the June L. Mazer Lesbian Archives in 1996: she trained as a ballerina throughout high school, studied math and English at New York University, and directed a production of “Berlin to Broadway with Kurt Weill” that was nominated for a Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Award in 1986. However, Giagni traces her interest in archival work to her love of libraries as a child, which eventually led

to a 10-year stint as a children’s librarian, including three years at the Alma Reaves Woods–Watts Branch of the Los Angeles Public Library.

“I loved that...that was a fabulous job,” says Giagni during an interview over coffee at Literati Café in Santa Monica. “And that’s sort of where my interest in joining the Archives board came from: my experience being a librarian. And I just had an affinity for libraries, even as a kid. I used to spend a lot of time in them. I just liked the environment.”

Although Giagni, an avid reader, was drawn to the quiet spaces and free books offered by libraries, her work in Watts helped her discover the library as a place of social engagement and a way to interact with new communities. “[We started] doing activities for the kids because we had a lot of kids that were latchkey kids, so they would hang out... There was a housing project across the street, so a lot of the kids from the housing project would just hang out with us because it was safe and something to do. We would keep them occupied. It was a very, very enriching experience for me, and I think it was good for the kids, too.”

Giagni became even more intertwined with the communities of South Central and East Los Angeles when she operated a book mobile in those areas, which she

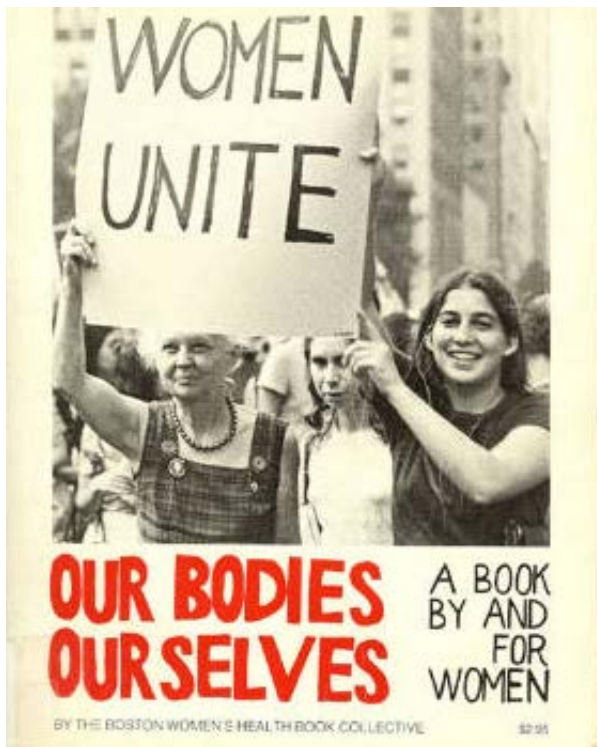


describes as “one of the most fun jobs I’ve ever had.”

“When you go to the community sites, you’re only there for an hour or two,” says Giagni. “For that little piece of time you become one thread in the fabric of that community, and I still remember that. There would be a crowd of people waiting for us when



Giagni’s love of books and libraries led her to work for the Los Angeles Public Library, including three years at the Alma Reaves Woods–Watts Branch (above right) and to operate a bookmobile in South Central and East Los Angeles.



we pulled up. They were regulars, and we got to know them and we knew what they liked. So we were always looking for books: oh, this book for so-and-so at this stop, and this book for so-and-so at that stop. It was a very personalized

service, but I got to know L.A. really, really well."

These combined interests in working with communities and archiving and disseminating meaningful stories made the Archives an ideal venue for Giagni to

Giagni came into her own as a lesbian and an activist during the boom of feminism and LGBT activism that took place in the 1970s.

find meaningful work and community. Giagni, who was born in 1948, also found herself invested in the Mazer Lesbian Archives because she remembered a time when lesbians and lesbian history seemed to be invisible.

"I grew up in a theater family; my dad is a choreographer. I knew about gay guys because my parents would have gay male couples over for dinner. I was aware of that as a little kid. I just never knew that two women could love each other," says Giagni. "It was not anywhere. It was not visible at all. They were not apparent in the general culture. The invisibility was stunning. I was vaguely aware that Tim and Hugh were together. They lived together, they came to dinner together, they did things together, I was aware of that,

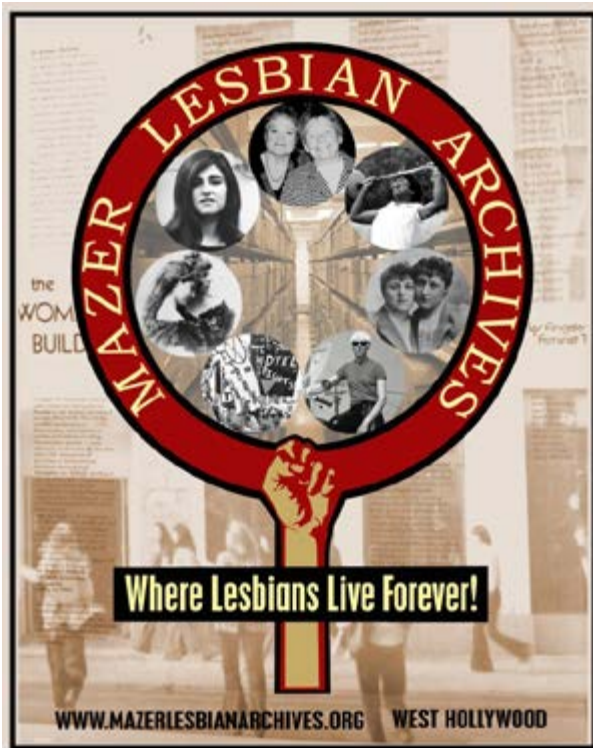
but I never saw two women in a similar union."

Giagni was at NYU when Stonewall, one of the major events to raise cultural consciousness about gay men, lesbians, and the Gay Liberation Movement, took place. However, she wasn't "out or aware of [her]self" at the time. Giagni came into her own as a lesbian and an activist during the boom of feminism and LGBT activism that took place in the 1970s.

"There was just an explosion. There's no other way to describe it," says Giagni. "It was kind of like the Big Bang starting the universe. There was nothing, and then there was everything. It was just like that. One of the catalysts was *Our Bodies, Ourselves*, out of the Boston [Women's Health Book] Collective, and there was a lot of interest in women's

health and the way the medical community was mistreating us. So there was women's health, and then there was women's publishing, and then there was women's music, and then there were women's bookstores, and then there were collectives everywhere. There was a lot of what was called "consciousness raising." It went from nothing to everything so fast. It was breathtaking. It was very, very exhilarating to live through that."

Giagni points out that this boom also led to the birth of the June L. Mazer Lesbian Archives, originally called the West Coast Lesbian Collections, which were founded in 1981 in Oakland, CA. Lillian Faderman describes its origin on www.mazerlesbianarchives.org: "In the 1970s, the lesbian world began to change. We



June L. Mazer Archives, originally called the West Coast Lesbian Collections, was founded in 1981 in Oakland, CA. Six years later it moved to Los Angeles. The Archives acquired its present name after the death of June Mazer, to honor her work as a community activist and invaluable supporter of the Archives.

realized, as we dreamt of the Lesbian Nation, that we could and must make our lesbian communities strong. Part of our struggle was to fight the erasure that had always been used to keep us weak. We had to proclaim not only our immediate presence but the fact that many went before us, that we did indeed have a history. It was in this climate that the June L. Mazer Lesbian Archives was created."

In the 1980s, many of the lesbian and feminist organizations that flourished in the 1970s began to wane. Giagni attributes this waning to several factors. Perhaps primarily, lesbians began to pool their resources to help, fight for, and fight with gay men who were dying of AIDS while the government and population at large

stigmatized and neglected them. "It was the lesbian community at the very beginning that stepped in to help," says Giagni. "And that, I think, really diverted a lot of our money and our energy into saying, 'Wake up world. You can't let these people die.' And that was a long effort."

Groups and organizations also began to fade simply because it is difficult to maintain grassroots organizations over a long period of time: financial resources run out, staff members come and go, and group's goals lose and gain momentum as culture changes. "Creation and maintenance have two different skill sets," says Giagni. "One is very exhilarating, and the other is a lot of hard work."

Giagni also stopped her work as an

activist when she fell ill in 1984. After recovering from an illness in the mid 1990s, she sought to rejoin the activist community. She was shocked to find how much it had diminished.

“When I got well enough and I was ready to re-enter being active...It was like everything had disappeared!” says Giagni. “It was like, ‘Well, where is everything?’...I was just stunned that so much that had been there when I had to drop out just wasn’t there anymore. So I talked to some friends of mine and asked ‘What’s around? I’d like to reconnect. I’d like to get involved again.’”

Through her contacts, Giagni discovered the Celebration Theatre in West Hollywood, which allowed her to draw on her experiences in the theater, and the Mazer Lesbian Archives, which fulfilled

the passion that was born in libraries. Both organizations satisfied Giagni’s desire to be an active part of Los Angeles’s LGBTQ community. She joined the board in 1996.

“I had a friend of mine call somebody on the board of the archives. She said, ‘Well, I know this person, and she’s interested in joining the board.’ Because I had decided that I wanted to be involved at the board level, not as a volunteer,” says Giagni. “They didn’t call for a really, really long time...So, finally, they called me, and I came in, they interviewed me, and I was accepted onto the board.”

Giagni’s interview, also her first board meeting, brought with it a big surprise. “At the same meeting they said, ‘Now, who will be our president?’

Because the gal who was going to be the president was going off the board, and they all looked at me,” says Giagni. “I said, ‘I can’t be your president, you don’t even know me!’ And I became president at that meeting. I was the only one, nobody else would do it, and I was just the new kid in town, and I said, ‘Well, this is ridiculous.’ So I was copresident for three months, to sort of get me acquainted. And there I was, and here I am.” Giagni has remained president of the board for 17 years.

Given her lengthy tenure with the Mazer, Giagni seems uniquely equipped to assess why they have managed to stay open and succeed in the decades during which other lesbian institutions and organizations

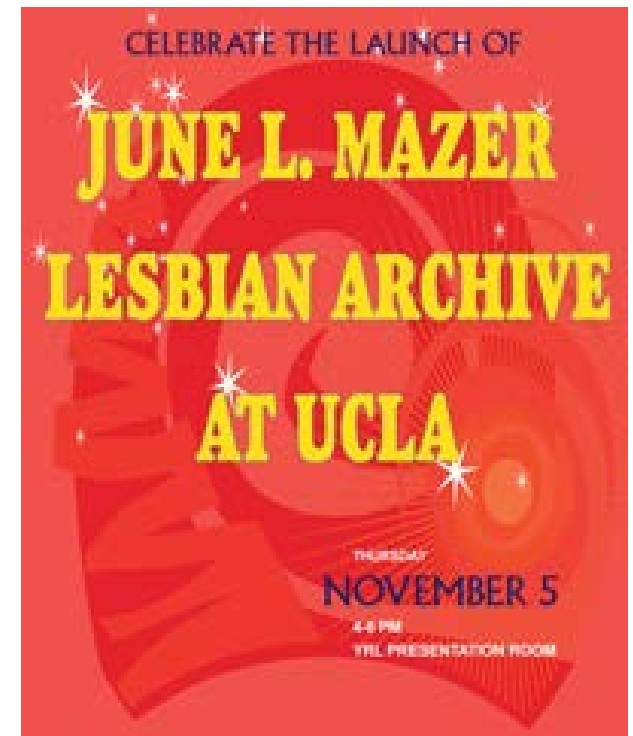
founded during the same period shut their doors. Giagni highlights several potential reasons for the organization's longevity, the first being its long-term, timeless mission.

"I was in a collective and our goal was to provide an alternative to the bars on Friday night. We ultimately stopped doing what we were doing...because there was so much going on that that need was being met and the attendance at our activities was declining. So we thought, 'Well, they don't need us anymore. Mission accomplished! Who would have thought its mission would still be valid decades later? One [reason for the archive's longevity] is that the purpose of the Archives, just by its nature, is long term. It's to collect and preserve lesbian history and feminist his-

tory. It's a mission that goes on forever."

