

Meyers Open Forum Collection (1885-2011): A Finding Aid

Descriptive Summary

Repository: Moakley Archive and Institute, Suffolk University, Boston MA

Location: 73 Tremont Street, Suffolk University

Collection Number: MS114

Creator: Meyers, Arthur S.

Title: Arthur S. Meyers Open Forum Collection

Date(s): 1885-2011

Quantity: 9 boxes, 3.6 cubic ft.

Preferred Citation: Arthur S. Meyers Open Forum Collection (MS 114), 1885-2011, Moakley Archive and Institute, Suffolk University, Boston, MA.

Abstract: The collection contains 9 boxes of Arthur S. Meyers' research files related to his book, *Democracy in the Making: the Open Forum Movement*. The book, published in 2012, chronicles the history of the nationwide open forum movement, including the role of the Ford Hall Forum. The collection contains photocopies of letters, articles, and programs related to open forums and the movement's proponents such as George W. Coleman and Mary Caroline Crawford.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information: Gift of Arthur S. Meyers, May 2014.

Use Restrictions: Use of materials may be restricted based on their condition or copyright status; consult the Archive for more information.

Related Collections: See also, the Ford Hall Forum Collection (MS113), Suffolk University.

Processed by: Hardin, Jessica 2015

HISTORICAL NOTE

Arthur S. Meyers, a historian and librarian, did extensive research to create a detailed account of the Open Forum Movement in the United States for his book, *Democracy in the Making: the Open Forum Movement (2012)*. The movement was founded by George W. Coleman, a lay Baptist leader and businessman in Boston, in 1908 with the creation of the Ford Hall Forum. Conceived as a form of popular education for adults, proponents of the movement, including Coleman and Mary Caroline Crawford, sought to create a space for public and democratic discourse between people from all walks of life. The lectures, which were free and open to the public, were locally administered and featured prominent



speakers discussing current issues of the day. Features unique to the forums included their trans-denominational focus and a format that allowed equal time for the lectures and the question and answer periods.

Based on the success of the Ford Hall Forum, Coleman's model spread from Boston throughout the U.S. to cities like Detroit, DuBois, Hammond, and Terre Haute and attracted thousands of people. The lecture movement declined in popularity over time with the advent of radio, film and, later, television.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

During the course of his research, Meyers gathered photocopies of articles, advertisements and programs related to the Open Forum movement and correspondence of important proponents of the movement, including Coleman and Crawford. The history of the Ford Hall Forum is well represented in the collection. The materials collected range in date from 1885-2011.

SUBJECT HEADINGS

- Civil society -- United States -- History.
- Coleman, George W. (George William), 1867-
- Crawford, Mary Caroline
- Democracy -- United States -- History.
- Meyers, Arthur S.
- Political culture -- United States -- History.
- Political participation -- United States -- History.

ARRANGEMENT

Collection arranged alphabetically.

CONTAINER LIST

Box Number	File Unit Nbr	Title
001	001	Adult Education (folder 1 of 4) 1906-1932
001	002	Adult Education (folder 2 of 4) 1933-1967
001	003	Adult Education (folder 3 of 4) 1974-1997
001	004	Adult Education (folder 4 of 4) 1997-2007
001	005	Boston Baptist Social Union 1864-1994
001	006	Boston 1910-2008
001	007	Bretton, Max (folder 1 of 2) 1906-1927



001	008	Bretton, Max (folder 2 of 2) 1937-2008
001	009	Coleman, Alice 1928-1995
001	010	Coleman, George (folder 1 of 4) 1886-1918
002	011	Coleman, George (folder 2 of 4) 1919-1925
002	012	Coleman, George (folder 3 of 4) 1926-1968
002	013	Coleman, George (folder 4 of 4) 1996-2005
002	014	Coleman, George, Articles by (folder 1 of 2) 1909-1922
002	015	Coleman, George, Articles by (folder 2 of 2) 1923-1932
002	016	Coleman, George, Books on/by 1914-1936
002	017	Coleman, George Correspondences 1907-1935
002	018	Crawford, Harold 1918-1921, 2000-2001
002	019	Crawford, Mary Caroline (folder 1 of 4) 1896-1914
002	020	Crawford, Mary Caroline (folder 2 of 4) 1915-1946
002	021	Crawford, Mary Caroline (folder 3 of 4) 1980-1999
003	022	Crawford, Mary Caroline (folder 4 of 4) 2000-2007
003	023	Crawford, Mary Caroline, Articles by (folder 1 of 3) 1809-1910
003	024	Crawford, Mary Caroline, Articles by (folder 2 of 3) 1914-1928
003	025	Crawford, Mary Caroline, Articles by (folder 3 of 3) 2002
003	026	Crawford, Mary Caroline Letters 1912-1922
003	027	DuBois, Articles on (folder 1 of 3) 1903-1926
003	028	DuBois, Articles on (folder 2 of 3) 1932-1990
003	029	DuBois, Articles on (folder 3 of 3) 1993-2007
003	030	DuBois -Crisis 1925-1932
003	031	DuBois -Hammond 1923-1995
003	032	DuBois-Other Cities (folder 1 of 4) 1917-1925
003	033	DuBois-Other Cities (folder 2 of 4) 1925-1926
003	034	DuBois-Other Cities (folder 3 of 4) 1926-1930
003	035	DuBois-Other Cities (folder 4 of 4) 1930-1996
003	036	DuBois Writings (folder 1 of 2) 1918-1936
004	037	DuBois Writings (folder 2 of 2) 1973-2011
004	038	Fink, Joseph 1912-1998
004	039	Ford Hall Forum News Articles (folder 1 of 3) 1908-1910, 2000-2001
004	040	Ford Hall Forum News Articles (folder 2 of 3) 1911-1915
004	041	Ford Hall Forum News Articles (folder 3 of 3) 1915-1916, 1923
004	042	Ford Hall Forum Articles, History and Transcripts (folder 1 of 4) 1908, 1913-1914
004	043	Ford Hall Forum Articles, History and Transcripts (folder 2 of 4) 1915-1916, 1918-1919
004	044	Ford Hall Forum Articles, History and Transcripts (folder 3 of 4) 1920-1927
004	045	Ford Hall Forum Articles, History and Transcripts (folder 4 of 4) 1931-1939, 1983, 1993, 1998-2000



