Finding Aid for the Marion Zimmer Bradley papers, 1956-1999LSC.1955


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Online finding aid last updated 8 August 2017.
Title: Marion Zimmer Bradley papers
Identifier/Call Number: LSC.1955
Contributing Institution: UCLA Library Special Collections
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 1.2 linear feet (3 document boxes)
Date (inclusive): 1956-1999
Abstract: Marion Zimmer Bradley was born June 3, 1930 in Albany, New York during the Great Depression. She was interested in science fiction and fantasy as a teenager, participating in amateur fiction contests as an adjunct and as a contestant, most notably for Fantastic Amazing Stories in 1949. Always promoting and supporting the work of other writers, Bradley not only encouraged and participated in the world of fan fiction, but also became the editor of anthologies and periodicals supporting up-and-coming authors. She became active in the gay and lesbian community not just through her writings and bibliographic work, but also through counseling services. After becoming ordained in the Eastern Orthodox priesthood she volunteered her time at the Gay Pacific Center offering pastoral counseling services. She died on September 25, 1999 after a struggle with heart disease. A year after her death she was awarded with Lifetime Achievement by the World Fantasy Awards, an international award begun in 1975 recognizing outstanding achievement in the Fantasy genre. This collection houses two copies of Marion Zimmer Bradley's Lesbian, Variant and Homosexual Literature annotated bibliography as well as an unpublished manuscript, unedited versions of published materials, her obituary, and brochures from fan gatherings, as well as some of her husband's work.

Language of Materials: Materials are in English.
Physical location: COLLECTION STORED OFF-SITE AT SRLF: Open for research. Advance notice required for access. Contact the UCLA Library Special Collections Reference Desk for paging information.
Creator: Bradley, Marion Zimmer

Conditions on Access
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Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], Marion Zimmer Bradley Papers (Collection 1955). UCLA Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles.

Provenance/Source of Acquisition
Provenance unknown.
This collection is part of an outreach and collection-building partnership between the June L. Mazer Lesbian Archives , the UCLA Center for the Study of Women (CSW) and the UCLA Library .

Processing Note
Processed by Stacy Wood, 2011. Description enhanced and further physical processing completed by Sabrina Ponce in 2016.
The June L. Mazer Lesbian Archive at UCLA is an outreach and collection-building partnership between the June L. Mazer Lesbian Archives , the UCLA Center for the Study of Women (CSW) and the UCLA Library . These collections expand the pool of primary source materials available to researchers and to the community at large. This partnership was initiated by CSW and is funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) to inventory, organize, preserve, and digitize more than eighty Mazer collections pertaining to lesbian and feminist activism and writings.

Biography
Marion Zimmer Bradley was born June 3, 1930 in Albany New York during the Great Depression. She was interested in science fiction and fantasy as a teenager, participating in amateur fiction contests as an adjunct and as a contestant, most notably for Fantastic Amazing Stories in 1949. Her first published story, entitled "Women Only" was showcased in Vortex Science Fiction in 1953.

She married Robert Alden Bradley in 1949. They had one child and divorced in 1964. During their marriage Marion Zimmer Bradley published her first novel The Door Through Space, which launched her writing career. She also became marginally involved with then-burgeoning lesbian activist organization Daughters of Bilitis. During this time she also published several
works under various pseudonyms. Many of these publications were gay and lesbian paperback pulp novels, most famously the novel *I Am a Lesbian* in 1962 under the name Lee Chapman.

1958 brought the first instance of the Darkover world in her novel *The Planet Savers*. The Darkover novels became one of her more famous and recognizable series. Although she wrote the majority of the novels contained within the series, it was occasionally supplemented by other authors with her blessing and continued after her death.

In 1964, shortly after her divorce from Bradley, Marion married Walter Breen, an American author and numismatist. They collaborated on a bibliography of gay and lesbian literature. They had two children and separated in 1979, but remained married until 1990.