The support of the City of West Hollywood has been fundamental to the success of the Archives. "We have a space [from the city of West Hollywood], and we don't pay for it; it's rent-free. That has allowed us to stay afloat. We went through a very difficult time; at one point, there were only three people left on the board, and we had to rebuild ourselves from that."

Giagni points out that, while the Archives always tries to attract young people to its board and as volunteers, the organization has thrived because of the dedication of a group of women who are established in their careers, who have made Los Angeles their permanent home, and who have a deep personal investment in the maintenance of les-

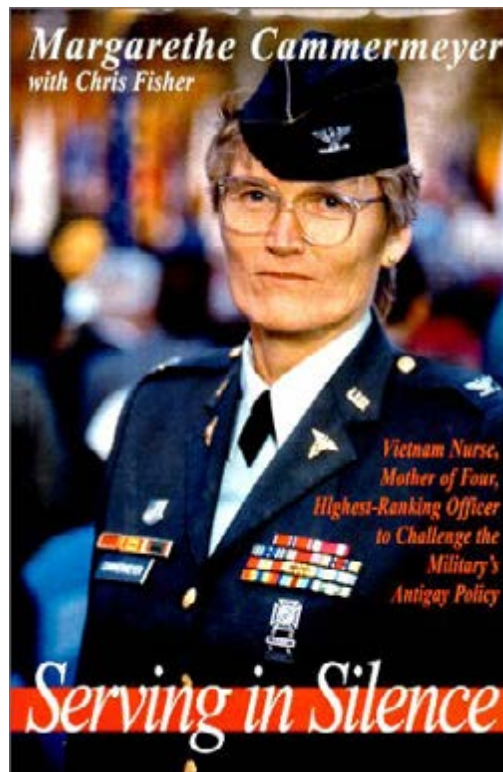


bian history (partly because they remember when it was impossible to find).

"[Younger women often] come in, they're very enthusiastic, they finish school, and they move out of town. So our board is made up of older women... who have a career now or are retired. And

we're on the board because we have a commitment to the mission. We've been very clear that we are a working board.. We've developed a process where we invite on to the board people that we've gotten to know, people who have exhibited, independent of us, an interest in and a caring for the Archives and for the whole concept of preserving history. I think we've been very fortunate that, as a board, we have been able to conduct activities and grow the Archives in a way that has attracted other responsible lesbians."

In 2007, the Mazer Lesbian Archives formed a relationship with the UCLA Center for the Study of Women, a union that has also contributed to the Archives' longevity and supported its growth. Board member Ann Powell,



affiliated with UCLA's Department of Education at the time, set up meetings with various campus organizations. CSW learned of the interest and contacted them.

"Originally we were going to cata-

logue about five collections," says Giagni. "We knew that Outfest had a relationship with UCLA, where they deposited their moving images in the UCLA Film & Television Archive. So I said to [CSW Director] Kathleen [McHugh], 'Could we have something like that, where we put our materials on file?' Because I knew that our space was limited. We had stuff in garages, we had [boxes] and we didn't even know what was in them, and we didn't have any of the proper conditions for maintaining material over time."

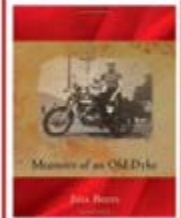
McHugh arranged a meeting with UCLA's University Librarian, Gary Strong, and several other library administrators, to discuss a possible collaboration between CSW, UCLA Library, and the Mazer Lesbian Archives.

A Celebration of Jinx Beers' 80th year



with
special guest Comedian and MC
Lynda Montgomery

Sunday, March 3, 2013 3-5pm
The Mazer Lesbian Archives
626 North Robertson Bl.
West Hollywood, CA 90069
Suggested Donation: \$10



Join us as we Celebrate this amazing Activist,
Pioneer and Founder of the Lesbian News!
We will have an open mic where you can come
and tell Jinx how important the Lesbian News
was/is for you. (One minute per person)

Jinx has been a long time supporter of the Mazer
generously donating all the costs and proceeds of
her wonderful book "Memoirs of an Old Dyke" to
the Mazer. She will be signing them at this event!



Jinx has also generously funded the archival
processing of our unprocessed posters for the
past two years making them all safe for the
future and available to view now at the Mazer.

**Jinx encourages everyone to support &
donate to the Mazer as she has done.**

Hors d'oeuvres will be served catered by Bristol Farms
(Donated by private contributions in honor of Jinx)

This is an all accessible event.

For more information go to www.mazerlesbianarchives.org

ACADEMIC LGBT CONFERENCE WITH A GRASSROOTS FLAVOR

ARCHIVES, LIBRARIES, MUSEUMS, AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS
2011 INTERNATIONAL LGBT CONFERENCE

MAY 12-15
PLEMMER PARK, WEST HOLLYWOOD

HOSTED BY
JUNE L. MAZER LESBIAN ARCHIVES

IN ASSOCIATION WITH
CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD
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INFO: HTTP@MAZERLESBIANARCHIVES.ORG

that when I left and when he left we both thought to ourselves, 'This is never going to work.'"

However, Giagni and the members of the board met and came up with a list of goals that they hoped to achieve through a potential relationship with UCLA.

"We wanted our materials preserved properly, and we wanted the expanded space," says Giagni. "What was most critical to us was that the material not disappear, that it stay in L.A., and that it get processed. If it stayed unprocessed, that would be a form of disappearing it."

Giagni and her colleagues had another meeting with Strong, Sharon Farb, Associate University Librarian for Collection Management and Scholarly Communication, and McHugh. The group began

"We had a conversation in which they asked us what we were interested in, and I laid out what I knew about the Outfest relationship, and he told us why he couldn't do that and gave all the reasons. At the end of the meeting he

said, 'Well, what you should do is go back and think about what you really want, and we can meet one more time and see if anything comes of it.' Later, after things were going well, we each acknowledged to each other

a discussion that led to the agreement that the three units have today.

In 2007, the UCLA Center for Community Partnerships awarded a two-year Competitive Support for Campus Partners grant to McHugh and CSW—"The 'Access Mazer' Project: Organizing and Digitizing the Lesbian-Feminist Archive in Los Angeles—to inventory, organize, preserve, and digitize several key Los Angeles-themed collections. During the first year of the project, CSW collaborated with the UCLA University Archives and the University Librarian's office on the processing of the five collections; the CSW project staff worked with the Mazer to assess, organize, and create extensive finding aids for the Connexus/Centro de Mujeres Collection, Margaret Cruikshank Papers, the Lillian Faderman



Papers, the Southern California Women for Understanding Collection, and the Women Against Violence Against Women Collection.

"[CSW and the board] agreed that we want to keep the relationship going," says Giagni. "We think that it's been very

Many of the materials in the Mazer Lesbian Archives reflect a collection policy that seeks to document the lives of "ordinary" lesbians





beneficial to us. Giagni has particularly valued board members' one-to-one relationships with CSW's administrators and staff. "Sharon [Farb] and Kathleen [McHugh] have been our liaisons with UCLA, and myself and Angela [Brinskele] have been the Mazer's liaisons, so that foursome is where most of the communications and decisions get made. At worst, it's been merely cordial, but most of the time it's fun and we have a great time and it works really well."

In 2011, CSW applied for and received a National Endowment for the Humanities grant for another Mazer project, titled "Making Invisible Histories Visible: Preserving the Legacy of Lesbian Feminist Activism and Writing in Los Angeles." Over three years, CSW archivists will arrange, describe, digitize, and make

physically and electronically accessible two major clusters of Mazer Lesbian Archives collections related to West Coast lesbian/feminist activism and writing since the 1930s.

In addition to helping the Mazer Lesbian Archives board members achieve the goals they set out in their early meetings, their partnership with UCLA has also led to the expansion of their collections. "We've gotten gifts because of the UCLA connection," says Giagni. "We got a gift from a woman, Beverly Hickok, up in the San Francisco area. Margarethe Cammermeyer, the lesbian officer [featured in the movie *Serving in Silence*, starring Glenn Close] gave us her collection, including a uniform. We've gotten some other important collections because of the UCLA relationship, and we can go

out and really urge people to give to us because we don't have the space limitations. That has been a real gift out of this relationship."

The relationship with UCLA has been mutually beneficial. Giagni emphasizes that the Mazer Lesbian Archives board's role in curating and maintaining the Archives and encouraging acquisitions is as strong as ever. The partnership has also allowed the Mazer Lesbian Archives to grow in productive new directions, increasing projects geared toward community outreach and education. Recent events have included a reading of *Aleta's Stories* by Angela Bowen—a dancer, teacher, mother, activist, professor, and author—accompanied by a documentary in progress about Bowen by Jennifer Abod; a celebration of the life and work

Please join us in Celebrating the life and times of Angela Bowen; Dancer, Teacher, Mother, Activist, Professor, Author

Mazer Lesbian Archives
Autographed books will be sold and Angela Bowen will be available for photographs

Readings from *Aleta's Stories* and Screening of *The Passionate Pursuits of Angela Bowen* a film in progress by award winning documentarian, Jennifer Abod




WHEN
Sunday, April 14, 2013
3pm-5pm

WHERE
Mazer Lesbian Archives
626 N. Robertson Blvd.
West Hollywood, CA 90069
TEL: 310 659-2478
www.mazerlesbianarchives.org
Requested donation \$10.00

For more information about the book or film please contact Jennifer at: j.abod@jenniferabod.com

"A Great Example of 'Living A Life' in All its Complexities"
Marie Cartier Professor Film Media Women's Studies
Cal State Northridge

"I Was Captivated: The Film is Rich Visually and in Content"
Dan Castanon Verizon Service Rep

"An Extraordinary Collection of Short Fiction"
Beverly Guy-Shettai Professor Spelman College

"Aleta's Stories are Vividly Drawn and Intensely Cinematic"
Vivian Price Professor CSU Dominguez Hills

of activist and Lesbian News founder Jinx Beers in celebration of her 80th year; and an open house to introduce the public to the Mazer Lesbian Archives board, inform them of current and future activities, and encourage

community building.

Giagni and the board have also worked on building relationships internationally. In May of 2011, the Mazer Lesbian Archives hosted “ALMS 2011: Highlighting Archives, Libraries, Museums and Special Collections: An International LGBT Conference,” which was organized by the Mazer Lesbian Archives in association with the City of West Hollywood, the UCLA Center for the Study of Women, and the UCLA Library. This conference was the third international conference focused on public, private, academic, and grassroots archives collecting and preserving materials of all types from LGBT communities to ensure the history survives unchanged. Last year, Giagni arranged to send two board members to “LGBTI ALMS 2012: The Fu-

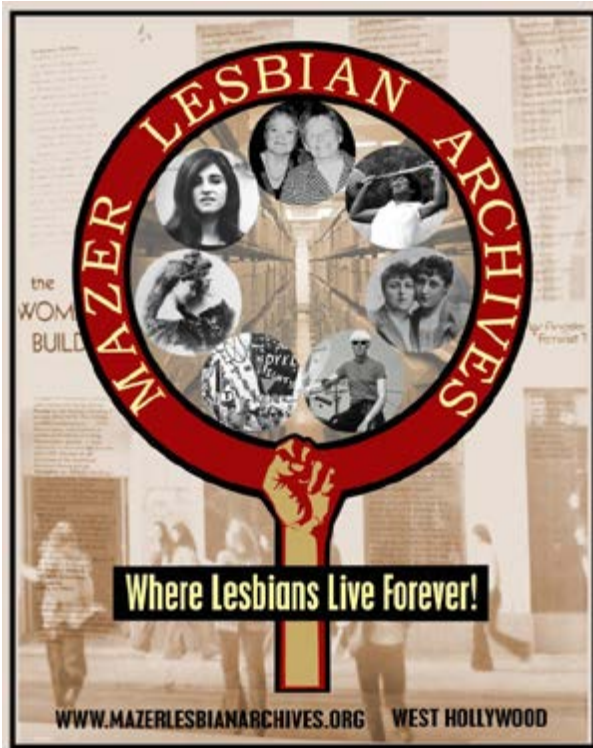
ture of LGBTI Histories,” which took place in Amsterdam.

