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Guide to the

**Vicki Garvin papers**

1923-1998 [bulk 1950-1990]

Sc MG 647

## Summary

**Creator:** Garvin, Vicki, 1915-2007

**Title:** Vicki Garvin papers

**Date:** 1923-1998 [bulk 1950-1990]

**Size:** 2.2 linear feet (1 record carton, 3 archival boxes)

**Source:** Gift, Vicki Garvin, Sept. 1998

**Abstract:** Victoria (Vicki) Garvin was an African-American trade union and political activist as well as a pan-Africanist and internationalist. From 1946-1950 Garvin served as a research director of the United Office and Professional Workers of America. In 1951 she took part in the formation of the National Negro Labor Council and became a national vice president and executive secretary of the New York City chapter. She taught English in Ghana between 1963-1964, and from 1964-1970 she taught English to advanced Chinese students at the Shanghai Foreign Languages Institute. The Vicki Garvin Papers document aspects of Garvin's work as a trade union organizer, especially among African-Americans in the 1950's, her teaching experience in Shanghai (1964-1970), return trips there in the 1970's, and her support of communism both in the United States and in China. Included are Garvin's personal reminiscences about her activities and individuals with whom she associated.

**Access:** Advance notice required.

**Preferred citation:** [Item], Vicki Garvin papers, Sc MG 647, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, The New York Public Library

## Creator History

Victoria (Vicki) Garvin was an African-American trade union and political activist as well as a pan-Africanist and internationalist. From 1946-1950 Garvin served as a research director of the United Office and Professional Workers of America. In 1951 she took part in the formation of the National Negro Labor Council and became a national vice president and executive secretary of the New York City chapter. She taught English in Ghana between 1963-1964, and from 1964-1970 she taught English to advanced Chinese students at the Shanghai Foreign Languages Institute.

## **Scope and Content Note**

The Vicki Garvin Papers document aspects of Garvin's work as a trade union organizer, especially among African-Americans in the 1950's, her teaching experience in Shanghai (1964-1970), return trips there in the 1970's, and her support of communism both in the United States and in China. Included are Garvin's personal reminiscences about her activities and individuals with whom she associated.

In addition to personal papers and letters Garvin wrote to various activists and personalities, her files include the published proceedings of the 11th Constitutional Convention of the CIO. Garvin's interest and work with the National Negro Labor Council (NNLC) is documented in the proceedings of the founding convention in 1951, news clippings, flyers, and her reminiscences.

Many of Garvin's activities teaching in China are reflected in her papers. Also included are her speeches, lessons plans and lectures in which she stated her support for Mao Tse-Tung and compared the liberation struggles of African Americans with those of the Chinese people and the South Vietnamese. In her diaries of the 1970's she summarized her personal experiences teaching in Shanghai and discussed the Gang of Four. The collection contains texts for Garvin's speeches and presentations regarding her personal achievements and background, her ideas for change, and tributes to black leaders. Her writings discuss the history of black workers' struggles in the United States in the 1950's and the Chinese Communist Party in the 1960's, among other topics. Of interest in the series, Organizational and Individual Files are Garvin's speeches and writings about Malcolm X, 1990-1997, her experiences with him as his translator when he visited Ghana in 1964, and her remembrances of the statements he made while in Ghana.

**Arrangement:** Papers organized into six series: I. Personal Papers; II. Correspondence; III. Employment; IV. Presentations and Speeches; V. Writings; VI. Organizational and Individual Files

## **Key Terms**

### **Subjects**

African American communists  
African American intellectuals  
African American political activists  
African American women  
African Americans -- China  
African Americans -- Civil rights  
African Americans -- Relations with Chinese  
Communism  
Communists -- China  
Labor unions  
Political activists

### **Geographic Names**

China -- Social conditions -- 1949-1976

### **Genre/Physical Characteristic**

Diaries  
Reminiscences  
Speeches

**Names**

Garvin, Vicki, 1915-2007

X, Malcolm, 1925-1965

Congress of Industrial Organizations (U.S.)

National Negro Labor Council (U.S.)

Zhongguo gong chan dang