

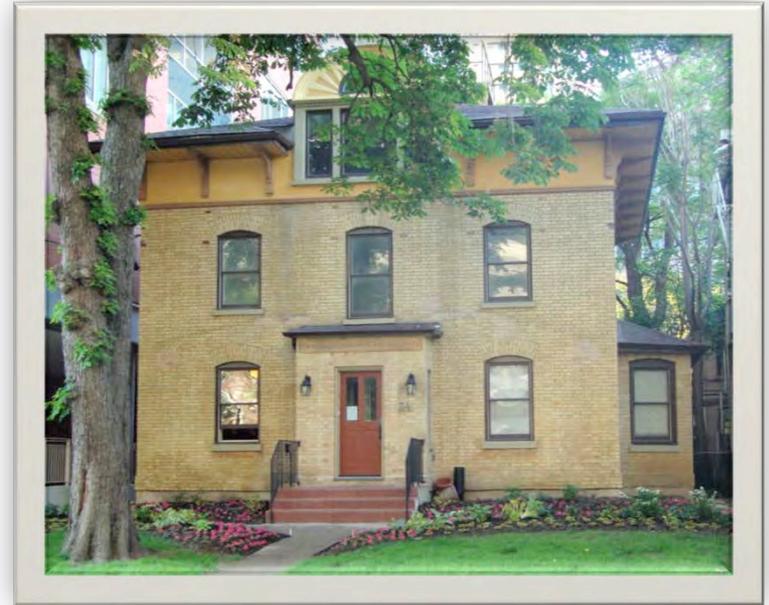


# Lesbian, Bisexual, Trans and Queer Women In the Archives

# What is the CLGA?

The Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives (CLGA) is the largest independent LGBTQ+ archives in the world. With a focus on Canadian content, the CLGA acquires, preserves and provides public access to information and archival materials in any medium.

By collecting and caring for important historical records, personal papers, unpublished documents, publications, audio-visual material, works of art, photographs, posters, and other artifacts, the CLGA is a trusted guardian of LGBTQ+ histories now and for generations to come.



# Snapshots in Time & Place

- ▶ The presentation includes spotlights from the CLGA's collections.
  - ▶ As a result these only paint a small part of the picture.
  - ▶ From specific points in time and place.
  - ▶ We endeavour to show a diversity of experiences, but please note they do not tell the story of all LGBTQ+ Canadian Women.
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# Two-Spirit Women



## *Two Spirit Women*

2nd Edition

- Canada being on First People's territories, we should first mention Two-Spirit women.
- Many Nations before colonization had roles for LGBTQ+ people that was very culturally specific.
- A modern way to address these varying roles is the term Two-Spirit.
- We have a number of books, vertical files, and documents on Two-Spirits, including this guide by the *2 Spirited People of the First Nations* and the *Ontario Aboriginal HIV/AIDS Strategy*.