Giagni and the Mazer Lesbian Archives continue working to contribute to the future of LGBTI histories. Board member Angela Brinskele and CSW’s student archivists currently work on digitizing the collection in order to expand its reach. The Mazer Lesbian Archives board continues to do a great deal of productive fundraising. Giagni points out that they had a higher income last year than the year before, an impressive feat for a not-for-profit organization in the current challenging economy.

“I think I would say primarily that our goals these days are to survive and to expand, both in terms of the materials coming in and the education programs that we can do,” says Giagni. “Just survival



is success. So we’re focused on that. We try to put a lot of time, attention, and self-training into learning how to be more sophisticated in fundraising, and to really nurture the giving of materials to us.”



Giagni is perhaps most passionate about her role, through the Mazer Lesbian Archives, in interacting with the community and encouraging archival donations by insisting on the vital importance of the lives of “ordinary” lesbi-

ans. “We don’t know elite lesbians,” says Giagni. “We don’t know stars, we don’t know mega-scientists. We don’t know those folks. We know the teachers, and the nurses, and the electrical workers. That’s who we know as a board. Our responsibility is that if there isn’t somebody out there talking to ordinary, ‘un-exciting’ lesbians, telling them that their lives are important, and that the material from their lives, their letters, their photos, their diaries, their personally-created memorabilia, are important, if there isn’t somebody out there telling these women, ‘Actually, your life is really important, and someday 10 years from now a researcher is going to be thrilled to look at your photos,’ they’ll throw them away. So that’s our role, and we’re trying to expand how we reach out to women

to let them know... We really feel that to have an accurate understanding of what the lesbian life was, you need to hear from people who had to work for a living, and who struggled with family, and were or were not involved with other activities. So we think that our role is really to be that link between people who don’t necessarily see themselves as important, as historically significant, and the concept that they are. The more we can collect from people, grassroots people, for future generations, particularly for younger lesbians who are trying to understand ‘What’s our history?’ the more complete and accurate the history will be.”

– Ben Sher

Ben Sher is doctoral student in the Department of Cinema and Media Studies.

ANGELA BRINSKELE

Her photos and memories chronicle L.A.'s lesbian community from 1991 to 2013



**Sarafemme Multicultural Women's Music Event,
August 17, 2008**

ONE OF THE TREASURES of the June L. Mazer Lesbian Archives at UCLA is a collection of approximately 800 photos chronicle Los Angeles' lesbian community from 1991 to 2013 (with the majority covering the last 10 years). These photos were taken by Angela Brinskele, Director of Communications at the Mazer Lesbians Archives. Brinskele first began taking photographs as a teenager in Orange County in the late 1970s. Los Angeles is perennially a smorgasbord of images waiting to be

captured, and Brinskele and her friends went to places like Chasen's Restaurant, The Beverly Hilton Hotel, and the stage door of *The Merv Griffin Show* to photograph stars including Bette Davis, James Stewart, Bob Hope, Audrey Hepburn, Johnny Carson, and Gene Kelly.

"My favorite thing ever was to watch the Golden Globe Awards at The Beverly Hilton Hotel," says Brinskele. "There was hardly any security at the time, so we would sit in the lobby, and somebody like François Truffaut would walk by because he was staying there, and we would ask for his picture. Or Dolly Parton. We would bring money for lunch and dinner, and film. It was one of the best experiences of my young life. We didn't want to be celebrity photographers because we didn't want to take

photos of people if they didn't want us to. We watched how the celebrity paparazzi treated celebrities, and we didn't like it."

However, Brinskele fell in love with photography as an art form, and decided to study it in college. She was immediately drawn to documenting lesbian subjects.

"The reason I started this was almost subconscious," says Brinskele. "I thought I was the only one for most of my life, until I was about 16. So when I got to college and studied photography I wanted to document our community, especially women and lesbians, because I wanted to make really, really sure that nobody else felt that they were the only one on the planet. I used my own money and my own time for at least 25 years to

document the community as much as I could. I used to look at my pride photos for years in boxes and think 'I love these,' but I was sure that nobody else would ever care about them."

Brinskele realized that there were, in fact, many who would care about her photographs when she became involved with the June L. Mazer Lesbian Archives in 2007.

"When I got to the archive, it was a perfect fit for me. I didn't know that other people cared about that history and were preserving that history, and I was thrilled to find that."

Although the Mazer Lesbian Archives contained photographs, Brinskele felt, as a photographer, that the collection needed more. In particular, she felt that there was a dearth of contemporary

work. The Mazer's board was enthusiastic when she offered to donate a collection of several hundred prints. Brinskele is thrilled that the photographs have gotten so much recognition.

"I never dreamt that anyone else would care," she says. "I didn't have a future plan for how [my photographs] were going to get out there, it just happened organically. I never thought in a million years that I would donate them to the Mazer and that then they would go to UCLA."

Brinskele and I had a chat about several photographs from the collection. She explained when and where they were taken, and why the images, and the people and places that they document, are meaningful to her.

"I really don't know a lot about [the



subjects of this photo]. I know, just by the fact that they were at the Silverlake march, instead of the one in West Hollywood, that they tend to be more

The Silverlake Dyke March, June 12, 2005



Kirsten Schaffer (right) and Nina Landey

radical, politically and otherwise. Actually, the Silverlake march exists because the Silverlake group was really adamant about only having women marching, so that's one of the reasons that there are two marches in LA. I often shot both marches every year for many years, and I like shooting this march because they are more radical. I always wish I had shot many more ACT UP events, because they would do things like light things on fire, and lay down like they were dead somewhere, as part of their activism. They really inspired people to action. They were very effective politically but they were also visually radical, and I think that the Silverlake march was always like that, too."

"[The photo of Kristen Schaffer] was just a photo waiting to be taken, right?"

How could I ignore that? I know Kirsten Schaffer very well, because I've taken pictures as a volunteer for Outfest for 12 or 13 years, and she is the head of Outfest now. I think that she's a wonderful person, and she's done a fantastic job. I didn't know, taking the picture, who the other woman was to her. I didn't know if it was her partner or her friend, but they were marching in the march, and it was kind of a radical thing to do, right? So I had to take a picture of it."

"Sarafemme is a women's multicultural music festival put together by Marquita Thomas. She put that on for several years, and I think I photographed it most of the years it was going. They're wonderful. There were different women singers every 15 or 20 minutes, or women doing spoken word art or theater.



**Sarafemme Multicultural Women's Music Event,
August 17, 2008**

Wendy Averill and Marilee France getting married, June 17, 2008, West Hollywood



It was really great. I really loved that it was multi-cultural. Visually, the women there were always so interesting. I loved shooting that event all the time, and I really had fun because I saw women there I never saw anywhere else, and they were very unique looking."

"I think it's so wonderful for me to be at a festival like that where women of color seem out and comfortable, and are having a good time. I started taking pictures of the community when most people were closeted, and I would never see women like this at an event in 1986. It would just be a little more rare."

"What's really great about [the photo of Wendy Averill and Marilee France] is that those are the first two women ever legally married in the city of West Hollywood. They were married by Mayor John

Duran. That was on the first day that it was legal in California. One of them, Marilee France (*right*), is a board member of the Archive. The other, Wendy Averill (*left*), is a big supporter.

I went because they are my very good friends and they told me they were going to get married that day. I was also a witness for them. Even if this hadn't been the case, I never would have missed it, because what actually ended up happening was that the city had a Wedding Village that day in West Hollywood Park. Musicians asked each couple, "When are you having your ceremony, do you want violin music?" They had five or six gazebos set up, because they had hundreds of people signing up for marriage licenses at the City Council Chambers. I followed Wendy and Marilee

throughout that process. They went in line, got the marriage license and paid for it, and then they went out to the gazebo and John Durand met them there. After the ceremony, there was a chef with cupcakes asking, "Would you like some wedding cake?" And all of this was donated by people in the community. It was amazing. I don't shoot weddings, I don't like to usually. I refused to shoot them until 2008. But this was wonderful, because all of these people were getting married all around you, and all of these people were providing music and cake. I'll never forget it.

Both of these women have been out for 30 years or maybe longer. They're both retired school teachers from the Pasadena School District. Wendy Averill came out in 1976 during the Briggs

Initiative, and would have lost her whole career as a teacher then had Prop 6 passed! I'll never forget that when I asked to take their photo years before this, they were the only women or men I knew who said 'Not only will we give you our first names, we want to give you our last names, too.' And nobody ever said that when I was taking pictures in the community. No one ever did that, unless they wanted their names in the newspaper or something. So they really stood out for being brave and out.'

"I can say that *The L Word* was one of the biggest things that ever happened to the lesbian community in L.A. At the beginning of each season they had a party somewhere and I would shoot it. One of these years it was at The Hard Rock Café at Universal Studios,

and women came in and packed every floor of the Café. My friend Ann Bradley said 'I have not seen anything like this since Paul McCartney and The Beatles.' That's exactly what it felt like. She was likening the actress who played Shane to Paul McCartney and it really fit well. The women were just crazy to see her anywhere, were just packed to the walls just to get a glimpse of her and the rest of the cast. That's what I think when I look at that picture of the actress who played Max, I think about how insane the lesbian community was about *The L Word*. Even if they hated it, they still watched it..."

"I met Pat and Jennie when I shot their 50th anniversary. I had photo-



Danela Sea ("Max" on *The L Word*) at The Power Up Annual Premiere Gala, November 21, 2005



Pat and Jennie and their dogs, 2012

graphed them before at a women's holiday party in Long Beach and so I knew their faces, but I hadn't become friends with them yet. After I shot their 50th anniversary, and I thought they were just

wonderful, wonderful people, I really wanted to know them. So I started going to things that they would go to, and they actually have group events at their house once in a while that I would attend, and I eventually did an oral history with them. They sat there on the couch with the dogs, because they said they couldn't do anything with them, and the dogs are so much a part of who they are. For the oral history, it was hilarious, because they would jump up and down on their lap as I was videotaping, and very specifically as they were telling me the story of one of them going AWOL [Absent without Leave, or Unauthorized Absence] from the Air Force in the 1950s to be with the other. Now they've been together for about 53 years. That was about three years ago. The fact that one

of them went AWOL for the other is such an amazing story, so I loved taking the oral history of that, too. We have the oral history digitally at The Mazer Lesbian Archives, and there's a clip from it on our website where they tell the AWOL story."

"It's so funny how important our pets are in the LGBT community. It's a really significant thing. It can't be ignored. So that was a fun picture for me for that reason, too. These women have had kids and raised them, but these are [also] their kids. They can't do enough for them. One of those chihuahuas had health problems, and they took her to a specialist for eyes, for ears, for everything. They would tell me how they would drive all over, 30 and 40 miles, to see a specialist for that dog's eyes."

At the end of our interview, Brinskele

emphasized that she most loves photography because she sees it as a miraculous medium. She describes the uncanny phenomenon of looking back over photos from decades ago and seeing that she had randomly photographed people who, years later, became close friends. She remains in awe of photography's ability to capture people, places, and moments in time.

"I always thought it was an absolute miracle. Even after I studied photography and knew every step of how it worked, how I got the image onto the paper, chemical compounds, and all of that, I still thought that it was absolutely incredible. To this day I think it's a miracle that we can do that, that we can take someone's image exactly, and have an image of that forever after. Knowing

everything, it still feels like it should be an impossible thing to do. So it's still an absolutely amazing thing to me, that I love."

– Ben Sher

Ben Sher is doctoral student in the Department of Cinema and Media Studies and a writer for CSW Update.

