

# Archivo Cubanecuir

## Finding Aid - ACHL and G.A.L.E.E.S. papers (AGP)

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Generated by Archivo Cubanecuir on January 08, 2025

Language of description: English

Language of description: Spanish

Archivo Cubanecuir

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# ACHL and G.A.L.E.E.S. papers

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## Summary information

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<b>Repository:</b>	Archivo Cubanecuir
<b>Title:</b>	ACHL and G.A.L.E.E.S. papers
<b>Reference code:</b>	AGP
<b>Date:</b>	c.1993-c.1996 (creation)
<b>Physical description:</b>	2 folders
<b>Language:</b>	Spanish
<b>Dates of creation, revision and deletion:</b>	Description prepared by Librada González Fernández, January 2025

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## Administrative history / Biographical sketch

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### Note

The Cuban Association of Homosexuals and Lesbians was an independent organization that fought for the unification and social recognition of LGBTI+ and HIV-positive people throughout the 90s in Cuba. Two of its known accomplishments were the publication of the clandestine newsletter “Huellas” (1993-c.1996) and the public reading of its manifesto on July 1994.

The organization was based in Havana and was led by Andrix Gudin Williams. Another of its members, Jorge Flores, was interviewed by the gay U.S. magazine “The Advocate” and stated: “The government will never permit a gay organization in Cuba [...] A small minority of the group wanted the project to go ahead, but the majority had an enormous fear-a fear that only gay Cubans can feel. I certainly don't want to be the leader, because they will cut my head off. You see, I don't mince words: They will cut my head off.”

The Manifesto of the ACHL was published in English by gay Canadian historian Ian Lumsden in his book “Machos, maricones and gays: Cuba and homosexuality”. According to Lumsden’s transcription, the manifesto was publically read on July 28, 1994 at 5:00 P.M. at Almendares Park. It calls upon listeners to remember those who were discriminated for their gender expression and sexuality since the U.M.A.P. camps; it highlights the importance of making laws to fight homophobia and serophobia; and asserts that the state should not make moral judgements, only juridical ones.

The ACHL dissolved few years after and some of its members joined the Action Group for Free Expression of Sexual Choice or G.A.L.E.E.S. (original Spanish acronym).

## Administrative history / Biographical sketch

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### Note

G.A.L.E.E.S. (Spanish acronym: Action Group for Free Expression of Sexual Choice) was an independent organization founded in Havana around 1996 dedicated to fighting homophobia and promoting sexual liberation. Their main strategy to achieve these goals was designing and coordinating activities. Its members, some belonging to the Gay and Lesbian Association of Cuba (Asociación Cubana de Homosexuales y Lesbianas or ACHL), led the group through a Board of Directors with a parallel leadership structure. Its principal members were José Enrique Pineda, Jorge Luis Torres, Lizbet Gispert, Amaury Fernández, [Odaymar] Cuesta and Joel Feal. G.A.L.E.E.S. took a critical stance against the official rhetoric, refuting the argument that marginalized communities were already integrated into, and respected by, Cuban society. Additionally, the group advocated for spaces dedicated to “sexual minorities,” arguing that their purpose was not to create divisions, but rather to include and empower those who felt excluded because of their sexual identity.

### Custodial history

During the mid-nineties, Salvador who was in charge of \*Huellas\*, entrusted these documents to British activist Stephanie Davies who was visiting the island with the Queers for Cuba group. In August 2020, Librada González Fernández met with José Pineda, ex-general coordinator of G.A.L.E.E.S. and he put her in contact with Stephanie Davies who donated this collection to Cubanecuir two months later.

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## Scope and content

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Records created by two Havana-based queer organizations during the 90's: fifteen issues of \*Huellas\*, the newsletter of the Cuban Association of Homosexuals and Lesbians (original Spanish acronym: ACHL) and a pamphlet about the Action Group for Free Expression of Sexual Choice (original Spanish acronym: G.A.L.E.E.S.).