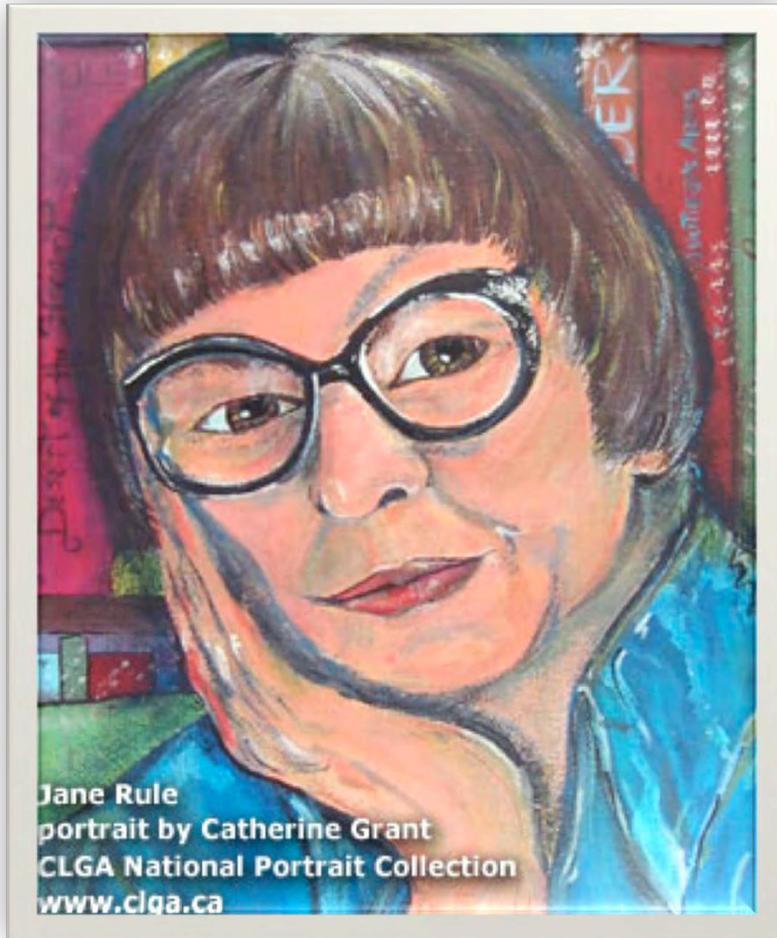
# Lesbians Making History

- Project created in the 1980s to document the lives of lesbian and gay women who lived in the 1950s, 1960s, & 1970s.



- Composed of eight oral history interviews with six different women.

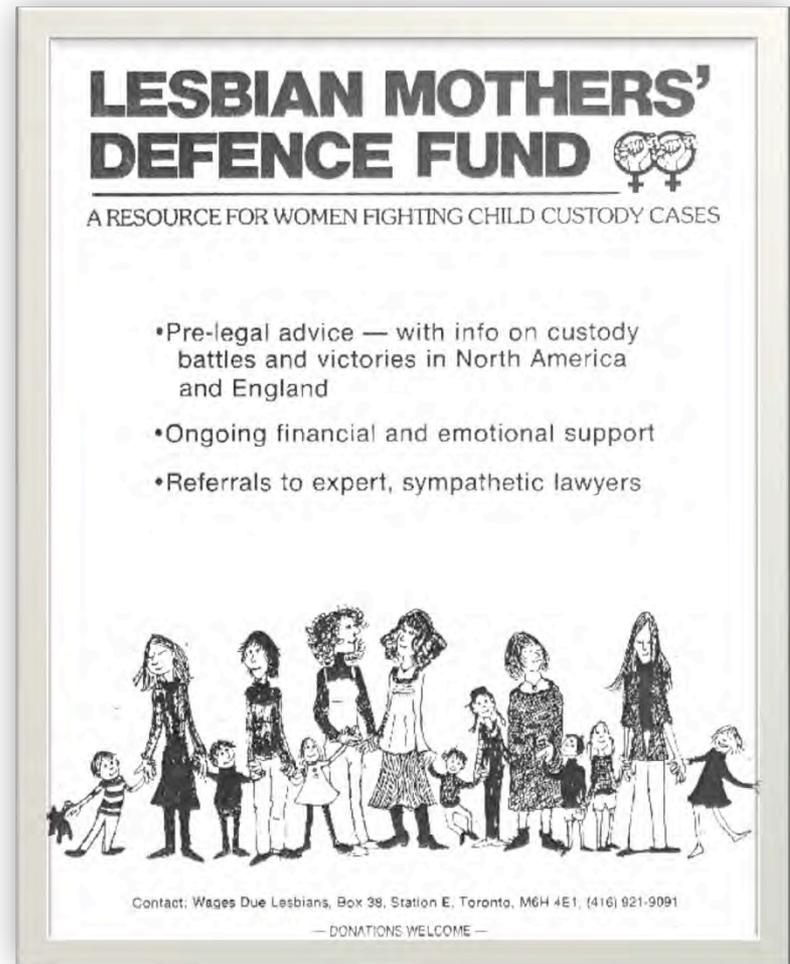
# “The Only Lesbian in Canada”



