



## Valley Peace Center Records

1967-1973

28 boxes (13.75 linear ft.)

Call no.: MS 301

### Collection overview

A community organization located in Amherst, Massachusetts, that was staffed largely by volunteer workers and financed by memberships and contributions and aimed to oppose the Vietnam War, to counsel young men of draft age, and to support programs directed at related social and political problems. Includes minutes, correspondence, financial records, newsletters, clippings, volunteer and membership lists, questionnaires, notes, petitions, draft registration forms, buttons, posters, circulars, pamphlets, brochures, periodicals, bound volumes, and other printed materials on such topics as issues of war and peace, draft counseling, alternative service, fund raising, boycotts, war tax resistance, demonstrations, prison reform, environmental quality, and political candidates.

### See similar SCUA collections:

[Antinuclear](#)[Massachusetts \(West\)](#)[Peace](#)[Social change](#)[UMass \(1947- \)](#)[Vietnam War](#)

## Background on Valley Peace Center (Amherst, Mass.)

A community organization staffed largely by volunteer workers and financed by memberships and contributions, the Valley Peace Center was established in October 1967 to oppose the Vietnam War, to counsel young men of draft age, and to support programs directed at related social and political problems. The Center rented space in Amherst, Massachusetts to house its draft counseling program, its library and its literature distribution services, and for planning and carrying out its other programs. The Center was succeeded by the New Valley Peace Center in April 1973.

Historically a center of dissent, the academic community's skepticism toward the Vietnam War was reinforced during this era by military draft laws and regulations that provided deferments for college and graduate students so long as they were pursuing their studies. This provision constrained many draft-age young men to college campuses and served to increase their uneasiness. As the decade of the 1960's progressed, opposition to the War and the draft grew, first on and then off the college campuses; spokespersons emerged; organizations were formed; and activities through which opposition to the war could be expressed were

developed. In this milieu, in the summer of 1967, members of campus groups at the University of Massachusetts such as the Faculty Group on War and Peace and the Students for Political Action, together with individuals from other area colleges and from the community at large - representing primarily religiously oriented groups - joined forces to form the Valley Peace Center of Amherst.

According to its October 1967 brochure, the Center was conceived of as an "umbrella organization serving as a resource to all those concerned with current international tensions and domestic conditions associated with a state oriented to war." The founders of the Center defined six central aims: U.S. disengagement from the Vietnam War; reversal of the neglect of the human needs of deprived and minority groups in America; change of the draft law to better accommodate objection to the Vietnam War; elicitation of pledges from the government to avoid first use of nuclear and biological weapons; reduction of the power of the "military-industrial complex"; and strengthening of the United Nations. The first aim predominated and served as the unifying position of the Center over its existence.

The Center was active for more than five and a half years, drawing its financial support largely from the community and the bulk of its work force from student and community volunteers. Most of its resources were devoted to draft counseling and the support of that activity, to its library and its literature distribution programs, and to the anti-Vietnam War demonstrations of the late 1960's and early 1970's, especially the weekly Amherst Common Peace Vigil and the demonstrations at the Westover Air Force Base in Chicopee.

As the United States wound down its activities in Vietnam, changed the military draft law, reduced draft calls and eventually discontinued the draft altogether, the role and future of the Center came into question, and a series of conflicts erupted among its participants, especially between some of those long associated with it and a group of energetic newcomers. The quarrel came to a head in the spring of 1973 when, following a change in the voting membership of the Center's executive board, the views of the newcomers prevailed and the old-timers withdrew. The disruption caused so extensive a reorganization of the Center that it was viewed as discontinued. The succeeding organization renamed itself the New Valley Peace Center.

## **Scope of collection**

The Valley Peace Center Records document the philosophy, activities, programs, and membership of the Center from its founding in 1967 to its disbanding and eventual re-forming as the New Valley Peace Center in 1973. The records comprise minutes, correspondence, financial statements, bills and invoices, manuscripts, surveys, membership lists, subject files, newsletters, brochures, posters, buttons, stickers, clippings, notes, petitions, draft registration forms, pamphlets, periodicals, bound volumes, and other printed materials on such topics as war and peace, draft counseling, alternative service, fund raising, boycotts, war tax resistance, demonstrations, prison reform, environmental quality and political candidates. The collection is prefaced with an introductory file including studies of the Center and is arranged into four series: organizational papers; programs; literature; and artifacts.

## **Arrangement**

This collection is organized into four series:

- **Series 1. Organizational Papers**
- **Series 2. Programs**
- **Series 3. Literature**
- **Series 4. Artifacts**

## Series descriptions

### Series 1. Organizational Records

Includes the Valley Peace Center Newsletter and the Valley Peace Center News Notes (subseries 1/00). The minutes of the Center begin with the surviving records of the Hampshire County Peace Action Committee, an ad hoc group which created the Center, followed by the minutes of its own Executive Board with certain other communications sent to members, surviving non-programmatic correspondence (correspondence relating to the Center's several programs is placed with other materials relating to respective programs), volunteer and membership lists and responses to mailings, all making up subseries 1/1. The financial records (subseries 1/2) of the Center comprise all surviving bills, cancelled checks, stubs and correspondence relating to its expenditures; no journal or other running record besides the check stubs seems to have survived. The Center's personnel did a great deal of clipping of current newspapers and leaves in magazines, both local and national; those clippings that originated in the local press or dealt with events taking place in this region are filed with the programs to which they related in series 23 or chronologically, except that the Westover Air Force Base demonstrations have their own folders in subseries 1/3. Materials relating to the activities of one of the Center's precursor groups, the Faculty Group on War and Peace, together with miscellaneous material from three individuals prominent at one time or another in the activities of the Center make up the fourth subseries of Organizational Papers.

