Marjorie and Paul Colvin papers HLL.2019.003

Allyson Eddy Bravmann, edited by Allison Ransom
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Language of Material: English
Contributing Institution: Holt Labor Library at CSU Dominguez Hills
Title: Marjorie and Paul Colvin papers
creator: Colvin, Marjorie
creator: Colvin, Paul
Identifier/Call Number: HLL.2019.003
Physical Description: 3.34 Linear Feet
Physical Description: 8 boxes
Date (inclusive): 1957-1991
Language of Material: Collection material is in English.
Abstract: This collection contains the personal and professional papers of Marjorie and Paul Colvin, members of the Socialist Workers Party and political activists who protested against the Vietnam war and other U.S. interventions during the 1960's and 1970's. It includes meeting notes, flyers, correspondence, and newspaper clippings related to the various organizations and movements they were involved with.

Processing Information
The collection was processed by Allyson Eddy Bravmann in August, 2007 at the Holt Labor Library in San Francisco, California. In 2019 Allison Ransom edited the finding aid in ArchivesSpace at the Gerth Archives and Special Collections, California State University, Dominguez Hills.

Preferred Citation
[Title of item]. Marjorie and Paul Colvin papers, HLL.2019.003, Gerth Archives and Special Collections, California State University, Dominguez Hills.

Related Collections
Holt Labor Library pamphlet collection, HLL.2019.001; Berta Green Langston papers, HLL.2019.002

Biographical/ Historical
Paul Colvin was born in Flint, MI. His mother was a member of the Proletarian party, and took him to meetings as early as age 7. In 1943 at age 18, he met a member of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) in Burbank, CA, and in 1946 he became a SWP sympathizer while attending the University of California at Los Angeles. Having served in the Navy during World War II, Paul worked as a merchant seaman between semesters. He began attending SWP meetings in 1949, but the House UnAmerican Activities Committee closely watched the maritime industry and the radical sympathizers within it. An informant in the Party turned him in, and he lost his seaman's papers in 1954, the same year he became an official member of SWP.

The national SWP selected Paul to attend the Trotsky School at Mountain Spring Camp in Washington, New Jersey. He spent the 1959-1960 school year there, studying Marx's Capital and American history. Afterwards, the Party asked him to be an educator in San Francisco teaching young party members about capitalism and political issues.

During the Vietnam War, Paul led the logistics committee for several antiwar demonstrations, which entailed gathering permits, banners, insurance, police, food, sound equipment, creating the march route, and raising funds to ensure the success of each event. He kept a file of people who were regular march monitors and collection volunteers; at one point he had nearly 700 names. At the time he worked the night shift at the San Francisco Chronicle, which allowed him to engage in political action during the daytime.

Paul was a member of SWP for 29 years and was part of a group that was expelled in 1983. He helped form Socialist Action, of which he was a member for 18 years. In the 1990s, he was active in the Mobilization to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal. He went on to form Socialist Workers Organization, which publishes Socialist Viewpoint. In 2006, he joined the Workers International League.

Marjorie Colvin came from a religious, apolitical family in Texas. She attended the University of Texas at Austin where she was an anti-segregation activist. She moved to San Francisco with her daughter in 1960 and met Paul in 1961. She was a social worker at a geriatric hospital and later for the California Department of Employment. She received a M.A. in anthropology from San Francisco State College, for which she wrote her thesis on an Apache person she met through the Department of Employment. That association led to her later involvement with the American Indian Movement and Dennis Banks.

She became a member of the Socialist Workers Party in October 1962, after participating in a demonstration concerning the Cuban Missile Crisis, and remained a member until the late 1970's. Marjorie was one of the top signature gatherers during the Proposition P campaign, collecting over 1,000 names to help get the measure on the ballot. Prior to joining the
SWP, she was active in the Fair Play for Cuba Committee in San Francisco in 1961 as well as the Communist Party. Marjorie worked for the Haight-Ashbury Free Clinic in San Francisco for 29 years as a drug counselor, mental health therapist, and an advocate for workers' rights. A women's detoxification center at the clinic's Mission Street location in San Francisco is named in her honor.

Scope and Contents
The Marjorie and Paul Colvin papers (1957-1991) consist of meeting notes, flyers, correspondence, newspaper clippings, and other documents concerning the Fair Play for Cuba Committee (FPCC), Proposition P (San Francisco 1967), Proposition J (San Francisco 1970), anti-Vietnam war activities and the Dennis Banks Defense Committee, in which the Colvins were active in during the 1960's and 1970's. The collection also includes correspondence with the Socialist Workers Party national organization in New York, which provides insight into the party's position on activism in the San Francisco Bay Area. The collection contains significant holdings on the New Mobilization Committee (National and West), the GI Civil Liberties Defense Committee and planning materials for antiwar demonstrations in San Francisco between 1967-1971.

