



The New York Public Library
Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture,
Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division

Guide to the

Jessica B. Davis Key Women of America files

1954-1996

Sc MG 620

Summary

Creator: Davis, Jessica Bell

Title: Jessica B. Davis Key Women of America files

Date: 1954-1996

Size: 1.04 linear feet (3 boxes)

Source: Gift of Jessica B. Davis, ca. 1997.

Abstract: This collection consists of personal and professional papers of Jessica B. Davis; the majority of the collection contains materials related to Davis's role as president of the Westchester Branch of Key Women of America. Most of this material is comprised of correspondence, reports, event programs, brochures, speeches written by Davis, and clippings on the branch and its members. Additionally, there is some material pertaining to Davis's other affiliations, mostly involving her work with A. Philip Randolph. There is a limited amount of personal material, which includes resumes, some correspondence, and papers on her brother and daughter.

Preferred citation: [Item], Jessica B. Davis Key Women of America files, Sc MG 620, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, The New York Public Library

Language of the Material: English

Separated Materials:

Transferred to the Photographs and Prints Division: photographs.

Related Materials:

Also in the Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture:

Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters collection, Sc MG 426

Creator History

Jessica Bell Davis (?-1991), a long-serving president of the Westchester Branch of Key Women of America, was the daughter of an official of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, James H. Bell, and also the wife of the union official, Clarence E. Davis. Additionally, she was a teacher and worked with A. Philip Randolph for forty-five years. Davis was a member of St. Catherine A.M.E. Zion Church in New Rochelle, New York.

Key Women of America was founded by Bertha Nelms Harris in 1954, initially to assist in securing foster and adoptive homes for homeless children in New York City. Later the organization became involved in many other community projects, such as prevention of drug addiction; hospital volunteer services; job development; prison visits; big sister prison release program; children uplift (program for pre-school children); awarding of scholarships, etc. Beginning in New York, this organization grew nationally and then internationally to some forty-six branches in the U.S., Aruba, Liberia, Nigeria and Bermuda.

Scope and Content Note

This collection consists of personal and professional papers of Jessica B. Davis; the majority of the collection contains materials related to Davis's role as president of the Westchester Branch of Key Women of America. Most of this material is comprised of correspondence, reports, event programs, brochures, speeches written by Davis, and clippings on the branch and its members. Additionally, there is some material pertaining to Davis's other affiliations, mostly involving her work with A. Philip Randolph. There is a limited amount of personal material, which includes resumes, some correspondence, and papers on her brother and daughter.

Arrangement: Arranged into 3 series: (1) Personal; (2) Key Women of America; and (3) Other affiliations.

Key Terms

Subjects

African American children
African American women -- Societies and clubs
Authors, Black
Social work with children -- United States

Geographic Names

New York (N.Y.) -- Social conditions

Names

Davis, Jessica Bell
Randolph, A. Philip (Asa Philip), 1889-1979
A. Philip Randolph Campus High School (New York, N.Y.)
Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters
Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. Ladies Auxiliary

Key Women of America, Inc
Negro American Labor Council

Container List

Personal

- b. 1 f. 1 Resumes and profiles 1965-1975
- b. 1 f. 2 Correspondence 1964-1980
- b. 1 f. 3 Membership cards and passes 1961-1969
Includes Davis's membership cards and conference passes for Key Women of America.
- b. 1 f. 4 Family 1954-1969
Includes materials on Davis's daughter, Carolyn (school newsletters and news clippings) and brother, Thomas Bell. All of her brother's materials relate to his position as the President of Sherwin Williams Credit Union.
- b. 1 f. 5 Miscellaneous 1967-1976
Includes maps, postcards, poems written by others, and church programs, among others.

Key Women of America

- b. 1 f. 6 Constitution, by-laws, and letterhead for national office 1967
Includes Davis's personal copy of the constitution and by-laws.
- b. 1 f. 7 Westchester Branch mission statements ca. 1960-1964
Correspondence and reports
Includes some national office correspondence; also includes meeting minutes and agendas.
- b. 1 f. 8 1961-1964
- b. 1 f. 9 1965
- b. 1 f. 10 1966
- b. 1 f. 11 1967-1969
- b. 1 f. 12 1973
- b. 1 f. 13 1974-1980
- b. 1 f. 14 1981-1985
- b. 1 f. 15 undated
- b. 2 f. 1 Jessica B. Davis Scholarship applications 1996
- b. 2 f. 2 Writing and speeches 1962-1984
Includes writing by Davis, mostly speeches, addresses, and president's messages, all drafts.
Also includes some notes.

Printed matter

- b. 2 f. 3 Programs and brochures 1961-1985
Includes annual luncheon programs and souvenir journals.
- b. 2 f. 4 Clippings 1963-1976
Mostly includes clippings about the Westchester Branch of Key Women of America and its members.

Key News

- b. 2 f. 5 1979-1982
- b. 2 f. 6 1983-1987
- b. 2 f. 7 Westchester Key Women, Inc. napkins

Other affiliations

- b. 2 f. 8 Mayor's Conference on Children and Youth 1962-1964
Davis was invited by Mayor Alvin Ruskin to participate in the conference.
Includes conference program, brochures, working papers, and clippings.

Other affiliations (cont.)

- b. 3 f. 1 **A. Philip Randolph Campus High School 1985-1989**
Includes annual dinner programs and clippings.
- b. 3 f. 2 **A. Philip Randolph Educational Fund and Institute printed matter 1977-1985**
- b. 3 f. 3 **Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and Negro American Labor Council**
1961-1968
Includes clippings, mostly on Randolph; a Ladies Auxiliary testimonial banquet program; and a convention program from 1961, among others.
National Association of College Women 1964
Includes a membership application and luncheon program.
- b. 3 f. 4 **General printed matter 1965-1987**
Includes clippings and two small posters on important figures in Black history.