

Archives General Research Guide

TOPIC: Butch and femme identities

This list is a sampling of collections addressing butch and femme identities; it is not intended to be comprehensive but rather as a series of starting points for research both within and outside the GLBT Historical Society archives.

GLBTHS Archival Holdings

1. ORGANIZATIONAL AND PERSONAL RECORDS:

Allan Bérubé papers (#1995-17)

dates: 1946-2007

The Allan Bérubé Papers document the personal life, family history and professional work of Allan Ronald Bérubé (1946-2007), a community historian, teacher, author and activist. The collection includes his extensive research files on the topics of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender history. Of particular note are Bérubé's writings and research files on the Marine Cooks and Stewards Union. These include several unfinished manuscripts and the oral histories he conducted for this project.

Finding aid: <http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c83f4rcg>

Relevant Materials within Bérubé collection:

- Series II. A Professional Papers: Writings, Talks and Slide Shows, 1968-2006, undated

Box 19 / Folder 25: Butch/Femme article correspondence, Amber and Esther, undated

- Series IV.J Lesbian Masquerade

Box 138 / Folder8: Butch/Femme Articles

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Julia Trahan papers (#1997-28)

dates: 1991 - 1996

This collection contains materials relating to lesbian performance artist and disability rights activist Julia "Dolphin" Trahan. It includes correspondence; flyers advertising performances, events and publications; reviews; videotapes; and volume 1, issue 2 of "GrooverZine!" Productions represented include "Body Talk=Survival: Intersections of Disability, Race & Sex," "Queen of the Girls," "Built: Readings and Performance Exploring Butch Identity," "Memories from a Coma," "Orgasms for Survival," "The Love Room," and "I Walked with Death Today." Includes a letter from Dorothy Allison who Trahan studied with.

Wide Open Town History Project records (#2003-05) 1930s-2002

dates: Circa 1930s - 2002

This collection contains research files and oral histories from Nan Alamilla Boyd's groundbreaking history of queer San Francisco to 1965, "Wide Open Town." Highlights of the collection include audiotapes of 41 separate interviews, some with transcripts; and photographs and archival materials donated by Boyd's subjects, which date back to the 1930s. Boxes 1 to 5 contain research files. These include Boyd's notes, photocopies of primary sources that date back to the 1950s, academic articles about LGBT history and a small amount of professional correspondence. Boxes 6 and 7 contain materials related to the oral histories, including release forms, letters, notes and transcripts. These are arranged alphabetically. There are also research files on bars, people and organizations. These include portions of Boyd's interviews, interviews by other scholars, academic articles and news clippings. Boxes 8 and 9 include a guide to queer bars in the Bay Area compiled by Eric Garber; photographs and archival materials donated by Boyd's interview subjects; and photographs, page proofs and other materials related to "Wide Open Town." Boxes 10 and 11 (Oversize) contain audiotapes of oral history interviews and performances.

Finding aid: <http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c8154hp7>

Relevant Materials within Wide Open Town records:
Box 7 / Folder 50: Butch-Femme

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2. PERIODICALS COLLECTION:

Title: Fierce Femme
Type: Magazine
Subtitle: Women/Bicycles/Culture
Holdings: #2 (1997)

Title: Shades of Pink
Type: Newsletter
Alternate Title: The Femme to Femme Chronicles
Organization: Femme to Femme (F2F)
Holdings: 1994: Winter

Title: Tres Femmes
Type: Magazine
Holdings: Vol 1 #1 - #2 (Oct 1972)

Title: Woman Voices
Type: Magazine
Subtitle: A Radical Femme Butch Feminist Zine
Holdings: vol. 2 #3 (Jly/Aug/Spt 1995)

Title: Femme Flicke
Type: Zine
Holdings: #2; #5; #7

Title: The Flying Bitch Sisters Present
Type: Zine
Alternate Title: The Very Latest in Femme Fashions and The Ladies Auxillary Cookbook
Subtitle: Femme Fashions / The Ladies Auxillary Cookbook
Holdings: #1 (Oct 1992); #2 (Jan 1993)

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Title: Iron Femme
Type: Zine
Subtitle: musings from an insurgent femme
Holdings: #1 (n.d.); #2 (2002); #3 (Aug 2003)

Title: The Femme Skunk
Type: Zine
Holdings: #1 (1996)

3. ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION

OHCNumber: 02-022
Interviewee: Crawford, Mary
Interviewer: Berube, Allan
Interview Dates: 2/17/1983 - 3/4/1983
Description: World War II, military, lesbian bars, New York City, abortion, bisexuality, butch-fem, 1930s, Depression.
Transcript: http://www.glbthistory.org/research/oh/Crawford_Mary2-17-1983_web.pdf