She received her BA from Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, Texas in 1965. She pursued graduate studies at the University of California at Berkeley until 1967, where she met Diana Paxson, a medieval studies graduate with whom she founded the Society for Creative Anachronism in 1966. During this time in Berkeley and through the 1970s and 1980s, Bradley would consider herself a neo-pagan, including interests in clairvoyance, extrasensory perception and reincarnation. She began the Centre for Nontraditional Religion which hosted various non-traditional groups such as Wiccans. Bradley was raised in the Episcopal tradition and returned to those roots in the 1990s.

In addition to separating from Walter Breen in 1979, Marion published what is ostensibly her most famous and groundbreaking work, *The Mists of Avalon*. Working within a feminist, revisionist framework, Bradley retells the Arthurian legend through the lens of its female characters, predominantly through the eyes of Morgaine.

Always promoting and supporting the work of other writers, Bradley not only encouraged and participated in the world of fan fiction (publishing her own "The Jewel of Arwen" based on a character in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings Trilogy*), but she also became the editor of anthologies and periodicals supporting up-and-coming authors. In 1984 she began *Sword and Sorceress*, an anthology series devoted to fantasy stories with non-traditional or challenging heroines. She edited the series until her death, and it continued until 2008. In 1988 she began Marion Zimmer Bradley's Fantasy Magazine, which included short stories and humorous pieces as well as interviews with recognizable science fiction and fantasy authors. She became active in the gay and lesbian community not just through her writings and bibliographic work, but also with counseling services. After becoming ordained in the Eastern Orthodox priesthood (along with her husband) by Mikhail Itkin, she volunteered her time at the Gay Pacific Center offering pastoral counseling services.

She died on September 25, 1999 after a struggle with heart disease. A year after her death she was awarded with Lifetime Achievement by the World Fantasy Awards, an international award begun in 1975 recognizing outstanding achievement in the Fantasy genre.

June 3, 1930  Marion Zimmer Bradley born in Albany, New York
1949  Marion wins a science fiction writing contest for AMAZING STORIES
1949  Marion marries Robert Alden Bradley
1953  Marion publishes "Women Only," her first published short story in Vortex Science Fiction
1957  Marion publishes Falcons of Narabedla, her first novel-length work
1958  First appearance of the Darkover world in *The Planet Savers*
1962  *I Am a Lesbian* is published under Marion's pseudonym Lee Chapman
1964  Divorces Robert Alden Bradley and marries Walter Breen
1965  B.A. from Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, Texas
1966  Marion helps to found the Society for Creative Anarchronism and coins its name
1979  Separates from Walter Breen, although the two remain married and friendly
1979  *The Mists of Avalon* is published
1984  *Sword and Sorceress Anthology Series* begins
1988  Marion Zimmer Bradley's Fantasy Magazine begins
1990  Divorces Walter Breen
September 25, 1999  Dies of heart failure after a long struggle with heart disease.

**Scope and Content**

This collection contains two copies of Marion Zimmer Bradley's bibliography of gay and lesbian literature, published and unpublished fiction manuscripts, a program from a fan convention, obituaries, some of her husband's work, and other assorted materials.

**Organization and Arrangement**

Arranged chronologically.

**Related Material**

See The Daughters of Bilitis Collection which is also housed in UCLA Special Collections.

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Subjects and Indexing Terms
Bradley, Marion Zimmer -- Archives.
June L. Mazer Lesbian Archive at UCLA.
June L. Mazer Lesbian Archives.
University of California, Los Angeles. Library.
Gays in literature--Bibliography.
Homosexuality in literature--Bibliography.
Lesbians in literature--Bibliography.
Women authors, American--Archives.

Box 1, Folder 1

**Scientology: The Fundamentals of Thought 1956**

General Physical Description note: pamphlet

Scope and Contents note
Initially meant as a primer to be translated into various languages to aid in the spread of Scientology outside of the United States, this remains as the beginner's guide to the principles of Scientology. Written by L. Ron Hubbard and revised and re-released in various forms since its initial publication, the book contains thoughts related to creativity, aging and potential.