\*Huellas\* focuses on topics such as queer Cuban identity, civil rights, education, health and culture during the last decade of the XX century. The issues available here were published between 1993-1996 and make-up what its authors call “the first publication to genuinely come from the scene, edited by and for \*entendidos\*” In other words, \*Huellas\* is the earliest surviving independent publication edited for and by openly queer people in Cuba.

Also included in this collection is a pamphlet detailing the mission, purpose, and leadership structure of G.A.L.E.E.S., an organization which included members from the ACHL after the latter dissolved.

To understand the importance of these documents, it is necessary to consider the difficulties of creating and circulating clandestine materials about 90's homosexual/queer culture in Cuba. In 1993, the most thorough and government-approved reference to the subject was the recently premiered movie \*Strawberry and Chocolate\* (original Spanish title: \*Fresa y Chocolate\*) based on a story by Senel Paz. Existing social spaces for LGBTQ+ people (such as parties and nightclubs) were outlawed and especially those with sociopolitical ends. G.A.L.E.E.S. and especially the ACHL spread their ideas through publications that, according to the State's monopoly of media in Cuba, were illegal.

Possibly this explains why the editorial team behind \*Huellas\* remained anonymous until the publication of issue # 21. They identified themselves as “Carlos, Salvador, Ivonne, Ricardo, Pedro (the \*Huellas\* five)”. None of them used their last name, but it is possible to assume that Pedro is the same Pedro Praderas that signed under the section titled “Nuestra canción” in issue # 21. It is also possible to associate Ivonne, the only traditionally feminine name, with the sections written under the pen name “Yo misma” (Myself). However, since according to issue # 13, “Yo Misma” retired after the prior issue, it is possible that the pen name was used by more than one person. Finally, the donor of this collection states that Salvador was the leader of the publication and who entrusted her with these copies so that they could be preserved.

The members of the ACHL understood the risks associated with participating in a clandestine organization. One of them, Jorge Flores, was quoted by the gay U.S. magazine \*The Advocate\* as saying: “The government will never permit a gay organization in Cuba [...] A small minority of the group wanted the project to go ahead, but the majority had an enormous fear—a fear that only gay Cubans can feel. I certainly don’t want to be the leader, because they will cut my head off. You see, I don’t mince words: They will cut my head off.”

The newsletter was first distributed on a trimonthly basis beginning December 1st, 1993. Out of the fifteen issues available here, only the first two are explicitly affiliated with the ACHL. After the second issue, the newsletter was distributed monthly and all references to the organization disappeared.

The last section of every issue, entitled \*Apretaditas\* (which can be translated to “Tight Ones”) offers the readers an authentic glimpse at the queer world of the time through personal messages, funny commentary, and brief news for and about queer/homosexual folks in Havana.

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## Notes

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### Immediate source of acquisition

Donated by Stephanie Davies to Archivo Cubanecuir  
Received October 22, 2020

### Arrangement

Arranged based on record creator and in chronological order when possible.

### Restrictions on access

Open for research

### Conditions governing use

Copyright undetermined.  
For more information contact Archivo Cubanecuir.

### Note [Sources]

- [1] Huellas: Año 1. 1 de diciembre de 1994. Boletín mensual # 10 para Homosexuales  
[2] Bull, C., & Morales, J. (1995, January 24). Crisis in Cuba. *The Advocate*, 672/673, 49. [[Read]](<https://books.google.com/books?id=5WMEAAAAMBAJ&lpg=PP1&rview=1&pg=PP1#v=onepage&q&f=false>)

### Other notes

- **Publication status:** Published

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## Access points

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- Asociación Cubana de Homosexuales y Lesbianas
  - Grupo de Acción por la Libertad de Expresión de la Elección Sexual
  - Periodicals (documentary form)
  - Zines (documentary form)
  - Havana (place)
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## Bibliography

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More information on the Gay and Lesbian Association of Cuba (pp. 197–198) including a public manifesto by the organization (Appendix C):

Lumsden, I. (1996). *Machos, maricones, and gays: Cuba and Homosexuality*. Temple University Press.  
<https://doi.org/10.3362/9781899365852>

Another documentary on gay and lesbian life in Havana during the Special Period. Includes many interviews with members of G.A.L.E.E.S. and more interviews with some of the subjects from the 1993 documentary *\*Looking for a Space\**:

De Vries, S., Centro Fe#lix Varela, & Frameline (Firm). (1995). *Gay Cuba*. Frameline.

