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## HOMOPHILE MOVEMENT: PAPERS OF DONALD STEWART LUCAS, 1941-1976

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This collection documents the activist and professional activities of Donald S. Lucas. The vast majority of the collection dates from 1953 to 1969. The Lucas collection contains an abundance of material relating to the early homosexual civil rights movement (the homophile movement) and the San Francisco manifestation of President Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty. The strength of the collection lies in the administrative and work files of the Mattachine Society, the Mattachine Review, Pan-Graphic Press, and the Central City Target Area of the San Francisco EOC. The collection includes: correspondence, meeting minutes, constitutions and by-laws, newsletters, manuscripts, financial documents, reports, statistics, legal decisions, surveys, counseling records, funding proposals, and subject files.

**Date Range:** 1941-1976

**Content:** 15,131 images

**Source Library:** The Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society, San Francisco, California. **Source Note:** Donald Stewart Lucas Papers, 1941-1998, Accession number: 1997-25, The Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society, San Francisco, California. See also Publisher's Note at end of description. <http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt638nb39r/>

### **Detailed Description:**

#### *Collection Overview*

Donald Stewart Lucas was born in 1926. Raised in rural Colorado, Lucas remained isolated from the rapidly modernizing United States until he left his hometown to work in the shipyards of Spokane, Washington, during the Second World War. During the war, he visited San Francisco once and was immediately enthralled with the technological wonders and the limitless opportunity that the city seemed to offer. In 1949, Lucas moved to San Francisco and remained there until he died in 1998.

Between 1949 and 1960, Lucas worked as a bookkeeper for an insurance company. By 1953, however, Lucas was introduced to a fledging organization whose mission was to

improve the lives of homosexuals in the United States. The organization was called the Mattachine Society. It was established in Los Angeles in 1951, but by 1953 internal debates about a host of issues signaled important changes on the horizon. The most immediate change was the inauguration of a new group of leaders that included Harold (Hal) Call, a San Francisco-based gay man who had previously worked as a journalist and newspaper publisher. Lucas and Call became friends and colleagues who worked together closely for the next 15 years leading the Mattachine Society and working alongside other organizations, known collectively as the "homophile movement." In 1954 they co-founded Pan-Graphic Press, one of the first gay-owned small presses in the United States. By this time, the headquarters of the Mattachine Society had relocated to San Francisco, placing Lucas and Call in permanent leadership roles in the organization. In 1955 they published the first issue of *The Mattachine Review*, a journal that sought to change public perceptions of homosexuality and which was published until 1964.

In addition to publishing a journal and operating a printing press, Lucas and Call, through the Mattachine Society, engaged in a wide-ranging program dedicated to social service and media relations. Given his background in journalism, Call focused on the media relations activities while Lucas spent most of his time engaged in what he would describe as "lay counseling." Receiving coverage in local newspapers, regional radio and television stations, and national magazines, the Mattachine Society attracted the attention of thousands of homosexuals in the United States who were seeking help-help to find an honest lawyer, a sympathetic psychologist or minister, or an accepting employer or landlord. In his notes (some of which survive in his papers), Lucas details the many hours he spent every week answering phone calls, responding to letters, and counseling visitors in the Mattachine Society office.

In the first half of the 1960s, the homophile movement expanded greatly in San Francisco with the founding of a half dozen new organizations. With several years experience and a collegial reputation (in contrast to Call's contentious one), Lucas was invited to help establish many of these new groups, in particular the Council on Religion and the Homosexual (est. 1964) and the Society for Individual Rights (est. 1964). For a host of reasons, the new crop of organizations rapidly replaced the Mattachine Society as the premier homosexual advocacy organization. Call, for his part, continued his publishing enterprise and, in 1967, opened up the Adonis Bookstore, what was likely the first gay bookstore in the United States. Lucas continued his community work in several of the newer organizations.

