Sylvia Dobson papers, 1934-1992 LSC.1989

UCLA Library Special Collections
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Online finding aid last updated 28 August 2017.
Title: Sylvia Dobson papers
Identifier/Call Number: LSC.1989
Contributing Institution: UCLA Library Special Collections
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 1.0 linear feet (2 boxes)
Date (inclusive): 1934-circa 1990s
Abstract: Sylvia Dobson was a schoolteacher and a close friend of the modernist and imagist poet Hilda Doolittle. This collection contains correspondence between Dobson and Doolittle between 1934 and 1951, in addition to Dobson’s notes on the letters written after Doolittle’s death in 1961. The content of the correspondence covers topics such as Dobson's poetry and writing, astrology, travel, World War II and its aftermath, and Doolittle's mental health. Also included are clippings and Dobson's unpublished autobiography, *On Not Bulldozing Xanadu* (1992).
Language of Materials: Materials are in English.
Physical Location: Stored off-site at SRLF. All requests to access special collections materials must be made in advance through our electronic paging system using the "Request items" button.
Creator: Dobson, Sylvia

Conditions Governing Access
COLLECTION STORED OFF-SITE AT SRLF: Open for research. All requests to access special collections materials must be made in advance through our electronic paging system using the "Request items" button.

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Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], Sylvia Dobson Papers (Collection Number 1989). UCLA Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles.

UCLA Catalog Record ID
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Acquisition Information
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 History
Processed by Stacy Wood, 2012 Description enhanced and further physical processing completed by Jessica Tai in 2017. 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
Sylvia Herbert Dobson was born on May 31st, 1908. She was a schoolteacher as well as an aspiring writer.
Hilda "H.D." Doolittle (September 10, 1886 – September 27, 1961) was an American modernist poet and writer, known for her association with the imagist group of poets that included Ezra Pound and James Joyce. In her time, Doolittle aligned her writing with that of the avant-garde. Her work experienced a surge in interest in the 1970s during second-wave feminism, in which her poetry was recognized for its innovative feminist perspective.
In 1934 Dobson discovered Hilda "H.D." Doolittle’s work and wrote her a letter of admiration. Doolittle replied, inviting Dobson to come meet her in her London home. This instigated a brief courtship followed by a friendship lasting almost thirty years.

Scope and Content
This collection contains correspondence between Dobson and Doolittle between 1934 and 1951. Following Doolittle’s death in 1961, Dobson compiled their letters and annotated them with personal reflections, in addition to expanding on historical contexts of the letters. Additional biographical information of Doolittle and her family is also provided. Subjects covered...
within the correspondence includes Dobson's poetry and writing, astrology, travel, World War II and its aftermath, and Doolittle's mental health. Also included are letters from Doolittle's long-term partner Bryher (Annie Winifred Ellerman) concerning Doolittle's illness at the end of her life and eventual death. The collection also contains clippings containing reviews of books detailing Doolittle's work and life, as well as Dobson's unpublished autobiography, *On Not Bulldozing Xanadu* (1992).

**Organization and Arrangement**
Arranged chronologically. The correspondence with Doolittle is arranged based on original order, and described using original folder titles.

**Related Material**
An astrological chart drawn by Sylvia Dobson can be found in the H.D. Papers at the Beinecke Library.

**Subjects and Indexing Terms**
Dobson, Sylvia -- Archives
H. D. (Hilda Doolittle), 1886-1961 -- Correspondence
June L. Mazer Lesbian Archive at UCLA.
June L. Mazer Lesbian Archives.

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**Box 1, Folders 1-6**

**Hilda Doolittle Correspondence 1934-circa 1990s**

- **Physical Description:** Photocopies and printed paper.
- **Scope and Contents note**
  These folders consist of correspondence written by Doolittle to Dobson. Interleaved are Dobson's notes on the correspondence, offering personal reflections, expanding on historical context, or giving additional information about her and Doolittle's life circumstances at the time the letters were written. The folders are titled with original file names, often citing the location the letters were received, or the historical circumstance in which they were written.

**Box 2, Folder 4**

**Clippings 1982-1989**

- **Physical Description:** Newsprint and printed paper.
- **Scope and Contents note**

**Box 2, Folder 2-3**

**On Not Bulldozing Xanadu 1992**

- **Physical Description:** Printed paper.
- **Scope and Contents note**
  Dobson's unpublished autobiography.