Box 1, Folders 2-5

**The Complete, Cumulative Checklist of Lesbian, Variant and Homosexual Literature 1965**

General Physical Description note: manuscript

Scope and Contents note
Contained in this annotated bibliography are 6 lists compiled by Marion Zimmer Bradley and Gene Damon, edited by her then-husband Walter Breen, and with an introduction by Bradley as well as several appendices listing relevant materials and periodicals. List 1: Fiction, Drama, Biography and related Non-Fiction in English or Available in English Translation. List 2: Variant Poetry. List 3: Variant Films. List 4: Foreign Lesbian, Variant and Related Materials (compiled by Breen). List 5: Bibliographic Tools and Reference Materials. List 6: Related publications. Folders 2-3 contain the original manuscript while Folders 4-5 contain a photocopy.

General note
Aided by librarian Gene Damon and Bradley's husband Walter Breen, this bibliography existed in many incarnations, initially as a twelve page pamphlet and ultimately a 608 page comprehensive collection in 1965. Inspired by the work of Jeanette Howard Foster in her work "Sex Variant Women in Literature," Bradley expresses in the introduction a desire to fill the lacunae of knowledge. Her reviews of various works in the bibliography express her opinion of their artistic and cultural merit.
Box 2, Folder 1  
**The Catch Trap 1979**

*General Physical Description note:* uncorrected proof, paperback completely broken spine.

*Scope and Contents note*
Uncorrected proof for the novel *The Catch Trap*, 608 pages.

*General note*
The book is a sprawling family saga that follows the Flying Santellis, a family of aerialists, in their rise to greatness. *The Catch Trap* is also a strong and moving love story of two men whose relationship is often as traumatic as it is wonderful. Set against the turbulent background of the 40's, the novel moves from tawdry backwater circuses to the glamor of Hollywood and the excitement of Center Ring in Madison Square Garden. Determined to restore his family's fame, Mario Santelli strives to perfect the legendary triple somersault, as young Tommy Zane learns to accept the grueling discipline that makes a great flyer. Drawn together, they discover a mutual need for each other that neither can repress. This is the story of real people whose shared ambitions lead them to discover the best in themselves by being unafraid to test their limits.

Box 2, Folder 2  
**Darkover: Grand Council IV 1981**

*General Physical Description note:* program guide

*Scope and Contents note*
Program guide for the 1981 Darkovercon, a science fiction and fantasy conference.

*General note*
The 1981 conference took place at the Wilmington, Delaware Radisson Hotel. Marion Zimmer Bradley was a special guest (*the conference takes its name from her series of novels*) as was Katherine Kurtz. C.J. Cherryh was the guest of honor. The guide includes short stories from each of the guests, a short bibliography of their work, a description of events as well as rules and regulations for the weekend.

Box 2, Folders 3-4  
**Free Amazons of Darkover circa 1985**

*General Physical Description note:* manuscript, cardboard piece

*Scope and Contents note*
Free Amazons of Darkover is a collection of short stories edited by Marion Zimmer Bradley. Each of the stories occurs in the fictional world of Darkover. The collection was first published in 1985, although this manuscript contains no date. Also contained with the manuscript is a piece of cardboard with "Free Amazons "Shattered Chain" written on it in purple marker.

*General note*
Box 2, Folder 5  
**Obituary 1999**  
General Physical Description note: newspaper clipping, photocopy  
Scope and Contents note  
A clipping of Marion Zimmer Bradley's obituary, published in the Los Angeles Times on September 90, 1999. Contains a summary of Bradley's works and contributions to feminist and science fiction culture.

Box 3, Folder 1  
**Ruins of Isis undated**  
General Physical Description note: carbon copy  
Scope and Contents note  
Carbon copy rewrite of the novel *Ruins of Isis*. Although published in 1978, this copy is undated.  
General note  
In the novel, a heterosexual couple finds themselves in the world of Isis, a matriarchal culture. In order to successfully navigate the world, the wife pretends to dominate her husband. A thematic exploration of the politics surrounding gender dynamics as well as lesbian separatist utopian ideals, *Ruins of Isis* attempts to depict the emotional and interpersonal consequences of grappling with sexism.

Box 3, Folders 2-3  
**Stranger's Harbor undated**  
General Physical Description note: manuscript  
Scope and Contents note  
Unpublished manuscript, missing pages 346-364.