

JEAN SWALLOW

PAPERS

1968-1995

Collection number: GLC 50

James C. Hormel Gay & Lesbian Center
San Francisco Public Library

2007

INTRODUCTION

Provenance

The Jean Swallow Papers were donated to the San Francisco Public Library in 1998 by Betsy Walker and Marian Michener.

Access

Collection is open for research.

Publication Rights

All requests for permission to publish or quote from original material contained within this collection must be submitted in writing to the City Archivist. The San Francisco Public Library owns copyright.

Collection Number

GLC 50

Size

5 cubic feet + 1 oversized box

Processed by

Timothy T. Wilson

Date Completed

August, 2007

Preferred Citation

[*Identification of item*], Jean Swallow Papers (GLC 50), James C. Hormel Gay & Lesbian Center, San Francisco Public Library.

Conservation Note

During processing, the entire collection was re-folded and re-housed in acid-free folders and boxes.

BIOGRAPHY

Jean Swallow was born on September 8, 1953. She was a writer and editor. Her work included newspaper editing for the Charlotte (North Carolina) *Observer*, poetry, novels, essays, and grant-writing. Her anthology *Out From Under* was published in 1983 and was the first book by and about lesbians in recovery from substance abuse. In 1986 her novel *Leave a Light on for Me* was published; it was reissued in 1991. She continued to write shorter pieces, poems and stories, which she collected in *How (Some of) It Works*.

The success of *Out from Under* led to a follow-up volume published as *The Next Step* in 1993. Both volumes were welcome additions to the literature of lesbians in recovery. Swallow died of an apparent suicide on January 16, 1995 in Seattle, Washington. At the time of her death, she had just finished a draft of a book of interviews with photographs by Geoff Manasse; the draft was published under the title *Making Love Visible: in celebration of gay and lesbian families*. The book *A Woman Determined* was published in 1998.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

This collection includes the written work of Jean Swallow and materials that she collected as background research on various subjects. There are drafts and publicity materials for her books, poems and stories. Swallow also amassed material on Al-Anon and other groups that assist people in recovery from substance abuse. At the time of her death Swallow had been clean and sober for 14 years.

ARRANGEMENT NOTE

The material has been arranged into six series, with subseries as noted:

Series 1. Correspondence, 1979-1994

Series 2. Writing by Jean Swallow, 1968-1994

Series 2a. Poems, stories and interviews, 1968-1994

Series 2b. Book Reviews, 1981-1993

Series 2c. Books

Series 2d. Grants, 1981-1989

Series 3. Talks, Workshops, 1982-1993

Series 4. Publications and Clippings Scrapbooks, 1970-1995

Series 5. Subject Files, 1971-1994

Series 6. Photographs, [1991?]

SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

SERIES 1: CORRESPONDENCE, 1979-1994.

12 folders

Arranged chronologically.

This series contains personal and professional correspondence including letters to and from publishers and other writers. Some letters concern writings by Swallow which she seeks to publish, and in other letters she is following through with a publisher. In some instances, Swallow is corresponding with the publisher about promotional activities. One folder labeled "Fan Mail" is filed at the end of this series.

SERIES 2: WRITINGS BY JEAN SWALLOW, 1968-1995.

SERIES 2a: Poems, Stories, Interviews & College Papers, 1968-994.

2 cubic feet

Arranged alphabetically by folder title.

This series contains the earliest of Swallow's work, poems and stories from 1968 into the early 1970s. There are also interviews with other writers notably Judy Grahn. Some of the poems are quite personal and are reflective of her emotional state at the time. *The Millionaire of Time* is a literary triptych formed by three full-length novels in parallel time; there is also a sequence of narrative poems called *A Kiss to Break the Spell*.

SERIES 2b: Book Reviews, 1981-1993.

5 folders

Arranged chronologically.

This series contains book and literature reviews written by Swallow and sometimes co-written by Swallow and others. The drafts and final published copy appear in this series. The literature reviews are a survey of published writings in a particular subject area.

SERIES 2c: Books, 1983-1995.

1.5 cubic foot

Arranged alphabetically by folder title.

This series contains drafts, final copy and publicity material for books and book-length manuscripts written by Swallow. Research notes and publisher's correspondence relating to specific books also appears in this series. *Out from Under*, *Leave a Light on for Me*, *The Next Step* and *Making Love Visible* (with Geoffrey Manasse) are some of the works in this series. There is also a significant amount of research material for "Not That Far From There to Here," which was inspired by the Green River murders in the Seattle, Washington and Portland, Oregon area in the 1980s and 1990s.

SERIES 2d: Grants, 1981-1989.

3 folders

Arranged chronologically.

This series contains drafts and final copy for grants written by Swallow. Some are grants that she wrote on behalf of others and a few sought grant money for her own projects. Correspondence with foundations and grant applicants appears in this series.

SERIES 3: TALKS and WORKSHOPS, 1982-1993.

6 folders

Arranged chronologically.

This series contains invitations to speak at workshops and conferences, and the drafts and final speeches delivered. Correspondence and background materials on the event are included in this series. There is also information on how to speak publicly. "The Politics of Hope" address includes breathing marks and other notations on the way to present the speech.

SERIES 4: SUBJECT FILES, 1971-1994.

29 folders

Arranged alphabetically by folder title.

This series contains material on a variety of subjects that interested Swallow. Many of the topics relate to writing and writers' organizations, lesbians, and recovery from substance abuse. There is material on the Women in Print conference which Swallow assisted with, and on the craft of writing and character study. Swallow's curriculum vitae, obituary, and "Historic Moments in Career" are also filed in this series.

SERIES 5: PUBLICATIONS and SCRAPBOOKS, 1970-1995.
16 items

Arranged alphabetically by title.

This series contains published material written by Swallow. In most cases, her poems, short stories or articles are printed in newspapers or anthologies. There are two scrapbooks of early newspaper articles that Swallow kept in binders. Two yearbooks are also included in this series.

SERIES 6: PHOTOGRAPHS, [1991?].
1 folder

This series contains publicity photographs of Swallow taken by Irene Young in the early 1990s. There are some page proofs of multiple photographs in addition to single images.