Custodial History
The Marjorie and Paul Colvin papers were donated to the Holt Labor Library in San Francisco, California in 2004, and were acquired by the Gerth Archives and Special Collections at California State University, Dominguez Hills in 2019.

Conditions Governing Access
Open for use by qualified researchers.

Conditions Governing Use
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Arrangement

Subjects and Indexing Terms
Socialism--United States--History--20th century
Vietnam War, 1961-1975--Protest movements--United States
Student movements--Political activity--20th century
Socialist Workers Party--United States--20th century
Cuba--History--Revolution, 1959
Scope and Contents
Contains newspaper clippings and magazine articles.

Scope and Contents
Contains articles regarding U.S. and Cuban relations, arts and culture, and "Radio Havana."

Series II. chronicles the campaigns for 1967 and 1970 San Francisco ballot measures to officially oppose the Vietnam War. Included are meeting notes, petitions, newspaper clippings, and lengthy reports written by the Colvins and Asher Harer for the Socialist Worker's Party.

Arrangement
Arranged chronologically.

"Declarations of Candidacy, Including Statements of Qualifications of Candidates; Propositions together with Arguments and Statements of Controller; Relating to Costs to be voted on at General Municipal Election to be held November 7, 1967" 1967

Pre-Campaign Meeting Notes, Petition Drive 1967
Pre-Campaign Clippings 1967
Campaign meeting notes 1967
Campaign Flyers and Talking Points 1967
Participant Lists 1967
box 3, folder 7  Events and Publicity 1967
box 3, folder 8  Financial Records 1967
box 3, folder 9  Election materials 1967
box 3, folder 10  Campaign Clippings 1967
box 3, folder 11  Post-Election Clippings 1967
box 3, folder 12  Post-Election Meeting Notes 1967-1968
box 3, folder 13  Post-Election Correspondence 1967-1968
box 3, folder 14  Post-Election Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance reports and notes 1967-1968
box 3, folder 15  Asher Harer Campaign Review for Socialist Worker’s Party 1968
box 3, folder 16  Post-Election, Paul Colvin Campaign Review for Socialist Worker’s Party 1968
box 3, folder 17  Post-Election, Marjorie Colvin memo to New Mobilization Committee 1969

box 4, folder 1-2  Precinct Lists 1968-1969
box 4, folder 3  Petition Volunteers 1970
box 4, folder 4  Call Sheets 1970
box 4, folder 5  General Campaign Materials 1970-1971

Anti-Vietnam War Organizations and Events 1964-1971
Scope and Contents
Series III. contains meeting notes, flyers, correspondence, clippings, and other documents that reflect the activities of various civilian, GI, veteran, and student-led anti-Vietnam War organizations, and other political organizations.
Arrangement
Arranged chronologically.

Anti-War Organizations 1964-1970
box 4, folder 6  Vietnam Committee 1964
box 4, folder 7  Socialist Worker’s Party on Vietnam 1965-1970
box 4, folder 8  Jeannette Rankin Brigade 1968
box 4, folder 9  GI’s United Against the War in Vietnam 1968-1969
box 4, folder 11  Presidio 27, National Committee for the 27, GI Association 1968-1969
box 5, folder 1  Student Mobilization Committee 1968-1969
box 5, folder 2  Veterans for Peace in Vietnam 1968-1969
box 5, folder 3  Organized Labor on Vietnam 1968-1970
box 5, folder 4  American Committee for Solidarity with the Vietnamese People 1969
box 5, folder 5  GI-Civilian Alliance for Peace (GI-CAP) 1969
box 5, folder 6  GI Civil Liberties Defense Committee, Fort Jackson Five 1969
box 5, folder 7  Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) 1969
box 5, folder 8  Vietnam Moratorium Committee 1969
box 5, folder 9  Women for Peace 1969
box 5, folder 10  Bay Area Peace Action Council (BAPAC) 1969-1970
box 5, folder 11  New Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam, National Chapter (New Mobe) 1969-1970
box 6, folder 1  New Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam, Western Chapter (New Mobe West) 1968-1969
box 6, folder 2  Peace Action Council of Southern California 1970

Other Organizations 1964-1969
box 6, folder 3  Area 2 Block Council, Committee to Save the Fillmore 1964
box 6, folder 4  Black Panthers 1968
Other Organizations 1964-1969

Scope and Contents
Includes documents reflecting the activities of the Northern Californians to Abolish the House Un-Americans Committee, the American Friends Service Committee, and the Laotian Patriotic Front, among others.

Events 1965-1971

Scope and Contents
Contains flyers, newspaper articles, and press releases regarding the various Anti-War demonstrations, including the Moratorium to End the War in Vietnam, a Berkeley, California "Draft Card Turn-In," among others.

Newspaper Articles 1964-1970

Donor and Participant Lists 1967-1970