



**Special Collections and University Archives**

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**Manuscript Group 150  
International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU)**

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Last Modified October 7, 2024**

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**International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU); Manuscript Group 150  
Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Special Collections and University Archives  
1 box, 1 linear foot**

**Historical Note**

The International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU) was founded in 1900, and it originated among Jewish and Italian immigrants, but soon expanded across all nationalities. Leading two major strikes in 1909 and falling victim to a devastating fire in 1911, the IGLWU soon became one of the most progressive and powerful unions throughout the 1930's and 1940's. Under the leadership of President David Dubinsky (1932-1966) and strong ties to Washington membership in influence soared. By the 1960's, because of cheaper imports from overseas and new labor laws the IGLWU membership began to dwindle. Recently in 1995, the IGLWU combined with the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers' Union, the Union of Needletrades and others to continue the union's efforts.

See also Manuscript Group 252: James Watta Industrial Heritage and Labor History Collection.

**Scope and Content**

The International Ladies Garment Workers Union Manuscript (ILGWU) Collection is housed in one archival box. It consists of newsletters, newspapers (*The Justice*), brief histories of the union, songbooks, convention programs and retirement/dinner announcements. The materials span from 1950s through the early 1990s. Most union newsletters and newspapers are from the 1980s and 1990s.

**Provenance**

The International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU) collection was donated by James Watta in 2010-2011. It was collected by the Labor Center in the Department of Employment and Labor Relations at IUP.

**Restrictions**

None.

**Processor**

The collection was processed and organized, and this finding aid was created by Lynn Rice in 2011.

**Contents Description**

**Box 1 (21 folders and 1 item)**

**Folders**

1. Histories of the ILGWU
2. Newspaper: *The Justice*, 1970, 1975, 1980, 1986, 1988, and 1993-1995;
3. Newspaper: *The Justice*, 1994-1995
4. Newspaper: *Garment Worker*, March 1956-April 1960
5. Newspaper: *Garment Worker*, June 1960-December 1962
6. Newsletter: *The Common Thread*, 1984-1986
7. Newsletter: *Garment Worker*, 1976-1986

8. Newsletter: *The Needle's Eye*, 1983-1987
9. Newsletter: *Needle News*, 1982-1986
10. Newsletter: *Northeastern News*, 1982-1986
11. Newsletter: *The Ohio Sew Biz*, 1982-1984
12. Newsletter: *The Torch*, 1982-1986
13. Newsletter: *Unity*, 1984-1986
14. Newsletter: *Union Sentinel*, 1982-1984
15. Newsletter: *Union Worker*, Local Union, 1982-1984
16. Newsletter of 37<sup>th</sup> ILGWU Convention, 1980
17. Health and Safety booklets, 1965-1984
18. ILGWU Annual Conventions: Northeast Department, 1950 and 1983
  - a. Report, 1950
  - b. Report to the Delegates, May 1983
19. Retirement/ Dinner Announcements, 1976-1980
20. Songbooks and Musical Programs, 1950-1989
21. Miscellaneous: photograph, newsletter, bill statement, posters, and booklet, 1956, 1979, and 1995
22. Miscellaneous: ILGWU publications
  - a. ILGWU: Signature of 450,000 (no date, 1964-1965)
  - b. ILGWU: Guide for Piece Rates – Northeast – Western Pennsylvania and Ohio Department, October 1979
  - c. Working Union: You and the ILGWU, no date

**Memorabilia**

1. ILGWU coffee mug (white plastic), no date (on display)