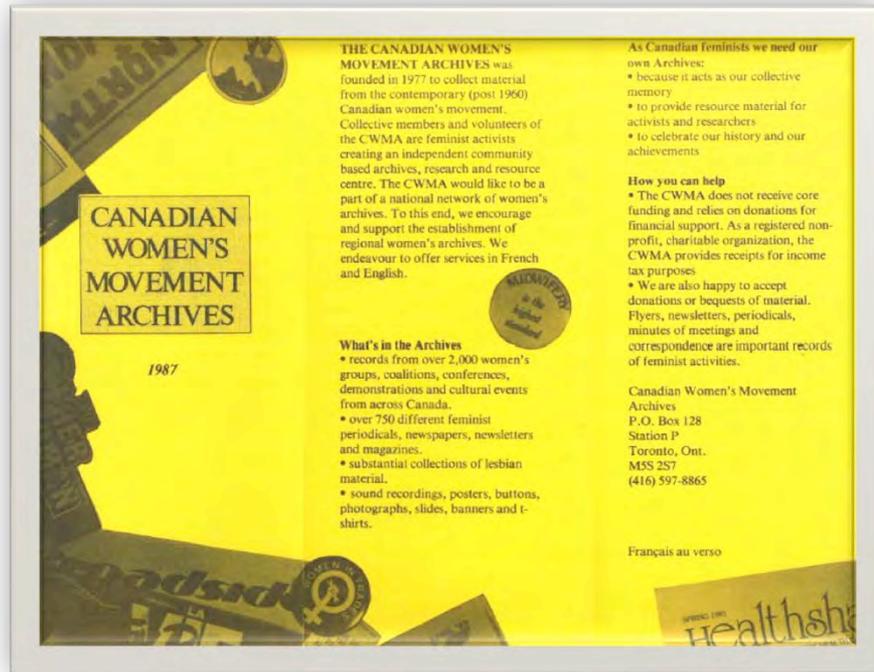
- A member of our National Portrait Collection, Jane Rule was a famous author who lived from 1931 – 2007.
- Her first novel “Desert of the Heart” (1964) was well acclaimed after 22 rejections for the lesbian content before homosexuality was decriminalized.
- She became a major gay rights advocate and became dubbed by the media as “The only lesbian in Canada.”
- The CLGA houses her books, some personal notes, videos of her work and, audio interviews with her.

# Lesbian Mothers' Defence Fund

- Organization set up in 1978 for lesbians to fight for custody for their children.
- Women frequently had their children taken away after divorcing their husbands as lesbians were considered “unfit parents.”
- LMDF lasted until 1987, the CLGA holds their newsletter, news articles about them and more.



# Canadian Women's Movement Archives



- Formed in 1977 as a feminist archives in Toronto.
- A lot of back and forth between the two organizations and many LGBTQ+ women went to the CWMA instead of the CLGA.
- Organization closed in 1991 and in 1992 all the records were donated to the University of Ottawa libraries.
- The CLGA however, has vertical files on the CWMA as well as microfilmed periodicals from them.

# International Women's Day



- International Women's Day which started in 1911, and become popular in North America starting in 1977.
- By the early 1980s it became a major community building space for Canadian lesbians and bi women.
- Many LGBTQ+ women's groups have marched and held events on International Women's Day.
- Shown are a few of the IWD buttons from our collections.

# Zami

- Zami was a group for queer people of Caribbean descent that was formed in 1984 and was active into the 1990s.
- The group became a major support and social setting for those who felt racism in gay communities and, homophobia in their Caribbean communities.
- Shown is an Xtra article talking about how Zami and the Lesbians of Colour (LOC) were creating their own spaces that were Queer People of Colour-centric.



# Pussy Palace

- Pussy Palace was started in 1998 as a way of providing a safe place for queer women to have sex and be educated on sexual health.

- It became an event night at the Club Toronto.