Visit the Mazer Archives online: <http://www.mazerlesbianarchives.org>

RUTH REID AND KENT HYDE COLLECTION

An insightful archive documenting a life-long bond



Ruth Reid and Kent Hyde, Santa Cruz, 1951

WORKING WITH the collections at the June L. Mazer Lesbian Archives is a unique experience. Each collection has its own sense of itself, serving as a window into individual lives, formative political moments and the growth and development of the lesbian community. One of the first collections that I processed was the Ruth Reid and Kent Hyde collection. Ruth and Kent were both writers, lifelong intellectuals, weavers and lovers. Their collection covers the duration of their relation-

ship of over forty years. What makes this collection so rich is the breadth of materials which includes a large amount of correspondence between Ruth and Kent and an array of their friends and family. These letters range in subject matter and through their reading one can get a sense of each woman's particular sense of humor, specific interests and professional tone.

Throughout their relationship, Kent passed as a man, working in research laboratories and hospitals. Ruth took

Materials from the Ruth Reid and Kent Hyde Collection include photos, newspaper clippings, articles, writings, and correspondence from their life together.





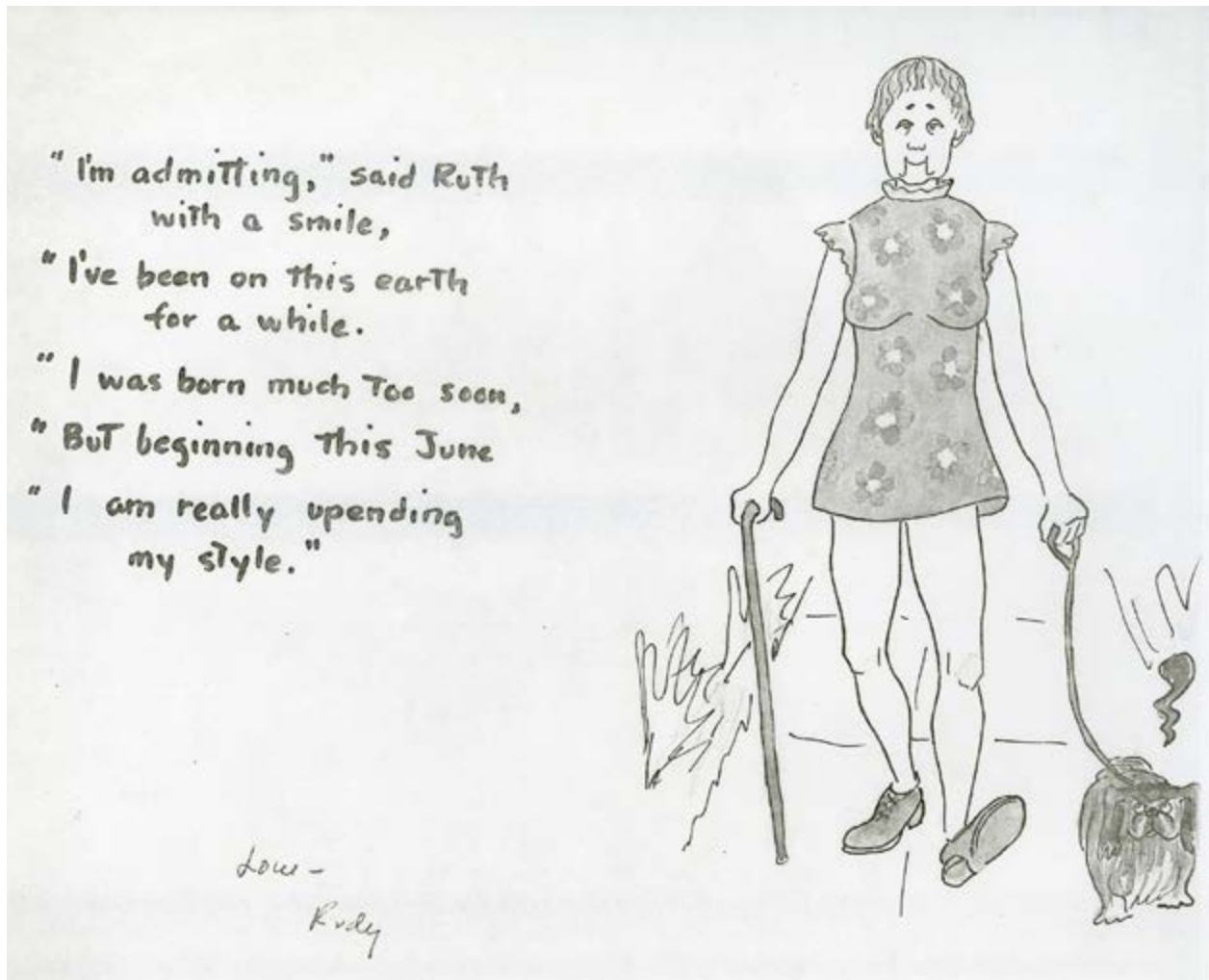
Ruth Reid 1951



Elizabeth "Kent" Hyde 1938

West Coast Lesbian Collections

care of Kent's mother and kept writing. Their political consciousness evolved as they reacted to the dramatic changes in political and social realities in the United States. Also included in the collection is an illuminating interview, conducted by volunteers at the June L. Mazer Lesbian Archives upon Ruth's donation of the collection. After reflecting upon her and Kent's life together, she also delves into the relief and sense of belonging she found once she actively sought out a lesbian community. Turning her efforts to activism in her later years she seems surprised at her and Kent's own aversion to gay and lesbian life. Their collection serves to witness the intricate emotional, political and intellectual lives of these women while simultaneously reminding us that in order to understand the



impact of change, we must look to the words of the people who weathered that change themselves. The Ruth Reid and Kent Hyde Collection has already been requested by researchers and Ruth herself used the interview done by the June L. Mazer Lesbian Archives as an aid in writing her autobiography, which mainly focused on her relationship with Kent.

– Stacy Wood

Stacy Wood is a graduate student in the Department of Information Studies at UCLA and a graduate student researcher at CSW.

The finding aid for this collection is available at <http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c8f47pwh/admin/>

MARGARET A. PORTER PAPERS

Journals, photography, and poetry of a lesbian pioneer

AS I PROCESSED the papers and other materials in the Margaret A. Porter Collection, I learned about much about Margaret's life and work but I also came to realize the importance of bringing such collections like this into the light. The Porter papers provide an excellent example of how significant archival material can document the life of someone from an underrepresented community and also demonstrate the struggles and achievements of a lesbian whose life spanned

almost the entire twentieth century.

Margaret Porter was most known for her poetry and for her translations from the French of poetry by Renee Vivien and Natalie Clifford Barney. In addition to Porter's original and translated poetry, the collection contains her personal diaries, which span over six decades of her life, photographs, and correspondence. In addition, there are materials from her activity in San Diego-based lesbian organizations and documents from her





Scenes from a active life: Margaret A. Porter Collec-
tion in the Mazer Lesbian Archives





research on Vivien, Barney, and other women in expatriate France.

Porter was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, on April 30, 1911 and raised in the Midwest. In an interview with the historian J.R. Roberts, she explained that knew she was “different” from the age

of nine but she didn’t know the word “lesbian.” Later she thought of herself as “one of a chosen few” like Sappho, Oscar Wilde and Tchaikovsky. As she was growing up, she could see no profit in being a woman, girl’s clothes, or women’s roles and wanted to be a boy. So she pretended she was one, and developed a detailed imaginary life at a young age. This imaginary life would turn out to be the foundation for much of her poetry as she later used it to create several *noms de plume*. Margaret had a lifetime interest in France and anything French, which was reflected in the characters in her imaginary life. These included Pierre E. Renet, Gabrielle L’Autre, and an ideal woman and muse named Alys.

She attended Marquette University, where she received a B.A. in journalism.

While in college, Porter first published under the name Pierre E. Renet. All her life, she always made it a point to clarify that she was not a “lesbian poet” but rather, a poet that wrote and translated some lesbian poetry.

The materials in the collection also cover several other periods in Margaret’s life, including her trips to France, her service in the Women’s Army Corps (her uniform is also in the collection), and her time traveling around the United States as a vagabond. While living in Oceanside in her later life, she worked closely with William Moritz to research and translate poetry of Vivien and others. Moritz, who was best known for his research in film history, was fluent in Greek and translated the poetry of Sappho, while Margaret translated the poetry of Vivien. Mar-



garet's translations received high praise because she often successfully projected the meter and rhyme of the French original in the English translation, as well as capturing the emotional qualities. Along with Catherine Kroger, Porter was the first to publish English versions of Renee

Vivien's poetry in their book, *Muse of the Violets*, which was published in 1977.

Although the majority of Porter's own written work remains unpublished, she often contributed to small press publications including *The Archer*, *New Athenaeum*, *South and West*, *Tres Femme*, and *The Ladder* in the 1960s and 1970s. During the same period, she became active in lesbian and feminist groups. Porter served as editor for the local chapter of the *Daughters of Bilitis* and later as co-founder of the groups *Search and Tres Femme*, for which she also wrote and edited newsletters and serial publications.

When Porter died on May 30, 1989, at the age of 78, she donated some materials to the Kinsey Institute Library at Indiana University and gave the rest to William Moritz, who later donated them

to the June L. Mazer Lesbian Archives. In a 1979 letter to Porter, a friend wrote, "...what a great need that exists for your words to be preserved for future lesbian women." The processing of the Porter papers—a cooperative effort by between the Mazer Lesbian Archives, the Center for the Study of Women, and UCLA Special Collections—fills that need by ensuring that Margaret's work is not only preserved but also made widely accessible.

— Gloria Gonzalez

Gloria Gonzalez is a M.L.I.S. student in the Department of Information Studies at UCLA and a fellow at the Center for Primary Research and Training.

Finding aid: <http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c8pv6jbjq/?query=Margaret+A.+Porter+Collection>

AUDIO-VISUAL COLLECTIONS

Interviews, radio programs, readings, and musical performances

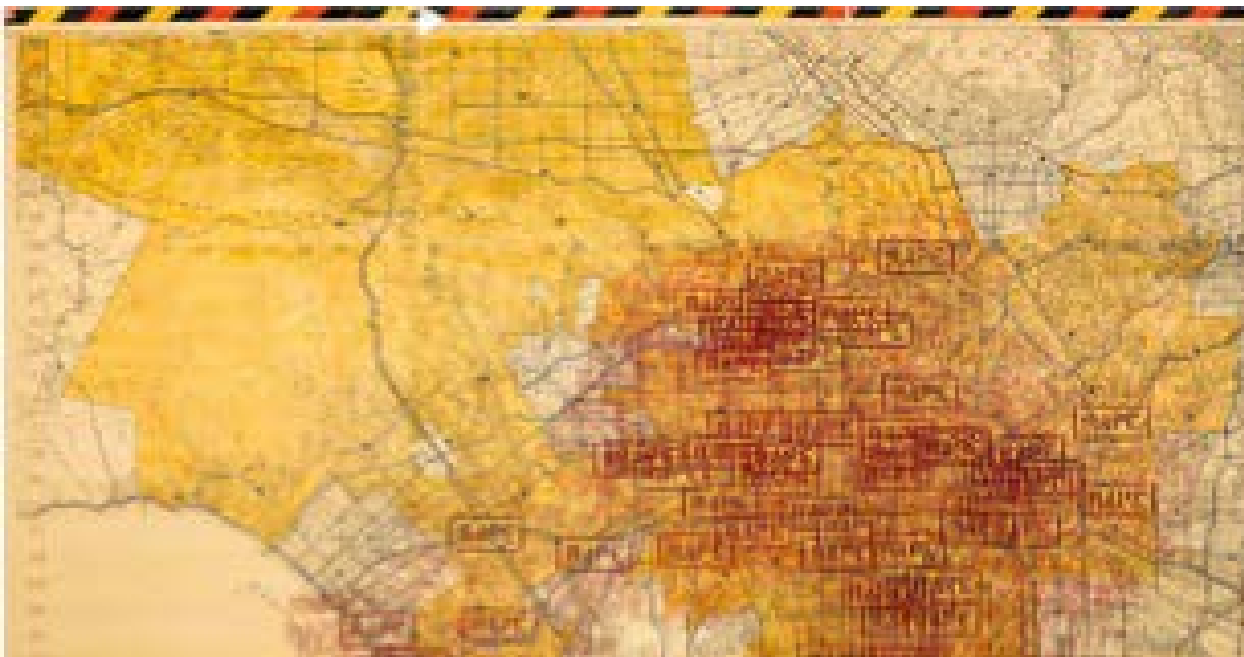
THE MATERIAL in the audio and video collections in the June L. Mazer Lesbian Archives material includes recordings of conferences, workshops, meetings, performances, radio and news broadcasts, interviews, and oral histories concerning topics such as homosexuality, lesbian issues, feminism, racism, discriminations, literature, music, history, and so on. These collections are being processed and digitized.

