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Activism of the 1980s Photograph Collection

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1985-1987

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During the academic year 1986-1987, UMass Amherst was awash in political turmoil, fueled in part by the US intervention in Central America. The arrival on campus of a CIA recruiting officer in November set off a string of demonstrations that attracted the support of activists Abbie Hoffman and Amy Carter, culminating in the occupation of the Whitmore Administration Building and later, Munson Hall. Among the many arrested, thirteen were brought to trial on charges of disorderly conduct, including

Hoffman and Carter, all of whom were eventually acquitted.

The Collection contains 64 mounted photographs of marches, demonstrations, and protests in Amherst and Northampton, Mass., taken by UMass Amherst students Charles F. Carroll, Byrne Guarnotta, and Libby Hubbard. The photographs are a vivid record of campus and community activism, and particularly the mobilization against the CIA and American intervention in Central America, as well as the arrest and trial of Abbie Hoffman and Amy Carter.

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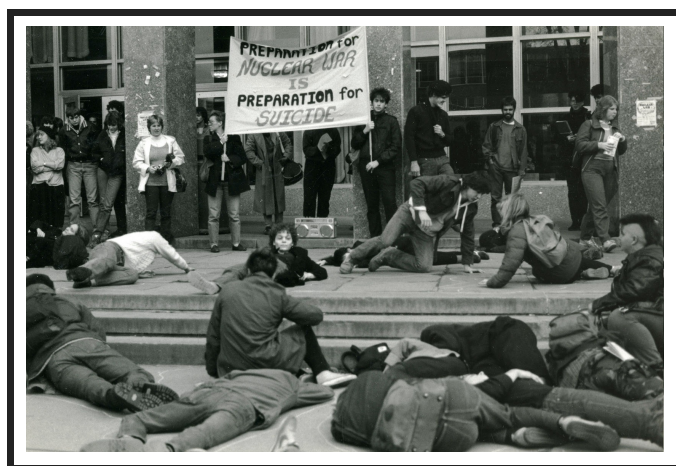
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Background

During the academic year 1986-1987, three students from the University of Massachusetts Amherst conducted a year-long photographic documentation of political demonstrations and protests. Charles F. Carroll, Byrne Guarnotta, and Libby Hubbard captured images of marches ranging from a Take Back the Night march to rallies for gay rights and protests against racism, American support for the apartheid regime in South Africa, and nuclear weapons.

The most volatile point of protest during that year, however, centered on US policy in Central America, and particularly the CIA support of death squads and Contra rebels in Nicaragua. The arrival of a CIA recruiter on campus in November proved to be a flash point, drawing in other activists from throughout the region and, as tensions rose, mobilizing students on both the left and right.



Die in on the steps of the Student Union

On November 13, the Radical Student Union (RSU) organized a protest at the University Career Center where the CIA had planned to hold a "pre-interview information session." Although the RSU succeeded in forcing the recruiters to cancel the session, they learned the next morning that the interviews had actually been shifted to an undisclosed location elsewhere on campus. In response, a number of protesters marched on the office of Chancellor Joseph Duffey in the Whitmore Administration Building to complain of the University's complicity in dealing with the CIA. Finding the main entrance to Whitmore locked down, they tried several other entrances, eventually gaining admittance to the Affirmative Action office through an unlocked side door. Their efforts to reach the Chancellor were unavailing, and when University police were called in, eleven were placed under arrest for trespass.

The occupation of Whitmore, however, was only the beginning of troubles. Five days later, a group of students presented a set of demands to the administration, asking (among other things) that the University bar CIA recruiters from campus. As tensions mounted, long-time activist Abbie Hoffman phoned members of the RSU, offering to come to campus to hold a workshop and take part in the demonstrations. Amy Carter, daughter of President Jimmy Carter and then a sophomore at Brown University, also came. When the protesters received what they regarded as a tepid and inadequate response to their demands, a crowd of approximately 700 protesters gathered, including Hoffman and Carter, and rallied in front of the Student Union Building before marching on Whitmore. Confronted by a police barricade, approximately 150 members of the crowd broke off and entered adjacent Munson Hall, occupying it for several hours. By the evening, state police in riot gear were called in, and wielding batons and dogs, they began removing the protesters one by one. As the crowd outside chanted "The whole world is watching," 51 were taken under arrest, thirteen of whom -- including Hoffman (who was inside Munson) and Carter (who was outside) -- were singled out and charged with trespassing and disorderly conduct. Throughout, smaller groups right wing counter-protesters squared off against the much larger anti-CIA crowd, complaining that denying access to the recruiters was unpatriotic and an infringement on their rights.