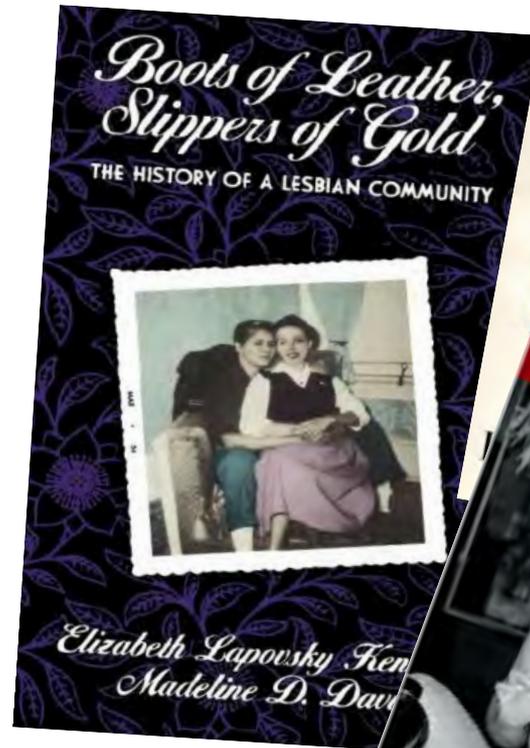


- In 2000 Police raided Pussy palace which led to subsequent court cases.

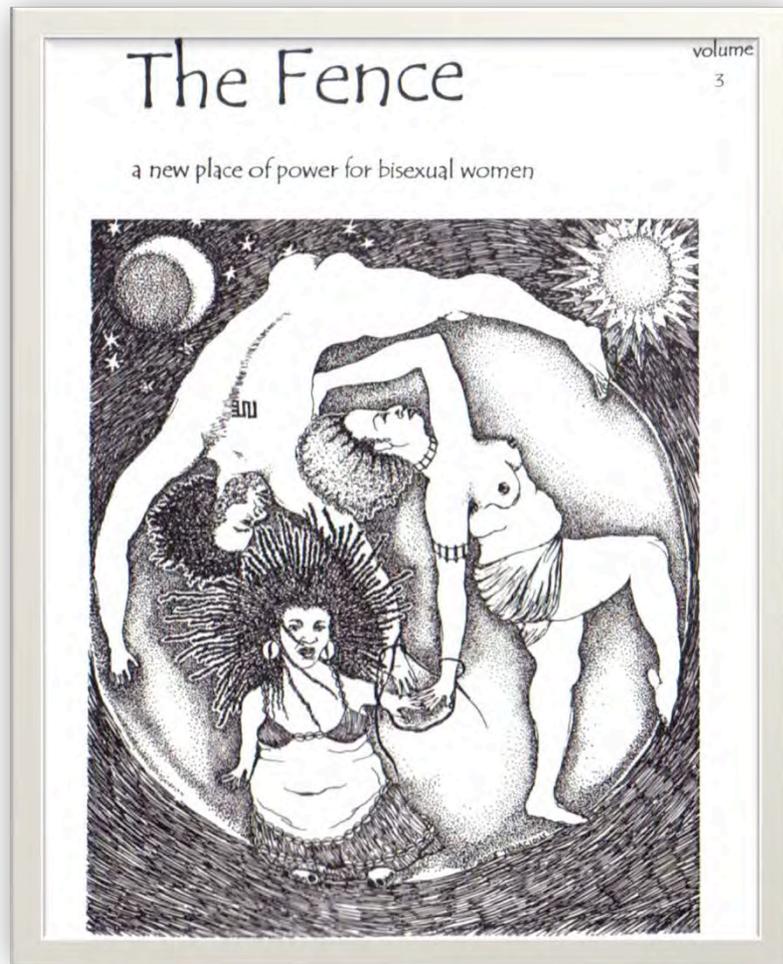
- By 2005 the Police were mandated to provide comprehensive LGBTQ training and put policies surround the treatment of trans people.

# Women in Leather

- The leatherdyke community has made a major impact on the LGBTQ women's community in Canada.
- We have many items from groups like:
  - Ms. Leather Toronto
  - International Ms. Leather
  - Unholy Harvest
  - Amazon's Bike Club
  - And more...
- Shown are a few of books addressing the Women and leather.

