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Martha Coons Collection

1978-1985

1 box (1.08 linear feet)

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Read collection overview

In the late 1970s and early 1980s Martha Coons was a political and labor activist in the Boston area. She was a shop steward in the District 65 Clerical Workers Union, which was a subdivision of the United Automobile Workers union, at Boston University for two years. Prior to and proceeding through that time, from 1979-1983, she was an activist within the Boston chapter of the New America Movement (NAM). The New America Movement was a socialist political advocacy organization with a focus on feminism, racial equality, and environmental rights. This ended with their merger with the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee, another somewhat less radical socialist organization. The Martha Coons Collection provides insight into the two major factors of her activism. The District 65 part of the collection showcases the inner workings of the labor union in the 1980s, as well as provides examples of grievances that were filed during a string of layoffs at Boston University. The New America Movement documents not only provide information about the meetings and ideals of the organization as well as its workings, but the history of the time around the NAM's merger with the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee, and the Boston chapter's large role in the opposition of said merger.

Background on Martha Coons

In the late 1970s and early 1980s Martha Coons was a political and labor activist in the Boston area. She was a shop steward in the District 65 Clerical Workers Union, which was a subdivision of the United Automobile Workers Union, at Boston University for two years. Prior to and proceeding through that time, from 1979-1983, she was an activist within the Boston chapter of the New America Movement (NAM). The New America Movement was a socialist political advocacy organization with a focus on feminism, racial equality, and environmental rights. This ended with their merger with the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee, another somewhat less radical socialist organization.

Scope of collection

The Martha Coons Collection provides insight into the two major factors of her activism. The District 65 part of the collection showcases the inner workings of the labor union in the 1980s, as well as provides examples of grievances that were filed during a string of layoffs at Boston University. The New America Movement documents not only provide information about the meetings and ideals of the organization as well as its workings, but also the history of the time around the NAM's merger with the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee, and the Boston chapter's large role in the opposition of said merger.

Inventory

Anti-union
1979
Box 1: 1
Boston University settlement
1983
Box 1: 2
Candidacy statement
undated
Box 1: 3
Committee letters
1980
Box 1: 4
District 65: 1983 union tasks
1983
Box 1: 5
District 65: 1983 union tasks
1983
Box 1: 6
District 65: agreement and pledge
1981-1985
Box 1: 7
District 65: B.U. stewards training workshop
undated
Box 1: 8
District 65: draft statement copies
undated
Box 1: 9
District 65: grievances
ca.1982
Box 1: 10
District 65: grievances and performance reports
1982
Box 1: 11
District 65: INCAR letter
undated
Box 1: 12
District 65: Mel King campaign
1983
Box 1: 13
District 65: pamphlets/fliers
ca.1970s-1980s
Box 1: 14
District 65: pins
undated
Box 1: 15
District 65: steward memos
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Box 1: 16
District 65: steward memos
ca.1983
Box 1: 17
District 65: steward memos, grievances
ca.1983
Box 1: 18
District 65: steward letters
1982
Box 1: 19
District 65: union information
ca.1980s
Box 1: 20
District 65: union meeting fliers
ca.1980s
Box 1: 21
District 65: VDTs
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New America Movement: convention 1980
1980

Box 1: 23
New America Movement: convention notebook
1979

Box 1: 24
New America Movement: finances
1979

Box 1: 25
New America Movement: fliers
ca.1978

Box 1: 26
New America Movement: labor conference
1979 Apr 21-22

Box 1: 27
New America Movement: newsletters
1979-1981

Box 1: 28
New America Movement: steering committee
ca.1979

Box 1: 29
New America Movement: steering committee notes
undated

Box 1: 30
New America Movement: workplace group
1979

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Newspaper
1987, 1983

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Publications
ca.1970s-1980s

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Publications
ca.1980s

Box 1: 34
Publications: Coffee Break
1981-1982

Box 1: 35
Publications: Coffee Break
1983-1984

Box 1: 36
Publications: Coffee Break articles
ca.1980s

Box 1: 37
Publications: Countdown
ca.1983

Box 1: 38
Publications: The Labor Page
1982-1984

Box 1: 39
Publications: Women's Rights
ca.1970s

Box 1: 40
Publications: Women's Rights
ca.1970s-1980s

Box 1: 41
San Francisco Mime Troupe
1982

Box 1: 42
Solidarity conference
1983

Box 1: 43
United Automobile Workers: calendar
1982

Box 1: 44
United Automobile Workers: Solidarity magazine
1981-1983

Box 1: 45

Administrative information

Administrative Information

Access

The collection is open for research.

Provenance

Gift of Martha Coons, 2024.

Processing Information

Processed by Hailey Dote, September 2024.

Language:

English

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

Cite as: Martha Coons Collection (MS 1221). Robert S. Cox Special Collections and University Archives Research Center, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries.

Search terms

Subjects

- Labor unions--Massachusetts--Boston
- Socialism

Contributors

- Coons, Martha [main entry]
- Coons, Martha
- New American Movement (Organization)
- International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace, and Agricultural Implement Workers of America. District 65

Genres and formats

- Memorandums
- Notes (documents)
- Publications (documents)

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