Guide to the William E. Houston Correspondence and Collection of Erotic Stories

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Collection number: 1994-22

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society
San Francisco, California

Processed by:
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Descriptive Summary
Title: William E. Houston correspondence and collection of erotic stories
Dates: Circa 1940-1995
Collection number: 1994-22
Creator: Houston, William E.
Creator: Dougherty, Joseph R., 1929-1994
Collection Size: 1 box (0.5 linear feet)
Repository: Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society
San Francisco, California 94105

Abstract: William Houston was a gay man from Santa Fe, New Mexico, with an interest in collecting erotic stories about men. Collection includes, in addition to typescripts of 47 erotic stories, correspondence regarding Houston's life with his lover Duke (Joseph R. Dougherty), and responses to a 1973 sex advertisement placed in The Advocate by Dougherty.

Languages: Languages represented in the collection: English

Access
Collection open for research.

Publication Rights
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Preferred Citation

Acquisition Information
Donated by William E. Houston.

Biography
William E. Houston, a resident of Santa Fe, New Mexico, was raised in the Harrisburg, Pennsylvania area, but little else is known about his life. He lived for many years with his lover, Duke (a pseudonym for Joseph R. Dougherty), who was born in 1929 and died of cancer in 1994.

Scope and Content of Collection
This collection comprises primarily 47 erotic stories by anonymous authors (with two exceptions) about gay male sexual experiences collected by Bill Houston. The majority of the stories are photocopied or mimeographed, and date from the 1940s and 1950s. Before commercial pornography was readily available, men used to write stories, and type or mimeograph them in order to trade them; the stories in this collection are of that genre.

In addition to the stories, the collection includes two files of correspondence. The first, dated 1973, contains responses to a sex ad placed in The Advocate by Ed Granger, a pseudonym for Joe Dougherty. Dougherty, later in life, was Bill Houston's lover, and was known at that time as Duke Houston. In addition to correspondence from the men answering the ad, the second file includes some photographs and note cards documenting Granger's (Dougherty's) interactions with several of
them, either by telephone or in-person. The second correspondence file, dated 1994-1995, consists of correspondence between James Duggins of the GLBT Historical Society, and Bill Houston, and provides biographical details about Houston's life and interests, and his relationship with his lover, Duke (Joe Dougherty).

**Arrangement**
Collection is arranged by type of material; stories are arranged alphabetically by title.

**Subjects and Indexing Terms**
- Gay men
- Erotica

**Other Finding Aids**
A list of the titles of stories in the collection is available at the GLBT Historical Society.