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## Collection holdings

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### File: AGP-HUE - Huellas

Creator: Asociación Cubana de Homosexuales y Lesbianas

Title: Huellas

Reference code: AGP-HUE

Date: 1 December 1993-1 March 1996 (date of creation)

Physical description: 1 folder

Arrangement: Arranged in chronological order.

Publication status:

Published

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**Item: AGP-HUE-1 - Año 0. 1 de diciembre de 1993. Boletín trimestral # 1 de la ACHL**

Title: Año 0. 1 de diciembre de 1993. Boletín trimestral # 1 de la ACHL

Reference code: AGP-HUE-1

Date: 1 December 1993 (date of creation)

Physical description: 1 sheet (21.5x32.5cm)

Publication status:

Published

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**Item: AGP-HUE-2 - Año 0. 1 de marzo de 199[4]. Boletín trimestral # 2 de la ACHL**

Title: Año 0. 1 de marzo de 199[4]. Boletín trimestral # 2 de la ACHL

Reference code: AGP-HUE-2

Date: 1 March 1994 (date of creation)

Physical description: 1 sheet (21.5x32.5cm)

Note [generalNote]: Typo in date of document. Document context suggests that this was a 1994 issue, not 1993.

Publication status:

Published

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**Item: AGP-HUE-3 - Año 0. 1 de abril de 1994. Boletín mensual # 3 para Homosexuales**

Title: Año 0. 1 de abril de 1994. Boletín mensual # 3 para Homosexuales

Reference code: AGP-HUE-3

Date: 1 April 1994 (date of creation)

Physical description: 1 sheet (21.5x32.5cm)

Publication status:

Published

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**Item: AGP-HUE-4 - Año 0. 1 de mayo de 1994. Boletín mensual # 4 para Homosexuales**

Title: Año 0. 1 de mayo de 1994. Boletín mensual # 4 para Homosexuales

Reference code: AGP-HUE-4

Date: 1 May 1994 (date of creation)

Physical description: 1 sheet (21.5x32.5cm)

Publication status:

Published

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**Item: AGP-HUE-5 - Año 0. 1 de junio de 1994. Boletín mensual # 5 para Homosexuales**

Title: Año 0. 1 de junio de 1994. Boletín mensual # 5 para Homosexuales

Reference code: AGP-HUE-5

Date: 1 June 1994 (date of creation)

Physical description: 1 sheet (21.5x32.5cm)

Publication status:

Published

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**Item: AGP-HUE-6 - Año 0. 1 de julio de 1994. Boletín mensual # 6 para Homosexuales**

Title: Año 0. 1 de julio de 1994. Boletín mensual # 6 para Homosexuales

Reference code: AGP-HUE-6

Date: 1 July 1994 (date of creation)

Physical description: 1 sheet (21.5x32.5cm)

Publication status:

Published

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**Item: AGP-HUE-7 - Año 0. 1 de agosto de 1994. Boletín mensual # 7 para Homosexuales**

Title: Año 0. 1 de agosto de 1994. Boletín mensual # 7 para Homosexuales

Reference code: AGP-HUE-7

Date: 1 August 1994 (date of creation)

Physical description: 1 sheet (21.5x32.5cm)

Publication status:

Published

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**Item: AGP-HUE-ALE - Alegato de "Huellas"**

Title: Alegato de "Huellas"

Reference code: AGP-HUE-ALE

Date: July 1994 (date of creation)

Physical description: 1 Letter size sheet (8.5x11in or 27.94x21.59cm)

