

Missoula New Party oral history project, 2005-2006

Overview of the Collection

Title	Missoula New Party oral history project
Dates	2005-2006 (inclusive) 2005 2006
Quantity	4 interviews
Collection Number	Oh 400
Summary	The four interviewees recorded in 2005 and 2006 by interviewer, Jack Rowan, discuss the New Party in Missoula, Montana. They discuss its beginnings, activities, challenges and eventual demise.
Repository	University of Montana, Mansfield Library, Archives and Special Collections Archives and Special Collections Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library University of Montana 32 Campus Dr. #9936 59812-9936 Missoula, MT Telephone: 406-243-2053 Fax: 406-243-4067 library.archives@umontana.edu
Access Restrictions	Researchers must use collection in accordance with the policies of Archives and Special Collections, the Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library, and The University of Montana-Missoula.
Languages	English

Historical Note

Around 1991, the New Party in Missoula, Montana began as membership political organization with membership rolls. It ended in early 2002, outlasting many other New Party chapters in the United States by four years. While the New Party self-described as a "small-d democrat" and "progressive" party, detractors argued that the New Party was little more than a pressure group.

The demise of the New Party started with the 1997 U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Timmons versus Twin Cities Area New Party*. The Court, in a 6-3 decision, upheld the Minnesota ban on cross-endorsing candidates, rejecting the New Party's argument that electoral fusion was a right protected by the First Amendment's freedom of association clause.

Content Description

The four interviewees recorded in 2005 and 2006 by interviewer, Jack Rowan, discuss the New Party in Missoula, Montana. They discuss its beginnings, activities, challenges and eventual demise.

Use of the Collection

Restrictions on Use

Researchers are responsible for using in accordance with 17 U.S.C. and any other applicable statutes. Copyright transferred to The University of Montana-Missoula.

Preferred Citation

[Name of document or photograph number], Missoula New Party Oral History Project, Archives and Special Collections, Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library, The University of Montana-Missoula.

Administrative Information

Custodial History

The interviews were conducted and recorded by Jack Rowan.

Acquisition Information

Interviews were deposited in 2005 and 2006.

Related Materials

The Mansfield Library's Archives and Special Collections also holds a collection of records of Missoula's New Party.

Detailed Description of the Collection

Description	Dates
OH 400-01: Interview with John Fletcher Sound Recording, audio cassette, analog Transcript, 17 leaves John Fletcher, an early members of the New Party who became the clerk or treasurer of the Party for many years, discusses aspects of the New Party community, including: the role of the clerk/treasurer in the organization; issues of importance to the New Party (living wage, neighborhood associations); the role of active members of the New Party and the social outlet that the Party provided; Party strategies; and the dissolution of the Party. He explains his view that the New Party was about getting people more informed about local politics through regular meetings and research.	2005 October 30
OH 400-02: Interview with Jim McGrath Missoula New Party oral history project, 2005-2006 http://archiveswest.orbiscascade.org/ark:/80444/xv91519	2006 January 16

Description**Dates**

Sound Recording, audio cassette, analog
Transcript, 18 leaves

Jim McGrath, New Party member and former Missoula, Montana, City Council member, discusses issues surrounding local politics during the decade of the 1990s, especially related to the New Party, standard debates in progressive politics, the collaborative and inclusive atmosphere of New Party meetings, New Party issues including growth management, social justice, and housing issues, how the diverse elements in the party stayed united and strategies for organizing diverse constituencies, his decision to run for city council; barriers facing the success of the New Party, the New Party's relationship with the Democratic Party, the introduction of nonpartisan local elections, and the long fight for and eventual passage of the living wage ordinance.

OH 400-03: Interview with Judy Smith
Sound Recording, audio cassette, analog
Transcript, 18 leaves

2006 April 30

Smith describes the beginnings of the Missoula, Montana, New Party and their issues including living wage, open space, and affordable housing. She explains the effects of organized hostility toward the New Party and describes the decision-making processes to gain election wins in Missoula, the course of the party, and its demise.

OH 400-04: Interview with John Torma
Sound Recording, audio cassette, analog
Transcript, 13 leaves

2006 April 3

John Torma, New Party member and former Missoula, Montana, City Council member, discusses what drew him into the New Party, running for office as a nonpartisan, living wage, growth management, occupancy standards, density bonuses; the reactionary nature of Chamber of Commerce, Democrats' and conservatives' reaction to the New Party, the political composition of various wards in Missoula; his distaste for the University Area Homeowners' Association, what brought the New Party together, the dissolution of the Party, personal gains from local politics participation, the present City Council, and current concerns about electronic voting.

Names and Subjects

Subject Terms :

Boards of trade--Montana--Missoula
Cities and towns--Montana--Missoula--Growth--Management
City councils--Montana --Missoula
Elections--Montana--Missoula
Electronic voting--Montana--Missoula
Homeowners' associations--Montana--Missoula.
Housing--Montana--Missoula
Living wage movement--Montana--Missoula
Open spaces--Montana--Missoula

Political activists--Montana--Missoula--Interviews
Political participation--Montana--Missoula
Political parties--Montana--Missoula
Women political activists--Montana--Missoula--Interviews

Personal Names :

Fletcher, John, 1948, interviewee
(interviewee)

McGrath, Jim, 1958, interviewee
(interviewee)

Smith, Judy, 1944, interviewee
(interviewee)

Torma, John, 1947, Interviewee
(interviewee)

Corporate Names :

New Party (Missoula, Mont.)

Missoula (Mont.)--City Council

Missoula Chamber of Commerce

University Area Homeowners' Association (Missoula, Mont.)

Geographical Names :

Missoula (Mont.)--Politics and government--20th century

Form or Genre Terms :

Interviews--Montana

Oral histories--Montana

Sound Recording

Other Creators :

Personal Names :

Rowan, Jack, interviewer
(interviewer)

Finding aid prepared by Teresa Hamann
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