
The Register of the Kristin Ockershauser Papers, 1965-1987

Collection number: MSS 082

Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research

Los Angeles, California

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Kristen Ockershauser Papers,

Date (inclusive): 1965-1987

Collection number: MSS 082

Creator: Ockershauser, Kristin

Extent: 7.5 legal boxes; 2.75 linear feet

Repository: Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research

Los Angeles, CA 90044

Abstract: These are papers of community organizer Kristin Ockershauser, primarily documenting efforts in the early 1970s organizing residents in two public housing projects in the San Pedro area of Los Angeles: the Park Western Organization for Positive Action (at Park Western) and Neighbors United for Action (at Barton Hill).

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], Kristen Ockershauser Papers, Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research, Los Angeles, California.

Provenance

Donated to the Library in the late 1980s by Kristin Ockershauser.

Biography

Kristin Ockershauser became involved in organizing among low-income communities after receiving her master's degree in social work from UCLA's School of Social Welfare in 1967, where she studied under long-time organizer Warren C. Haggstrom. As an advocate at the Legal Aid Foundation of Long Beach, she worked with such groups as the Welfare Rights Organization.

In 1969 Ockershauser and colleagues Howard Uller, Squire Lance, Lauro Garcia, and Hollis Stewart joined with Warren and Lois Haggstrom to establish the board of the Institute of Socio-Analysis (ISA). The nonprofit ISA was dedicated to helping low-income people organize to improve their lives. It provided intensive educational programs in grassroots community organizing.

Between 1970 and 1973 Ockershauser founded self-help organizations in the San Pedro area, including two at public housing projects, the Park Western Organization for Positive Action (at Park Western) and Neighbors United for Action (at Barton Hill). These organizations succeeded in preventing the demolition of a low-income housing project, getting full-day sessions for students of a neighborhood elementary school, registering voters in unprecedented numbers, and instituting English classes for Spanish-speaking adults. Inadequate funding plagued the success of ISA from the outset and the organization was officially dissolved as a nonprofit corporation in the summer of 1975.

In the fall of 1973 Ockershauser traveled to Europe where she lived for three months in Rome and met Danilo Dolci at his Centro Studi e Iniziative in Western Sicily. After having read most of Dolci's writings she had become interested in the Centro's work and its similarities with the grassroots organizing efforts of the ISA.

Uncertain about what to do after ISA disbanded, Ockershauser returned to Europe in 1976 visiting Italy and Switzerland. Between 1977 and 1978, Ockershauser continued her activism as the Director of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) for the Pacific Southwest. She returned to Europe and between 1978 and 1979 lived in Paris for six months and Morocco for one month.

Ockershauser's work with the Unitarian Universalists continued through the early 1980s where she served on the Haspl Visit Committee to bring the Reverend Bohdana Haspl to the United States for the 40th anniversary celebration of the UUSC. Bohdana Haspl was the daughter of Reverend Norbert Capek, who founded the Czech Unitarian Society in 1939 and later perished at the hands of the Nazis. The Czech Unitarian Society's rescue and relief efforts during the Nazi advance became the genesis of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee. Bohdana Haspl wrote about her father's work in a 100 page unpublished manuscript which Ockerhauser attempted to get published through 1982.

Ockershauser's other organizing efforts include joining organizing colleague Michael Silver in 1981 to put together a proposal and funding for a school for organizers aimed ultimately at creating neighborhood governments.

Colleagues

Warren C. Haggstrom - entered the University of Minnesota in 1947 and graduated summa cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa in 1949. During the late 1940s he helped start a variety of efforts to create union, political, farm and community organizations. He received his master's degree in social welfare from the University of Minnesota and his doctorate in social work and social psychology from the University of Michigan. In 1962 while employed at Syracuse University he founded and directed the Community Action Training Center that was devoted to the organization of low-income populations. In 1966 he moved to Los Angeles to become associate professor at UCLA specializing in the teaching of grass roots organization to graduate students. He co-founded the Institute of Socio-Analysis along with his wife Lois and colleagues Kristen Ockershauser and Lee Staples. He withdrew from participation in ISA a few years later following the death of his wife. In the 1980s he worked with Kristen Ockerhauser and Michael Silver on the creation of a graduate level school for community organizers.

Michael Silver - good friend and organizing colleague of Kristin Ockerhauser's and a former student of Warren Haggstrom, Michael Silver received his doctorate from the University of California at Berkeley. He spent several years on the East Coast where he organized with ACORN, edited the journal "The Organizer", and taught community organizing at the University of Maryland Graduate School of Social Work. He returned to Los Angeles in the early 1980s where he worked with the California Action League as an organizer. He also worked with Ockershauser and Haggstrom on starting a graduate level educational program for organizers in Los Angeles.

