Gladys A. papers 7062

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USC Libraries Special Collections
2018 August
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URL: http://libraries.usc.edu/locations/special-collections
Language of Material: English
Contributing Institution: USC Libraries Special Collections
Title: Gladys A. papers
creator: A., Gladys
Identifier/Call Number: 7062
Physical Description: 1.31 Linear Feet(3 containers)
Date (inclusive): 1944-06-09-1979
Abstract: The Gladys A. papers contain diaries of Gladys A., a young woman who participated in sex work in and around Downtown Los Angeles. The diaries span from the day she arrived in LA in January of 1949 through 1953, detailing the daily experiences of her first five years in the city. The collection also includes photographs of Gladys with unidentified individuals, correspondence from her family in Michigan, memorabilia from her Catholic high school, and other miscellaneous personal items.

Biographical note
Gladys A. came to Los Angeles in 1949 from Saginaw, Michigan with very little money. To support herself she immediately began engaging in sexual relationships with men she met in exchange for money, meals, gifts, and amusements. Gladys A. also occasionally worked in diners and bars in and around downtown. She kept a diary of her daily activities detailing her experiences as a young woman and a sex worker in Los Angeles in the 1950s.

Content Description
The Gladys A. papers consist principally of diaries detailing Gladys's daily activities and life as a prostitute in Los Angeles from January 1949, when she arrived from Michigan, through April 1952. The collection also contains photographs of Gladys and others in her life, correspondence, and personal items including high school graduation memorabilia, receipts, and other notes. These materials trace Gladys' initial experience of moving to and living in Los Angeles as an independent woman in her early twenties. They reveal characteristics of the day-to-day places, activities, and troubles that she navigated and detail the numerous personal and intimate relationships Gladys cultivated as a casual sex worker. Her documented life gives insight into the complex realities of race, gender, and socioeconomic relationships of Los Angeles in the early 1950s.

Arrangement
The Gladys A. papers are organized into three series: 1. Writings, 2. Photographs, and 3. Personal Items.

Conditions Governing Access
Advance notice required for access.

Preferred Citation
[Box/folder no. or item name], Gladys A. papers, Collection no. 7062, Special Collections, USC Libraries, University of Southern California

Immediate Source of Acquisition
Purchased from The Bookshop, December 11, 2017.

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Subjects and Indexing Terms
Prostitution -- California -- Los Angeles -- 20th century -- Archival resources
Women -- California -- Los Angeles -- History -- Archival resources
Women -- Economic conditions -- 20th century -- Archival resources
Los Angeles (Calif.) -- Social life and customs -- 20th century -- Archival resources
Correspondence
Diaries
Ephemera
Photographs
A., Gladys -- Archives
Writings 1949-1979

Diaries 1949-01-27-1953-12-14
Scope and Contents
Diaries written by Gladys A. chronicling her experiences, thoughts, and other aspects of her life daily. The first entry is written on the day she arrives in Los Angeles, presumably from Saginaw, Michigan where she is originally from. The entries continue daily through 1949 and 1950 with only a couple of months missing. 1951 is almost completely missing. 1952 and 1953 are also only missing a couple of months. Together, these diaries contain detailed information about and an intimate glance into Glady A’s first five years in Los Angeles.

Box 1, Folder 1 1949 January 27 - March 10
Box 1, Folder 2 1949 March 11 - March 17
Box 1, Folder 3 1949 March 18 - April 1
Box 1, Folder 4 1949 April 2 - April 19
Box 1, Folder 5 1949 April 20 - August 29
Box 1, Folder 6 1949 August 30 - October 27
Box 1, Folder 7 1949 October 28 - December 14
Box 1, Folder 8 1949 December 15 - 1950 January 29
Box 1, Folder 9 1950 January 29 - March 21
Box 1, Folder 10 1950 March 22 - May 19
Box 1, Folder 11 1950 May 20 - August 4
Box 1, Folder 12 1949 November 8 - 1950 December
Box 1, Folder 13 1950 November 15 - 1951 January 1
Box 1, Folder 14 1951 February 08 - February 19
Box 1, Folder 15 1952 January 22 - March 31
Box 1, Folder 16 1952 April 1 - July 1
Box 1, Folder 17 1952 April 11 - April 12
Box 2, Folder 1 1952 July 2 - August 26
Box 2, Folder 2 1952 August 27 - October 12
Box 2, Folder 3 1952 October 13 - November 30
Box 2, Folder 4 1953 January 22 - April 29
Box 2, Folder 5 1953 May 16 - July 2
Box 2, Folder 6 1953 July 2 - July 29
Box 2, Folder 7 1953 July 30 - September 15
Box 2, Folder 8 1953 September 19 - November 15
Box 2, Folder 9 1953 November 16 - December 14
Box 3, Folder 11 Correspondence 1956-1977
Scope and Contents
A few letters sent from and to Gladys from her mother and other family members back home in Saginaw, Michigan and unidentified individuals from her personal life.

Box 3, Folder 12 "Crazy as a Loon" Poem 1979
Scope and Contents
Poem written by Gladys A. about herself

Box 3, Folder 13 Notes Undated
Scope and Contents
Miscellaneous notes written by Gladys to herself of unidentified subject matter.

Photographs Undated
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 3, Folder 1-5</th>
<th><strong>Photographs of Gladys</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Contents</td>
<td>Portraits and casual photos of Gladys at various ages. Some depict her as a teenager in high school in Saginaw, Michigan and others are snapshots of her daily experiences in Los Angeles throughout her adult life.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 3, Folder 6</th>
<th><strong>Photographs of Gladys with Others</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Contents</td>
<td>Casual photographs of Gladys with various unidentified members of her personal life as an adult in Los Angeles.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 3, Folder 7</th>
<th><strong>Photographs of Others</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Contents</td>
<td>Photographs of various unidentified individuals whom were presumably known to and/or friends of Gladys as an adult in Los Angeles.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 3, Folder 8</th>
<th><strong>Miscellaneous Photographs</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Contents</td>
<td>Miscellaneous photographs of landscapes, objects, and explicit content.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Personal Items 1944-1979**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 3, Folder 9</th>
<th><strong>High School Memorabilia 1944</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Contents</td>
<td>Cards, year books, programs, and photographs commemorating Gladys's graduation from St. Andrew's Catholic High School in 1944.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 3, Folder 10</th>
<th><strong>Miscellaneous Personal Items 1949-1962</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Contents</td>
<td>Receipts, identification cards, and order messages.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>