In April 1987, the defendants were tried in the Hampshire County Court House in Northampton. The defense team, led by Leonard Weinglass, raised a "necessity defense" based on provisions in Commonwealth law that exonerate those charged with crimes if they reasonably believed that their actions would prevent the "clear and immediate threat" of greater harm. Judge Richard F. Connon allowed the defense and admitted the testimony of a number of prominent left-wing political figures who provided testimony on the CIA's support for death squads, assassinations, and other illegal activities. The defense succeeded. Although it is unclear whether necessity held greater sway among jurors than the belief that disorderly conduct did not apply, the jury's exoneration of the defendants was widely understood as a rebuke to the CIA and to University policy.

Scope of collection

The Activism in the 1980s Collection contains 64 mounted photographs depicting marches, demonstrations, and protests in Amherst and Northampton, Mass. Taken by Charles F. Carroll, Byrne Guarnotta, and Libby Hubbard, all UMass Amherst students, the photographs are a vivid record of campus and community activism in the mid-1980s, and especially the mobilization against the CIA and American intervention in Central America and the arrest and trial of Amy Carter and Abbie Hoffman.

Although the protests against the CIA and American policy in Central America predominate, the collection also includes images of events ranging from a Take Back the Night march to rallies for gay rights and protests against racism, American support for the apartheid regime in South Africa, and nuclear weapons. Seven photographs depict right wing counter-demonstrators protesting at the trial of Carter and Hoffman.

Inventory

CIA protests at UMass Amherst

1986-1987

Crowd of protesters at University Career Center, with anti-CIA placard

1986 Nov.

1



Graffiti on wall outside University Gallery reading 'CIA out of UMass'

1986 Nov.

2

Interior shot of student occupation of Munson Hall

1986 Nov.

3

Piles of student newspaper The Minutemen, with headline 'Does Freedom Reign? CIA. . . where your opinions are as diverse as



your interests'

1986 Nov.

4

Rally on lawn with banners reading 'CIA out of UMass' and 'Students united will never be defeated'



1986 Nov.

5

Student being carried off, covered with fake blood

1986 Nov.?

6

Student march toward Whitmore Hall. Passing by Herter Hall

1986 Nov.

7

Student occupation of Munson Hall, with banner reading 'Covert Inhuman Atrocities'



1986 Nov.

8

Students arrested and dragged off by police

1986 Nov.

9

Students occupying Munson Hall, Climbing in second story window

1986 Nov.

10



Throng of protesters on UMass campus, one waving a large American flag

1986 Nov.

11

Carroll, Charles F.: 'Students for a Socially Responsible University -- Radical Student Union. Amy Carter, CIA on Trial' [Police in riot gear and dogs staging by UMass buses]

1986 Nov.

12



Carroll, Charles F.: Police in riot gear and dogs staging by UMass buses

1986 Nov.

13

Altered sign in unidentified building reading 'CIA no' and 'Justice and freedom' with shaving cream graffiti of anarchist A and 'No way'

1986 Nov.

14

Police and onlookers

ca.1986 Nov.?

15



Unidentified protesters in office, one wearing t-shirt 'Nicaragua libre'

1986

16

'CIA on campus student protest' [meeting and panel discussion in Campus Center]

1987

17

Hubbard, Libby: 'Students for a Socially Responsible University (Radical Student Union)' [Chalk outlines of people on sidewalk with words Draper and Bombs]

1987

18

'Students protest CIA' by University Art Gallery

1987

19

'Students protest' [speaker in front of crowd holding bullhorn, wearing t-shirt reading 'Put the CIA on trial']



1987

20

Carroll, Charles F.: "Students take over forum"

1987

21

Carroll, Charles F.: "Students take over forum"

1987

22

Anti-CIA skit at Student Union Art Gallery

1987

23

Elderly man carrying placard reading "Not a penny to the Contra cutthroats," standing by pond and markers for victims of



Contra violence

1987

24



Markers placed on lawn by pond commemorating victims of Contra violence

1987

25

Protesters at Student Union with banner reading "Rafael Eduardo Garcia student assassinated April 14, 1987 in El Salvador. Stop



CIA death squad crimes"

1987

26

Hubbard, Libby: Protesters in front of Student Union Building with anti-CIA banners

1987

27

Unidentified woman talking with crowd, man probably at student takeover of forum



1987

28

CIA: Trial of Abbie Hoffman and Amy Carter

1986-1987

Abbie Hoffman lying on floor, talking with students

1986 Nov.

29

Carroll, Charles F.: Amy Carter at the microphone

1986 Nov.

30

Hubbard, Libby: Protester with sign reading "Ban the CIA not protesters" in front of Whitmore Building, UMass



1986 Nov.

31

Carroll, Charles F.: "Abby in court"

1987 April

32

View of courtroom, Northampton, with Abby Hoffman standing

Carroll, Charles F.: "CIA Trial -- Abby"

1987 April

33

Abby Hoffman and crowd in courtroom, Northampton



Carroll, Charles F.: "CIA trial"

