

# Phyllis Lyon, Del Martin and the Daughters of Bilitis

*Correspondence, manuscripts and papers chronicle a turning point in civil rights.*

Date Range: 1955-1984

Content: 40,293 pages

Source Library: Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Historical Society, San Francisco, CA

TITLE: Series, Lesbian Mothers, 1970-1984, Subseries: Court Cases, 1972-1981, Rebuttal And Issues	SOURCE: Phyllis Lyon and Del Martin Papers	DETAIL: N/A: 1130	COLLECTION: Phyllis Lyon, Del Martin and the Daughters of Bilitis
TITLE: Series, Homophile And Gay Liberation Organizations, 1960-1984, Subseries: Gay Liberation -- Northern California, 1970-1977, Gay/Catholic, Gay Liberation Human Contacts Materials, N/D	SOURCE: Phyllis Lyon and Del Martin Papers	DETAIL: N/A: 108	COLLECTION: Phyllis Lyon, Del Martin and the Daughters of Bilitis
TITLE: Series, Homophile And Gay Liberation Organizations, 1960-1984, Subseries: Gay Liberation -- Northern California, 1970-1977, Bay Area Gay Liberation Flyers, N/D	SOURCE: Phyllis Lyon and Del Martin Papers	DETAIL: N/A: 56	COLLECTION: Phyllis Lyon, Del Martin and the Daughters of Bilitis
TITLE: Series, Homophile And Gay Liberation Organizations, 1960-1984, Subseries: Gay Liberation -- National And International, 1973-1977, List Of Gay Organizations, N/D	SOURCE: Phyllis Lyon and Del Martin Papers	DETAIL: N/A: 76	COLLECTION: Phyllis Lyon, Del Martin and the Daughters of Bilitis
TITLE: Series, Lesbian Mothers, 1970-1984, Subseries: Bibliographies/Resource, N/D	SOURCE: Phyllis Lyon and Del Martin Papers	DETAIL: N/A: 45	COLLECTION: Phyllis Lyon, Del Martin and the Daughters of Bilitis
TITLE: Series, Lesbian Mothers, 1970-1984, Subseries: 1973-1984, Personal Notes, Legal Issues, N/D	SOURCE: Phyllis Lyon and Del Martin Papers	DETAIL: N/A: 209	COLLECTION: Phyllis Lyon, Del Martin and the Daughters of Bilitis
TITLE: Series, Police Oversight, 1960-1984, Subseries: Miscellaneous, n/d	SOURCE: Phyllis Lyon and Del Martin Papers	DETAIL: N/A: 109	COLLECTION: Phyllis Lyon, Del Martin and the Daughters of Bilitis
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TITLE: Series, Police Oversight, 1960-1984, Subseries: Citizens Alert, 1965-1972, Fundraising, n/d	SOURCE: Phyllis Lyon and Del Martin Papers	DETAIL: N/A: 56	COLLECTION: Phyllis Lyon, Del Martin and the Daughters of Bilitis
TITLE: Series, Police Oversight, 1960-1984, Subseries: Citizens Alert, 1965-1972, By-Laws, N/D	SOURCE: Phyllis Lyon and Del Martin Papers	DETAIL: N/A: 56	COLLECTION: Phyllis Lyon, Del Martin and the Daughters of Bilitis
TITLE: Series, Willings, 1964-1984, Subseries: Notes, 1970-1984, Research Studies, n/d	SOURCE: Phyllis Lyon and Del Martin Papers	DETAIL: N/A: 109	COLLECTION: Phyllis Lyon, Del Martin and the Daughters of Bilitis

Phyllis Lyon and Del Martin founded the first U.S. lesbian rights organization, the Daughters of Bilitis (DOB), in San Francisco in 1955 as a secret sorority. They did so at a time when “gay rights” was a contradiction in terms: gay men and women risked personal safety and their jobs if they dared to live openly. “We were fighting the church, the couch, and the courts,” Martin remembered years later.

As outspoken organizers, the couple – the first to be married by Mayor Gavin Newsom in 2004 as a challenge to California law prohibiting same-sex marriage – was also instrumental in forming related social movements, including the contemporary women’s rights movement. Lyon and Martin helped bring issues of violence against women and within families into public view and challenged censorship at local, state and national levels.

*Phyllis Lyon, Del Martin and the Daughters of Bilitis* supports a variety of academic disciplines, from political history to journalism to gender studies. This comprehensive selection of primary source materials makes for a wealth of social history that scholars won’t find anywhere else.

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# Phyllis Lyon, Del Martin and the Daughters of Bilitis

This collection documents the joint and individual work lives of life-partners Phyllis Lyon and Del Martin, from the homophile movement of the 1950s to the 1980s. This collection is strongest in materials connected to Lyon and Martin's involvement with the Daughters of Bilitis, and for material from the 1960s and 1970s, particularly related to homophile and gay liberation organizations, lesbian mothers and violence against women. The archive includes correspondence, manuscripts and manuscript drafts, organizational papers including minutes, constitutions, flyers and financial documents.

## Daughters of Bilitis National Organization, 1956-1984

This series contains material documenting the activities of the DOB's national governing board and general assembly, including the biennial National Convention of DOB, administration of the Blanche M. Baker Memorial Scholarship to assist women with their educational costs, research projects and papers including questionnaires sent to *The Ladder* subscribers, materials collected on the history of the DOB, membership and financial records, the DOB Book Service, *The Ladder* magazine and *Sisters* magazine.

## Daughters of Bilitis (San Francisco Chapter), 1955-1979

This series includes documents related to the founding of the Daughters of Bilitis (DOB), and the administration, activities and membership of the San Francisco Chapter including its interactions with the National Chapter. Materials include the original constitution, bylaws, correspondence, legal documents, membership records, financial reports, newsletters, flyers, clippings and other materials.