In 1966, Lucas played a role in convincing the San Francisco outpost of President's Johnson's War on Poverty to organize the Tenderloin and South of Market (or "Central City") neighborhoods, allowing them to be eligible for antipoverty monies. In 1967 he was appointed director of that new office, the Central City Target Area, and served in this capacity until 1969 when federal budget cuts changed the scope of antipoverty work nationwide. From 1970 until his death in 1998, Lucas continued his life's work as a 'lay counselor' and 'community organizer'; he served on the boards of several non-profit organizations, including the Haight-Ashbury Free Clinic. He made ends meet by working as a bookkeeper out of his home.

### *Historical Context and Relevance of the Collection*

Donald Lucas's life and, by extension, the documents included in his papers, offer insight into the Homophile Movement of the 1950s and 1960s, the movement for minority rights, religion and social justice, print culture and the media, and the trajectory of Cold War liberalism.

The homophile movement was the first sustained movement for homosexual rights in the United States. The earliest organizations established in California and New York in the 1950s but spread over the next decade to the most populous cities and states in the nation. The Donald Lucas Papers document the Mattachine Society, arguably the movement's most central organization, as well as several other groups established later. Historians continue to debate homophile goals and actions, and whether the movement should be considered successful or not. The Lucas papers enable researchers to engage in and, possibly, further these debates. Meeting minutes provide insight into organizational goals along with debates about ideology and strategy. Moreover, organizational records document the kind and extent of the activities undertaken; such records should allow researchers to study the links (and disjunctures) between goals and accomplishments, ideology and practice. In a broader historical context, the Lucas papers offer scholars insight into the transformation of the movement for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) rights. Lucas's documentation of the Mattachine Society and other organizations over the roughly fifteen years he worked with those groups demonstrates that the movement was ever-changing as new participants and new ideas in the 1960s replaced those from the 1950s. Although earlier strategies, such as forging alliances with respected professionals, continued on, new approaches, such as a protest and political engagement, emerged and became dominant. The Lucas papers document this transition.

The Lucas papers, in addition, provide insight into other topics of concern to scholars of LGBT studies beyond the specific issues of rights and politics. The correspondence in the papers documents the subjective thoughts and ideas of homosexuals just as that category of identity was entering into regular circulation in national news magazines and other media outlets. While non-normative gender and sexual identities were often conflated in the press and in academic literature before the 1940s, beginning in the 1950s gender identity and sexual orientation were increasingly seen as distinct; correspondence and other writings in the Lucas papers document this change as it was occurring. Moreover, given that Lucas and the Mattachine Society were located in San Francisco, his papers offer some documentation of homosexual life in the city that Life magazine would describe as a "gay capital" by 1964.

The homophile movement is rightly considered part of the broader movement for minority group civil rights in the United States. Although some scholars have compared and contrasted homophile organizations with those of the Black Civil Rights Movement, feminism, and other movements on behalf of minority rights, research is still needed to place these organizations more thoroughly in the social movement context. Documents, such as organizational position statements and correspondence with members, may help scholars determine if homophile activists approached the category of "sexuality" in the same way civil rights activists considered "race." Additionally, the examination of "tactics" for bringing

about social change is important for scholars of social movements. Further study of the homophile movement, as documented by Lucas, should provide insight into the degree to which homophile activists borrowed tactics employed by already established activists and the degree to which those tactics succeeded (or not) for the homophile movement.

A key topic within the study of social movements is the relationship of religion and religious organizations to the movements. While this has been studied extensively in the context of the Black Civil Rights Movement, the study of religion in the homophile movement so far has been neglected. Scholars will find much in the Lucas papers to address this topic from correspondence with ministers in the Mattachine Society records to research and drafts of a 1966 book on the topic to a selection of records documenting the founding and work of the Council on Religion on the Homosexual.

A central focus on the Mattachine Society was the media. Call and Lucas sought to influence mainstream media representations of homosexuals as well as make available a wider variety of publications on homosexuality to homosexuals themselves. In the case of the former, the Lucas papers document Mattachine Society interactions with mainstream journalists, radio talk show hosts, university scholars, and others who were in a position to influence public opinion. With the former, the Lucas papers include the records of the *Mattachine Review*, Pan-Graphic Press, the Dorian Book Service, and the *Dorian Book Service Quarterly*, all of which made available to the public previously difficult to find books and essays that presented homosexuality in a uniquely objective and/or humane light.

