Register of the Ellie Schnitzer Papers, 1972-1996

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Register of the Ellie Schnitzer Papers, 1972-1996

Collection number: MSS 025

Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research
Los Angeles, California

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Ellie Schnitzer Papers,
Date (inclusive): 1972-1996
Collection number: MSS 025
Creator: Ellie Schnitzer, 1922-1996
Extent: 2 Record Storage Boxes (2 Cubic Feet)
Repository: Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research.
Los Angeles, California
Language: English.

Access
The collection is available for research only at the Library’s facility in Los Angeles. The Library is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday. Researchers are encouraged to call or email the Library indicating the nature of their research query prior to making a visit.

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Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], Ellie Schnitzer Papers, Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research, Los Angeles.

Biography
Ellie Schnitzer (1922-1996), a lifelong, political activist, was born in Munich Germany. She and her family fled the Nazi regime, settling in California in 1937. She attended Pasadena City College, U.C. Berkley, and Columbia University, graduating with an MSW. For 35 years she worked with children in Los Angeles as a social worker for Vista del Mar and other Jewish family agencies. She retired in the early 1980’s to become, in her own words, “a full-time revolutionary.”
As a social worker, she was active in her union. She was also a member of the Communist Party, USA (CPUSA). She and her first husband went underground and moved to Seattle during the McCarthy era. She met and married her second husband, Jerome Schnitzer, in the late 1950’s. In the late 1970’s, having left the communist party, she became involved with Line of March and its newspaper, Frontline. She was a study-group leader for Line of March led, Marxist-Leninist Education Project (MLEP) as well as a writer and distributor for Frontline. She was also a leading activist in many of the organization’s initiatives.

She continued her involvement with this political group as it developed into the Frontline Political Organization, and finally Crossroads, founded in conjunction with the Freedom Road Socialists. Throughout the 1980s and early 1990s, Ellie was also involved in many local and national political initiatives which were supported by Line of March or related political organizations. She was sometimes represented Line of March (or its affiliates) while participating in these initiatives, which included the Committee for Justice (See Scope and Content), the movement to free Geronimo Pratt, a Black Panther Party member who was imprisoned under questionable circumstances, and the Rainbow Coalition, a political organization founded by Jesse Jackson. Ellie was a member of the Advisory Board of KPFA, Pacifica Radio's local affiliate station. She also become actively involved with the Committees of Correspondence (COC), a leftist organization formed in 1992 by CPUSA members and other activists. Ellie participated in the COC’s pre-foundation conference in Berkeley in 1992, and served as a member of both its local and national coordinating committees.

**Scope and Content**

The Ellie Schnitzer Collection is divided into five series: PARTY BUILDING, LINE OF MARCH, FRONTLINE POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS (FPO), CROSSROADS, and OTHER POLITICAL INTERESTS.

The first four series contain records of a particular political tendency associated in its origins with the Guardian Newspaper. Ellie Schnitzer was actively involved in this tendency from its beginnings in 1978 to its eventual dissolution in 1992. Each of these four series represents a particular political and organizational stage in its development. The tendency as a whole is generally known as "Line of March," the form it assumed during its most influential period, 1980 - 1989.

**Material Cataloged Separately**


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**PARTY BUILDING, 1976-1980**

Scope and Content Note

The PARTY BUILDING series contains records relating to the debates, publications, and activities which led to the founding of Line of March in 1980.

**LINE OF MARCH, 1980 - 1989**

Scope and Content Note

The LINE OF MARCH series (1980 - 1989) contains records pertaining to the history of Line of March as well as on a serious political and organizational crisis that occurred on both the local and national level in 1988. (B1 #10) The sub-series Marxist-Leninist Education Project (MLEP) contains a history and political analysis of the MLEP (B1 #25, 26). The folders in the sub-series MLEP - Study Guides may contain subjects in addition to those named on the folder. The sub-series Conferences contains fliers and articles on the Blue Shield Strike of SEIU local 3 by Filipino workers in San Francisco in 1981 (B1 #16). The sub-series L.A. Plan contains draft plans for Los Angeles Line of March as well as a description of its internal dynamics, including the names and roles of individuals in the organization and on the periphery (B2 # 5-7). The sub-series Frontline Newspaper refers to the bi-weekly publications of Line of March and is distinct from the FRONTLINE POLITICAL ORGANIZATION series, although the organization was an outgrowth of the newspaper.

**FRONTLINE POLITICAL ORGANIZATION (FPO), 1989 - 1991**

Scope and Content Note

The FRONTLINE POLITICAL ORGANIZATION (FPO) series (1989 - 1991) documents the transition from line of March to Frontline Political Organization (B2 # 15). The Day of Dialogue folder (B2 #17) contains lists of participating activists, grouped by their areas of interest such as labor, peace, women's issues, gay/lesbian issues, racism.
CROSSROADS, 1990 - 1992
Scope and Content Note
The CROSSROADS series (1990 - 1992) contains documents relating to the journal Crossroads as well as to discussion groups associated with it.

OTHER POLITICAL INTERESTS
Scope and Content Note
The OTHER POLITICAL INTERESTS series contains documents relating to political initiatives in which Ellie Schnitzer was active or areas of political concern for which she collected information. The sub-series Committee for Justice concerns the "L. A. Eight," seven Palestinians and a Kenyan whom the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) attempted to deport for their (legal) political activities. Three of the L. A. Eight had close connections to Line of March, and that organization was very active in the Committee for Justice which supported the fight against deportation. The Background Material folder (B2 #20) explains the case in some detail. The folder CPUSA (B2 #31) contains correspondence concerning a dispute between Los Angeles Line of March and the local CPUSA leadership. The folder African American Community (B2 #30) contains reports of the Coalition Against Police Abuse (CAPA) from 1989 - 1993, including a report on community demands to implement a gang truce between Crips and Bloods. This folder also contains a report generated by the FBI file concerning the FBI’s covert action plan to destroy the Black Panther Party.

PARTY BUILDING
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Periodicals, report, study guides 1976, 1977, NDS
Box 1, Folder 2
Pamphlets, papers 1972, 1980, NDS
Box 1, Folder 3
Conference on Minority Marxists-Leninists 1979, 1980
Box 1, Folder 4
Discussion Guides 1978, 1980, NDS

LINE OF MARCH
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Notes, reports, memos 1980-1982, NDS
Box 1, Folder 6
Discussion guides, memos 1980-1982, NDS
Box 1, Folder 7
Box 1, Folder 8
Discussion guides, seminars 1984, NDS
Box 1, Folder 9
National Board reports 1984-1986
Box 1, Folder 10
Agendas, minutes, reports 1985, 1986, 1988, NDS

Special Projects
Box 1, Folder 11
Anti-racism presentations, pamphlets 1980 , NDS
Box 1, Folder 12
Child care: notes, lists, publications 1981, NDS
Box 1, Folder 13
China project: study guide 1981, NDS
Box 1, Folder 14
Soviet Union project: study guide NDS

Conferences
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Conference on Racism: reports, study guides 1981
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Labor Commission conference 1981
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Labor Commission conference, Class Lines1982
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Stalin conference: study guides, notes 1983

Affiliated Organizations
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U.S. Anti-Imperialist League (USAIL) 1982
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United Front Against Racism: Study guides, reports NDS

MLEP
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Forums: presentations, notes 1979, NDS
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U.S. History Project I - IX 1982, NDS

Study Guides
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Marxism 1979, NDS
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