

Special Collections & University Archives



W.E.B. Du Bois Library, 25th Floor
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Amherst, MA 01003-9275

The unique and historically valuable collections in SCUA are the product of countless acts of generosity over decades of support. With the help of our friends and partners, SCUA has assembled a rich record of social change and cultural achievement that has fueled research and enriched the lives of students, scholars, and community members alike.

SCUA welcomes gifts of materials or financial support relating to our collecting interests and public programming, particularly in social change, agriculture, labor, the arts, and the history and cultures of New England. All donations are fully tax deductible.

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Social Change



Special Collections University Archives

W.E.B. Du Bois Library :: University of Massachusetts Amherst



In a decades-long career of struggling for social justice, W.E.B. Du Bois recognized that the roots of inequality were deeply entangled. Ideas surrounding race and gender, class and economic status, are so tightly connected that any effort to resolve one problem inevitably requires tending to others. As a result, there are few single-issue activists.

The Department of Special Collections and University Archives at UMass Amherst (SCUA) collects original materials that document the efforts of individuals and groups to create positive social change through political, economic, spiritual, artistic, or other means. Our perspective on social change reflects a Du Boisian belief in the deep interconnectedness of social forces. Rather than examine individuals or movements in isolation, we document the intellectual and organizational ties that connect them. From the records of community service organizations to civil rights groups and intentional communities, SCUA's collections speak to a long and creative history of social engagement. By preserving a record of these activities for students, scholars, and the general public, we hope to enlighten and encourage future generations in their own efforts to better the world.

SCUA is committed to preserving a robust record of social change and making it freely available to all. Dating from the mid-19th century to the present day, our collections consist of thousands of linear feet of manuscripts and tens of thousands of books, magazines, newspapers, photographic images, posters, audio and visual materials, and associated memorabilia.

Antifluoridation

Since the late 1940s, the antifluoridation movement has been fueled variously by concerns over fluoride toxicity, environmental concerns, and fear of governmental encroachment into private lives.

Examples: Martha Bevis, George Waldbott, Ionel Rapoport

Antinuclear Movement

The growth of the nuclear industry in the 1970s spawned one of the largest grassroots movements of the post-Vietnam era. SCUA's collections reflect widespread concerns over nuclear power, nuclear waste, and nuclear conflict.

Examples: Alternative Energy Coalition, Anna Gyorgy, Citizens Awareness Network

Environment

SCUA collects materials relating to the conservation of natural resources, pollution control, environmental racism, alternative energy, and related topics.

Examples: EarthAction, 20/20 Vision, Jonathan Maslow

Gay, Lesbian, and Gender Rights

Includes material on the struggles for marriage equality and civil rights, gay activism, and gender identity, as well as day to day lives and experiences.

Examples: MassEquality, Boston AIDS Consortium, Barbara Gittings

Intentional Communities

SCUA documents experiments in communal living and alternative lifestyles, cooperative economic arrangements, and the lives and legacy of communards.

Examples: Raymond Mungo, Famous Long Ago Archive, Brotherhood of the Spirit

Labor, Work, and Industry

SCUA's deep holdings for organized labor and labor activism include a rich record of the experience of work and the growth of industry in New England.

Examples: Mass AFL-CIO, John Bennett, union collections

Organic Agriculture and Sustainability

Among the many agricultural collections are materials on organic practices, gardening, heritage breeds, and sustainability in farming, silviculture, and horticulture.

Examples: Northeast Organic Farming Association

Political Radicalism

SCUA documents radical efforts to reform American politics, society, and culture. Our collections also include rich material on Communist-era Eastern Europe.

Examples: Carl Oglesby, Eric Mann & Lian Hurst, Laura Ross

Social Justice

Engagement in creating a more equitable society for all Americans, including antiracism, economic justice, the peace and non-violence movements.

Examples: W.E.B. Du Bois, Liberation News Service, Horace Mann Bond, AFSC Western Mass, Randy Kehler