Donald Lucas's work in homophile organizations as well as for 1960s antipoverty programs illustrates one trajectory of Cold War liberalism. One strain of scholarship on liberalism documents the move away from consensus-driven politics in the 1950s into increasingly radical and identitarian movements in the late 1960s; the narrative of Black Civil Rights from the Southern Christian Leadership Conference through the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee to the Black Panthers is just one example. The biography, and collected papers, of Lucas offer a somewhat different narrative. Lucas, rather than traveling from consensus liberalism to radicalism, seemed to have begun as a moderate liberal and then became more interested in community-organizing and working across identity groups to develop strategic alliances to help the disadvantaged in a variety of groups (as he did in the Central City Target Area antipoverty office). This trajectory of San Francisco liberalism deserves further research and the Lucas papers should provide scholars with useful material to conduct such a study.

#### ***Resources Found in the Collection***

Although the Donald Lucas Papers is not a major collection in terms of the number of discrete items or linear feet of cartons, the papers do contain a number of unique, historically significant documents. The Lucas papers include a nearly complete set of meeting minutes of the Mattachine Society coordinating council, annual meetings of the national organization, and conventions, including notes on the two conventions in 1953 that witnessed a change in the leadership of the organization. Perhaps the material of greatest scholarly import is the Mattachine Society correspondence included in the Lucas papers. Arranged both chronologically and by name of correspondent, the letters document not only the function

of the organization, they provide first person accounts of the lives of homosexuals in the 1950s and 1960s. The Lucas papers also contain the records of Pan-Graphic Press and the *Mattachine Review*. These files include some correspondence with authors along with limited documentation of the business finances. The collection also contains prints of rare and original Pan-Graphic Press publications, including Helen Branson's *The Gay Bar* (1957).

The Council on Religion and the Homosexual, a homophile organization established in 1964, is well documented in the Lucas papers. Key items related to this organization include the founding documents, meeting minutes, and a small cache of correspondence. Files also contain materials documenting the "Mardi Gras Ball" of New Year's Day 1965, a dance at which several homosexuals attendees and ministers who supported them were arrested by the San Francisco Police Department. The arrests backfired, creating a public relations coup for homosexuals and their allies in San Francisco. The Lucas papers also include important, although incomplete, records from the Society for Individual Rights, the Daughters of Bilitis, and other organizations.

In addition to documenting the homophile movement, the Lucas papers contain an abundance of information on antipoverty programs in San Francisco, particularly those sponsored through the San Francisco Economic Opportunity Council, the city's official outpost of the federal Office of Economic Opportunity. The Lucas papers include a sample of organizational documents such as meeting minutes and funding applications, but are particularly strong in documenting the Central City Target Area (CCTA). The CCTA was the antipoverty program that served the city's Tenderloin and South of Market neighborhoods. It was unique in that many of the poor in these neighborhoods were white (unlike the ethnoracial minority ghettos elsewhere in the city) and many residents were homosexual or transgender. Documents from the CCTA include meeting minutes, funding proposals and budgets, correspondence, and research reports.

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**Publisher's Note**

*The Donald Stewart Lucas Papers, 1941-1998*, were edited to maximize their value to researchers while respecting the privacy of homophile activists who did not hold official positions or lead public political lives. We assumed but could not verify that most names were pseudonyms. Thus, the full names of the officers of organizations were retained, but the last names of rank and file activists were most often redacted. Membership lists, minutes, and convention registration lists were edited with this policy in mind. The names of professionals who lectured and consulted for the homophile organizations under study were left whole. The last names and addresses of correspondents who were not principals in the organizations whose materials Lucas collected were masked. Street addresses found on correspondence dated 1986 or after were redacted. Some letters dealing with sensitive legal or medical issues were removed in their entirety. A few letters sharing detailed descriptions of sexual encounters were also withheld. When a letter was removed, a notice of withdrawal was

inserted in its place, alerting the researcher to the availability of this item, clearly identified, in the print collection housed at the GLBT Historical Society. In addition, social security numbers were masked, and tax and banking records withdrawn.