

**Finding Aid for the
Laura Durán and Irene Martínez Collection
Los Angeles Public Library Special Collections**

OVERVIEW

Identifier/Call No.: LA MSS 0004

Creators: Laura Durán and Irene Martínez

Title: Laura Durán and Irene Martínez Collection

Dates: 1978-1994

Language: Materials in English and Spanish

Abstract: This collection consists of materials collected by Laura Durán and Irene Martínez during the 1980s and early 1990s, a time they were both actively involved as volunteers with Gay and Lesbian Latinos Unidos (GLLU), and Lesbianas Unidas (LU). Items include correspondence, invoices, photographs, and other documents related to GLLU and LU.

Scope and Content:

The collection contains ephemera, newsletters, committee reports, meeting minutes, and planning documents compiled by Laura Durán and Irene Martínez in the course of their volunteer organizing work with Gay and Lesbian Latinos Unidos (GLLU) and Lesbianas Unidas (LU) from the early 1980s to the mid-1990s. GLLU files include early documents, bylaws, General Assembly meeting minutes, materials on anniversary and awards ceremonies, and items related to committees, events, programs, and finances. It also includes several GLLU t-shirts, and member award plaques, as well as UNIDAD newsletters from 1983-94. Lesbianas Unidas materials date from 1979-94. Files are on topics such as the Connexus Women's Center, International Women's Day, meeting minutes, newsletters, networking with other organizations, and the annual Latina lesbian retreats. Restructuring took place in 1993-94, and LU became a separate group from GLLU in order to prioritize projects and issues important to members. There are also materials on Lesbians of Color, a group that predated LU.

Quantity: 1.28 cubic feet (1 record storage carton)

Location: Rare Books, South Stacks. Los Angeles Public Library Special Collections, Central Library, 630 W. 5th Street, Los Angeles, California 90071.

ADMINISTRATIVE/BIOGRAPHICAL HISTORY

Lesbianas Unidas of Gay and Lesbian Latinos Unidos (GLLU) was founded in 1983. Through restructuring in 1993-94, Lesbianas Unidas (LU) became a separate organization from GLLU. A letter written by Lydia Otero in 1987 describes Lesbianas Unidas as the most visible and active group of exclusively Latina lesbians in California, the Southwest, and possibly the United States. At the time, the group had a mailing list of 350. The membership was mainly Chicanas but also included women from Chile, Peru, Puerto Rico and other Latin American countries. Their purpose was to host events and yearly retreats that focused on issues affecting Latina lesbians, as well as other women of color.

Laura Durán and Irene Martínez served as two of the first Board members of GLLU in the early 1980s. They have been together as a couple since 1987. Irene Martínez was a Lesbianas Unidas volunteer member and Connexus facilitator. She worked with the Latina Lesbian Support Group, which met at El Centro Human Services, as a volunteer facilitator and coordinator from the late 1980s to early 1990s.

Martínez was a Lesbianas Unidas committee chair in 1988, as well as a board member, and worked on special projects for LU, as well as special events for GLLU.

Laura Durán was born in February 1954 in Torreon, Coahuila, in Mexico. Her parents, Jose and Leonor Durán, were both born in Mexico. Durán is the second oldest child of seven, and has three sisters and three brothers. In August 1962, the family immigrated to Pasadena, California. In 1976, Durán graduated from UCLA with a Bachelor's Degree. She retired from a position with the State of California after 35 years of service. Durán was active with GLLU and Lesbianas Unidas from 1987-1993, served on GLLU's Board of Directors as Treasurer in the 1990s, and was active in 1989 when Bienestar was established. She facilitated both of the women's support groups, Spanish speaking and English speaking.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Use Restrictions

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Access Restrictions

This collection is open for research by appointment only in the Rare Books reading room. Information about setting appointments can be found on the Library's website at lapl.org/branches/rarebooks. Appointments can also be arranged by sending an email inquiry to [rarebook \[at\] lapl.org](mailto:rarebook@lapl.org).

Provenance/ Source of Acquisition

The collection was donated by Laura Durán and Irene Martínez in August 2023. The donation was facilitated by Lydia R. Otero.

Preferred Citation

[Item], Laura Durán and Irene Martínez Collection. Los Angeles Public Library Special Collections.

Related Materials

[Lydia R. Otero Archive](#). Los Angeles Public Library Special Collections.

[David P. Gonzales Collection](#). Los Angeles Public Library Special Collections.

[Louis Jacinto Collection, 1976–2008](#). Photo Collection, Los Angeles Public Library.

PROCESSING INFORMATION

Archival processing was completed at the Los Angeles Public Library by Rosemarie Knopka, Librarian Archivist, in March 2024.

