Guide to the Civil Rights in Brooklyn Collection, 1961 - 2005

Brooklyn Public Library
Grand Army Plaza
Brooklyn, NY 11238

Contact: Brooklyn Collection
Phone: 718.230.2762
Fax: 718.857.2245
Email: bcref@brooklynpubliclibrary.org
www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org

Copyright © 2012 Brooklyn Public Library. All rights reserved.

Descriptive Summary

Creator: Various
Title: Civil Rights in Brooklyn Collection
Date Span: 1961-2005 (bulk 1960s)
Abstract: The collection consists of four series:
Series I: Congress of Racial Equality (C.O.R.E.) Documents
Series II: FOCUS - A newsletter and other materials relating to an integrated, but predominantly white Civil Rights group based in the shorefront area of Brooklyn.
Series III: Various books, pamphlets, articles and items on Civil Rights issues compiled by the donor
Series IV: Black News
Quantity: 11 Boxes
Location: Brooklyn Collection, Map Room, Shelves 1.5 – 1.7
Repository: Brooklyn Public Library – Brooklyn Collection
Reference Code: BC0023

Biographical History

In the early 1960s, the Civil Rights movement moved up north. Inspired by the Freedom Fighters in the South, a small group of intrepid people led by Doctor Robert Palmer decided to do something about the appalling conditions in the Bedford-Stuyvesant ghetto: crumbling and rat-infested housing; inadequate garbage collection, inferior schools, and very high unemployment. Thus was born Brooklyn CORE (The Congress of Racial Equality). During the early 1960s, the Brooklyn Chapter of CORE was one of the most dynamic civil rights organizations in New York City. From 1960-64, members of Brooklyn CORE led local demonstrations to desegregate apartments, integrate public schools, create jobs, and improve sanitation services to Bedford-Stuyvesant.
FOCUS (Freedom Organizations Coordinated for Unity in Shorefront) was another group that made significant contributions to the Civil Rights movement. Working out of the Sheepshead Bay-Shorefront area, the group was instrumental in suspending the licenses of several real estate brokers who discriminated in selling and renting houses and apartments. They also took direct action against violators of public accommodations such as the American Legion and Cabana Clubs. Operation Open City was active in obtaining housing for minority families who had been discriminated against. Between them, these organizations were successful in making new areas of Brooklyn available to minorities.

Rioghan Kirchner, compiler and donor of the collection, was personally involved in many CORE actions, and served as Chair of the Focus Housing Committee, where she organized black and white couples to test landlords for housing discrimination.

Scope and Content

The collection contains both original materials documenting the work of CORE, FOCUS and other Brooklyn groups during the 1960s, and secondary materials, especially newspaper and magazine articles from the 1960s-1980s, that refer to ongoing civil rights struggles on the national stage. Series I covers CORE actions against employment discrimination, housing and school discrimination in Brooklyn, as well as the organization’s participation in the March on Washington in 1963. It includes legal cases and photographs of actions and individual activists. Series II contains FOCUS newsletters and other materials relating to housing discrimination. Series III is a compilation of books, articles, typescripts and ephemera on various aspects of the Civil Rights movement. Series IV consists of a run of the newsletter Black News (124 volumes from October 1969 to March 1984). These volumes contain articles by and about: Amiri Baraka (Leroi Jones), Betty Shabbazz, Jitu Weusi, Julius Nyerere, Stokely Carmichael, Angela David, Malcolm X, Idi Amin, Joanne Little, Elijah Muhammad, Rap Brown, James Meredith, Bob Marley, Charlayne Hunter and many others.

Restrictions

Access Restrictions
Collection is located in the Brooklyn Collection at the Central Branch at Grand Army Plaza. The collection may only be used in the library and is not available through interlibrary loan. Requests to view the collection must be made at least 48 hours in advance of visit.

Use Restrictions
While many items in the Brooklyn Collection are unrestricted, we do not own reproduction rights to all materials. Be aware of the several kinds of rights that might apply: copyright, licensing and trademarks. The borrower assumes all responsibility for copyright questions.
Access Points

Subject Topics:
- Civil rights movements—New York (State)—New York
- Race relations—New York (State)—New York
- Brooklyn (New York, N.Y.)—history

Related Materials

Available at the Brooklyn Collection:
Civil Rights in Brooklyn Oral History Tapes. Interviews conducted by Brian Purnell of activists in the Brooklyn Civil Rights Movement. Interview subjects: Bob law, Edith Diamond, Maxine Craig (daughter of Oliver and Marjorie Leeds), Lacqueline Lee Young, Paul and Rita Heiegg, Dr Douglas Bibuld, Riohan Kirchner, Elaine Bibuld, Frances Phipps, Mary Ellen Phipps Kirton, Jerome Bibuld, Edith lewinson, Gilbert Banks, Sunny Carson, Msemaji Weusi and Nandi Weusi.
Location: MR Shelf 1.5

Black News Table of Contents
A listing of articles in each issue of Black News, by date.