4. EPHEMERA

San Francisco LGBT General Subjects Ephemera Collection (SUB EPH)
37 boxes (16.5 linear feet)
Abstract: Consists of a wide range of ephemera related to LGBT communities in San Francisco and the Bay Area, representing a diverse collection of subjects, ranging from AIDS, bathhouses, city agencies and sex clubs, to collections of catalogs and directories. Much of the materials were produced by unaffiliated groups or individuals and ad hoc coalitions or committees for one-time events or ongoing public causes, including: Pride parades; theater productions; films, art exhibitions and shows; protests; election issues; and AIDS prevention and awareness. Business materials are represented, including: service oriented, networked or freelance businesses; travel agencies; publishers; therapists; instructors; and sex clubs and bathhouses. Includes

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materials from social clubs; sports teams; religious groups; and gay, lesbian or queer studies classes. Personal ephemera includes: funeral programs and memorials; wedding announcements; garage sales; birth and adoption announcements; and private party invitations. Also contains materials related to the governing bodies of the city of San Francisco.

Finding aid: <http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt3779s0c3>

Coloring Books:

Femme Coloring Book (Caitlin Sweet) 2001

Events:

Femme Gender Conference 1998-2006

San Francisco LGBT Groups Ephemera Collection (GRP EPH)

68 boxes (33 Linear feet)

Abstract: Consists of ephemera pertaining to groups affiliated with San Francisco's LGBT community. The bulk of the material is from the late 1970s through the 1990s, with the homophile groups of the 1960s represented as well. Groups include: community service centers; governmental organizations; various social groups and clubs; musical groups, choirs and bands; theatrical companies and performance groups; dance troupes; literary groups and non-profit publishers; scholarly associations; universities, colleges, institutes and schools; student and youth groups; religious and spiritual centers; motorcycle clubs; sports teams; communes, cooperatives and collectives; political parties; business and neighborhood associations; legal aid centers; clinics and hospitals; leather groups. Most of the materials are related to the prominent national political and social events and movements of their time, primarily the Gay Liberation Movement, the Gay Rights Movement, and the AIDS crisis. Types of ephemera represented include: announcements, fliers, postcards, invitations, theatrical playbills, brochures, direct mail, conference schedules, booklets, guides, directories, letterheads, business cards, meeting minutes, correspondence, and magazine and newspaper clippings.

Finding aid: <http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt687036vt>

Butch Femme Socials circa 2005, undated

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Femme to Femme, circa 1995, undated

Outside Resources

1. ARCHIVAL HOLDINGS FROM OTHER INSTITUTIONS

ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives, USC Libraries, University of Southern California:

Córdova (Jeanne) papers and photographs

Date (inclusive): 1948-2011

Abstract: Photo albums, diaries, correspondence, minutes, manuscripts, clippings, posters, memorabilia, audiotapes, computer files and other material from lesbian activist, writer and publisher, Jeanne Córdova. In the early 1970s, Córdova began her career as a leader in the Los Angeles gay and lesbian and feminist movements by becoming President of the Los Angeles chapter of the Daughters of Bilitis; founding the publication, *The Lesbian Tide*; and becoming Human Rights Editor and columnist for the *Los Angeles Free Press*. In 1973, she was a key organizer of the first National Lesbian Conference, and in 1981, she founded the *Community Yellow Pages*, currently the nation's largest and most comprehensive LGBT directory. Her collection includes organizational records from publications she founded and several activist organizations she led; manuscripts and clippings of articles and books she wrote; personal diaries and correspondence with former lovers. Her collection also includes extensive photo albums with detailed annotation documenting her life and major events in the gay and lesbian liberation movement.

Finding aid: <http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt25803202>

Escalante (Vivian) Collection

Date (inclusive): 1992-2010

Abstract: Fliers, trading cards, and event materials from Cunt Club L.A., Dapper Dyke, Dyke March Los Angeles, and the Women Moto-cyclists collected by Vivian Escalante, the founder of Dapper Dyke and the Women Moto-cyclists of Southern California.

Finding aid: <http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c83x8b0x>

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ONE Subject Files Collection

Date (inclusive): 1900-2012

Abstract: The ONE Archives' Subject Files consist of more than 8,100 unique files of businesses, organizations, people, and topics primarily documenting twentieth century global lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, asexual and ally (LGBTQIA) history and culture. The bulk of the documents are newspaper and magazine clippings along with promotional materials such as advertising fliers, brochures, and mailers for businesses, organizations, and events. To a lesser extent, the files also contain records from organizations, resource lists, questionnaires, and surveys.

Finding aid: <http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt7779s1q0>

Sophia Smith Collection, Smith College Libraries, Northampton, MA

Carmen Vázquez Papers, 1951-2007

13 boxes (14.75 linear ft.)

Collection number: MS 557

The Carmen Vázquez Papers document Vazquez's activism for gay and lesbian rights; they include materials pertaining to gay and lesbian health issues, as well as Vazquez's interest and involvement in broader issues of race and class. The collection includes diaries, correspondence, biographical information, an interview, photographs, memorabilia, writings and speeches.