Of particular note is the June L. Mazer and Bunny MacCulloch Interviews

Etc collection, which includes interviews with Mazer and MacCulloch concerning the Southern California Women for Understanding (SCWU), the archive, Mazer's death, and lesbian culture in the San Francisco Bay Area. The audio recordings provide great insight into the life and work of both Mazer and MacCulloch, who were prominent figures in the lesbian community of the West Coast. The women conducted interviews with scholars and other experts on lesbian culture and history and were also the subjects of interviews. The collection

includes a recording of the Jewish memorial service that honored the life and work of Mazer after her death in 1987.

The rest of the (mostly audio) audio-visual collections that have been digitized so far has included many well-known people and significant events. Lesbian-feminist activist Diane Germain's video collection includes interviews with Southern California lesbians and recordings of Germain's various appearances on news broadcasts and talk shows. The Reading Performances 1980-1983 collections features readings by a variety



of lesbian and feminist writers, including Judy Grahn, Peg Cruikshank, Judy Freespirit, Kent Hyde, Terri de la Pena and others in lesbian bars, bookstores, events, and on KPFA radio. There are a number of recordings from radio shows, including a KPFA presentation about the Stonewall Riots and the KPFA show, *Women's Magazine*, which featured Del Martin discussing domestic violence within heterosexual and homosexual relationships.

The digitized collections present a range of topics with a variety of hosts and speakers. From music recordings to scholarly talks to small group medical information sessions, the Mazer audio-visual collections capture the culture, diversity, politics, scholarship, and activism that feminist and lesbian communities have produced throughout the last 50 years.



Sisterhood Book Store, which was located on Westwood Blvd, opened in 1972 and closed in 1999. In addition to stocking lesbian, feminist, and progressive books, the owners (Adele and Simone Wallace) organized readings and other events.

The tapes also describe a great deal of activism that women were involved with in Los Angeles throughout the latter half of the twentieth century. One recording, titled "Rape City Mall," includes materials from a project that took place over three weeks to raise awareness about the frequency of assaults against women across Los Angeles. The event included speeches, interviews, self-defense demonstrations, and an art piece by Suzanne Lacy. The recording includes Lacy explaining her intentions in producing the piece and interviews with the public as they passed by, reacted to, and watched her as she indicated the number of reported rapes that had occurred in three weeks that May.

A number of recordings were taken at the Women's Building, which was a nonprofit arts and education center founded in 1973 by Judy Chicago, Sheila



“Eloise Klein Healy, Poet”
photo by Nancy Rosenblum

Levrant de Brettville, and Arlene Raven and was originally located in MacArthur Park. The Women’s Building closed its doors in 1991, but it was a vital base for the feminist movement in Los Angeles. It also was a safe space for women to create art, write, collaborate, meet, and develop their sense of identity and community.

Another set of recordings in the Women Writers Series features events held at the Women’s Building. These events were mostly organized by the L.A.–based author Eloise Klein Healy. She is an American poet who has published five books of poetry, founded Arktoi Books, and taught at the Women’s Building and served on its Board of Directors. She was recently named Poet Laureate of Los Angeles. The recordings include Healy reading her work but also her interviewing other writers on her radio show,

Women’s Words, on KPFK 90.7. Other recordings feature Healy and other writers reading their work at the Sisterhood Bookstore, a unique establishment on Westwood Blvd. that specialized in feminist and non-sexist literature and music for more than 20 years.

Before doing this processing, I was not well-versed in lesbian and feminist history, but I have gained so much from listening to these voices. I not only have learned about the development of lesbian-feminist activism but I have also been given a chance to help make available an integral piece of the story of Los Angeles and of California.

– Angel Diaz

Angel Diaz is a graduate student in the Department of Information Studies at UCLA.

LESBIAN SCHOOLWORKER RECORDS, 1977–1978

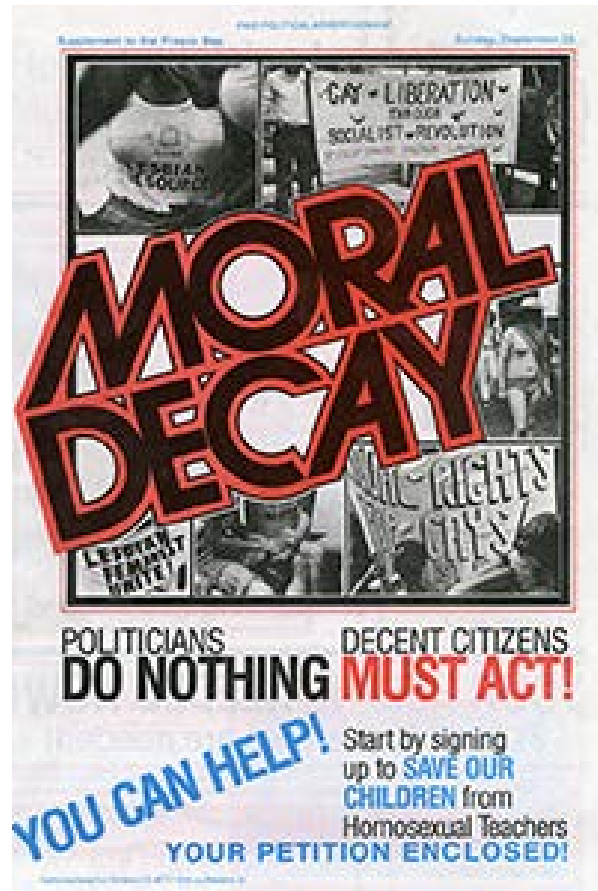
Rallying against Prop 6, an initiative to ban gays and lesbians from the public schools

IN 1978, Proposition 6 was presented on the California State ballot. This initiative, proposed by conservative legislator John Briggs as well as California Defend Our Children (CDOC), and later nicknamed the Briggs Initiative, rallied to ban gays and lesbians from teaching within the public school system. This later extended to possibly include any supporters of gays or lesbians as “advocates of homosexuality.” A CDOC pamphlet in circulation at the time argued that the purpose of the initiative would not deny gays or lesbians their human rights, but instead “protect the rights

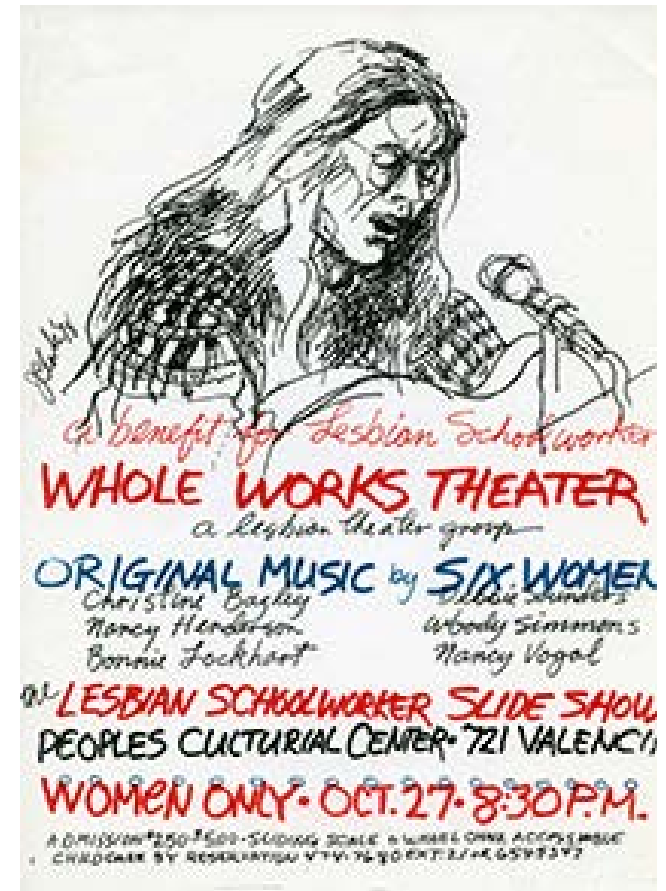




of innocent children from people who choose their position as a teacher," maintaining that "there is no inherent right for an individual to hold a teaching job."



One of the first (and smallest) collections I processed was the Lesbian Schoolworkers Records, which contained information regarding its organi-



zational history, principles of unity and structure, press releases, newsletters, flyers, paste-ups, and photographs. With a commitment to "fighting racism, sexism,

class and oppression within our own movement and this society," the Lesbian Schoolworkers organized in 1977 to defeat the Briggs Initiatives, Propositions 6 and 7. While this organization was among the many to rally against the anti-lesbian and gay bill, it was uniquely also actively campaigned against the anti-lesbian and pro-death penalty laws, and sought to identify the relationship between Third World oppression and the oppression of all lesbians. Throughout the election fight, the Schoolworkers emphasized that the struggle against Proposition 6 was not a single campaign issue or just a fight for civil rights, but instead, "that we are all suffering at the hands of a common enemy."

Comprised of a core group of twenty, and over seventy participants, the

Schoolworkers planned educational activities, sponsored cultural events, and produced leaflets and newsletters aimed at defeating the legislation and educating voters. Representatives often went before various civic groups, councils and educational organizations to speak against the measures, and were notorious for their slideshow, "Don't Let It Happen Here." Designed to inform others of the dangers of the Briggs Initiatives, the slideshow drew together such crucial issues as abortion, death penalty, and of course, women and lesbian oppression. Amber Hollibaugh, political activist from San Francisco, traveled throughout small but crucial Northern California towns presenting the slideshow and participating in public debates.

Within this collection there is also

information about both pro and anti-Briggs organizations; a San Francisco Board of Education study on the possibility of including "gay lifestyle" into school curriculum on family and health studies; and a Oregon State Task Force of 1977 report, which collected "information on homosexual men and women in Oregon in order to make recommendations on legislation and administrative policies that would ensure the civil rights of all Oregonians."

In the end, the Briggs Initiative failed miserably, even after first receiving overwhelming support. With the help from Harvey Milk, public opinion was soon swayed; groups seen as traditionally heterosexual, such as the trade union movement, the teachers' associations and unions, child-care workers, health-



care workers, and even churches, largely opposed Proposition 6 in the end. While the defeat of the Briggs' Initiative did not solve the discrimination of California's gay and lesbian citizens, it did for the first time—as explained by Hollibaugh in a 1979 interview—“expose sexual dynamics as central in this society” by discussing homophobia as an intrusion of basic human rights.

—Kimberlee Granholm

Kimberlee Granholm is an M.A. candidate in the Moving Image Archive Studies program, where her interests focus on film curatorship, exhibition, and public access. She currently acts as the Graduate Student Association's Director of Melnitz Movies.

Finding aid: <http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c8wq04k3/?query=Lesbian+Schoolworker+Records>

DIANE GERMAIN PAPERS

Collection reflects the many facets of lesbian life



BY COLLECTING and preserving the documentation and materials that are central to women's lives, The June Mazer Lesbian Archives preserves details of American culture that have long been invisible in archival histories. The Diane F. Germain papers exemplify this fact.

Germain is a French-American lesbian-feminist psychiatric social worker. She conducts the Lesbian History Project and created and conducted a strength group for Women Survivors of Incest and/or childhood molestation for five years. She was one of the founding



members of Dykes on Hikes, the Lesbian Referral Services, Beautiful Lesbian Thespians, and California Women's Art Collective. She was an early principal member of the San Diego Lesbian Organization and a collective member of both Las

Hermanas and Califia, a separatist lesbian community.