Brian Purnell. *A movement grows in Brooklyn: the Brooklyn chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) and the northern civil rights movement during the early 1960’s.* Ann Arbor, MI: UMI 2006


Administrative Information

Provenance
The Civil Rights in Brooklyn Collection was donated to the Brooklyn Public Library by Rioghan Kirchner in 2003-2005.

Preferred Citation
This collection should be cited as the Civil Rights in Brooklyn Collection, Brooklyn Collection, Brooklyn Public Library.
Arrangement
Series I: Congress of Racial Equality (C.O.R.E.) Documents
Series II: FOCUS - A newsletter and other materials relating to an integrated, but predominantly white Civil Rights group based in the shorefront area of Brooklyn.
Series III: Various books, pamphlets, articles and items on Civil Rights issues compiled by the donor
Series IV: Black News

Folder List
Series I: Congress of Racial Equality (C.O.R.E.) Documents
Box 1: Location MR Shelf 1.5
  1.2 Employment Discrimination – Downstate medical Center – 1963
  1.3 Employment Discrimination. Downstate Medical Center
  1.5 Employment Discrimination – Ebinger’s Bakery – Photographs
  1.6 Operation Clean Sweep - 1962
  1.7 CORE pickets Whitehouse – Federal Intervention in Georgia
  1.8 School Discrimination- Bibuld Case. 1963-64 (1)
  1.9 School Discrimination- Bibuld Case (2)
  1.10 CORE - Route 40 1961-63
  1.11 CORE - March on Washington 1963
  1.12 Civil Rights misc
  1.13 Howard Beach 1986
  1.14 A Day of Outrage 1987

Box 2: Location MR Shelf 1.5
  2.1 CORE Housing Discrimination (1) 1961-64
  First sit in, IRA Management; Safrin & Safrin; Ginsberg vs. Ryan; Diamond-Greaves; Christie-Jacobovitz; Lawson vs. Nieman; Cole vs Vanderveer Estate
  2.2 CORE Housing Discrimination (2); The Whitings vs Molo Const etc; State and Federal Funds for Discrimination?; Lefrak; photograph of Rose Beverley & friend in her new apartment.
  2.3 CORE Housing Discrimination (3) Weiner-McGuire; White Bros vs Cohn & Kahn
  2.4 Housing discrimination—miscellaneous newspaper articles, 1963-1987
  2.5 Housing Discrimination. Real Estate Brokers. Focus
  2.6 Housing Discrimination. Real Estate Brokers. Focus
  2.7 Housing Discrimination. Henderson vs Wurman; White Brothers.
  2.8 Housing Discrimination. Johnson-Ganz.
  2.9 Housing Discrimination. Braithwaite vs Vitucci & Cam Construction. (Includes original documents and photographs of Braithwaite family)
2.10 CORE Community Organizing. Rent Strikes 1963-64. (Includes two photographs of protest against police brutality.)

