Summary

Creator: Major, Gerri, 1894-1984

Title: Gerri Major papers

Date: 1927-1985

Size: 1 linear foot (2 archival boxes, 2 vols.)

Abstract: Geraldyn "Gerri" Hodges Major, journalist and writer, was raised and educated in Chicago. Known then as Geraldyn Dismond, she pursued a professional career as a writer, journalist and editor for several African-American newspapers including the "New York Amsterdam News." Black society was Major's primary journalistic interest, and she wrote about society fashion, food and style, frequently traveling around the globe as she covered social events. From 1934-1946 Major worked for the New York City Health Department's Bureau of Public Health Information and Education as an administrative assistant. In 1953, then known as Gerri Major, she began a 25 year career at the New York office of the Johnson Publishing Company where she served as society editor and associate editor for "Ebony" Magazine, and later, "Jet" Magazine. She became senior staff editor for "Ebony" in 1967 and briefly was a European correspondent. She wrote and lectured on aspects of black society, and co-authored a book, "Black Society," published in 1976. Major died in New York City in 1984. The Gerri Major Papers reflect some aspects of the career of this journalist and writer. Much of the collection consists of biographical information in the form of news clippings about her worldwide travels, her achievements, and other activities. Major's writings include her columns for the "New York Amsterdam News," 1939-1944, a couple of issues of "Jet" Magazine, reports and articles written during her employment with the New York City Health Department, Bureau of Public Health Information and Education, and early submissions to "Opportunity" and other journals. The balance of the collection consists of materials relating to her 80th and 85th birthday celebrations, in 1974 and 1979, respectively. Her 80th birthday is acknowledged with news clippings, and for her 85th, celebrating sixty years in the writing field, there are news clippings describing the festivities, and two scrapbooks containing numerous letters, telegrams, and greeting cards.

Access: Advance notice required.

Preferred citation: Gerri Major papers, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, The New York Public Library
Creator History
Geraldyn “Gerri” Hodges Major, journalist and writer, was raised and educated in Chicago. Known then as Geraldyn Dismond, she pursued a professional career as a writer, journalist and editor for several African-American newspapers including the "New York Amsterdam News." Black society was Major’s primary journalistic interest, and she wrote about society fashion, food and style, frequently traveling around the globe as she covered social events. From 1934-1946 Major worked for the New York City Health Department’s Bureau of Public Health Information and Education as an administrative assistant. In 1953, then known as Gerri Major, she began a 25 year career at the New York office of the Johnson Publishing Company where she served as society editor and associate editor for "Ebony" Magazine, and later, "Jet" Magazine. She became senior staff editor for "Ebony" in 1967 and briefly was a European correspondent. She wrote and lectured on aspects of black society, and co-authored a book, "Black Society," published in 1976. Major died in New York City in 1984.

Scope and Content Note
The Gerri Major Papers reflect some aspects of the career of this journalist and writer. Much of the collection consists of biographical information in the form of news clippings about her worldwide travels, her achievements, and other activities. Major’s writings include her columns for the "New York Amsterdam News," 1939-1944, a couple of issues of "Jet" Magazine, reports and articles written during her employment with the New York City Health Department, Bureau of Public Health Information and Education, and early submissions to "Opportunity" and other journals. The balance of the collection consists of materials relating to her 80th and 85th birthday celebrations, in 1974 and 1979, respectively. Her 80th birthday is acknowledged with news clippings, and for her 85th, celebrating sixty years in the writing field, there are news clippings describing the festivities, and two scrapbooks containing numerous letters, telegrams, and greeting cards.

Key Terms
Subjects
African American authors
African American journalists
African American women authors
African American women journalists
African Americans -- New York (State) -- New York
African Americans -- Social life and customs
African Americans in the newspaper industry -- New York (State) -- New York
Black author
Upper class -- New York (State) -- New York -- African Americans

Genre/Physical Characteristic
Scrapbooks

Names
Major, Gerri, 1894-1984
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