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Collection Summary

Repository: Archives and Special Collections Library, Vassar College Libraries

Title: Vassar College 1990 Main Takeover Records

Dates: 1990-1991

Quantity: 0.5 cubic feet (3 boxes)

Abstract: Correspondence, flyers, news clippings and press releases from the 1990 takeover, along with tapes and supporting documents from an oral history project undertaken the following year under the auspices of Elizabeth Daniels' "Testimony of the Past" class, which worked on documenting Vassar history.

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Historical Note

On 29 January 1990 Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan gave the annual lecture as Vassar's Eleanor Roosevelt Chair, an honor given to a distinguished guest which included a public address in the Chapel. Although the address itself was not criticized, Moynihan was accused of making sexist and racist remarks at a reception immediately following the talk. In the subsequent weeks, a number of student organizations came together under an umbrella called the Coalition of Concerned Students to protest not only Moynihan's remarks, but the college administration's response to those remarks. Events culminated in a takeover of Main Building and a list of extended demands including the creation of a Black Student Center, an Intercultural Center, a task force on racism, and divestment from South Africa.

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Scope and Content Note

Correspondence, flyers, news clippings and press releases from the 1990 takeover, along with tapes and supporting documents from an oral history project undertaken the following year under the auspices of Elizabeth Daniels' "Testimony of the Past" class, which worked on documenting Vassar history.

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Arrangement

This collection is organized into 10 folders of paper materials and one box of audiotapes. [Top](#)

Access and Use

Access

The audio/video material in this collection is restricted due to fragility. Please contact the staff for further information. The remainder of the collection is open for research according to the [regulations of the Vassar College Archives and Special Collections Library](#) without any additional restrictions.

Restrictions on Use

Permission to quote (publish) from unpublished or previously published material must be obtained as described in the [regulations of the Vassar College Archives and Special Collections Library](#).

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Related Material

Related Materials

- [Digitized newspapers in the VC Digital Library](#)

Separated Materials

- The videotaped interviews are housed with the Archives & Special Collection Library's Film and Video Collection.

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Subject Headings

Names:

- Moynihan, Daniel P. (Daniel Patrick), 1927-2003

Organizations:

- Vassar College--Students

Subjects:

- African American students
- College students--United States--Attitudes
- Student movements--United States--History--20th century
- Students--Political activity--United States--History--20th century

Document Types:

- Audiocassettes
- Videotapes

VCL Categories:

- Vassar College Events and Issues

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Encoding Information

Encoded by Laura Streett, January 2015.

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Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements

Audiovisual material may require special viewers/players or digitization to preserve the masters.

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Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

Vassar College 1990 Main Takeover Records, Archives and Special Collections Library, Vassar College Libraries.

Processing Information

Original processing date unknown.

Acquisition Information

Transfer and date unknown. May have been transferred by Elizabeth Daniels, College Historian (1985-2013).

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Container List

DOCUMENTS ISSUED BY STUDENTS DURING TAKEOVER

- Folder 1.1 Research notes on Moynihan
- Folder 1.1 Rewrite of research on Moynihan (incomplete document)
- Folder 1.1 Student Coalition's statement on Eleanor Roosevelt Chair & "Moynihan Incident"
- Folder 1.1 List of demands
- Folder 1.1 Strategy sheet
- Folder 1.1 Letter from Grant Litford to John Saverse re: missed employment, 1990 Feb 18
- Folder 1.1 Original Mailing List from Coalition
- Folder 1.1 Original letter from Tom Furtwangler and Rachel Shearer
- Folder 1.1 List of ideas

- Folder 1.1 Rough draft of position paper
- Folder 1.1 Final draft of position paper
- Folder 1.1 Floor plan of Main Building
- Folder 1.1 Coalition meeting notes, 1990 Feb 18
- Folder 1.1 "Agenda for 10:30 All Campus Meeting"
- Folder 1.1 "Problems with Our Plan As It Was Articulated Last Night"
- Folder 1.1 Letter from coalition to Vassar community
- Folder 1.1 Student Coalition statement to President, 1990 Feb 15

DOCUMENTS ISSUED BY COLLEGE & SENATOR MOYNIHAN DURING & AFTER TAKEOVER

- Folder 1.2 From President Fergusson, 1990 Feb 12
- Folder 1.2 From President Fergusson, 1990 Feb 15
- Folder 1.2 From President Fergusson, 1990 Feb 20
- Folder 1.2 From President Fergusson, 1990 Mar 8
- Folder 1.2 Black Faculty Caucus Statement
- Folder 1.2 From David Irvine to Vassar College EMS, 1990 Feb 20
- Folder 1.2 From Senator Moynihan to President Fergusson, 1990 Feb 14

