

**Collection title:** Diane F. Germain

**Dates:** Circa 1970 - 1999

**Language of materials:**

English

**Physical Location:**

The Diane F. Germain Collection is housed in the archives room at the June L. Mazer Lesbian Archives.

**Creator:**

Diane F. Germain; Califia Collective

**Conditions of governing use and reproduction rights:**

The rights to this collection belong to the June L. Mazer Lesbian Archives. Literary rights, including copyright, are retained by the creators and their heirs. This collection is open for research.

**Acquisition information:**

All items included in this collection were donated by Diane F. Germain, beginning with donations being made in 1989. An ongoing collector of lesbian ephemera, Diane is “dying to give [us] more!”

**Biography and history:**

Diane F. Germain was born January 23, 1942 in Winooski, Vermont, though most of her time living in Vermont was spent in Burlington on lovely Lake Champlain. She attended the University of Vermont, graduating in 1964. In this time, her mother and older sister moved to California, and after graduating from college, Diane followed them out west. She attended graduate school at the University of California Los Angeles, graduating with a master’s degree in psychiatric social work in 1975.

In her master’s thesis, she wrote about the role of the social worker in inpatient psychiatric care at the Veteran’s Affairs hospital in Brentwood, California. Looking back, she wishes she had written about a topic related to sexuality; but being a young lesbian who came out slowly rather than all at once, she held back. However, as Diane navigated the lesbian world, she became braver as she saw what other lesbians were doing, eventually leading her to a life dedicated to lesbian activism. In 1978, Diane left Los Angeles for San Diego, excitedly following a group of hip and progressive friends she met at graduate school at UCLA.

Diane is a founding member of Dykes on Hikes, The Lesbian Referral Services, Beautiful Lesbian Thespians, and the California Women’s Art Collective. As a volunteer for the Lambda Archives of San Diego, she noticed a lack of lesbian representation in the archive.

To fill this gap, she conducted interviews, oral histories, and collected materials from lesbians in Southern California. Diane was also a member of Las Hermanas, a coffee house and women's cultural center, and the Califia Community, a feminist educational retreat that held conferences in the woods to discuss topics related to anti-racism, class, and sexism.

Always doodling and searching to express herself as a lesbian through art, Diane was the staff Cartoonist for *HotWire: The Journal of Women's Music, Culture of Chicago*, and *Lesbian News*, though her comics appear to many more publications, including *The Lavendar*, *Fuzzy Friends*, and *Thursday's Child*, to name a few. Whoever had a lesbian publication, Diane would send comics. Her work even appears in a lesbian newspaper in Italy.

Diane has been described as a "Lesbian Encyclopedia" because she writes down and saves everything, remembers everyone's names, and strives to preserve as much history pertaining to women and lesbians as she can. Diane continues to donate materials to the June L. Mazer Lesbian Archive with regularity.

**Scope and contents note:**

This collection is comprised of Diane's comics and the publications they appeared in, her master's thesis, political buttons, a binder of policies and new decisions from the Califia Community in 1982 – 1984, Clip Art images, a jean jacket, and a box of manuscript materials including correspondences from publications she working with and submitted comics to, and a variety of activist organizations.

**Organization and arrangement:**

Diane's collection is arranged by material type in the following series:

Series 1 — Cartoons

Series 2 — Masters Thesis

Series 3 — Manuscripts and Correspondences

Series 4 — Buttons, Clothing, and Novelty Items

**Subjects and indexing terms (local):**

Diane F. Germain

Lesbian history

Lesbian Community -- San Diego, California

Lesbian Community -- Los Angeles, California

Lesbian comics

Lesbian art

Califia Community

Lesbian Social Workers

Lesbian Activism

**Finding aid author:**

This finding aid was created by Hall Frost, an Archival Studies MLIS student at UCLA, and was made as part of a Community-Based Archiving course taught by Dr. Michelle Caswell in the Spring of 2021.