

Collection Summary

ID Number: CS 563

Title: Synanon

Extent: 2 Folder(s)

Span Dates: 1969-2000

Language: English

Geographic Location: Los Angeles, California

Abstract: This collection consists of publications and newsletters by the community and reprinted articles and clippings.

Historical Notes: In 1958, Chuck Dederich, a former member of Alcoholics Anonymous, established Synanon as an unconventional drug rehabilitation center in the Los Angeles area. The center experienced rapid growth and soon evolved into an intentional community that attracted many members whose reasons for joining were related to drugs or alcohol. Over the years, many thousands of persons were members of Synanon and lived in communal houses in many locations in California; members lived in simple communal equality, eating together, dwelling in close quarters, and playing "the game," Synanon's pioneering version of encounter groups and similar types of interpersonal exploration that became widely popular in the late 1960's. In the 1970's, however, Synanon began to attract highly vocal critics, and the ensuing conflicts endured for many years. The movement fought its opponents in the courts, and a few members struck out violently, most famously, in a case in which members planted a rattlesnake in the mailbox of an opposing attorney. Synanon's legal problems led to financial problems, and the movement was finally dissolved in 1991. Dederich died in 1997. **Sources:** Miller, Timothy. *The encyclopedic guide to American intentional communities*. 2nd ed. Clinton, New York: Richard W. Couper Press, 2015. pgs. 433-434.

Selected Search Terms

Subjects: Communal living; Commune; Cults; Synanon (Foundation); Rehabilitation methods; Rehabilitation counseling; Rehabilitation centers; Substance abuse; Substance abuse—Patients—Rehabilitation; Dederich, Chuck, 1913-1997

Administrative Information

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Contents	Date	Container	Folder	Location
The Synanon Story. Marshall, CA: Synanon News Service. Vol. 4: no. 1 (January 1976), Vol. 5: no. 4 (October 1977), Vol. 6: no. 1 (May 1978)	1976 - 1978	Filing Cabinet	Folder 1	Filing Cabinet 16-E
Synanon The People Business: Advertising Gifts and Premiums Catalog, 1978-1979	1978 - 1979	Filing Cabinet	Folder 1	Filing Cabinet 16-E
Faucette, Betty. Synanon Philosophy: Synanon Infant School. Oakland, CA: Synanon News Bureau, May 1973	1973	Filing Cabinet	Folder 1	Filing Cabinet 16-E
Dederich, Chuck. The Game Process. Santa Monica, CA: Synanon Foundation	1976	Filing Cabinet	Folder 1	Filing Cabinet 16-E
Contracts. Santa Monica, CA: Synanon Foundation	1976	Filing Cabinet	Folder 1	Filing Cabinet 16-E
Lees, Bob. The Miracle on the Beach. Marshall, CA: Synanon Foundation	1978	Filing Cabinet	Folder 1	Filing Cabinet 16-E
Dederich, Betty. I'm Betty D: Selected Writings from Betty Dederich. Marshall, CA: Synanon Foundation	1977	Filing Cabinet	Folder 1	Filing Cabinet 16-E
Garfield, Howard. The Synanon Religion: The Survival Morality for the 21st Century. Marshall, CA: Synanon Foundation	1978	Filing Cabinet	Folder 1	Filing Cabinet 16-E
Carder, Brooks. Synanon: An Educational Community. Marshall, CA: Synanon	n.d.	Filing Cabinet	Folder 1	Filing Cabinet 16-E
Handouts on Synanon Philosophy	1977	Filing Cabinet	Folder 1	Filing Cabinet 16-E
Reprinted Articles and Clippings	1969 - 2000	Filing Cabinet	Folder 2	Filing Cabinet 16-E
Gates, Eileen M. and Philip C, Bourdette. "The Synanon Alternative to the Criminal Justice System." Journal of Drug Issues, Summer 1975, pgs. 232-241.	1975	Filing Cabinet	Folder 2	Filing Cabinet 16-E
Randall, David. "Synanon: Born While AA Slept." 24: The Magazine of Living the Way—Twenty-four Hours at a Time. July 1973.	1973	Filing Cabinet	Folder 2	Filing Cabinet 16-E
Sale, Lillian. "Synanon: People in Transition to Responsible Living." LKHH Accountant, Spring 1973.	1973	Filing Cabinet	Folder 2	Filing Cabinet 16-E

O'Quin, Sally. "Close-Up/Chuck Dederich." Life, Vol. 66: no. 4 (January 31, 1969)	1969	Filing Cabinet	Folder	2	Filing Cabinet 16-E
Coyle, Wanda. "Synanon Camp: The Game is a Life Style." The Fresno Bee, July 14, 1974, pg. C1.	1974	Filing Cabinet	Folder	2	Filing Cabinet 16-E
Ferderber, Skip. "Al Simmie's retirement Adventure." Modern Maturity, October-November 1976.	1976	Filing Cabinet	Folder	2	Filing Cabinet 16-E
Ferderber, Skip. "Synanon: Where Life is the Game." Westways, Vol. 66: no. 5 (May 1974)	1974	Filing Cabinet	Folder	2	Filing Cabinet 16-E
Barty, Sandra. "The Synanon Community: Women's Liberation?" Oneida, NY. Communal Studies Association Conference, October 1994	1994	Filing Cabinet	Folder	2	Filing Cabinet 16-E