Publication status:

Published

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**Item: AGP-HUE-8 - Año 0. 1 de septiembre de 1994. Boletín mensual # 8 para Homosexuales**

Title: Año 0. 1 de septiembre de 1994. Boletín mensual # 8 para Homosexuales

Reference code: AGP-HUE-8

Date: 1 September 1994 (date of creation)

Physical description: 1 sheet (21.5x32.5cm)

Publication status:

Published

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**Item: AGP-HUE-9 - Año 0. 1 de noviembre de 1994. Boletín mensual # 9 para Homosexuales**

Title: Año 0. 1 de noviembre de 1994. Boletín mensual # 9 para Homosexuales

Reference code: AGP-HUE-9

Date: 1 November 1994 (date of creation)

Physical description: 1 sheet (21.5x32.5cm)

Publication status:

Published

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**Item: AGP-HUE-10 - Año 1. 1 de diciembre de 1994. Boletín mensual # 10 para Homosexuales**

Title: Año 1. 1 de diciembre de 1994. Boletín mensual # 10 para Homosexuales

Reference code: AGP-HUE-10

Date: 1 December 1994 (date of creation)

Physical description: 1 sheet (21.5x32.5cm)

Publication status:

Published

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**Item: AGP-HUE-11 - Año 1. 1 de enero de 1995. Boletín mensual # 11 para Homosexuales**

Title: Año 1. 1 de enero de 1995. Boletín mensual # 11 para Homosexuales

Reference code: AGP-HUE-11

Date: 1 January 1995 (date of creation)

Physical description: 1 sheet (21.5x32.5cm)

Publication status:

Published

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**Item: AGP-HUE-12 - Año 1. 1 de febrero de 1995. Boletín mensual # 12 para Homosexuales**

Title: Año 1. 1 de febrero de 1995. Boletín mensual # 12 para Homosexuales

Reference code: AGP-HUE-12

Date: 1 February 1995 (date of creation)

Physical description: 1 sheet (21.5x32.5cm)

Publication status:

Published

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**Item: AGP-HUE-13 - Año 1. 1 de abril de 1995. Boletín mensual # 13 para Homosexuales**

Title: Año 1. 1 de abril de 1995. Boletín mensual # 13 para Homosexuales

Reference code: AGP-HUE-13

Date: 1 April 1995 (date of creation)

Physical description: 1 sheet (21.5x32.5cm)

1 identical copy

Publication status:

Published

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**Item: AGP-HUE-21 - Año 2. 1 de febrero de 1996. Boletín mensual # 21 para Homosexuales**

Title: Año 2. 1 de febrero de 1996. Boletín mensual # 21 para Homosexuales

Reference code: AGP-HUE-21

Date: 1 February 1996 (date of creation)

Physical description: 1 sheet (21.5x33.5cm)

1 identical copy

Publication status:

Published

Access points:

- Cuban music--Boleros (subject)
- 

**Item: AGP-HUE-16 - Año 2. 1 de marzo de 1996. Boletín mensual # 22 para Homobisexuales**

Title: Año 2. 1 de marzo de 1996. Boletín mensual # 22 para Homobisexuales

Reference code: AGP-HUE-16

Date: 1 March 1996 (date of creation)

Physical description: 1 sheet (21.5x33cm)

1 identical copy

Publication status:

Published

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**File: AGP-GAL - G.A.L.E.E.S.**

Creator: Grupo de Acción por la Libertad de Expresión de la Elección Sexual

Title: G.A.L.E.E.S.

Reference code: AGP-GAL

Date: c.1996 (date of creation)

Physical description: 1 folder

Publication status:

Published

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**Item: AGP-GAL-1 - Untitled "¿Qué es GALEES?"**

Title: Untitled "¿Qué es GALEES?"

Reference code: AGP-GAL-1

Date: c.1996 (date of creation)

Physical description: 1 Letter size sheet (8.5x11in or 27.94x21.59cm)

Publication status:

Published

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