

KERISTA COMMUNE.
Kerista Commune collection, circa 1965-2009

Emory University
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Descriptive Summary

Creator: Kerista Commune.
Title: Kerista Commune collection, circa 1965-2009
Call Number: Manuscript Collection No. 1238
Extent: 1 linear foot (1 box) and 1 oversized paper (OP)
Abstract: Collection of materials relating to the Kerista Commune, including printed material, writings, presentations, and video recordings.
Language: Materials entirely in English.

Administrative Information

Restrictions on Access

Unrestricted access.

Terms Governing Use and Reproduction

All requests subject to limitations noted in departmental policies on reproduction.

Related Materials in Other Repositories

[Kerista Commune collection](#), Syracuse University Libraries and [Kerista Commune collection](#), Special Collections, University of California, Davis

Source

Purchase, 2012.

Citation

[after identification of item(s)], Kerista Commune collection, Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

Processing

Arranged and described at the box level by Sarah Quigley, September 2016.

Collection Description

Historical Note

The Kerista commune was a utopian polyfidelity commune that existed in San Francisco from the 1960s through the early 1990s. The commune was led by Jud Presmont and based in the Haight-Ashbury neighborhood. At its height, it attracted approximately two dozen participants. The group "worshipped" the goddess Kerista, an Afro-wearing earth mother pictured in its publications. Its ideology melded progressive ideas about race and gender equality with libertarian socialism and a rejection of traditional modes of monogamy. The group's definitive feature was polyfidelity, a practice in which individuals married into families with multiple members and exchanged sexual partners on a rotating basis. Those units were closed, in the sense that members were polyamorous only within their marriage unit. To raise money for the commune, members started a number of business ventures in San Francisco, including a Macintosh computer distributorship.

Scope and Content Note

The collection consists of materials relating to the Kerista commune from circa 1965-2009 including pamphlets, fliers, and other printed material by and about the commune. The majority of the collection postdates the demise of the commune in 1992 and documents Jud Presmont's later communal projects, loosely incorporated under the World Academy of Keristan Education (WAKE). There are numerous project plans and philosophical essays written by Presmont and others. One notable item is a questionnaire sent to former members of the commune by Eve Furchgott ("Even Eve") to assess the reasons for the commune's failure. Presmont completed the survey and retained a copy of his answers, which is present in the collection. Fliers advertise educational events such as workshops and informal community gatherings. There is also a DVD of Presmont's public access television program "Brother Jud on Love Energy," as well as some photocopied correspondence from Presmont to various political leaders and educators.

Arrangement Note

Arranged by record type.

Container List

Box	Folder	Content
1	-	Printed material, philosophical essays, presentations, and DVD of "Brother Jud on Love Energy"
OP1	-	Fliers and posters
