Meg Barnett collection of Lesbians Against Police Violence records

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1989-05
Descriptive Summary

Title: Meg Barnett collection of Lesbians Against Police Violence records
Dates: 1979-1981
Collection Number: 1989-05
Creator/Collector: Barnett, Meg
Extent: 1 box (0.4 linear feet)
Repository: GLBT Historical Society
San Francisco, California 94103

Abstract: Lesbians Against Police Violence worked against police harassment in San Francisco especially the Mission neighborhood. The papers consist of agendas, minutes, and notes of general meetings and committee meetings; skits and song lyrics; flyers and fact sheets; and a few clippings.

Language of Material: English

Access
Collection is open for research. Funding for processing this collection was provided by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC).

Publication Rights
Copyright to any unpublished materials included in this collection of which Meg Barnett is currently the legal owner has been transferred to the GLBT Historical Society.

Preferred Citation
Meg Barnett collection of Lesbians Against Police Violence records. GLBT Historical Society

Acquisition Information
Gift of Meg Barnett in 1989.

Biography/Administrative History
Lesbians Against Police Violence (LAPV) worked against police harassment in San Francisco in 1979 and 1980. LAPV was organized to monitor the police, respond to police-related incidents, educate citizens, and form support and legal defense groups for victims of police violence. The group saw an affinity with the severity of police violence in the Third World, drawing parallels to the San Francisco Police Department’s (SFPD) role in the Mission (a San Francisco neighborhood of mostly low income residents), a “Third World neighborhood.” LAPV began as a meeting called by Lesbian School workers after a February 1979 incident at Amelia’s, a women’s bar in the Mission. Sue Davis and Shirley Wilson, two lesbians leaving the bar, were arrested by SFPD officers. They were beaten, strip-searched, and held overnight without being charged or granted a telephone call. The treatment of ex-cop and SF supervisor Dan White after his murder of Mayor George Moscone and Supervisor Harvey Milk was another source of anger for the group. Meg Barnett was one of the founding members of LAPV and the related Sue and Shirley Defense Fund.

Scope and Content of Collection
The papers consist of agendas, minutes, and notes of general meetings and committee meetings; skits and song lyrics; flyers and fact sheets; and a few clippings. Most of the records of meetings are legible but fragmentary notes. However, a few of the earliest meetings are extensively documented on typed pages. The notes document reports of committee meetings, new directions for the group, fundraising activities, etc. Principles of unity, orientation guides, and elements of the LAPV process (History and Structure of LAPV folder) provide the framework for the meetings. The LAPV encountered problems of organizing, determining membership, making decisions, and establishing meeting rules; these records document how this group of women attempted to solve them through such concepts as meeting structure, consensus, and criticism/self-criticism sessions. The skits and song lyrics include “Count the Contradictions,” a musical comedy about living in the Mission by the LAPV (1980). Several short skit dialogs, song lyrics, and chant sheets for Gay Day and election night are also included. In addition to the LAPV, sources include the Stonewall Coalition and Communist groups. A skit on racism is part of the materials for a racism workshop, along with an opening statement, facilitator’s guidelines, and questions for attendees (Workshops folder). Flyers and fact sheets were created by the LAPV (LAPV Flyers folder) or by organizations seen to share the same goals (Notebooks 1 and 2). The shared-affinity flyers concern legal rights of citizens, San Francisco housing problems, Third World colonialism and organizing, affirmative action and the Bakke “reverse discrimination” legal decision, Puerto Rican independence, Nicaraguan freedom, anti-racist groups, and Dan White-related demonstrations. Materials created for workshops on racism and criticism/self-criticism are also included (Workshops folder). The financial records indicate fundraising activities, such as rummage sales and San Francisco Pioneers basketball games.

Indexing Terms
Lesbians Against Police Violence (Organization : Oakland, Calif.)
Police brutality.
Homophobia.
Mission District (San Francisco, Calif.)
Meg Barnett collection of LAPV records Container List