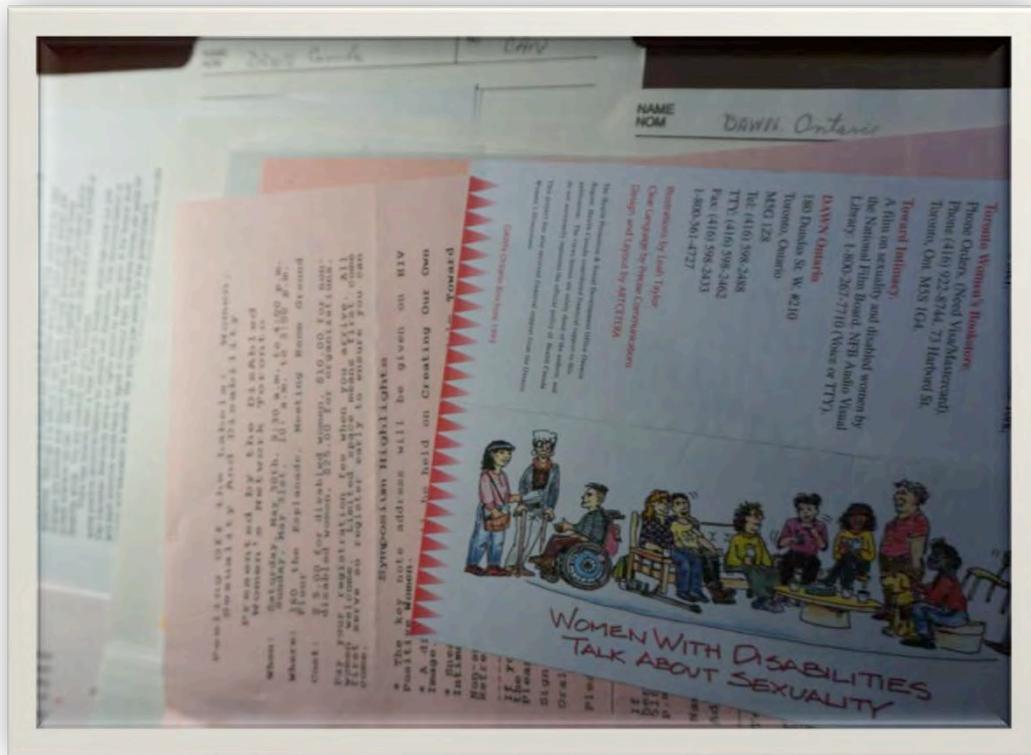


# Sitting on the Fence



- A magazine for bisexual women.
- Name is based off the stereotype that bisexuals are sitting on the fence and can not pick a side.
- The magazine addresses biphobia from both lesbians and straight communities.
- There are 10 versions from 2002 – 2013 of which the CLGA has copies 2 – 9.

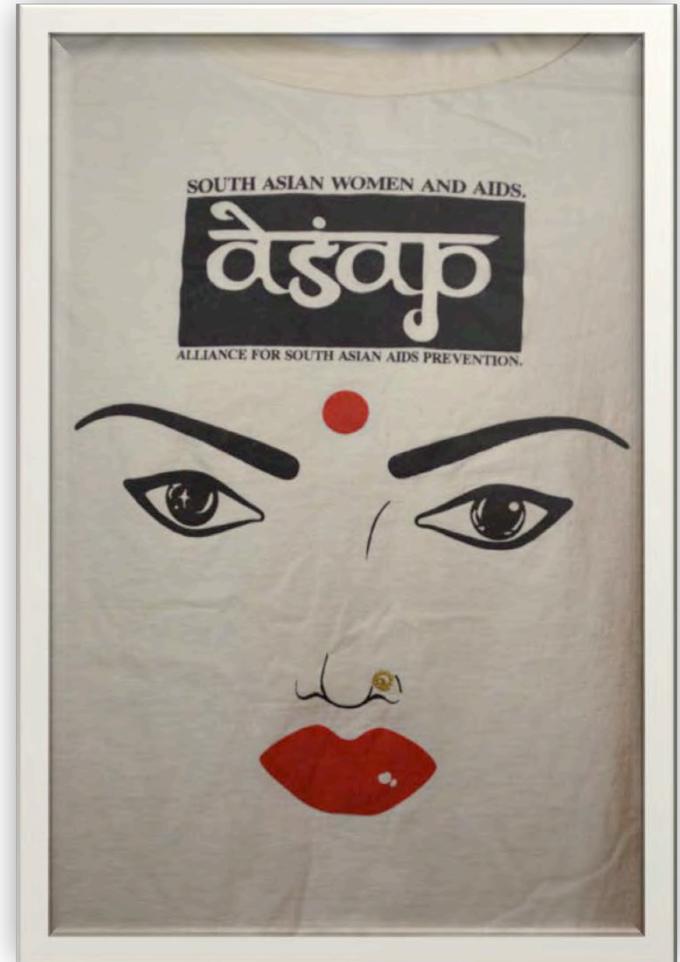
# DisAbled Women's Network (DAWN)