She worked at Lambda Archives throughout the 1990s, interviewing women in order to preserve lesbian history and gathering collections. She later returned to serve as their Student Volunteer Coordinator. She was the staff cartoonist for *HotWire: The Journal of Women's Music, Culture of Chicago* and *Lesbian News*. Her writing and artwork was featured in various publications, including *Les Talk: The Magazine for Empowering Lesbians/Womyn*. She is featured in both the anthology *Tomboys!*, edited by Lynne Yamaguchi and Karen Barber, and *Lesbian Culture: An Anthology*, edited by Julia Penelope and Susan J. Wolfe.

Germain was not only interested in documenting her own experiences, but

also in documenting the representation of women in the media as well as preserving lesbian culture on the whole for posterity. Therefore, the content of this collection is varied. The collection contains materials from activist organizations in which Germain was herself involved, as well as information and resources for other like-minded organizations. She also collected magazine and newspaper clippings that included her art work (some of which include her commentary). Financial documents and other organizational records relating to the Las Hermanas coffee house and presentations meant for the Califia Community are included in the collection.

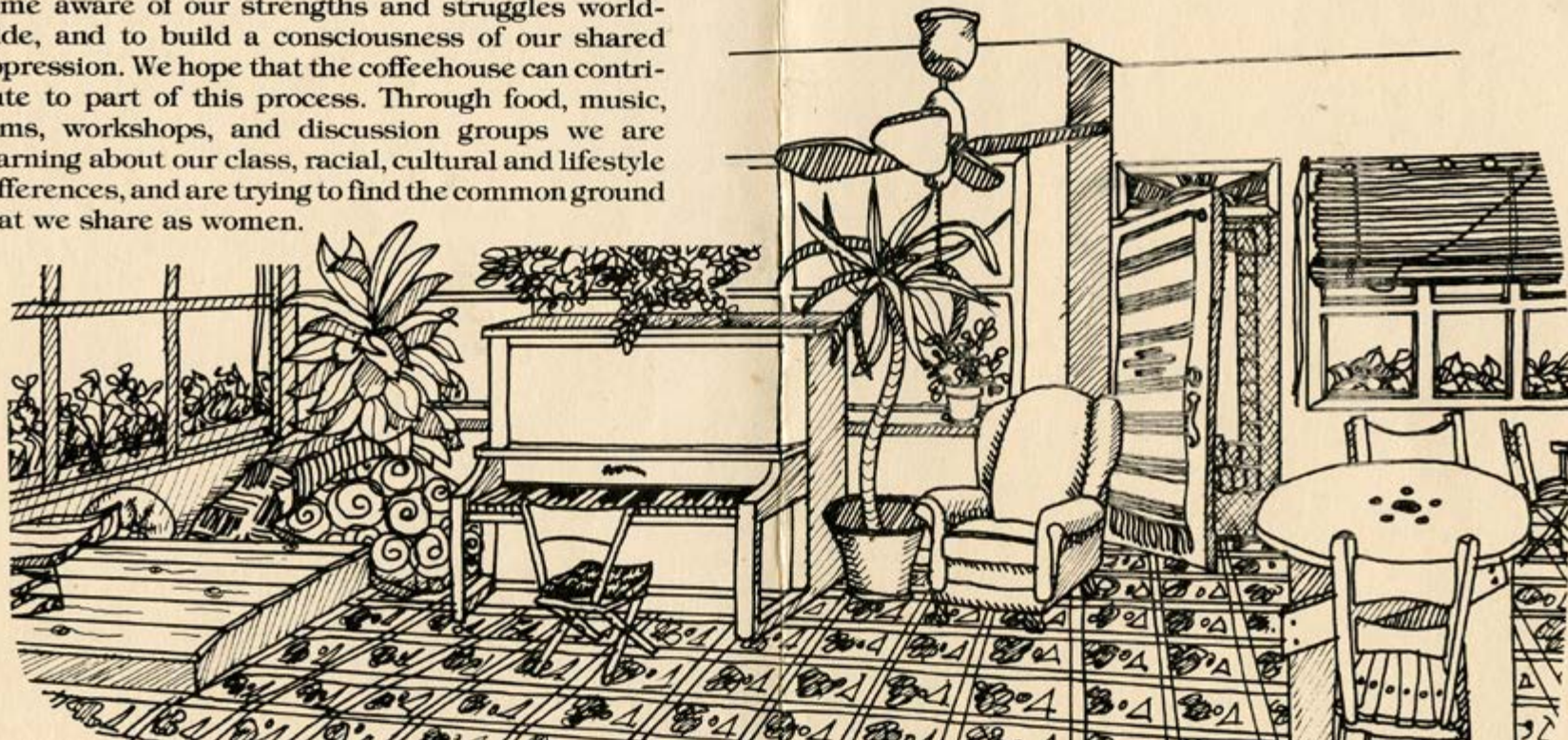
Materials also include videotapes of community events and speakers, extensive flyers, brochures, and other papers

About Us

Las Hermanas Women's Cultural Center and Coffeehouse is a women's space, organized and run collectively by community women to provide a space for all women to share, learn, and enjoy ourselves together. We, the Las Hermanas workers, are women of mixed racial, ethnic, and class backgrounds. We are workers, students, mothers, mostly (though not exclusively) lesbians and feminists. We believe that women need to organize and work together to become aware of our strengths and struggles worldwide, and to build a consciousness of our shared oppression. We hope that the coffeehouse can contribute to part of this process. Through food, music, films, workshops, and discussion groups we are learning about our class, racial, cultural and lifestyle differences, and are trying to find the common ground that we share as women.

Las Hermanas Women's Coffeehouse & Cultural Center

4003 Wabash Avenue San Diego 280-7510
Fridays 5-11 Saturdays 5-11 Sundays 10-2





Califia, a separatist lesbian community

regarding lesbian and feminist political events, clippings documenting offensive depictions of LGBT people and women in media, photography, correspondence, and other ephemera and realia.

Because Germain has worn so many hats, from cartoonist to historian to leader of a strength group for abuse survivors, her collection offers documentation of many diverse facets of lesbian life and culture throughout the second half of the twentieth century.

– Ben Sher

Ben Sher is doctoral student in the Department of Cinema and Media Studies and a writer for CSW Update.

Finding aid for the Diane Germain Papers is available: <http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c8jd4xjg/>

WOMEN AGAINST VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN COLLECTION

WOMEN AGAINST VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN (WAVAW), a feminist activist organization, was founded in 1976 in Los Angeles by anti-pornography activist Marcia Womongold. The Los Angeles chapter of WAVAW was formed out of an ad hoc coalition of feminist groups who joined forces to protest a film called *Snuff* and the advertising campaign for the Rolling Stones album, *Black and Blue*.

WAVAW first began as a reaction to the Los Angeles debut of *Snuff* in March of



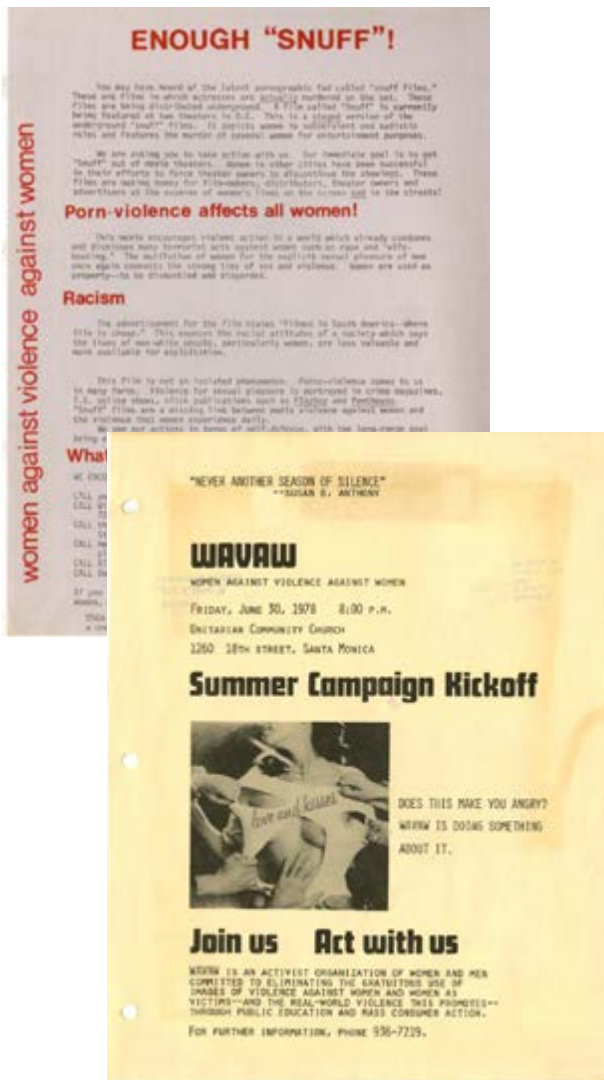
1976. This film was advertised as having been made in South America where “life is cheap” and falsely claimed to show the actual murder and dismemberment of a woman. In Southern California this film opened in twenty-two theatres in Los Angeles and Orange County, including the Mann Theaters. Due to WAVAW protest over the ad and the film, *Snuff* was withdrawn from circulation in the entire Southern California area one week after it opened.

In June of 1976, Atlantic Records—a Warner Communications, Inc. (WCI) subsidiary—put up a billboard on Hollywood’s Sunset Strip to advertise the Rolling Stones’ album *Black and Blue*. It depicted a beaten, bound young woman saying, “I’m ‘Black and Blue’ from the Rolling Stones and I love it!” WAVAW,

in cooperation with the California state chapter of the National Coalition for Women (NOW), protested, and the sign was subsequently removed during the night before the group held its press conference beneath the billboard on Sunset Boulevard and picketed at the site.

In response to pressure from WAVAW, Atlantic Records scaled back its Black and Blue advertising campaign but did not eliminate it. In light of this, WAVAW’s campaign to stop the use of images of violence against women in advertising began. When Warner, Elektra and Atlantic Records—subsidiaries of Warner Communications, Inc.—failed to reply to demands that they cease and desist in the use of images of violence against women, and sexual violence, as





an advertising gimmick, WAVAW, in coalition with California state chapter of the National Coalition for Women (NOW) called a boycott of all WEA labels (Warner Bros., Reprise, Elektra, Asylum, Nonesuch, Atlantic and Atco) in December 1976. The WCI boycott generated letters from thousands of individuals and organizations such as NOW chapters, YWCAs, and rape crisis hotlines demanding that WCI companies institute a responsible advertising policy. The letter-writing campaign developed as a follow-up to WAVAW's slide show, a presentation of offensive album covers and advertisements that had been shown to hundreds of women's groups, schools, universities and community organizations across the country.

In 1979, after three years of national protesting, presenting community slide shows, letter-writing, phone-calling, attending shareholders' meetings, leaflet distributions, and boycotting, WAVAW secured a policy from Warner Communications, Inc. stating they agreed to cease and desist with the use of images of violence against women and sexual violence in advertising. As a result of the agreement, WAVAW and California NOW ended a three year boycott of WCI Records. On November 8, 1979, WAVAW and WCI made joint statements to the press at dual news conferences in New York and Los Angeles announcing that an agreement had been reached. The agreement, announced on November 8, 1979, was presented to the public in the form of a joint press statement, which



was negotiated by representatives from WAVAW's national coordinating committee and from the office of David H. Horowitz who is in charge of WCI's record division.

Subsequently, the Los Angeles chapter of WAVAW turned to local projects involving protests against films and campaigns against advertising including *The Story of O* (1975, directed by Just Jaeckin), *Bloodline* (1979, directed by Terence Young), *Windows* (1980, directed by Gordon Willis), and *Dressed to Kill* (1980, directed by Brian De Palma).

They also regularly protested violence in pornography (with other organizations), and Playboy's First Amendment Awards in 1982.

The Women Against Violence Against Women (WAVAW) Collection is a mixture

of papers and organizational records, publications, ephemera and audiovisual materials collected by organization member Dani Adams (from the national office in Los Angeles). The collection includes a range of materials, beginning with minutes from early meetings establishing the organization, and continuing to document all of the group's activities until it disbanded in 1984.

