

- [Visit](#)
- [Apply](#)
- [Give](#)
- [Search UMass.edu](#)

Paul Lyons Papers

1947-2009

2 boxes (0.63 linear feet)

Call no.: MS 1186

- [About SCUA](#)
 - [SCUA home](#)
 - [Credo digital](#)
- [Scope](#)
- [Inventory](#)
- [Admin info](#)
- [Download](#)
 - [xml version](#)
 - [print version \(pdf\)](#)



Read collection overview

Background on Paul Lyons

Paul Lyons was a passionate teacher, historian, writer, activist, and musician. He was born in 1949 to a lower middle class Jewish family in New Jersey. He earned his undergraduate degree in history from Rutgers University in 1964. He then continued at Rutgers where he began studying law. Following a speech by Bayard Rustin, he quit law school to become a teacher and civil rights activist. Later, as a member of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) he participated in campus protests as part of the anti-Vietnam War movement. Lyons earned his Masters in history at Rutgers in 1967. Between receiving his Master's and PhD, Lyons taught history at Miquon Upper School, an independent, parent-owned, elementary school located in Whitemarsh on the suburban outskirts of Philadelphia, PA. He would later also teach high school at Chestnut Hill School. After a short stint at Temple University, he spent the bulk of his career teaching at Stockton University in New Jersey. While at Stockton he was involved in his union, played saxophone, and sang in the Stockton Faculty Band.

Lyons received his PhD in Social History Work and Community Organizing from Bryn Mawr in 1980. During his career he published 6 books, Philadelphia Communists, 1936-1956 (1982), Class of '66 (1994), New Left, New Right, and The Legacy of the Sixties (1996), The People of This Generation (2003), American Pacifism (2006), and American Conservatism: Thinking It, Teaching It (2009). Lyons was one of the pioneers of studying the teaching of the right within an academic institution. A historian of the Left, Lyons spent his career attempting to grapple with the successes and failures of the New Left in the United States during the latter part of the 20th Century. Literature on the New Left was long dominated by top-down narratives focusing on major organizations and their leaders. Lyons' People of This Generation (Temple UP, 2003) was significant in that it presented a far different view of the movement: as a neighborhood-level case study of the grassroots. His book American Conservatism: Thinking It, Teaching It grappled with the history/intellectual traditions of conservatism in America through the experience of teaching an interdisciplinary senior seminar in the spring of 2006. Much of his research focused on the teaching of social justice and present day events, such as 911, within the classroom. He was published in the Chronicle of Higher Education, Inside Higher Education, The Observer and The Journal of Historical Society. Married twice, he had three children with his second wife Mary Hardwick. Lyons also enjoyed Basketball and playing music. He passed away at the age of 67 in 2009.

Scope of collection

This small collection of published and unpublished papers assembles several of Lyons' articles for publication in Chronicle of Higher Education, Inside Higher Education, and The Journal of Historical Society, a draft of his

unpublished memoir, his 1980 master's thesis, The Communist as Organizer: The Philadelphia Experience, 1936-1956, drafts of his book American Conservatism, speeches given at anti-Iraq War rallies, and a draft of a manuscript called The Last Socialist in America. It also includes his poetry and other assorted Many of the writings reflect his lifelong areas of interest such as the history of the Left and the rise of conservatism in the U.S. Also included are several articles from journals and web outlets that address September 11th, the Iraq war, teaching, John F. Kennedy, the 1960s, patriotism, and more.

Inventory

American Conservatism: Notes, drafts
2006

Box 1: 1.

Anti-Iraq War speech

2003

Box 1: 2.

The Communist as Organizer: The Philadelphia Experience, 1936-1956 master's thesis

1980 March

Box 1: 3.

Correspondence

2003, 2004, 2006

Box 1: 4.

Democracy and Empire manuscript

ca.2003

Box 1: 5.

"Encouraging Political Incorrectness and Civility", Inside Higher Ed

2009 March 31

Box 1: 6.

From Camelot to Cowboy manuscript

ca.2000

Box 1: 7.

From Vietnam to Iraq: Lessons from the City of Brotherly Love manuscript

ca.2003

Box 1: 8.

George W. Bush's City on a Hill, Journal of the Historical Society vol. 6, no. 1

2006 March

Box 1: 9.

Guterman, Lila Lost Count, Chronicle of Higher Education

2006 February 4

Box 1: 10.

Iraq and Vietnam manuscript

2006 April

Box 1: 11.

The Last Socialist in America manuscript draft pt. 1

ca.2005

Box 1: 12.

The Last Socialist in America manuscript draft pt. 2

ca.2005

Box 1: 13.

Lest We Forget

ca.2002

Box 1: 14.

The Liberal Sixties manuscript

ca.2004

Box 1: 15.

Memoir essay manuscript

undated

Box 1: 16.

Philadelphia 2003 manuscript

2003

Box 1: 17.

Photographs

ca.1970-2000

Box 1: 18.

Poetry, artwork, essays

ca.1947-2000

Box 1: 19.

Progressives manuscript

2001

Box 1: 20.
Quayling manuscript
ca.1992
Box 2: 1.
Questions which Require Attention
ca.2004
Box 2: 2.
Reporters on Trial manuscript
ca.2004
Box 2: 3.
September 11th/terrorism class materials
ca.2005
Box 2: 4.
"Teaching the Holocaust in America", Historically Speaking
2011 November
Box 2: 5.
Thoughts on Social Class and Politics manuscript
1990-07
Box 2: 6.
"Toward a Revised Story of the Homecoming of Vietnam Veterans", Peace and Change vol. 23, no.2
1998 April
Box 2: 7.
"The Truth About Teaching Racism", Observer
2005 April 15
Box 2: 8.
Teaching in America manuscript
undated
Box 2: 9.
Untitled essay on the Middle East, oil, patriotism
1981-10
Box 2: 10.
Unpublished memoir manuscript
ca.2005
Box 2: 11.

Administrative information

Access

The collection is open for research.

Provenance

Gift of Max Lyons, 2023.

Processing Information

Processed by Jeremy Smith, May 2023.

Language:

English

Copyright and Use ([More information](#))

Cite as: Paul Lyons Papers. Robert S. Cox Special Collections and University Archives Research Center, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries.

Search terms

Subjects

- Communism--Pennsylvania--Philadelphia--History
- Communist Party of the United States of America--History
- Communist party work
- Communists--Pennsylvania--Philadelphia--History
- Conservatism--United States

- Iraq War, 2003-2011
- Labor unions
- Philadelphia
- September 11 Terrorist Attacks, 2001
- Socialism
- Teaching
- Vietnam War, 1961-1975

Genres and formats

- Manuscripts

Special Collections & University Archives

[University Libraries](#) : [UMass Amherst](#)

154 Hicks Way : Amherst, Mass. 01003-9275

Ph. 413-545-7282 (545-SCUA)

[f](#) [@](#) [t](#) [✉](#) [Email an archivist](#)

2020 [Site Policies](#) [Accessibility](#)