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Ford Foundation records, Urban Poverty Program, Office Files of Robert Curvin

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Summary Information

Repository:	Rockefeller Archive Center
Creator:	Ford Foundation
Title:	Ford Foundation records, Urban Poverty Program, Office Files of Robert Curvin
ID:	FA626
Date [inclusive]:	1981-1996
Physical Description:	5 Cubic Feet
Language of the Material:	English
Abstract:	The Office Files of Robert Curvin document planning, implementation and management of grants by the Ford Foundation's Urban Poverty Program during the period 1981-1996. There are substantial files relating to Foundation support for community development corporations, response to the Los Angeles riots of 1991 and the work of other foundations on such urban issues as housing, education, substance abuse and employment. The files contain correspondence, memoranda, reports, grant proposals and meeting materials. They are arranged in a single alphabetical series. The collection measures 5 linear feet and is contained in 5 record cartons.

Preferred Citation note

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Biographical Note

Robert Curvin joined the Ford Foundation in 1988 as Director of the Urban Poverty Program (UPP), which under his leadership granted over \$50 million annually to revitalize neighborhoods and expand economic opportunities for city residents. In 1996, Curvin was appointed VicePresident for Communications. Curvin retired from the Ford Foundation in January 2000, and later served as President of the Greentree Foundation. Prior to joining the Ford Foundation, he served for five years as Dean of the Graduate School of Urban and Public Policy at the New School for Social Research in New York City.

He also spent six years as a member of the Editorial Board of The New York Times, where he wrote on a wide range of social policy issues. From 1960-1970 he was a social worker in New York City and New Jersey, and from 1974-1978 taught politics at Brooklyn college. He holds a B.A. (1960) and M.A. (1964) in social work from Rutgers University, and a Ph.D. (1975) in political science from Princeton University.

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Organizational History

Ford Foundation support for an array of programs to alleviate urban poverty in the United States dates from the 1960s, when funding was provided to the Gray Areas program – a model for later federal programs associated with the War on Poverty – and to the first wave of community development corporations. In 1981, as part of a major institutional reorganization, the Foundation established its Urban Poverty Program (UPP). UPP encompassed existing grant portfolios for urban affairs, community development, employment and job training, welfare, teen pregnancy, crime, pre-college education and population. Bernard McDonald served as UPP Director from 1981-1987. The principal institutions that UPP assisted during the 1980s were community development corporations, human service organizations and public secondary schools. Under Robert Curvin's leadership from 1988-1996, UPP expanded its commitment to grantmaking aimed at issues relating to housing, substance abuse and urban poverty outside of the United States.

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Scope and Contents

The Office Files of Robert Curvin document strategic planning and grantmaking by the Ford Foundation's Urban Poverty Program during the period 1981-1996. There are substantial files relating to the work of Ford-funded community development corporations, Foundation response to the Los Angeles riots of 1991, the federal government's Empowerment Zone initiative, and the work of other foundations on various urban issues. Files on "Miami Staff Conference on Urban Initiatives," "Program Review," and "Reichmann, Rebecca" are especially rich in material concerning UPP strategy and program development. The transcript of a 1990 interview of Curvin and Program Officer Prudence Brown provides useful context and background on UPP work during the 1980s (Box 3, Folder 19). Files concerning the work of Foundation Program Officers (Roland Anglin, Prudence Brown, et al) contain a variety of documents related to grants and initiatives coordinated by these individuals. The files contain correspondence, memoranda, reports, grant proposals and meeting materials, and are arranged in a single alphabetical series. The collection measures 5 linear feet and is contained in 5 record cartons.

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Arrangement

The Urban Poverty Program Files of Robert Curvin are arranged alphabetically.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

Rockefeller Archive Center

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Sleepy Hollow 10591

archive@rockarch.org

URL: <http://www.rockarch.org>

Conditions Governing Access note

Material is open for scholarly research, with prior archival review.

Material more than ten years old is open for scholarly research.

Select individual files are restricted, as noted. Permission to access these files must be obtained from the Ford Foundation before scholarly access is permitted.

Conditions Governing Use note

Completion of a use agreement is required prior to providing scholarly access. See RAC Head of Reference (or applicable designee) for details. Ford Foundation holds title, copyright and literary rights in the collection, in so far as it holds them. The Rockefeller Archive Center has authority to grant permission to cite and publish material from the collection for scholarly purposes. Permission to publish extensive excerpts, or material in its entirety, will be referred to the Ford Foundation.