Finding aid:

http://asteria.fivecolleges.edu/findaids/sophiasmith/mnsss471_main.html

Documenting Lesbian Lives: Student Oral History Project

Abstract: The Documenting Lesbian Lives Oral History Project is a collection of life histories of women who identify as lesbian, bisexual, woman-identified-woman, queer, or who prefer not to identify with sexuality categories. The project provides a complex and nuanced collective story of American lesbian history and experience. Interviews were conducted by Smith College students in Kelly Anderson's 'Documenting Lesbian Lives' course in the spring of 2010 to the present. Students were trained in both United States lesbian history and oral history techniques and protocols. Narrators include grassroots activists and political organizers, educators and academics; musicians, writers, and artists; as well as community and religious leaders. They come from a variety of class, ethnic, racial, social, and geographic

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backgrounds. Interviews cover childhood and growing up experiences; education and employment; activism and politics; family, identity, relationships, and community.

Finding aid:

http://asteria.fivecolleges.edu/findaids/sophiasmith/mnsss506_main.html

2. WEBSITES AND ONLINE MATERIALS

Barnow, Blythe (compiler of reading list). "Resources on Queer Misogyny, Transmisogyny, and Misogyny In General."

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1DA32WZZH0SGOPBAaSfs6Q1yNnrI_T6a8bfSrVP_f6xY/pub

Femme Shark Manifesto, *Community #1*. QZAP:

http://www.qzap.org/v5/gallery/main.php?g2_view=core.DownloadItem&g2_itemId=799

Goodloe, Amy. "Lesbian Identity and the Politics of Butch-Femme Roles."

www.lesbian.org/amy/essays/bfpaper.html

GLBTQ Encyclopedia Entry for Butch-Femme (Theophano, 2015):

http://www.glbthqarchive.com/ssh/butch_femme_ssh_S.pdf

3. PRINT MATERIALS

Chrystos, "I Don't Understand Those Who Have Turned Away From Me," in *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*, ed. Cherríe Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa (New York: Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press, 1983).

Dahl, Ulrika (2009). *Femmes of Power: Exploding Queer Femininities*. Serpent's Tail: London, United Kingdom.

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Faderman, L. (1991). *Odd girls and twilight lovers : a history of lesbian life in twentieth-century America*. New York : Columbia University Press, ©1991.

Feinberg, Leslie (1993). *Stone Butch Blues: a novel*. Ithaca, NY: Firebrand Books.

Hollibaugh, Amber L. (200). *My dangerous desires : a queer girl dreaming her way home*. Durham, NC : Duke University Press

Kennedy, Elizabeth Lapovsky; Madeline D. Davis (1994). *Boots of Leather, Slippers of Gold: The History of a Lesbian Community*. New York: Penguin. pp. 90–93. ISBN 0-14-023550-7.

Lorde, Audre (1982). *Zami : a new spelling of my name*. Trumansburg, N.Y. : Crossing Press, 1982.

Mushroom, Merrill. , "How to Engage in Courting Rituals, 1950 Butch Style in the Bars: an Essay," *Common Lives Lesbian Lives* (Summer 1982), 6-10

Nestle, Joan. "The Femme Question," in *Pleasure and Danger*, Carole S. Vance, ed., Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984:

Nestle, Joan (1992). *The persistent desire: A Butch-Femme Reader*. Allyson Publications.

Nestle, Joan. "A Restricted Country, Ithaca: Firebrand Books, 1987; idem, "An Old Dyke's Tale: An Interview with Doris Lunden," *Conditions* 6 (1980), 2644.

tF: *Female to Femme*, digital video documentary, 48 minutes, 2006. Dirs. Kami Chisholm and Elizabeth Stark.

Rose Brushwood, Chloe (ed.), & Camilleri, Anna (Editor). *Brazen Femme: Queering Femininity*. Arsenal Pulp Press: __, 2003.

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4. ADDITIONAL READINGS

André, Amy and Chang, Sandy “And Then You Cut Your Hair: Genderfucking on the Femme Side of the Spectrum,” in *Nobody Passes: Rejecting the Rules of Gender and Conformity*, ed. Mattilda a.k.a. Matt Bernstein Sycamore (CA: Seal Press, 2006).

Austin, Paula. “Femme-Inism: Lessons of My Mother,” in *Colonize This! Young women of color on today’s feminism*, ed. Daisy Hernández and Bushra Rehman (CA: Seal Press, 2002)

Austin, Paula “I Learned from the Best: My Mother Was a High-Femme Whore,” in *Jane Sexes It Up: True Confessions of Feminist Desire*, ed. Merri Lisa Johnson (New York: Thunder’s Mouth Press, 2002).

Ortiz, Lisa. “Dresses for My Round Brown Body,” in *Femme: Feminists, Lesbians, and Bad Girls*, ed. Laura Harris and Elizabeth Crocker (New York London: Routledge, 1997).

Ramos, Juanita. “Bayamón, Brooklyn y yo,” in *Compañeras: Latina Lesbians*, ed. Juanita Ramos (New York London: Routledge, 1994).

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