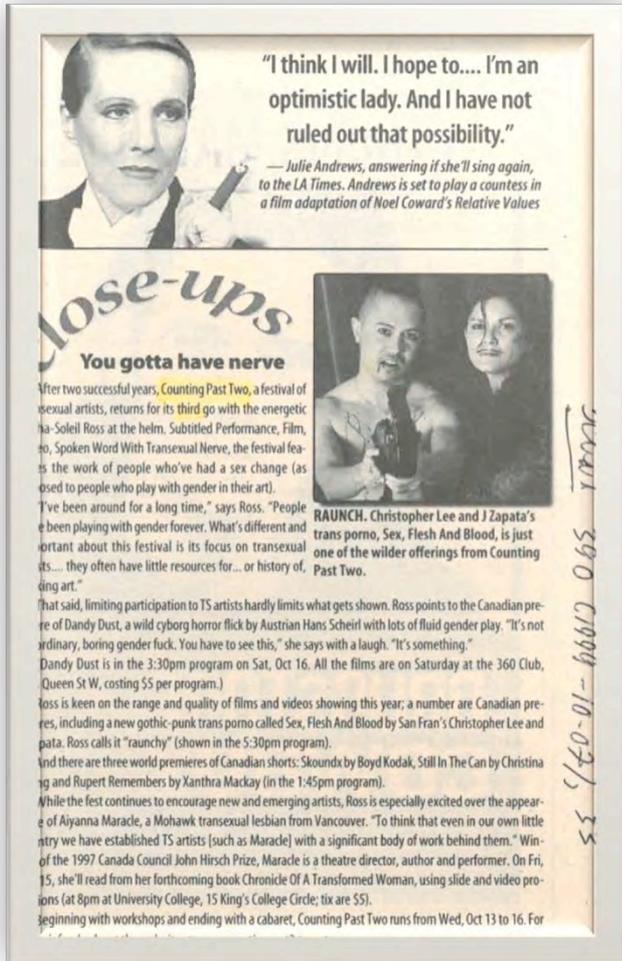
- DAWN was founded in 1985 to address the specific experiences of disabled women.
- One of the few groups to talk openly about sexuality and disability some of their files have made their way to our records.
- Pictured are the vertical files for DAWN Canada and DAWN Ontario including a newsletter about one of DAWN Ontario's conferences focusing on sexuality and disability.

# ASAAP

- The Alliance for South Asian AIDS Prevention created this t-shirt as a way of focusing on South Asian Women & AIDS.
- Other notable documents on South Asian women include: Diva magazine and files on various South Asian women groups.



# Counting Past 2



- Counting Past 2 was a trans arts festival that ran between 1997 – 2002.
- It was the first festival of its type in Canada and was spearheaded by trans woman activist Mirah Soliel-Ross.
- It addressed the need for a trans-centric space and was also one which trans women had major roles in it.
- The existence of Counting Past 2 inspired the creation of other festivals and an entire generation of trans artists.
- At the CLGA we have articles, posters, and videos from Counting Past 2.

# Imaging Home

- Imaging Home was the CLGA's 2014 World Pride exhibition in partnership with Envisioning Global LGBT Right, looking at migration and world activism in particular in: Uganda, Kenya, Botswana, Jamaica, Guyana, Belize, Saint Lucia and India.
- As Canada is increasingly multicultural so is the queer women's communities that span across borders.
- Imaging home addressed the intersection of homophobia, racism, and migration.



# Question & Answer



# Keeping Our Stories Alive

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