



## Frances Crowe Photograph Collection

1969-1987

1 box (0.25 linear foot)

Call no.: PH 092

### Collection overview

A founder of the Western Massachusetts branch of the American Friends Service Committee and the Traprock Peace Center, Frances Crowe was a legendary peace activist. Born in Missouri in March 1919, Crowe became a committed pacifist in 1945 after learning of the devastation of the bombings in Dresden, Hiroshima, and Nagasaki. Moving to Northampton in 1951 with her husband Thomas, a physician, she began organizing for peace and against nuclear weapons, increasing her peacework during the Vietnam War, she worked as a draft counselor in Northampton. A member of the Society of Friends, she joined the War Resisters League, SANE, and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, among many other organizations, and was arrested dozens of times for civil disobedience during protests opposing war and militarism, nuclear energy, American imperialism in Central America, and apartheid, and she became a war tax resister after the first Iraq War. An activist to the very end, she died on Aug. 27, 2019, at the age of 100.

This small collection of photographs was kept by Frances Crowe in her role as contributor to Peace Work, the newsletter of the American Friends Service Committee, or for inclusion in the AFSC files. Concentrated in the early 1980s, they depict a range of peace and antinuclear protests in western Massachusetts. The majority of the images were taken by Crowe's associate, Miriam Leader.

### See similar SCUA collections:

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## Background on Frances Crowe

A founder of the Western Massachusetts branch of the American Friends Service Committee and the Traprock Peace Center, Frances Crowe was a legendary peace activist in the Pioneer Valley of Massachusetts, whose influence extended nationally. An ardent pacifist, she was at the center of resistance to war, nuclear weaponry and nuclear power, U.S. imperialism, and an array of other social justice causes for over half a century.

Born in Carthage, Missouri, in March 1919, Crowe took part in a peace friendship club as a young girl and her convictions only grew after witnessing of a public hanging of a Black prisoner at a local jail. As a young woman, she studied at Syracuse University and Columbia, working in a defense plant during the Second World War, but after learning of the devastation resulting the bombings in Dresden, Hiroshima, and Nagasaki, her commitment to pacifism solidified. Recently married to Thomas Crowe, a radiologist completing his military service in Panama, Crowe immediately began educating herself on pacifism and non-violence.



*Randy Kehler, Frances Crowe, and Bill Strickland at a dinner in honor of Margaret Holt, 1985*

Frances and Thomas Crowe moved to Northampton in 1951 to enroll their son in the Clarke School for the Deaf. Becoming connected with the Quakers, she began to spend increasing time as a member of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, War Resisters League, and SANE organizing against war, nuclear weaponry, and nuclear testing. During the Vietnam War, she attended a training session sponsored by the Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors and formed the Northampton Draft Information Center in the basement of her home -- a center for much of her organizing and activism -- counseling thousands in resisting military service. In 1968, she also founded the Western Massachusetts Branch of the American Friends Service Committee, running it for many years out her office in her basement.

Crowe's first arrest (among many) came after an International Women's Day protest in 1972 at the Westover Air Force Base in Chicopee, Mass., working with a group she helped to found, Women Against the War. Her commitments and record of arrests only accelerated from there. She was a key founder of the Traprock Peace Center in Deerfield, Mass., and several other local and regional peace organizations, and she was a key organizer for the Nuclear Freeze campaign, the antinuclear movement more generally, opposition to U.S. intervention in Central America, and other causes. Known for keeping a weekly anti-war vigil in front of the courthouse in Northampton, she became a war tax resister after the first Iraq War, unable to conscience supporting the U.S. military any longer. An activist to the very end, she died on Aug. 27, 2019, at the age of 100.

## **Scope of collection**

This small collection of photographs was assembled by Frances Crowe in her role as head of the American Friends Service Committee, Western Massachusetts, with the images apparently intended for publication or for inclusion in the AFSC files. Concentrated in the early 1980s, they depict a range of peace and antinuclear protests, primarily in western Massachusetts. Many of the images were taken by Crowe's associate, Miriam Leader.

## Inventory

➤ <b>Photographs: Vietnam Moratorium protest (Springfield, Mass.)</b>	1969	5 images	Folder 1
➤ <b>Photographs: Anti-war, antinuclear, women's movement, and draft registration protests (Greenfield and Northampton, Mass.)</b>	1976-1980	6 images	Folder 2
➤ <b>Photographs: Peace Vigil at the White House (Washington, D.C.); Draft resistance and antinuclear protests (Northampton, Mass.)</b>	1981	20 images	Folder 3
➤ <b>Photographs: Nuclear Freeze activism and antinuclear and antiwar protests (Northampton, Mass.)</b>	1982	5 images	Folder 4
➤ <b>Photographs: Nuclear Freeze activism and antinuclear and antiwar protests (Northampton, Mass.); 20th Anniversary of March on Washington (Washington, D.C.)</b>	1983	35 images	Folder 5
➤ <b>Photographs: Antinuclear and anti-war activism and protests (Northampton, Mass.); Dinner in honor of Margaret Holt (Amherst, Mass.)</b>	1984-1987	16 images	Folder 6
➤ <b>Photographs: Antinuclear and anti-war protests (Northampton, Mass.)</b>	undated, but ca.1980-1984	32 images	Folder 7

## Administrative information

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### Access

The collection is open for research.

### Provenance

Gift of Eugene Povirk, Oct. 2019 (2019-175).

### Digitized content

Nearly all of the images (excepting duplicates) have been scanned and may be **viewed online in SCUA's digital repository, Credo**.

### Related Material

SCUA also houses the records of the **American Friends Service Committee for Western Massachusetts** (MS 459). The bulk of Crowe's papers are held at the Sophia Smith Collection at Smith College.

### Processing Information

Processed by I. Eliot Wentworth, Oct. 2019.

### Language:

English

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

*Cite as:* Frances Crowe Photograph Collection (PH 092). Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries.

## Search terms

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### Subjects

- American Friends Service Committee. Western Massachusetts
- Anti-war demonstrations--Massachusetts--Photographs
- Antinuclear movements--Massachusetts--Photographs
- Demonstrations--Massachusetts--Photographs
- Draft registration
- Northampton (Mass.)--Photographs
- Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign
- Peace movements--Massachusetts--Photographs
- Vietnam War, 1961-1975--Protest movements--Massachusetts--Photographs

### Contributors

- Crowe, Frances, 1919- **[main entry]**
- Leader, Miriam

### Genres and formats

- Photographs

### Link to similar SCUA collections

[Antinuclear](#) [Massachusetts \(West\)](#) [Peace](#) [Political activism](#) [Quakers](#) [Vietnam War](#)