Language of Material: English
Contributing Institution: SJSU Special Collections and Archives
Title: Kensington Ladies’ Erotica Society Collection
Identifier/Call Number: MSS.2013.22.08
Physical Description: 2.6 Linear feet
Date (inclusive): 1977-2006
Date (bulk): 1983-1988
Abstract: The Kensington Ladies’ Erotica Society Collection documents the variety of activities, organizations, publications, photographs, and news articles about the society.
Physical Location: Vault 1, Range 22A (Bay 20)
Physical Description: 2 Boxes, 25 Folders
Language of Material: Languages represented in the collection: English
Conditions Governing Access
The collection is open for research.
Publication Rights
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Preferred Citation
The Kensington Ladies’ Erotica Society Collection, MSS-2013-22-08, San José State University Library Special Collections and Archives.
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Organizational History
In 1977, Sabina Sedgewick founded The Kensington Ladies’ Erotica Society by initiating the society’s first meeting at a potluck dinner at her house. With inspiration from Sedgewick, the ladies’ first assignment was to expand on their love for food, in which they each created an individual recipe for their ideal lover. Sedgewick asked the society whether or not women and men agree on what is erotic. To explore this question, the society continued to meet every month at one of the member’s homes. The Erotica meetings commenced with chilled wine, hors-d’œuvres, and finally the moment of Erotica would begin. Together, the ladies recollected about their sexual awakenings, by slowly and randomly assembling information; from pulp magazines, the dictionary, comparing their anatomies, and eavesdropping on conversations not meant for their ears. The result of these meetings lead to the society’s first publication, Ladies Home Erotica: Tales, Recipes, and Other Mischiefs by Older Women (1984), later published as Ladies’ Own Erotica (February 1986). Then, The Erotic Companion: An Illustrated Write-Your-Own Erotic Journal was published in 1985 by Pat Adler of The Kensington Ladies’ Erotica Society. Afterwards Look Homeward Erotica was published 1986, followed by the society’s final publication, Sex, Death, and Other Distractions (2002).
Scope and Content of Collection
The collection consists of administrative records, correspondences, ephemera, periodicals, photographs, sound recordings, and writings. The majority of the collection contains books and written material, including individual rough drafts of book chapters, journals, poetry, and short stories. In addition, the collection contains information regarding the policies and procedures of the society. There is also a variety of correspondences between publishing and royalty houses, along with many invoices that record the costs of distribution and sales. The rest of the collection contains photographs of the people in the society, name tags and ribbons, along with advertisements, book-buying catalogs, and newspaper clippings that
trace the history of the society’s success.

**Arrangement**
The arrangement of this collection consists of seven series documenting 1977-2002: Series I, Administrative Records, 1983-2006, is arranged chronologically and then alphabetically by title; Series II, Correspondences, 1983-2000, is arranged chronologically and then alphabetically by title; Series III, Ephemera, no dates, is arranged by format; Series IV, Periodicals, 1972-1992, is arranged chronologically and then alphabetically by title; Series V, Photographs, 1984-1988, is arranged chronologically in folders and intact with their respective albums; Series VI, Sound Recordings, no dates, is arranged in a folder; Series VII, Writings, 1974-2000, is arranged alphabetically by authors’ pseudonym (last name, first name), then alphabetically by title, and then by draft edition number.

**Subjects and Indexing Terms**
Erotic stories, American -- California
American fiction -- 20th century
Sexual fantasies -- California
American fiction -- Women authors
Erotic literature, American -- California
Velora Moore (Jenna York)
Judy McBride (Emma Hawksly)
Frances Rowe (Claudia Morton)
Annegret Ogden (Sabina Sedgewick)
Laurel Cook (Elvira Pearson)
Nenelle Bunnin (Nell Port)
Pat Adler (Rose Solomon)
Ann Fisher (Susan Hutchinson)
Sascha Dorgeloh (Bernadette Vaughan)

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**Series I: Administrative Records 1983-2006 bulk**

**Physical Description:** 1 Box, 2 Folders

**Scope and Contents**
This series consists of financial material, including estimates of production costs, invoices, and pay check records between The Kensington Ladies’ Erotica Society and among various publishing houses. It also includes an informative list of the names and pseudonyms of the members of the society along with a list of the societies’ procedures.