004	046	Ford Hall Forum in Boston Public Library 1924, 1993-2007
005	047	Ford Hall Forum Programs (folder 1 of 6) 1908-1912
005	048	Ford Hall Forum Programs (folder 2 of 6) 1912-1914
005	049	Ford Hall Forum Programs (folder 1 of 6) 1914-1915, 1993
005	050	Ford Hall Forum Programs (folder 1 of 6) 1916-1918
005	051	Ford Hall Forum Programs (folder 1 of 6) 1920-1924
005	052	Ford Hall Forum Programs (folder 1 of 6) 1925
005	053	Ford Hall Folks Articles (folder 1 of 3) 1912-1913
005	054	Ford Hall Folks Articles (folder 2 of 3) 1913-1914, 1923
005	055	Ford Hall Folks Articles (folder 3 of 3) 1914
006	056	Hammond Pep in Calumet (folder 1 of 3) 1923-1925
006	057	Hammond Pep in Calumet (folder 2 of 3) 1926-1938
006	058	Hammond Pep in Calumet (folder 3 of 3) 1939-2006
006	059	Hammond- Open Forum (folder 1 of 4) 1924-1927
006	060	Hammond- Open Forum (folder 2 of 4) 1927-1931
006	061	Hammond- Open Forum (folder 3 of 4) 1931-1934
006	062	Hammond- Open Forum (folder 4 of 4) 1934-1943
006	063	Hammond- Interviews (folder 1 of 2) 1921-1960
006	064	Hammond- Interviews (folder 2 of 2) 1990-1996
006	065	Hammond- Open Forum
006	066	Harring, John (folder 1 of 2) 1914-1968
007	067	Harring, John (folder 2 of 2) 1997-2007
007	068	Hirsch, Emil 1885, 1919-1985, 1990, 1995
007	069	Hedwig, Kuhn 1919-1989, 1995-1998
007	070	Background Information 1921-1998
007	071	Cleveland Open Forum 1916-1926
007	072	Cincinnati Open Forum 1936, 1994-1995
007	073	Detroit Open Forum 1917-1928
007	074	Evansville Open Forum (folder 1 of 2) 1922-1937
007	075	Evansville Open Forum (folder 2 of 2) 1956-1996
007	076	Indiana Open Forum (folder 1 of 3) 1913-1935
007	077	Indiana Open Forum (folder 2 of 3) 1980-1985
008	078	Indiana Open Forum (folder 3 of 3) 1997-2001
008	079	Indianapolis Open Forum 1924-1998
008	080	Kokomo Open Forum 1914, 1917, 1997, 2005
008	081	Midwest Open Forum 1916-1997
008	082	National Council-Open Forum 1917-1924
008	083	New England Open Forum (folder 1 of 2) 1913-1919
008	084	New England Open Forum (folder 2 of 2) 1934-1995, 1998



008	085	Other Cities (folder 1 of 2) 1916-1938
008	086	Other Cities (folder 2 of 2) 1980-1999
008	087	Rauschenbusch, Walter 1907-2007
008	088	Sagamore Sociological Conference (folder 1 of 2) 1907-1910
009	089	Sagamore Sociological Conference (folder 2 of 2) 1911-1918
009	090	Social Gospel (folder 1 of 3) 1920-1972
009	091	Social Gospel (folder 2 of 3) 1991-1999
009	092	Social Gospel (folder 3 of 3) 1999
009	093	South Bend 1916-1997
009	094	Terre Haute (folder 1 of 3) 1915-1922
009	095	Terre Haute (folder 2 of 3) 1924-1965
009	096	Terre Haute (folder 3 of 3) 1995-2006
009	097	Women (folder 1 of 2) 1910-1999
009	098	Women (folder 2 of 2) 1999-2003