



Center for Popular Economics Records

1978-1986

21 boxes (10.5 linear feet)

Call no.: MS040

Collection overview

Established in 1978 by a group of radical economists at UMass Amherst and local community and labor activists, the Center for Popular Economics. The Center's staff grew to include a diverse group of economics professors, degree candidates, and activists from a wide range of educational institutions and social forums.

The collection documents the development of the Center's program, curriculum, and staff, as well as their fund raising, advertising, outreach and networking activities.

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Background on Center for Popular Economics

A group of radical political economists organized the Center for Popular Economics in 1978 as a forum for the exchange of ideas and for building a movement for social and economic justice. Based largely at UMass Amherst, the core group behind the CPE included Samuel Bowles, Juliet Schor, Diane Flaherty, and David Kotz, but they added a robust advisory committee that included Howard Zinn, Barbra Ehrenreich, and others. From a radical perspective, they developed a series of workshops and summer institutes for activists, organizers, researchers, and educators that focused attention on critical social issues with the goal of demystifying the economy and providing participants with a deep analysis of the root causes of economic injustice.

The Center's first Summer Institute for Popular Economics was held in 1979 and was accompanied by a series of carefully-targeted workshops attended by activists from organized labor and a range of other causes. In various workshops during its first decade of operation, the CPE explored the impact of racism, sexism, Reaganomics, Capitalism, class structure, patriarchy, militarism, globalization, and Socialism. The CPE remains an active presence, and has expanded its scope of analysis to include issues such as sustainability, climate change, and economic austerity.

Scope of collection

Focused on the first nine years of its operation, this collection documents the development of the CPE's workshops, programs, and curricula, and the corresponding growth of the Center's staff and efforts at outreach and evaluation. The collection is organized chronologically, year by year, with materials for each year divided up by curriculum, correspondence, arrangements, applications, and evaluations.

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Administrative information

Access

The collection is open for research.

Provenance

Gift of Valeria LaPere, 1986.

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Search terms

Subjects

- Classism

- Economics--Study and teaching
- Militarism
- Racism
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- Socialism
- United States--Economic conditions--1981-2001
- University of Massachusetts Amherst. Department of Economics

Contributors

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