Lee Staples - before arriving in California, Staples worked for the National Welfare Rights Organization (NWRO) in Ohio, Massachusetts and Rhode Island. He also trained new organizers as well as conducted workshops at NWRO conferences throughout the country. In 1970 Staples moved to Los Angeles to begin work with the ISA studying under Warren Haggstrom at UCLA's School of Social Welfare. In 1972 he helped organize Neighbors United for Action in San Pedro with Kristin Ockershauser. In 1975 Staples returned to Massachusetts where he helped found Massachusetts for a Fair Share Alliance and taught organizing at the Boston University Graduate School of Social Work.

Howard Uller - received his master's degree in social work from UCLA studying under Warren Haggstrom. As one of the original ISA board members, along with Haggstrom and Ockershauser, Uller helped organize the Organization for United Brothers in central Los Angeles.

Scope and Content

The bulk of the collection documents Ockershauser's organizing efforts during the 1970s in San Pedro and 1980s. There are administrative, publicity, and training materials consisting of organizational documents, fliers, newsletters, election material, newspaper clippings, articles, notes and memos. The collection also documents Ockershauser's long-time activism in the Los Angeles area through her work with the Legal Aid Foundation, the Welfare Rights Organization, and the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee. Other materials included in the collection are the unpublished manuscripts of organizing colleagues that detail the theory and practice of organizing for social change.

Arrangement

The collection is divided into 4series: 1. PERSONAL PAPERS, 2. ORGANIZATIONS, 3. ORGANIZERS and 4. REFERENCE MATERIAL.

Arrangement

Original order was maintained as much as possible and original folder titles were incorporated where appropriate.

Separated Material

No materials have been separated from this collection.

Title: 20th Century Organizational Files,

Date (inclusive): 1912-1980s

Physical Description: 49 legal archival document boxes; 16 linear feet

Series I. Personal Papers, 1965-1981

Physical Description: 25 folders

Scope and Content Note

This series includes class schedules, syllabi, outlines, course material, and notes from Warren C. Haggstrom's courses at UCLA. Also included is a course outline from Haggstrom's action seminar course at Syracuse University. In addition, there is later material not directly related to organizing activities, but in support of Ockerhauser's activism and includes information about her travels in Europe, her visit to Danilo Dolci's El Centro, news clippings of personal interests, and general correspondence.

Box-folder 8/1-8/16 **Education**
Box-folder 8/1-8/8 **Class notes, UCLA**
Box-folder 8/1 **1967-1971**
Box-folder 8/2 **1971**
Box-folder 8/3 **1972, 1980-1981**
Box-folder 8/4-8/8 **Undated notes, n.d.**
Box-folder 8/9 **Class schedules, UCLA, 1966-1967**
Box-folder 8/10-8/13 **Course materials, UCLA**
Box-folder 8/10 **1966-1968**
Box-folder 8/11 **1969, 1970**
Box-folder 8/12 **1971, 1979**
Box-folder 8/13 **1981**
Box-folder 8/14-8/15 **Course outlines, 1965-1968, n.d.**
Box-folder 8/14 **Syracuse University, 1965-1966, n.d.**
Box-folder 8/15 **UCLA, 1967-1968, n.d.**
Box-folder 8/16 **Reading lists (bibliographies), UCLA, 1966-1970**
Box-folder 8/17-8/20 **El Centro visit**
Box-folder 8/17 **Correspondence, 1973**
Box-folder 8/18 **Notes, n.d.**
Box-folder 8/19 **Notes, n.d.**
Box-folder 8/20 **Outline and article, n.d.**
Box-folder 8/21 **Fliers and pamphlets, n.d.**
Box-folder 8/22 **General correspondence, 1975-1982, n.d.**
Box-folder 8/23-8/24 **News clippings**
Box-folder 8/23 **1973-1980**
Box-folder 8/24 **1980-1982, n.d.**
Box-folder 8/25 **Notes, 1972-1981, n.d.**

Series II. **Organizations, 1968-1987**

Physical Description: 79 folders

Scope and Content Note

Organizational files, reports, memos, correspondence of social work and organizing activities arranged chronologically. This series is divided into six subseries: Legal Aid Foundation, Welfare Rights Organization, Park Western Organization, San Pedro Organization/Neighbors United Association, the Institute of Socio-Analysis and Other organizations, which includes: Organization of United Brothers, La Vecindad Unida/United Neighborhood and California Action League.