ARRANGEMENT

Materials are arranged chronologically within folders by date of creation.

Items removed from the collection include materials with confidential information such as bank statements, support group sign-in sheets, and home addresses.

INDEXING TERMS

The Los Angeles Public Library used both Library of Congress Subject Headings and the Library of Congress Thesaurus for Graphic Materials (TGM) as sources for subject headings for cataloging. The Homosaurus, an international linked data vocabulary of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) terms, was also used. In addition, TGM was used for genre and format terms.

Library of Congress topics:

Activism, LGBTQIA+

Activism, Queer.

Activism--United States.

Chicano movement.

Civil rights--California--Los Angeles.

GLLU.

Gay and lesbian rights.

Gay and lesbian movement.

Latinos (United States).

Lesbians.

Lesbian activism.

Lesbian activists.

Lesbian archives.

Lesbian community.

Lesbians--California--Los Angeles.

Lesbians--California--Los Angeles--Social conditions.

Lesbians--Civil rights.

Lesbians--History--20th century.

Lesbians--Political activity.

Lesbians--Social networks.

LGBTQ+ activists.

LGBTQ+ activism.

Social movements -- California -- Los Angeles.

Homosaurus terms:

Gay activism.

Latino/a/x lesbians.

Latino/a/x LGBTQ+ people.

Latino/a/x queer people.

LGBTQ+ communities.

LGBTQ+ newsletters.

GENRE / FORMAT

Correspondence
Documents
Ephemera
Periodicals
T-shirts

CONTAINER LIST

Box : Folder Description

1 : 1 Connexus Women's Center and El Centro Human Services Corporation, 1986-94

File contains lists of resources for Latina lesbians, as well as feminist, lesbian and gay organizations, as well as documents on meeting planning and facilitating. There is a document on coping with ending a romantic relationship, and a Connexus facilitator training certificate for Irene Martínez. File contains support group guidelines, memorandum of understanding, and termination of agreement. The organization provided space for the Latina Lesbian Support Group. There are also notes from the Latina Lesbian Mental Health Conference committee. File contains information on the Latina Lesbian Support Group, including guidelines, a peer rap group that met weekly and had separate meetings in English and Spanish. Materials in English and Spanish.

1 : 2 GLLU - Anniversary and Awards Ceremonies, 1983-89

File contains an invitation to the 1984 event, programs for the 1988 and 1989 events, event flyers, and planning documents, as well as a list of provisions adopted by the General Assembly in 1989. Materials in English and Spanish.

1 : 3 GLLU - Board of Directors, 1988-94

File contains meeting agendas and minutes, lists of board members and committee chairs, a BIENSTAR report from 1990, and correspondence with the Stonewall Democratic Club of Los Angeles.

1 : 4 GLLU - Bylaws, c.1989-90

File contains a document detailing guidelines and procedures for GLLU.

1 : 5 GLLU - Committees, Events and Programs, 1983-92

File contains Education Committee notes, a narrative for a Gay Latino Leadership Program, Gay and Lesbian Chicano Movement sub committee notes, and materials on the Lesbian Task Force. There are event flyers for Radio GLLU, the 1990 National Chicano Moratorium march and rally, and the re-election campaign for Gloria Molina.

1 : 6 GLLU - Early Documents, 1983-85

File contains information sheets, a statement of purpose, questionnaires, event flyers, essay contests, a press release for a Cinco de Mayo cultural retreat to take place at Camp Radford in Big Bear and other retreat information. Materials in English and Spanish.

1 : 7 GLLU - Financial Reports, 1985-94

File contains monthly financial reports, a meeting agenda from 1988, and correspondence.

1 : 8 GLLU - General Assembly, 1985-94

File contains meeting agendas and minutes, including committee and task force reports.

1 : 9 GLLU - Member Awards, 1986-91

File contains two plaques reading "Gay and Lesbian Latinos Unidos Proudly Recognizes Lydia Otero, G.L.L.U. Member Award, Los Angeles, California" dated November 1986 and October 5, 1991.

1 : 10 GLLU - Press Clippings, 1985

File contains photocopies of advertisements for the GLLU Cinco de Mayo concert at Plummer Park in West Hollywood from "Data-Boy Magazine," "Update," and "Edge."

1 : 11 GLLU - T-shirt, undated

File contains two white cotton t-shirts with a logo reading GLLU Los Angeles, Gay and Lesbian Latinos Unidos and images of the North and South American continents in a blue, pink and green color combination.

1 : 12 GLLU - T-shirt, undated

File contains a black cotton sleeveless shirt with a logo reading GLLU Los Angeles, Gay and Lesbian Latinos Unidos and images of the North and South American continents in a blue, pink and green color combination.