Immediate Source of Acquisition note

Ford Foundation archive was deposited at RAC in 2011. Ford Foundation records, correspondence, reports, program files and officers papers were transferred to, and accessioned by, RAC beginning in 2011. Accessions continue as necessary.

Processing Information

Level 1 Minimal Processing has been conducted to establish basic intellectual and physical control of the material and assess immediate preservation and conservation needs. Material remains as received, in original folders and storage boxes.

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Related Materials

Separated Materials

Unpublished reports written by Ford Foundation staff and consultants were removed from the papers and transferred to the Archives' collection of staff and consultant reports. A list of the titles of these reports is appended to this register.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Ford Foundation

Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements note

Materials requiring specialized equipment for access (film, audio, video, slides) may be restricted from scholarly research dependent on availability of the applicable equipment. Brittle or damaged items, or materials otherwise in need of preservation care, may be restricted from scholarly research at the discretion of the RAC Head of Archival Services/RAC Head of Reference.

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Appendix A: Reports

Arrangement

The following list of unpublished reports written by FF staff and consultants were removed from the papers and transferred to the Archives' collection of staff and consultant reports. The reports are listed in alphabetical order by author. The number on the left is the assigned accession number and may be retrieved via the online catalog.

Title/Description	Instances
Anglin, Roland. Expanding leadership capacity in the field of community development: a concept paper, n.d.	report 16273
Arrick, Ellen. Financing Low-Income Housing with Private Capital: The Experience of the Black Lending Consortia, 1991 January	report 15493
Berresford, Susan V. Remarks Delivered at the Boston United Way, 1988 February 16	report 16684
Calmore, John O. Notes on the Ford Foundation rights and social justice program grantee meeting (Los Angeles, CA), 1994 June 1	report 16275
Chege, Michael. Programming for Democratic Governance and Public Policy in Eastern and Southern Africa: A Program Strategy Paper, 1990 January 2	report 16690
Cuevas, Christina. Los Angeles Visit, 1992 July 30	report 16691
Ford Foundation. Community Epidemiology and Health Management: Report of a Meeting Held at Khon Kaen, Thailand, 1988 February 1-4	report 16679
Ford Foundation. An Overview of Public Policy Research Centers, n.d.	report 16685
Ford Foundation. Reproductive Health and Population. Program Officers Meeting, 1990 March 5-7	report 16688

Friedman, Barry L. and Lerman, Robert I. The Role of Employer-Provided Benefits in Achieving Social Protections, 1989 January	report 16689
Gaberman, Barry. Remarks Delivered at the Conference on Local Intermediaries, Denver, Colorado, 1988 January 21	report 16683
Hahn, Russell and Matthei, Chuck. Community land trusts and the delivery of affordable shelter to the urban poor in Kenya, 1991 November	report 16270
Hoekman, Scott. Proceedings: Workshop for funders of business development and self-employment loan funds, 1988 October 18-19	report 16269
Hokans, Jim. Urban Poverty Programming in East Africa: A Focus on Local Governance for Urban Community Development, 1988	report 106693
Johnson, James H., et al. Second status report on the Center for the Study of Urban Poverty's (CSUP) evaluation of the responses to the Los Angeles civil unrest of 1992, 1993 December 3	report 16276
Lynch, Barbara. Environment and Development Activity in Cuba, 1994 March 31	report 16687
Molnar, Janice Marie. The Ford Foundation early childhood development program: Draft #1, 1993 November 2	report 16272
Portes, Alejandro. Urban Poverty in Miami and the Third World, 1989	report 16682
Rosefsky, Carrie. Toward Establishing Guidelines for the Evaluation of LEIG Activities: A Preliminary Report, 1989 January 20	report 16686
Sherwood, Kay E. Comprehensive Community Planning Initiatives: A List of Foundation-Sponsored Projects, 1994 December	report 16680
Silk, Leonard. Foundation for American Communications, 1991	report 16681
Thomas, Franklin A. Remarks by Franklin A. Thomas: Local Initiatives Support Corporation Tenth Anniversary Celebration, 1989 October 19	report 16153
Walker, Lynn. Reflections on a Trip to Brazil, 1991 March	report 16692
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