1987 April

34

Amy Carter and students raising fists on steps of Northampton Courthouse and holding banner reading "On to Washington!" probably after trial

"Jay Allare -- Northampton CIA trial"

1987 April

35

Group on steps of Northampton courthouse

1987 April

36



"Amy Carter Victory over CIA"

1987 April

37

Amy Carter hugging supporters in court room, Northampton

Carroll, Charles F.: Anti-CIA protesters in Northampton with placards reading "CIA sponsors international terrorism;" "Nancy just



say no to the CIA," and "Stockwell lies"

1987 April

38

Guarnotta, Byrne: Amy Carter and Abbie Hoffman at press conference

1987

39

Carroll, Charles F.: Familiar man

1987

40

Carroll, Charles F.: Familiar woman

1987

41

Carroll, Charles F.: Firemen outside Hampshire County Courthouse

1987 April

42

Other protests at UMass Amherst

1986-1987

Carroll, Charles F.: "Black students protest"

ca.1986-1987

43

Carroll, Charles F.: "Gay rights"

ca.1986-1987

44

Banner in window of Machmer Hall(?) reading Lesbian Union

Hubbard, Libby: "Take back the night -- Women's movement"

ca.1986-1987

45

Take back the night march



"US military recruitment on campus"

ca.1986-1987

46



Night rally with placards reading "Fight racism" and "El Pueblo Unido"

ca.1986-1987

47

Protesters occupying Whitmore Hall

ca.1986-1987

48

Sign taped to door: "Students are now occupying Whitmore over the right to control student activities money"

ca.1986-1987

49

Hubbard, Libby: Staged die-in beneath banner reading "Preparation for nuclear war is preparation for suicide"



ca.1986-1987

50

Unidentified speaker

ca.1986-1987

51

Unidentified student and official(?) seated at conference table

ca.1986-1987

52



Woman greeted at door of Whitmore Hall by police officer and official

ca.1986-1987

53

Protester in helmet and cape holding up "complaint form" before students (skit)

ca.1986-1987

54

Unidentified woman in front of blackboard with tally of votes

ca.1986-1987

55

Right wing counter-demonstrations

1986-1987

Hubbard, Libby: Handbill posted on podium reading "Stop Communism a protest of the Soviet Union Sponsored by the UMass



Republican Club"

ca.1985 October

56

Hubbard, Libby: Banner on bus kiosk, Northampton, reading "Amy & Abbie came to UMass now it's time to kick their ass!"



ca.1987 April

57

Hubbard, Libby: Crowd of right wing protesters carrying anti-Amy Carter and Abbie Hoffman placards, Northampton, American



flag, and Ronald Reagan poster

ca.1987 April

58

Hubbard, Libby: Protester standing by effigy of Abbie Hoffman dressed in Moscow University sweatshirt hanging from tree,



Northampton Courthouse

ca.1987 April

59

Hubbard, Libby: Banners hanging on building (possibly Beta Kappa Phi frat) reading "If you don't love American then leave!" and



"CIA the American way, Beat it liberals"

ca.1987

60



Hubbard, Libby: Protester with placed reading "Nuke Happy Valley"

ca.1987

61

Carroll, Charles F.: "Right students protest" [protesters in front of Student Union carrying signs "Student money is student money," "Student rights," "We give an inch they take our trust fund," and "Randy the Donut, Get the hole out of office"]



ca.1987

62

Anti-apartheid and disinvestment protests

1986-1987

Sign altered in administrative offices to read Apartheid Office -- Vice Chancellor for South Africa -- Defeat Racism 4 love & peace

ca.1986-1987

63



South African divestment march at UMass

ca.1986-1987

64

Signs read "Embargo South Africa not Nicaragua," "Divest now," and "Ban apartheid"

Administrative information

Access

The collection is open for research.

Provenance

Acquired Aug. 12, 1999.

Processing Information

Processed by Dexter Haven, 2008.

Digitized content

Most of the collection has been digitized and can be viewed online in our digital repository, [Credo](#).

Related Material

For related collections, see:

Radical Student Union Records (RG 45/80 R1)

University Records: Student Protests and Demonstrations -- CIA Recruitment (RG 45/101)

CIA on Trial Project (MS 508)

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Subjects

Amherst (Mass.)

Anti-apartheid movements--Massachusetts.

CIA on Trial Project (Amherst, Mass.)

Carter, Amy.

Central America--Foreign relations--United States.

Demonstrations--Massachusetts.

Hoffman, Abbie.

Northampton (Mass.)

Student movements.

United States--Foreign relations--Central America.

United States. Central Intelligence Agency.

Contributors

Carroll, Charles F.

Guarnotta, Byrne.

Hubbard, Libby.

Genres and formats

Photographs.

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University Libraries : UMass Amherst
154 Hicks Way : Amherst, Mass. 01003-9275
Ph. 413-545-7282 (545-SCUA)



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