**Arrangement**
This series is arranged chronologically and then alphabetically by title.

**Box 1**
**Folder 1:** Society procedures, information, and records 1983-1985
**Folder 2:** Financial Records 1986-2006


**Physical Description:** 1 Box, 1 Folder

**Scope and Contents**
The material in this series documents correspondence letters between The Kensington Ladies’ Erotica Society and among various publishing houses, society members, friends, and relatives. Files are arranged alphabetically by title, and then chronologically (oldest to newest) within each folder.

**Arrangement**
This series is arranged chronologically and then alphabetically by title.

**Box 1**
**Folder 1:** Correspondences, letters 1983-2000
**Series III: Ephemera No dates**

Physical Description: 1 Box, 2 Folders, Two loose yellow masks

Scope and Contents

The material in this series documents bookmarks made by the members of The Kensington Ladies’ Erotica Society, advertisements for book publications, and two ballroom masks made out of colorful construction paper.

Arrangement

This series is arranged by format.

**Box 1**

Folder 1: Bookmarks, postcards, event invites No dates
Folder 2: Advertisements No dates
Folder 3: Two yellow masks No dates

**Series IV: Periodicals 1972-1992 bulk**

Physical Description: 1 Box, 4 Folders

Scope and Contents

The material in this series documents newspaper clippings that refer to The Kensington Ladies’ Erotica Society, and book-buying periodicals that feature books written by the society members.

Arrangement

This series is arranged chronologically and then alphabetically by title.

**Box 1**

Folder 1: Periodicals 1972-1992
Folder 2: Periodicals 1978-1987
Folder 3: Periodicals 1984-1985
Folder 4: Periodicals 1985-1992

**Series V: Photographs 1984-1988**

Physical Description: 1 Box, 8 Folders

Scope and Contents

The material in this series documents photographs of the members of The Kensington Ladies’ Erotica Society.

Arrangement

This series is arranged chronologically and then by format.

**Box 2**

Folder 1: Photographic album 1984-1985
Folder 2: Photographic album bulk
Folder 3: Photographic album 1985-1986
Folder 4: Photographic album 1985-1986
Folder 5: Photographic album 1985-1986
Folder 6: Photographic album 1986
Folder 7: Photographic album 1985-1988
Folder 8: Photographs 1987
Series VII: Writings 1974-2000 bulk

Physical Description: 1 Box, 6 Folders

Scope and Contents
The material in this series comprises the bulk of The Kensington Ladies' Erotica Society collection. This series consisting of hand-written in notebooks and type-written drafts of chapters, short stories, and poetry by the society's members. There are also seven books in this series which consist of the society's first publication, Ladies Home Erotica: Tales, Recipes, and Other Mischiefs by Older Women (1984), later published as Ladies' Own Erotica (February 1986), and Ladies’ Own Erotica: Two bestsellers from the Kensington Ladies' Erotica Society Together in one Volume (1984, 1986). The Erotic Companion: An Illustrated Write-Your-Own Erotic Journal (1985) was published by Pat Adler of The Kensington Ladies’ Erotica Society. Look Homeward Erotica was published in 1986, followed by the society's final publication, Sex, Death, and Other Distractions (2002). These books can be searched in the general catalogue.

Arrangement
Files are arranged alphabetically by authors’ pseudonym (last name, first name), then alphabetically by title, and then by draft edition number. Books have been cataloged in the OPAC.

Box 1
Folder 1: Ann Fisher (Susan Hutchinson) 1985-1986
Folder 2: Jenna York (Velora Moore) 1979-2000
Folder 3: Jenna York (Velora Moore) 1980-2000
Folder 4: Notebooks of Jenna York (Velora Moore) No dates
Folder 5: Notebook of Jenna York (Velora Moore) 1998
Folder 6: Illustrated stories 1974

Series VI: Sound Recordings 1985-1986
Physical Description: 1 Box, 1 Folder
Scope and Contents
The material in this series consists of six cassette tapes.

Arrangement
This series is arranged in a folder.

Box 2
Folder 1: Six cassette tapes 1985-1986