Of particular interest are the internal memos and complete run of national newsletters produced by the Los Angeles Chapter for national chapter distribution and slides and scripts from the WAVAW slide show, the presentation that chapter members showed to audiences nationwide. There is also extensive coverage of WAVAW's actions against the film *Snuff* and various other films,





the Rolling Stones' *Black and Blue* advertising campaign and national boycott of Warner Communications, Inc. (WCI), including background research, press

releases, correspondences, and protest pamphlets.

This collection is useful to researchers on several fronts. It provides a compre-

hensive portrait of a feminist organization that had substantial influence on the social and cultural institutions of its time. It provides rare archival documentation of the film and music industry's behind the scenes efforts to grapple with (or try ignore) feminist issues, and respond to feedback from social groups. It also serves as a potent reminder of the serious misogyny that permeated advertising from the mid-1970s to the early 1980s.

– Ben Sher

Ben Sher is doctoral student in the Department of Cinema and Media Studies and a writer for CSW Update.

Finding aid : <http://www.oac.cdlib.org/find-aid/ark:/13030/kt4t1nf1vc/>

ESTER BENTLEY PHOTOGRAPHS AND PAPERS, 1940–2003

The best thing about working with a large number of different collections is that you never know what you're going to discover next. In the past year I've worked with collections featuring lesbian and feminist comic books, boxes full of T-shirts from music festivals, passionate love letters, and organizational materials from different activist groups. Because the June L. Mazer Lesbian Archive has such a generous collection policy, the materials not only represent individual people but also provide snapshots of communities and political movements. Many of the collections come to us with no contextual information; in some cases,







we may not even know a donor's real name. Sometimes the collections are in conversation with one another, giving us a broader picture of a time or place or movement than any individual could. The Ester Bentley Collection functions simultaneously as an individual collection and as connective tissue between a handful of other collections containing letters, photographs, and journal entries

referencing or involving other donors to the collection. These overlaps and interweavings don't come as a complete surprise, given that Ester Bentley was an active and integral part of the lesbian activist community in Los Angeles for many years.

Born in Louisville, Kentucky, on October 24, 1915, she attended the University of Louisville but completed her Bach-

elor's of Science at Catherine Spalding College (also in Louisville, Kentucky). She earned her Master's in Social Work at two institutions, beginning at Kent School of Social Work and finishing it at the National Catholic School of Social Service at Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C. She also acquired a real estate license from the Scadron Business College in San Bernardino, California, and attended San Bernardino Valley College part-time. She spent the bulk of her career as a social worker in both administrative and field capacities. Upon her retirement, she focused on local lesbian activism and Catholic ministry. A large part of her collection is made up of photographs documenting friends, family, and community life. My favorite photographs in the collection come



from a series of road trips Ester took with her partner, mostly photos of landscapes along the way. She had an eye for capturing not just a moment but a mood in time. Her photographs provide a deep sense of time and space both of her own life but also of the communities of which she was a part.

–Stacy Wood

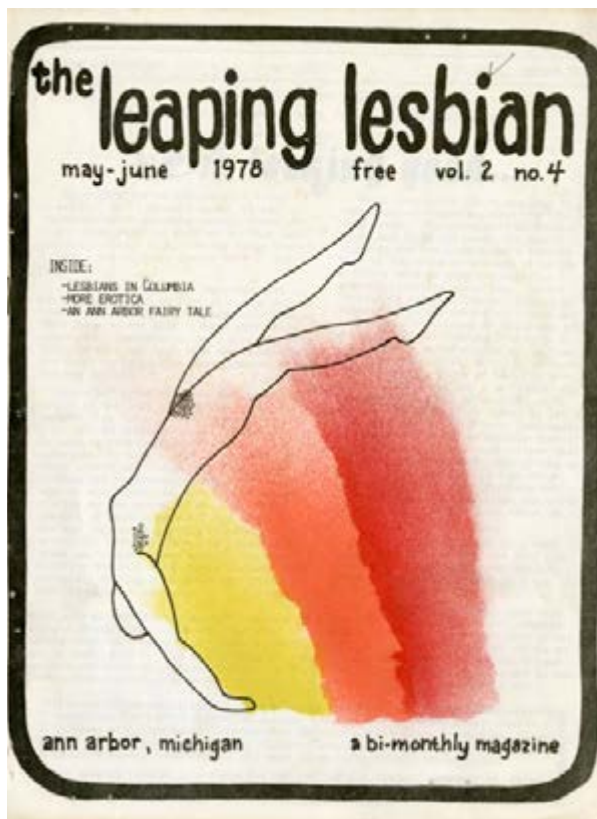
Stacy Wood is a graduate student in the MLIS program at UCLA and a GSR for the NEH/Mazer project.

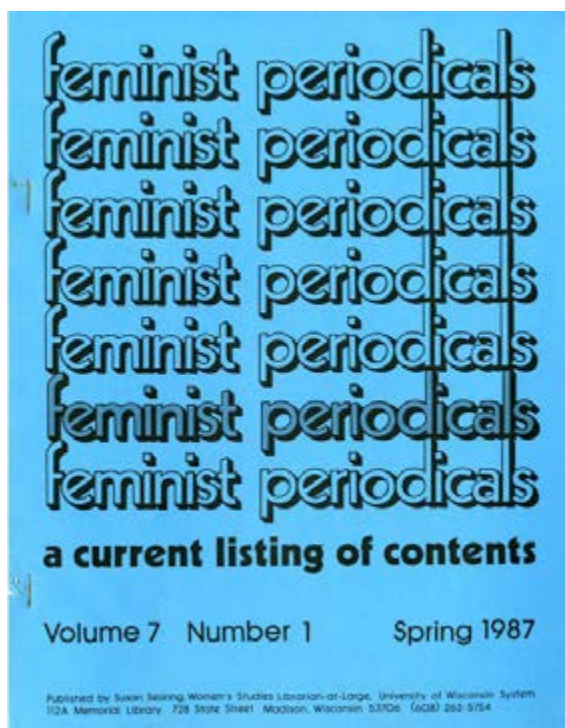
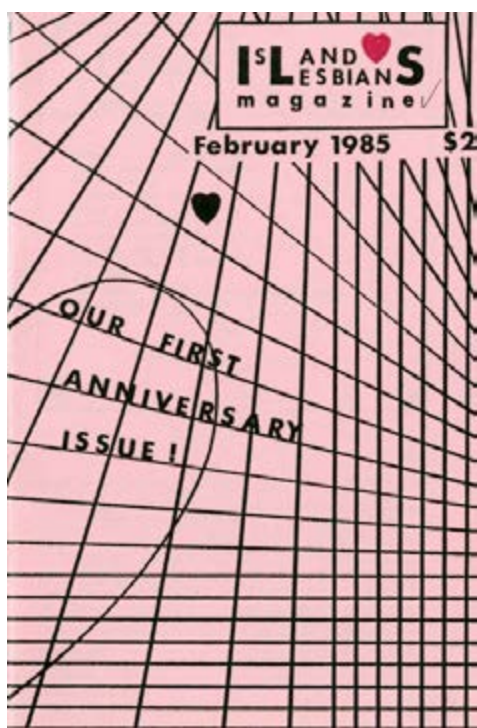
Finding aid: <http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c8319wpx/?query=Ester+Bentley+Collection>

GRIER PERIODICAL COLLECTION AND DIANA PRESS RECORDS

Materials that document the strategies, successes, and struggles of progressive publications

Over the course of the winter quarter I had the opportunity to work with two different collections from the June L. Mazer Lesbian Archives. The first collection I processed was the Barbara Grier Periodical Collection. Barbara Grier (1933-2011) was a lesbian-feminist activist, writer, and publisher. She is perhaps best known for her work with *The Ladder*, the monthly magazine published by the Daughters of Bilitis, the first national lesbian organization in the United States. Writing under the pseudonyms Gene Damon, Vern





Niven, and Lennox Strong, Grier began contributing copy to *The Ladder* in 1957, and continued until 1968 when she assumed the role of editor, and then publisher, in 1970. In 1973, Grier co-founded Naiad Books, which later became Naiad Press, the preeminent lesbian book pub-

lisher that opened up lesbian writing to the world.

The Barbara Grier Periodical Collection represents a rich assemblage of feminist and lesbian themed newspapers, magazines, journals, and small press publications amassed by Grier over the years.

Although the collection spans 1969 to 1992, the bulk of the material is from the 1980s and features periodicals from large U.S. metropolitan areas as well as smaller towns. A notable strength of the collection is the range in type of periodical: ad-heavy weekly LGBT newspapers

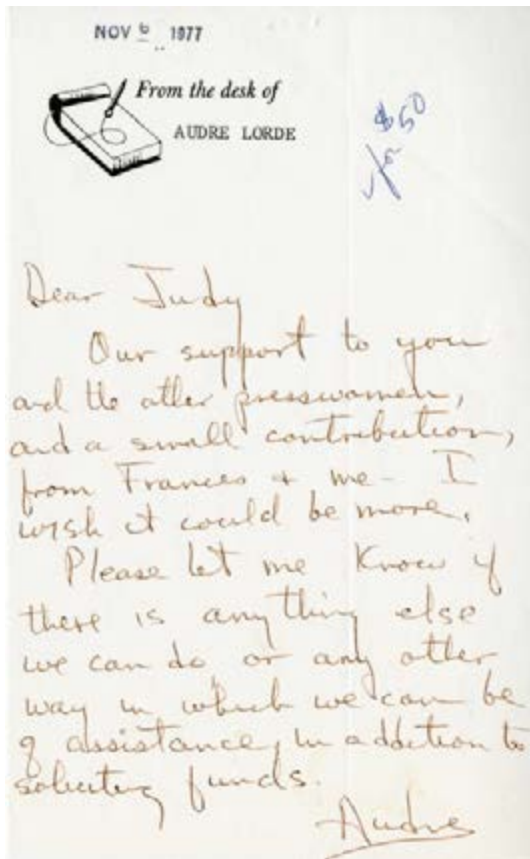


such as Pittsburgh's *Out*, newsletters from organizations like Seattle's Lesbian Resource Center, bibliographic resources including the University of Wisconsin's *Feminist Periodicals*, and personal publications such as Dorothy Feola's *Women's Network*.

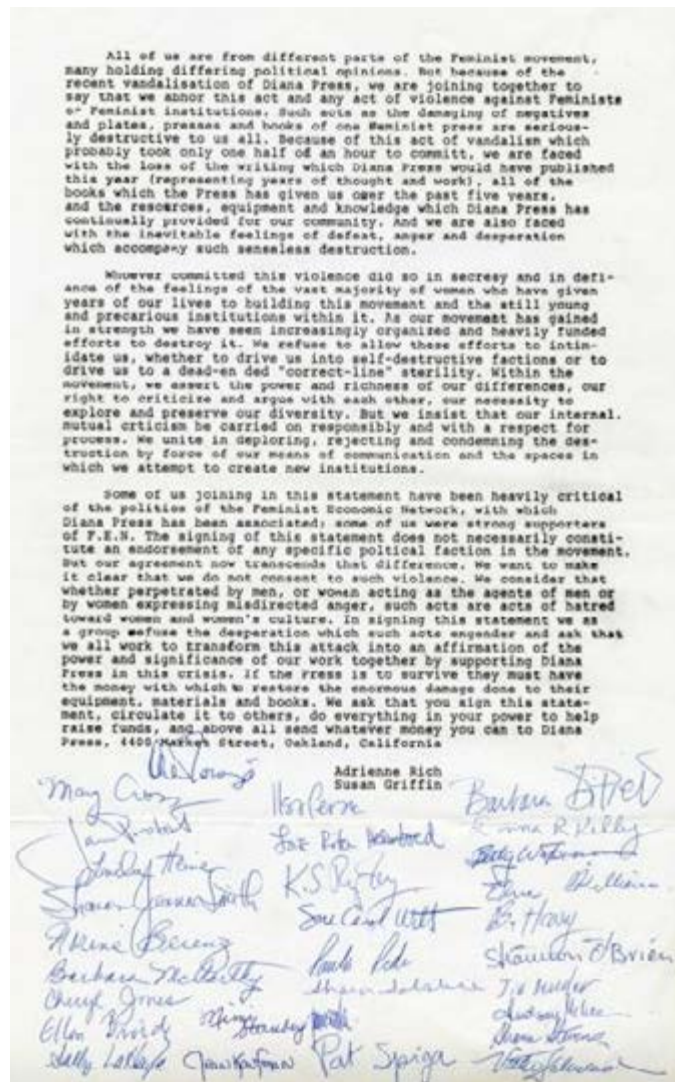
The second collection, which is still being processed, is the Diana Press Records. Diana Press was a lesbian feminist printing and publishing house which was started by Coletta Reid and Casey Czarnik in Baltimore, Maryland in 1972, then relocated to Oakland, California in 1977. Most notably, Diana Press published titles by the likes of Rita Mae Brown and Judy Grahn, and reprinted Jeannette Foster's pioneering *Sex Variant Women in Literature*. However, the press was also plagued by a series of mis-

fortunes including a fire in 1975 and a crippling incident of vandalism in 1977. Economic setbacks, coupled with disagreements amongst leadership, led to a cease in publication in the late 1970s.