### Series 2. Programs

**Arrangement:** Arranged by activity. Within each subseries, materials are arranged under either the name of the program or the name of the organization spawned by or cooperating with the Center.

Includes materials used to organize and initiate services that the Center set out to provide. Subseries 2/1 is a general file of these programs and organizations. Materials relating to the assistance of candidates for public office, draft counseling, to the work involved in placing potential draftees in alternative service program, and to the provision of the library and literature distribution programs are set out in subseries 2/2 through 2/5, respectively.

### Series 3. Literature

The Center operated its literature distribution and library program with several aims. It distributed literature and loaned books and pamphlets furthering its views on the Vietnam War, on war in general, and on other social problems in which it was interested. It informed potential draftees of their options, and kept draft counselors informed on the current state of the military draft laws and regulations and on court cases involving the draft. Much of the material was in the form of flyers and circulars, and periodicals produced by national organizations of long standing with well-known spheres of activity and expertise. These materials are arranged in subseries 3/1, under the name of the issuing agency, or, in the case of periodicals, by title. Some circulars and the like from miscellaneous sources are in topical groups in subseries 3/2. Clippings and extracts from the national media on the Vietnam war and other international and domestic issues in which the Center's participants were interested, are arranged by subject, and make up subseries 3/3.

Format considerations dictated the arrangement of most pamphlets and of books into subseries 3/4 and 3/5, respectively. Most pamphlets and all books are filed alphabetically by the name of the author, or, when none was shown, by title. Some smaller pamphlets showing no author are filed in subseries 3/1 under the name of the issuing agency.

Lists of book and pamphlet titles in this series are available in the collection.

There are many instances in which drafts of meeting minutes, carbons of outgoing correspondence, manuscript notes, etc., were made on the back of spare copies of notices of the Center's activities. In some cases, those copies used for "scratch" purposes may represent the only copies of such notices surviving in the files.

## Series 4. Artifacts

Includes stickers, rubber stamps, and thirty-eight buttons related to the Vietnam peace movement, the McGovern candidacy, and other issues; and two rubber address stamps for the Center. Also included in this series, and stored in map case 2, drawer 5, are two posters advertising the Center's address, phone number and its services; one poster "Strategic Air command/Peace is our Profession"; and a copy of the U.S. Constitution, Bill of Rights with footnotes.

## Inventory

### Series 1. Organizational Records

#### Introductory materials

Guide (Removed to notebook of inventories.)

Box 1: 1

Donor File, (Removed. Office records.)

1971

Box 1: 2

Bergethon, B. - Outline for paper Box 1: 3

Bergethon and Panter - Small Time, Most Greatly Liv'd' - original typescript Box 1: 4

(Same) - photocopy Box 1: 5

### Subseries 1/00: Publications

Valley Peace Center Newsletter 1967-1970 Box 2: 6

Valley Peace Center News Notes and Valley Peace Center Newsletter 1970-1973, 1973 Box 2: 7

### Subseries 1/1: General

Hampshire County Coordinated Action For Peace 1967 Box 2: 8

Minutes and papers of the Executive Board 1967 Box 2: 9

Minutes and papers of the Executive Board 1968 Box 2: 10

Minutes and papers of the Executive Board 1969 Box 2: 11

Minutes and papers of the Executive Board 1970 Box 2: 12

Minutes and papers of the Executive Board 1971 Box 2: 13

Minutes and papers of the Executive Board 1972 Box 2: 14

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New Valley Peace Center 1973 Box 2: 16

General Correspondence of the Board 1967-1973 Box 2: 17

Valley Peace Center vs. James Kelley Box 2: 18

Volunteer and membership lists Box 2: 19

Volunteered in response to mailing 1970 Box 2: 20

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### Subseries 1/2: Financial papers

Bank statements and cancelled checks 1967-1968 Box 3: 22

Bank statements and cancelled checks 1969-1970 Box 3: 23

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?Allen, Dean A.? Manuscript notes for 2 talks about 1967 and letter	1970	Box 4: 46
Burak, Nonnie - correspondence, not Valley Peace Center		Box 4: 47
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Amherst College; protest against investments in prime military contractors		Box 5: 53
Amherst High School		Box 5: 54
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Discussion groups		Box 5: 61
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Group for New Culture Protection (includes newspaper clippings)		Box 5: 63
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### Subseries 3/4: Pamphlets