UNSOLICITED REACTIONS FROM BOTH ON & OFF CAMPUS

- Folder 1.3 The Moynihan Rally: An Independent Reaction by John Semmel
- Folder 1.3 Letter from The Right Angle to Coalition for Concerned Students
- Folder 1.3 "Valentine's Day Vassacre Awards"
- Folder 1.3 Letter from Molly Shanley to Cleon Edwards, 1990 Feb 16
- Folder 1.3 Note from "April" to Cleon Edwards, 1990 Feb 21
- Folder 1.3 Unsigned postcard to Cleon Edwards
- Folder 1.3 Unsigned letter to Cleon Edwards
- Folder 1.3 Letter from Jack McGarvey to Cleon Edwards, 1990 Feb 15
- Folder 1.3 Letter from John A. Bahrs, 1990 Feb 15
- Folder 1.3 "Poem"
- Folder 1.4 "The Valentine's Day Uprising," paper by David F. Gallagher, VC 1990

PRESS INFORMATION

- Folder 2.1 Press Release, 1990 Feb 14
- Folder 2.1 Press Release (draft), 1990 Feb 15
- Folder 2.1 Press Release, 1990 Feb 15
- Folder 2.1 Complete Press packet, 1990 Feb 14
- Folder 2.1 Press Release (draft), 1990 Feb 12
- Folder 2.1 Miscellany News, 1990 Feb 9
- Folder 2.1 Miscellany News, 1990 Feb 16
- Folder 2.1 Miscellany News, 1990 Feb 23
- Folder 2.1 Miscellany News Editorial

- Folder 2.1 AP Wire, 1990 Feb 13
- Folder 2.1 NY Times, 1990 Feb 15
- Folder 2.1 The Oracle, 1990 Feb 15-21
- Folder 2.1 Vassar Daily, 1990 Feb 16
- Folder 2.1 Jet Magazine, 1990 Mar 20
- Folder 2.1 Poughkeepsie Journal, 1990 Feb 15
- Folder 2.1 NY Post, 1990 Feb 15
- Folder 2.1 NY Observer, 1990 Feb 12

DOCUMENTS ISSUED DURING ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

- Folder 2.2 To Constance Berkley from Wendy Wasserman and Alison Froling, 1991 Mar 27
- Folder 2.2 To Folami and Obika Gray from Wendy Wasserman and Alison Froling, 1991 Mar 27
- Folder 2.2 To Wendy Wasserman from President Fergusson, 1991 Mar 26
- Folder 2.2 Suggested interview questions
- Folder 2.2 Waiver form
- Folder 2.3 Lists of negotiating teams and appendix
- Folder 2.4 Overview comments, 1991 May 7

INTERVIEW INDEXES AND SYNOPSES

- Folder 2.5 Constance Berkley, Africana Studies Faculty,
- Folder 2.5 D.B. Brown, Director of Counseling
- Folder 2.5 Heather Ciociola, Student, Class of 1991, Main Student Fellow
- Folder 2.5 Catherine Comins, Assistant Dean of Student Life
- Folder 2.5 Nancy Dye, Dean of College
- Folder 2.5 Cleon Edwards, Student, Class of 1990, BSU president
- Folder 2.5 Stacey Floyd and Rene Patterson, Students, Class of 1991
- Folder 2.5 Tom Furtzwangler, Student, Class of 1992
- Folder 2.6 Folami Gray, Director of Dutchess County Youth Bureau
- Folder 2.6 Oblika Gray, Political Science/Africana Studies Faculty
- Folder 2.6 James Montoya, Dean of Student Life
- Folder 2.6 Ray Parker, Director of Campus Activities and College Center
- Folder 2.6 Heidi Segal, Student, Class of 1990, 1990 class president
- Folder 2.6 Michael Solomon, Student, class of 1991, EMT Coordinator
- Folder 2.6 Shiokamini Somasundaram, Student, Class of 1991
- Folder 2.6 Anthony Stellato, Vice President for Finance and Treasury
- Folder 2.6 Daphne Olive

AUDIOTAPED INTERVIEWS

- 3.1 Constance Berkley, WKID radio interview, 1991 Apr 24 (audio)
- 3.2 D.B. Brown, 1991 Apr 17 (audio)
- 3.3 Heather Ciociola, 1991 Apr 24 (audio and video)

- 3.3 Anthony Stellato, 1991 Apr 24 (audio and video)
- 3.4 Catherine Comins, 1991 Apr 10 (audio)
- 3.4 Obika and Folami Gray, 1991 Apr 23 (audio and video)
- 3.5 Nancy Dye, 1991 Apr 17 (audio)
- 3.5 James Montoya, 1991 Apr 17 (audio)
- 3.6 Cleon Edwards, WOR radio interview, 1990 Feb 14 (audio)
- 3.7 Cleon Edwards, 1991 Apr 28 (audio)
- 3.8 Stacey Floyd and Rene Patterson, 1991 Apr 1 (audio)
- 3.9 Stacey Floyd and Rene Patterson, 1991 May 1 (audio)
- 3.10 Tom Furtwangler, 1991 Apr 10 (audio and video)
- 3.10 Raymon Parker, 1991 May 1 (audio and video)
- 3.11 Heidi Segal, 1991 Apr 27 (audio)
- 3.12 Michael Solomon, 1991 May 1 (audio)
- 3.12 Daphne Olive, 1991 Apr 10 (audio)
- 3.13 WOR radio interview, 1990 Feb 14 (audio)
- 3.14 Vassar College Black Student Union, WKIP radio interview, 1990 Feb 13
Shiokamini Somasundaram (video)

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