Subseries A. **Legal Aid Foundation, 1968-1970**

Physical Description: 4 folders

Box-folder 1/1 **Activity reports, 1967-1970**
Box-folder 1/2 **Correspondence, 1968-1971**
Box-folder 1/3 **Memos, 1967-1970**
Box-folder 1/4 **Newsletter "Annual Report, Legal Aid Foundation of Long Beach," 1968**

Subseries B. **Welfare Rights Organization (WRO), 1969 - 1970**

Physical Description: 2 folders

Box-folder 1/5 **Organizational materials, 1969**
Box-folder 1/6 **News clippings, 1969-1970**

Subseries C. **Park Western Organization for Positive Action (PWOPA), 1970-1972**

Physical Description: 24 folders

Box-folder 1/7 **Agendas and minutes, 1970, n.d.**
Box-folder 1/8 **Benefits and services, 1970, n.d.**
Box-folder 1/9-1/12 **Chapman College**
Box-folder 1/9 **Background material, 1968, 1971**
Box-folder 1/10 **History, 1969**
Box-folder 1/11 **Legal documents, 1971, n.d.**
Box-folder 1/12 **Pamphlets, 1970-1971, n.d.**
Box-folder 1/13 **Community information, 1970-1971, n.d.**
Box-folder 1/14-2/2 **Correspondence**
Box-folder 1/14 **1970**
Box-folder 2/1 **1970**
Box-folder 2/2 **1971**
Box-folder 2/3 **Election drive, 1971**
Box-folder 2/4 **Fact sheets, 1970-1971, n.d.**
Box-folder 2/5 **Fliers, 1970-1972, n.d.**
Box-folder 2/6 **Housing issues, 1968, 1970, n.d.**
Box-folder 2/7 **Housing surveys, 1970**
Box-folder 2/8 **Lists, 1970, 1972, n.d.**
Box-folder 2/9 **Meeting attendees, 1970, n.d.**
Box-folder 2/10 **Membership, 1971, n.d.**
Box-folder 2/11 **Memos, 1970-1971**
Box-folder 2/12 **News clippings, 1969-1971, 1980, n.d.**
Box-folder 2/13 **Newsletters, 1970-1971**
Box-folder 2/14 **Notes, 1969-1970, n.d.**
Box-folder 2/15 **Organizational documents, 1970, n.d.**
Box-folder 2/16 **Petition, sample letters, surveys, 1970, n.d.**
Box-folder 2/17 **Photographs, n.d.**
Box-folder 2/18 **Press releases, 1970, 1971, n.d.**

Subseries D. **San Pedro Organization / Neighbors United for Action (SPO/NUA), 1971-1973, n.d.**

Physical Description: 28 folders

Box-folder 2/19 **Barton Hill tunnel action, 1972, n.d.**
 Box-folder 2/20-2/21 **Benefits and services, 1971-1972**
 Box-folder 2/20 **Notes, 1971-1972, n.d.**
 Box-folder 2/21 **Order forms and lists, n.d.**
 Box-folder 2/22-2/24 **Candidate's night**
 Box-folder 2/22 **1972**
 Box-folder 2/23 **1972**
 Box-folder 2/24 **1973**
 Box-folder 2/25 **Community information, 1972, n.d.**
 Box-folder 2/26 **Constitution and committee notes, 1972, n.d.**
 Box-folder 3/1 **Correspondence, 1971-1973, n.d.**
 Box-folder 3/2 **Fact sheets, 1972, n.d.**
 Box-folder 3/3 **Fliers, 1972, n.d.**
 Box-folder 3/4-3/5 **Get-out-the-vote effort, 1972, n.d.**
 Box-folder 3/6 **Harbor General Hospital action, 1973, n.d.**
 Box-folder 3/7 **House meetings and committee notes, 1972, n.d.**
 Box-folder 3/8-3/10 **Membership agreements**
 Box-folder 3/8 **1971, 1972, n.d.**
 Box-folder 3/9 **1972**
 Box-folder 3/10 **1972, n.d.**
 Box-folder 3/11 **Membership drive and committee notes, 1972, n.d.**
 Box-folder 3/12 **News clippings, 1972-1973**
 Box-folder 3/13 **Newsletters, 1972-1973, n.d.**
 Box-folder 3/14 **Notes and lists, 1971, 1972, n.d.**
 Box-folder 3/15-3/16 **Photographs, n.d.**
 Box-folder 3/17 **Surveys, n.d.**
 Box-folder 3/18-3/20 **Voter registration drive**
 Box-folder 3/18 **1971**
 Box-folder 3/19 **1972, n.d.**
 Box-folder 3/20 **n.d.**

Subseries E. **Institute Socio-Analysis (ISA), 1970-1980, n.d.**

Physical Description: 10 folders

Box-folder 3/21 **Benefits and services, 1971, n.d.**
 Box-folder 3/22 **Correspondence, 1970-1975**
 Box-folder 3/23 **Fact sheets, 1971, n.d.**
 Box-folder 3/24 **Memos, 1970-1980**
 Box-folder 4/1 **Miscellaneous documents (agenda, newsletter, funding proposal, letterhead/ folder), 1970,1973, n.d.**
 Box-folder 4/2 **Notes, 1972-1974, n.d.**
 Box-folder 4/3 **Prospectus, n.d.**
 Box-folder 4/4 **Slides (ISA? students in class), 1972**
 Box-folder 4/5 **Student recruitment, n.d.**
 Box-folder 4/6 **Training materials, n.d.**

