
Guide to the Ellen Lewin Papers, 1977-1981

Accession number: 1992-03

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society

San Francisco, California

Contact Information:

- Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society
- 657 Mission Street, #300
- San Francisco, California 94105
- Phone: (415) 777-5455
- Email: info@glbthistory.org
- URL: <http://www.glbthistory.org>

Processed by:

Jessica Moll

Date Completed:

October 1996

Encoded by:

Xiuzhi Zhou

© 1999 The Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society. All rights reserved.

Descriptive Summary

Title: Ellen Lewin Papers,

Date (inclusive): 1977-1981

Accession number: 1992-03

Creator: Lewin, Ellen

Extent: 7.5 linear feet

Repository: The Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society.

San Francisco, California.

Language: English

Acquisition

The Ellen Lewin Papers (1992-03) were donated by Lewin in 1992 to GLBTHS.

Access

Collection is open for research.

Publication Rights

Copyright to unpublished manuscript materials has been transferred to the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society.

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Ellen Lewin Papers, The Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society.

Historical Note

The interviews included in this collection are part of a research project on lesbian mothers that Ellen Lewin first conceived for her doctoral dissertation in 1975. At this time Lewin felt that she must be somewhat secretive about her topic -- she deliberately excluded the word "lesbian" from an early grant proposal. She conducted interviews of single mothers, both lesbian and heterosexual, between 1977 and 1981. Her project reached maturity at a time of much greater acceptance of lesbian and gay studies: in 1993 her book, *Lesbian Mothers: Accounts of Gender in American Culture*, was published by Cornell University Press. She donated her interview transcripts to the Gay and Lesbian Historical Society in 1992.

Scope and Content

The collection is comprised of six boxes of interviews, each numbered according to which group in the sampling design a particular interview belongs. The sampling design uses the following categories: sexual orientation (self-identified as lesbian or heterosexual); relationship status (i.e., whether the mother lived with a partner or not); socioeconomic status (SES); and whether the mother had her child in a marital situation (formerly married or never married). Lewin speaks in detail about these independent variables in the appendix to her book. A copy of the appendix, as well as bibliographic information about the book, is included at the end of the finding aid.

The code numbers for the interviews were assigned as follows:

100's:

Upper SES, formerly married

200's:

Middle SES, formerly married

300's:

Lower SES, formerly married

400's:

Upper SES, never married

500's:

Middle SES, never married

600's:

Lower SES, never married

Within all groups, numbers 1-49 were lesbian; numbers 50-99 were heterosexual; odd numbers designated women without co-residential partners; even numbers designated women who lived with partners. For example, # 105 would indicate an upper SES formerly married lesbian who does not have a co-residential partner. The use of the term married refers only to heterosexual marriage.

Most interviews are approximately 100 pages long. Personal names in the transcripts are rendered with initials. The interviewer's name is indicated by her initials: EL means Ellen Lewin; TL means Terrie Lyons. At the end of each interview, the interviewer includes 5-15 pages of notes which describe her impressions of the respondent and the dynamics of the interview. Some of the interviews include a topic notation sheet, which indicates where in the interview certain topics are discussed. Topics covered in the interviews include general background about the respondent's childhood and relationships with her family members, stories of deciding to get divorced and/or coming out, reasons for having children, the child's relationship with his or her father and/or the respondent's lover, different experiences of discrimination and stigmatization, child care and financial concerns, as well as the pleasures of being a single mother.

Title: Del Martin/Phyllis Lyon Papers

Identifier/Call Number: #93-13

Box 1	102
	104
	105
	106
	110
	111
	112

113

114

115

116

117

118

119

121

123

151

152

153

154

156

158

160

163

175

177

179

Box 2 181

183

202

203

204/06

205

207

208

209

210

212

213

214

215

216

218

220

251

252

254

256

258

262

263

271

Box 3 279

283

285

287

291

293

295

301

303

304

305

306

307

308

309

311

313

315

351

353

354

356

Box 4 358

359

362

369

371

401

402

403

404

406

408

410

412

414

451

452

453

454

456

458

462

464

501

Box 5 502

503

504

505

508

510

512

551

553

554

555

556

557

558

560

562

601

602

603

604

605

606

608

Box 6 610

612

614

616

618

620

654

656

658

660

661

662

664

666

Pilot #1