The Diana Press collection contains an assortment of administrative materials, author files, unpublished manuscripts, press materials, and a substantial amount of correspondence. The correspondence is fascinating in terms of its scope and content, documenting everything from simple requests for catalogs to major business disagreements with authors. The assemblage of letters of support following the 1977 vandalism of the Diana Press office is a particular highlight of the collection, featuring correspondence from feminist luminaries such as Adrienne Rich and Audre Lorde.



Letters of support written to Diana Press by Audre Lord and Adrienne Rich



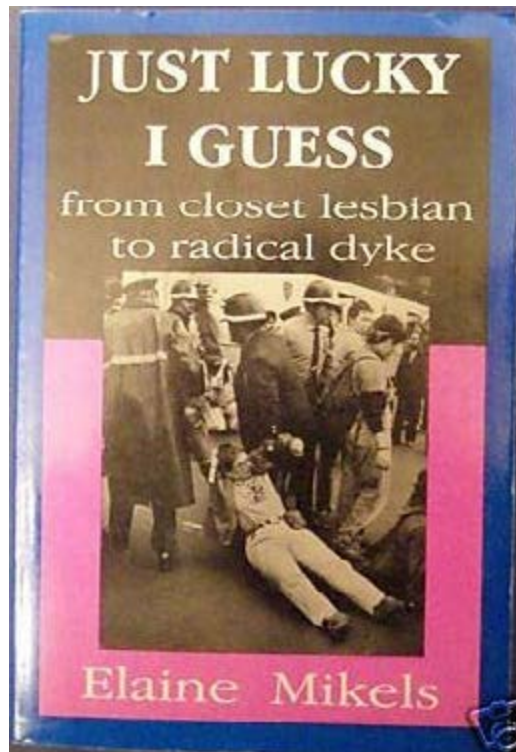
Both the Grier Periodical Collection and the Diana Press Records represent narratives that are too often excluded from the historical record. I'm excited to be a part of preserving and making these materials available.

—Courtney Dean

Courtney Dean is a graduate student in the Department of Information Studies

ELAINE MIKELS PAPERS, 1977-1984

*Activist rallied against war and for peace and helped found
Older Lesbians Organizing for Change*



One of the processed collections from the June L. Mazer Lesbian Archives now available for viewing in UCLA Library's Digital Collections is the Elaine Mikels Papers, 1977-1984.

Mikels was born in 1921 in Los Angeles and spent much of her early life there. Like some other closeted women coming of age in the 1940s, she had little concept of how to deal with her own relationships, much less how to build community though shared inter-

ests. In the late 1960s, she became, in her own estimation, political. She supported the anti-war movement, joined lesbian-feminist communities in Oregon, and participated in peace actions. In 1976 she founded the Older Women's Network in order to bring older lesbian feminists together to share resources and achieve their activist goals. She would go on to participate in similar groups and helped to found the group Older Lesbians Organizing for Change. Mikels eventually settled in Santa Fe,

NM, but most of the photographic collection represents the years she lived in Oregon and North Carolina.

Most of the collection is composed of about 200 photographs taken by Mikels. Included are scenes of activist gatherings, social gatherings and sports clubs, writing groups. One set of photos, titled “Dyke Olympics,” includes photos of women lifting weights, wrestling, sprinting, and wearing togas from an event held in 1983. Another includes photos of women working on roofing a house. Softball games are the subject of another series.

Mikels participated in demonstrations including Nuclear Disarmament Rally in 1982, a PeaceWalk from Durham, NC, to Seneca Peace Camp, which took place from June 3 to July 4, 1983, and

PeaceWalk from Gainesville, FL, to Key West, FL, in 1984. Also represented in the collection are photographs documenting the Women’s Pentagon Action, a two-thousand– woman protest that surrounded the Pentagon in 1981.

Her involvement in the Older Women’s Network is documented through examples of the organization’s newsletter, which was called *Our Own*.

Contained in the Mikels collection are also photos related to *Feminary*, a newsletter published by an women’s collective in Durham, NC, in 1969. In the words of Minnie Bruce Pratt, “we were a group of anti-racist, anti-imperialist Southern lesbians.” Photographs of Pratt are contained within the Mikels collection.

The collection also includes materials related to the publication of Elaine

Mikels’ autobiography, *Just Lucky I Guess: From Closet Lesbian to Radical Dyke* (Desert Crone Press), as well as a copy of the final published version. Papers, journals, correspondence, drawings, and other personal materials make up the rest of the collection.

It is collections like this one that make the Mazer such a special repository. Having these images from Mikels’ life available for viewing on the UCLA Library’s Digital Collections means that lesbians, feminists, and researchers from all over the world can get a glimpse of an important time and one woman’s legacy of lesbian activism.

Finding aid: <http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c8fx7b5w/?query=Elaine+Mikels+papers>

RECORDS OF *BROOMSTICK* MAGAZINE

Combatting ageism and gender stereotyping



BROOMSTICK was an independent, self-published radical feminist magazine dedicated to supporting and promoting women and lesbian activism and art for an audience of women over forty. Founded by Maxine Spencer and Polly Taylor in Berkeley, California, in 1978, it ceased publication in 1993.

Its main goals were confronting ageism, stereotypes of the disabled, and breaking down gender conventions in publishing. It also explores topics re-

lated to radical feminist politics, lesbian culture and art, spirituality of the Crone, women and aging, and feminist coalitions and communities. The collection contains a complete run of the magazine, organizational records, financial statements, correspondence, submissions and rejections, and many of the plates used for printing the magazine. The collection also contains Spencer's personal papers documenting her personal experiences with radical feminism, lesbianism, disability,

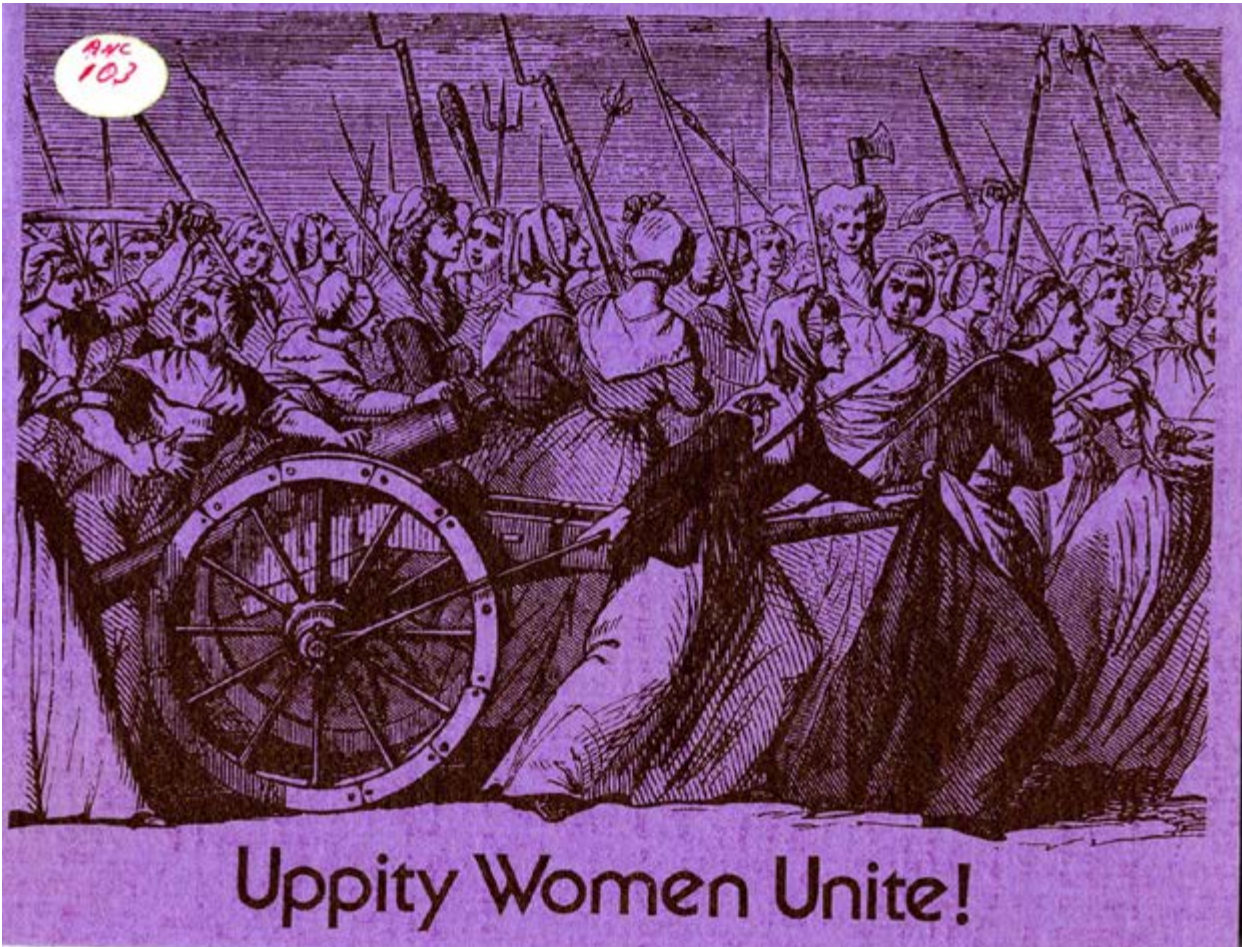


Broomstick sought to provide materials, information, and support for women over forty.

sexism, and age discrimination.

The idea for *Broomstick* was born when eight women over forty attended a Crone's Caucus and organized a loose coalition that would support, fund, and collectively address concerns specific to older women. This peer-led group would also function as a supportive network for activism. Together, Spencer and Taylor approached "OPTIONS for Women Over Forty," a newly formed feminist organization in Berkeley. They asked for its endorsement and financial support to create a feminist political journal for and about women over forty. In exchange, Spencer and Taylor pledged to publicize OPTIONS in the journal and promote its programs. Though OPTIONS gave initial support and funding, Broomstick eventually grew into an independently

published and funded magazine, but financial insolvency led to its demise. The materials are organized into four series: Magazine Production, Publicity, Administrative Records, and Author Files. The Magazine Production series documents the creative and physical production process of Broomstick from start to finish. It offers a unique perspective on the process of creating a grassroots, independent magazine. It contains layouts, typesettings, artwork and cartoons, articles used for research, letters to the editor, ideas for editorials, drafts and potential content for magazine columns, promotional contests, as well as a complete set of finished *Broomstick* issues, including indexes—published annually cataloging authors, themes, and published issues—and a self-produced



Writer's Packet to guide contributors in the submission process. The other series are equally rich in material about the process of publishing, including developing ideas, managing finances, and getting attention.

Finding aid: <http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c8br8sth/?query=Broomstick+Magazine>

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