Subseries F **Other Organizations, 1967-1982**

Physical Description: 9 folders

Box-folder 4/7 **Organization of United Brothers, Political Power Program, voting results, blank membership agreement, 1967-1974, n.d.**
 Box-folder 4/8 **La Vecindad Unida/United Neighborhood (LVU/UN), newsletters, fact sheets, fliers, 1973, n.d.**
 Box-folder 4/9-4/14 **Unitarian Universalist Service Committee**
 Box-folder 4/9 **Bodhana Hapsl visit, memos, notes, 1978-1980, n.d.**
 Box-folder 4/10 **Correspondence, 1979-1982**
 Box-folder 4/11-4/14 **Dr. Norbert Fabian Capek**
 Box-folder 4/11-4/13 **Biography, n.d.**
 Box-folder 4/14 **Notes, n.d.**
 Box-folder 4/15 **California Action League (CAL), mixed documents, fliers, 1981-1982**

Series III. Organizers, 1966-1982

Physical Description: 22 folders

Scope and Content Note

This series contains unpublished manuscripts and correspondence relating to the theory and practice of grassroots organizing written by colleagues of Kristin Ockershauser: Warren C. Haggstrom, Michael Silver, Lee Staples and Howard Uller.

- Box-folder 4/16-5/5 **Warren C. Haggstrom**
- Box-folder 4/16 **Correspondence, 1979-1980**
- Box-folder 4/17 **Correspondence, 1981**
- Box-folder 4/18-5/5 **Writings**
- Box-folder 4/18 **n.d.**
- Box-folder 4/19 **1966-1967**
- Box-folder 4/20 **1968**
- Box-folder 4/21 **1969**
- Box-folder 4/22 **1970-1971**
- Box-folder 5/1 **1972, 1979-1980**
- Box-folder 5/2 **1980**
- Box-folder 5/3 **1980-1981**
- Box-folder 5/4 **1981-1982**
- Box-folder 5/5 **1982**
- Box-folder 5/6-5/13 **Michael Silver**
- Box-folder 5/6 **Correspondence and memos, 1981**
- Box-folder 5/7-5/12 **Writings**
- Box-folder 5/7-5/9 **n.d.**
- Box-folder 5/10 **1976, n.d.**
- Box-folder 5/11 **1976, 1978, n.d.**
- Box-folder 5/12 **1980**
- Box-folder 5/13 **Assorted documents, n.d.**
- Box-folder 5/14 **Lee Staples, writings, 1973, n.d.**
- Box-folder 5/15 **Howard Uller, writings, n.d.**

Series IV. Reference Material, 1970-1982

Physical Description: 46 folders

Scope and Content Note

This series includes articles related to grassroots organizing, famous organizers, action samples, and publications; alphabetically arranged by topic.

- Box-folder 5/16-6/2 **Action samples, n.d.**
- Box-folder 6/3 **Aid to Families with Dependant Children (AFDC), n.d.**
- Box-folder 6/4 **Alinsky, Saul, n.d.**
- Box-folder 6/5-6/16 **Articles, n.d.**
- Box-folder 6/18-7/3 **Benefits and services, n.d.**
- Box-folder 7/4 **Common Ground Garden Program, n.d.**
- Box-folder 7/5 **Crime prevention, n.d.**
- Box-folder 7/6 **Dolci, Danilo, n.d.**
- Box-folder 7/7-7/10 **Elections**
- Box-folder 7/7 **general election, 1972**
- Box-folder 7/8-7/9 **primary, 1972**
- Box-folder 7/10 **primary, 1973**
- Box-folder 7/11 **Housing, n.d.**
- Box-folder 7/12 **Liberty Hill Foundation, 1980**
- Box-folder 7/13-7/15 **Massachusetts Alliance for a Fare Share, n.d.**
- Box-folder 7/16 **Miscellaneous issues (fliers and pamphlets), n.d.**
- Box-folder 7/17-7/22 **News clippings**
- Box-folder 7/17 **1970**
- Box-folder 7/18 **1971**
- Box-folder 7/19 **1972**
- Box-folder 7/20 **1973-1978**
- Box-folder 7/21 **1980-1982**
- Box-folder 7/22 **n.d.**
- Box-folder 7/23 **Organizational documents, n.d.**
- Box-folder 7/24-7/25 **Publications, n.d.**