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Allen, Robert I. Dialectics of Black Power. N.Y.; Weekly Guardian Associates; 1969. 32 pp.	Box 18: 330
Amherst, Mass., Citizens Review Commission Report to the town of Amherst, Nov. 1, 1969. 22 pp.	Box 18: 330
American Friends Service Committee. Speak truth to power: a Quaker search for an alternative to violence. A study of international conflict prepared for (the author). (author?, 1955). vii, 71.	Box 18: 330
_____. (another copy, same collation; printed in 1955).	Box 18: 330
Bell, Inge Powell. Status discrepancy and the radical rejection of nonviolence. Photocopy from Sociological Inquiry 38:51-64, 1968, pp. 52-63 not copied.	Box 18: 331
Berkeley-Oakland Women for Peace, Your draft-age son: a message for peaceful parents. Berkeley, CA, the author, 1968. 27 pp.	Box 18: 331
Blumberg, Herbert H. Accounting for a nonviolent demonstration. Photocopy from Sociological Inquiry 38:43-50, 1968. With Bell, Inge Powell in L.	Box 18: 331
Blumberg, Herbert H. A guide to organizations, books and periodicals concerned with nonviolence. Photocopy from Sociological Inquiry 38:73-93, 1968. With Bell, Inge Powell in L.	Box 18: 331
Brinton, Howard H. The peace testimony of the Society of Friends. Philadelphia?; American Friends Service Committee; (1955?). 16 pp.	Box 18: 331
Brown, Harrison. Community of fear, by Harrison Brown (and) James Real, with forward by Reinhold Niebuhr. Santa Barbara Ca.; Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions; 1960. (40 pp.)	Box 18: 331
Clark, Sen. Joseph S. Stalemate in Vietnam: report to the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate. Washington D.C. U.S.G.P.O.; 1968. 24 pp.; folding map.	Box 18: 332
Commission on Voluntary Service and Action. Invest yourself: a catalogue of service opportunities; 25th ed. N.Y.; the author; (1970). 51 pp.	Box 18: 332
Directory of Social Change. Alternatives: foundation, a non-profit educational program for persons exploring alternative life styles. Sebastopol, Ca.; the Foundation; 1969. 30 pp.	Box 18: 333
Dixwell Legal Rights Association, Inc. Community workers as community organizers. New Haven, Ct.; the author; (n.d.). (13 pp.); Photocopy.	Box 18: 333
Draws, Dale H. Humanist Conscientious objection: a guide for men of draft age; 2nd ed. N.Y.; American Ethical Union; 1971. 44 pp.	Box 18: 333
Draws, Dale H. Humanist conscientious objection: a guide for men of draft age. N.Y.; American Ethical Union; 1971. 44 pp. "Riesterer".	Box 18: 333
Eberly, Donald J. A profile of national service. N.Y.; Overseas Educa-tional Service; (1966?). 60 pp.; "Dean A. Allen".	Box 18: 334



____. ____ . another copy, marked "Allen".	Box 18: 334
Farber, Jerry. The student as nigger. Boston, Ma.; New England Free Press; (n.d.). 6 pp.	Box 18: 335
____. ____ . another copy.	Box 18: 335
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Valley Peace Center sign, on cardboard 13" X 13": black lettering on white panels of heavy paper pasted onto black background; some panels missing.	Map Case #2, drawer 5
Panel 1. Valley/Peace/Center/ open weekdays/ one to five p.m./(panel 2) telephone AL 3-3683.	
Panel 2. Saturdays, two to four	
Panel 3. Trained draft/and military counselors are/available during these hours./For urgent cases/other times/ (missing).	
Valley Peace Center poster, on heavy beige paper 24" X 18". "where will the children play/valley peace center. 1 cook place/in the alley. amherst 253-3683" over silhouettes of people and animals; signed: Stella 73 6/20. (i.e., 20-6-73?)	Map Case #2, drawer 5
Photograph poster, 23" X 17" of missile and billboard with legend "Strategic Air command/Peace is our Profession"; by Fleur De Lis, Amherst, Ma.	Map Case #2, drawer 5
U.S. Constitution. Bill of Rights, as proposed March 4, 1789. 13 1/2" X 15" facsimile, with footnotes.	Map Case #2, drawer 5
Rubber Stamp: "Valley Peace Center/1 Cook Place - In the Alley/253-3683/Amherst, Mass. 01002"	Box 4
Rubber Stamp: "Valley Peace Center/P.O. Box 418/Amherst, Mass. 01002"	Box 4
Blank button. 5 red.	Box 4



Blank button, red, hand-lettered: "KIDNAP/BEBE/RE(B)OZO"

Box 4

Peace stamps 1 1/2" X 5" booklet, of 500, with 72 remaining.

Box 4

Plastic packet of stickers:

Box 4

All our sons in Vietnam are POWs (5)

Peace on earth, good will toward men (5)

War is not healthy for children (5)

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### Access

The collection is open for research.

### Provenance

Acquired in February 1974 by a group of Executive Board members including Nonny Burack and Professor Dean A. Allen.

### Accruals

Accretions expected.

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