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People for a Socially Responsible University (PSRU) Records

1988-2024

2 boxes, 1 folder (0.83 linear feet)

Call no.: RG 45/80/P5

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Read collection overview

Background on People for a Socially Responsible University (PSRU)

Founded in 1988 as the anti-CIA protests began to wind down, the People for a Socially Responsible University (PSRU) was a student movement that started at UMass and saw participation from Hampshire College students as well as members of the community. The group began when students started to research the university's military ties and funding from the United States Department of Defense. Concerned about the militarization of higher education, the group organized several non-violent protests. Over the course of six sit-in occupations of UMass campus buildings in the spring of 1989, around 200 students were arrested. After the UMass administration refused to acknowledge PSRU, a chapter was started at Hampshire College, and students opened an office in Amherst. The group also collaborated on demonstrations with the Central American Solidarity Association, and was involved in issues including budget cuts, school investment policy, economic conversion, and environmentalism. PSRU continued to be active until the graduations of the remaining students involved in the group in 1992.

Scope of collection

A small collection, the PSRU Records document an important period of student activism in the history of UMass. News clippings serve as a window to the community's reaction to protests and student arrests, while correspondence, statements, and newsletters written by members of PSRU capture the passion of those involved in the demonstrations against military-funded research on campus. There are also records from the trials of a few of the UMass and Hampshire students arrested during the protests. Within the collection there are several photographs and VHS tapes depicting protesters and the police force during the 1989 sit-ins. A copy of Randy Viscio's book, *Under the Bridge: Notes from a ME Generation Dropout*, is also part of the collection.

Inventory

Fliers

1989-1990

Box 1: 1

News clippings

1989
Box 1: 2
News clippings
1989-1990
Box 1: 3
Newsletters
1989-1990
Box 1: 4
Material donated by Randy Viscio

Content list
2024
Box 1: 5
Fliers and posters
1989 Feb-May
Box 1: 6
Internal dialogues, reflections, campaign flyers
1989 Sep-1990 Aug
Box 1: 7
News clippings, jury trial news, 2009 retrospective
1989 Apr-1990 Feb, 2024
Box 1: 8
News clippings - Valley Advocate
1988 Nov 28
Box 1: 9
Photographs
1989
Box 1: 10
Photographs: Wettengel, David
1989
Box 1: 11
Photographs: Wettengel, David
1989
Box COS 1: 1
Statements and demands
1988 May-1989 May
Box 1: 12
Trial documents and correspondence
1989
Box 1: 13
[VHS: Marcus Hall takeover April 19th 1989; Memorial Hall occupation 1st day](#)
1989
Box 2
[VHS: Memorial Hall 2nd day arrests](#)
1989
Box 2
[VHS: Selby Eddy tape #1: 1st Memorial Hall arrests, 2nd Memorial Hall occupation / interviews with Randy Viscio / Nathan Guisinger](#)
1989
Box 2
[VHS: Selby Eddy tape #3: 2nd Memorial Hall occupation \(news interviews\), interview w/ Nathan](#)
1989
Box 2
Viscio, Randy Louis: Under the Bridge: Notes from a Me Generation Dropout
1993
Box 1: 14

Administrative information

Access

The collection is open for research.

Provenance

Majority of material gift of Randy Viscio, 2024.

Processing Information

Processed by Kailey Holtslander, February 2024.

Related Material

For related collections, see:

- [Activism of the 1980s Photograph Collection \(PH 012\)](#)
- [Radical Student Union Records \(RG 45/80/R1\)](#)
- [CIA on Trial Project \(MS 508\)](#)

Edits of the 4 VHS tapes have been made by Randy Viscio and are available on his YouTube channel. These edits cut out extraneous material and combine footage from videographers Rob Skeleton and Selby Eddy, highlighting certain aspects of the building occupations and arrests.

- [SIT-IN 1989 UMASS Amherst Student Protest against Military and Sit-In April 19, 1989](#)
- [BREAK-IN 1989 UMass Amherst Student Protester's storm Memorial Hall, April 24](#)
- [OCCUPATION- 1989 Umass Amherst Student Protest Against Military Research; Inside the occupation](#)
- [ARRESTS -1989 Umass Amherst Student Protesters against military research arrested April 25th, 1989](#)
- [TAKEOVER -1989 Umass Amherst Protesters against military research takeover Graduate Research Center](#)

Language:

English

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Search terms

Subjects

- College students--Political activity
- Demonstrations--Massachusetts--Amherst
- Student movements
- Student protesters
- University of Massachusetts Amherst--Students

Genres and formats

- Clippings (information artifacts)
- Fliers (printed matter)
- Newsletters
- Photographs
- Videocassettes

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