1 : 13 GLLU - T-shirt, undated

File contains a black cotton t-shirt printed in white with the GLLU logo of an image of a row of figures and text reading GLLU "Orgullosos del Prado... Optimistas del Futuro" and "Proud of our past: Shaping our future."

1 : 14 GLLU - UNIDAD Newsletters, 1983-94

File contains issues of the GLLU newsletter UNIDAD, which featured photographs, advertisements, articles about events, essays, letters to the editor, calendar of events, interviews with members, and committee updates. Information about different events, such as International Working Women's Day, picnics, protests, dances, and conferences. Materials in English and Spanish.

1 : 15 Lesbianas Unidas, 1979-94

File contains business cards for Irene Martínez, correspondence, event flyers, poetry, a questionnaire for a study, an accounting book from 1989, a newsletter dated 1989, flyers, and calendars of events. Materials in English and Spanish.

1 : 16 Lesbianas Unidas - California State Legislature Commendation, 1989

File contains a "California Legislature Assembly Certificate of Appreciation presented to Lesbianas Unidas in honor of their service to GLLU and commitment to the growth and development of women within GLLU." It was presented in Los Angeles, California on October 14, 1989 by Richard Polanco, Member of the Assembly.

1 : 17 Lesbianas Unidas - International Women's Day, 1979-93

File contains four unsigned and undated poems, and event flyers for programs dated 1989-93. There is a copy of the article "Women in Mexican History: "Cinco de Mayo" by Anna Nieto-Gomez published in

"Somos" in May 1979, and other essays on Cinco de Mayo and International Women's Day. Materials in English and Spanish.

1 : 18 Lesbianas Unidas - Latina Lesbian Identity Study, undated

File contains a participant questionnaire written by a doctoral candidate seeking information about the development of Latina lesbian identity as compared to Anglo lesbian identity development.

1 : 19 Lesbianas Unidas - Meeting Minutes, 1980-93

File contains steering committee requirements and meeting minutes, the Lesbianas Unidas structuring process, meeting planning documents, a mission statement, financial and retreat information, and correspondence.

1 : 20 Lesbianas Unidas - Newsletters, 1989-93

File contains issues of the LU News, and other related newsletters including Las Entendidas and the Southern California Women for Understanding (SCWU) Newsletter. Materials in English and Spanish.

1 : 21 Lesbianas Unidas - Related Groups, 1983-91

File contains information about the groups Ebony Lesbians of African Decent (ELAD) in Long Beach, the Eagles Center, SASSAFRAS, Women's Institute for Mental Health, Women of Color Resource Center, and Las Mujeres de Arco Iris. Materials in English and Spanish.

1 : 22 Lesbianas Unidas - Restructuring, 1993-94

File contains documents related to the separation of LU from GLLU, including a flyer for the first membership meeting after restructuring; notes from the LU forum planning committee; a proposed structure for Lesbianas Unidas document; conflict resolution, problem solving and meeting planning documents; a new proposed mission statement; and a bookmark with the LU mission statement. Materials in English and Spanish.

1 : 23 Lesbianas Unidas - Latina Lesbian Retreats, 1984-92

File contains retreat flyers, programs and information packets. The 1984 materials were created by Lydia Otero. Materials in English and Spanish.

1 : 24 Lesbianas Unidas - Latina Lesbian Retreats, 1988-89

File contains member correspondence, planning documents, an evaluation form, workshift sign-up sheets, and workshop topics for the fifth and sixth annual retreats that took place at Camp Radford in Big Bear. File also contains a retreat program for the Sixth Annual Latina Lesbian Retreat 1989, handwritten notes, and steering committee retreat notes.

1 : 25 Lesbianas Unidas - Latina Lesbian Retreats, 1990

File contains a program for the seventh annual retreat, handwritten notes, form letters, and steering committee retreat notes for a retreat held at de Benneville Pines Camp. Materials in English and Spanish.

1 : 26 Lesbianas Unidas - T-shirt, 1993

File contains one white cotton t-shirt with a logo reading LU, Lesbianes Unidas of GLLU, Los Angeles, CA, Celebrating Ten Years of Unity 1983-1993 laid over a gray triangle.

1 : 27 Lesbianas Unidas - Tenth Anniversary, 1993-94

File contains a statement of purpose, steering committee information, future planning, and a retreat brochure for a gathering held in September, 1993 in the San Bernardino Mountains. Materials in English and Spanish.

1 : 28 Lesbians of Color, 1978-83

File contains a program for the 1983 National L.O.C. Conference, committee information, and a statement on racism. Materials in English and Spanish.

1 : 29 Martínez, Irene - Notes, 1982-88

File contains a tag for the 1982 Run for Gay Pride, as well as a typed award acceptance statement.