Feminist and lesbian periodical collection, 1932-1997

Overview of the Collection

**Creator** University of Oregon. Libraries. Special Collections & University Archives

**Title** Feminist and lesbian periodical collection

**Dates** 1932-1997 (inclusive)

**Quantity** 43 linear feet, (89 containers)

**Collection Number** Coll 257

**Summary** The Feminist and Lesbian Periodical Collection contains 482 lesbian and feminist periodical titles including 36 Oregon titles and 31 international titles. Approximately 80 percent of the entire collection contains titles published during the 1970s. This collection does not duplicate circulating holdings in the UO Libraries for feminist and lesbian topics.

**Repository** University of Oregon Libraries, Special Collections and University Archives.

UO Libraries--SCUA
1299 University of Oregon
Eugene OR
97403-1299
Telephone: 541-346-3068
spcarref@uoregon.edu

**Access Restrictions** Collection is open to the public. Collection must be used in Special Collections and University Archives Reading Room. Collection or parts of collection may be stored offsite. Please contact Special Collections and University Archives in advance of your visit to allow for transportation time.

**Additional Reference Guides** See the Current Collection Guide for detailed description and requesting options.

**Languages** English

**Sponsor** Funding for encoding this finding aid was provided through a grant awarded by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

**Historical Note**

The majority of periodicals in this collection were collected and donated by Ruth and Jean Mountaingrove of Wolf Creek, Oregon. During the late 1970s and 1980s, they lived on their rustic women's land where lesbians pursued writing, publishing, and other arts. Together they published the periodical WomanSpirit Magazine, included in this collection. Ruth and Jean were keys in the development of the lesbian community in Southern Oregon. They became part of a nationwide web of women who created periodicals in order to maintain a record of the lives of lesbians, and to build
community through intellectual and artistic exchanges. This collection of periodicals was born out of the exchanges between WomanSpirit Magazine and other lesbian and feminist groups.

Diverse groups of feminist and lesbian publishers surfaced in the early 1970s with similar visions of building a more accurate, thorough history. This collection brings together themes of lesbian and feminist community building, political activism, separatism, and spirituality. A huge feminist and lesbian publishing wave began after 1969 as lesbians and feminists were participants in and influenced by Stonewall and civil rights events. Long-distance consciousness raising and broadening of communities were two immediate effects of feminist and lesbian publications and exchanges.

Periodical exchanges were informally established with the intent of communicating in the most cost-effective manner. Friends and publishers would send copies of the latest news to women with notes scrawled on the cover, some as brief as "Exchange, sister?" After several issues, some publishers found it necessary to solicit subscriptions and cease the exchange. The bulk of periodicals was assembled through many women's volunteer hours and donated services of mimeographing, sorting, stapling, addressing and stamping. For those who could afford the cost, printing houses did most of the job. Some publishers enlisted the aid of paid advertisements, thus creating sometimes more aesthetically pleasing items while others completely banned advertisements featuring anything male-made on the premise of "by women, for women." Universities and local women's centers doubled as publishing houses and contributed much needed financial support and stability.

The risks of publishing radical material coupled with financial burden led many periodicals to quick ends. So did theft and sabotage. It is a testament to united strength and determination that surviving periodicals have established a place in lesbian and feminist history as records of social activity and community development.

Content Description

The collection comprises 482 lesbian and feminist periodical titles, including 36 Oregon titles and 31 international titles. The entire collection spans from 1932 to 1997 with 80 percent of the titles covering the 1970s. Eighty-one titles in this collection include the first issue published.

These periodicals are arranged alphabetically by title. Name changes are noted as "continued by." Dates not known are listed as "undated" and approximate dates are listed as "(1979) ca." Date and issue ranges are not complete for all titles, but there are several complete or near-complete runs collected from publishers in Oregon, California, Michigan, and Pennsylvania. Directories, publishing records, fliers, and random ephemera are not included. All regular and irregular issues are included; no attempt has been made to correct date or volume inconsistencies.

This collection is intended as a general beginning point for research and does not contain certain titles which are noted as key works in lesbian and gay history such as: The Ladder, Just Out, etc. due to their availability.

Administrative Information

Detailed Description of the Collection
Guide to the Feminist and Lesbian Periodical Collection

Names and Subjects

Subject Terms:
American literature--20th century--Periodicals
American literature--Women authors--Periodicals
Feminism--Oregon--Periodicals
Feminism--Periodicals
Feminist literature--Periodicals
Feminist literature--Publishing
Feminists--United States--Social life and customs--Periodicals
Lesbianism--Oregon--Periodicals
Lesbianism--Periodicals
Lesbians' writings--Periodicals
Lesbians' writings--Publishing
Lesbians--United States--Social life and customs--Periodicals

Personal Names:
Mountaingrove, Jean
Mountaingrove, Ruth

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