2.11 Operation Open City

2.12 Brooklyn Ministers’ Coalition

Box 3: Location MR Shelf 1.5

3.1 Operation Clean Sweep “Taxation without Sanitation.” 18 photographs numbered 3.1.1 to 3.1.18

3.2 Fast for Freedom. 1 photograph numbered 3.2.1

3.3 Stall-in at the World’s Fair 1964

3.4 School Integration – Bussing – Boycotts, Etc. 1964-1969

3.5 Federal Intervention in Georgia 1962—CORE. 3 photographs, numbered 3.5.1, 3.5.1 (copy 2), 3.5.2

3.6 Brooklyn CORE Organization

3.7 St. John’s Episcopal hospital / Urban League 1962

3.8.1 People of Brooklyn CORE; Oliver Leeds, Arnold Goldwag, Major Owens, Elaine Bildeul, Prof Edward Lewinson

3.8.2 People of Brooklyn CORE; Dr Barbara Wallace, Rioghan Kirchner, Marjory Leeds

3.9 James Farmer

3.10 Sit-in photographs—Molo Construction. 6 photographs numbered 3.10.1 to 3.10.6

3.11 Board of Education—CORE (16 photographs numbered 3.11.1 to 3.11.14 with 2 copies

Series II: FOCUS

Box 4: Location: MR Shelf 1.5

4.1 FOCUS Newsletter Vol 1 No 1 - Vol 1 No 3, 1964

4.2 FOCUS Newsletter Vol 2 No 1 - Vol 2 No 5, 1965

4.3 FOCUS Newsletter Vol 2 No 6 – Vol 2 No 9, 1965

4.4 FOCUS Newsletter Vol 3 No 1 - Vol 3 No 3, 1966

4.5 FOCUS Newsletter Feb 1967 In Memoriam Dorothy Fulmer

4.6 FOCUS—Letter from Ira Gruber, Sheepshead Bay student, in Mississippi

4.7 FOCUS—Public Accommodations

4.8 FOCUS—Misc articles 1964-1967

4.9 Cartoons from FOCUS newsletters (3 original on tissue paper)

4.10 Low-income housing on Emmons Ave—opposition by whites

4.11 Copsic—Committee on Preservation of a Self-Integrated Community

4.12 Tester’s Handbook. FOCUS Housing Committee. Rioghan Kirchner Chairman

Series III: Various books, pamphlets, articles and items

Box 5: (flat) Location MR Shelf 1.6

5.1 Life magazine September 6, 1963. Coverage of March on Washington with color and b & w photos

5.2 Press articles on March on Washington: NY Amsterdam News Sept 7, 1963;
Murray Kempton in the New Republic, Sept 14, 1963;
U.S. News and World Report Sept 9, 1963;
Newsweek Sept 2, 1963;
Ebony November 1963;
Leaflet, The Issue is Silence, text of address by Joachim Prinz, President of the American Jewish Congress, at the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, Lincoln Memorial, Aug. 28, 1963

5.3 Typescript, Why Not Next Door? A number of human interest stories on the subject of discrimination, by Rioghan M. Kirchner.


5.5.1 Miscellaneous newspaper and magazine articles:
Source unknown, possibly Life Magazine, June 1963, “Five Days in Mississippi.”
Source unknown, possibly Life magazine n.d. “Crusade in Mississippi.”
Time magazine, Sept 27, 1963, from cover with portrait of Governor Wallace of Alabama.
NY Amsterdam News, Apr 13, 1968 “I have a dream” speech, reactions to slaying of MLK
Source unknown, n.d. 6 portraits of African-Americans
Leaflet, William Moses Kunstler Racial Justice Awards.
Notice (original) “These housing accommodations are the subject of a complaint before the City Commission on Human Rights…”

5.5.2 Further newspaper and magazine articles re murder of Medgar Evers, KKK etc.
Evers, Myrlie. “He said he wouldn’t mind dying—if…” No source, n.d.
“In memoriam Medgar Evers” no source, n.d.
Bennett Jr., Lerone “SNCC: Rebels with a cause.” No source, n.d.
“School plan hit by Oklahoma City” New York Times? N.d.
Full text: Dr. M.L. King’s Historic Nobel Prize speech…” N.Y. Amsterdam News, Dec 12, 1964
James L. Hicks, Freedom’s fraternity. No source, dated in red pencil Jul7 27, 1963
“White hate groups.” No source, n.d.
Fairlie, Henry. “An Englishman goes to a Klan meeting.” New York Times Magazine,
May 23, 1965


“Civil Rights.” *Time* Sept 27, 1963


“White cleric, battered in Selma, feared near death.” No source, Mar 11 1965

“Historic turning point for the Negro’s cause.” *Life magazine* Mar 26, 1965


Brown vs State of Louisiana (photocopies.)

Several photocopied articles and printouts of two articles on CORE

*La Revolte de Los Angeles.* *Paris Match*, 28 Aout, 1965

“A Mailman's last delivery.” Special CORElator supplement in commemoration of William Moore.

“Birmingham’s shame…the many guilty” No source, Sept 1963


5.7 Sheephead Bay. A Pictorial Tour, compiled by Focus. R.M. Kirchnner, Housing Chairman. 6 mounted photographs 13.5” x 9” with handwritten captions describing conditions.

5.8 Police Brutality. Clippings on police brutality, 2 photographs (numbered 5.8.1 and 5.8.2) of a 1999 protest rally, a 1964 City of New York memo, recounting an incident of police brutality.

Box 6: Location MR Shelf 1.6

6.1 A collection of books and pamphlets relating to the Civil Rights Movement.

*A Political Biography of Angela Davis.* New York: Committee to Free Angel Davis n.d. 9pp.


*Calendar of Coercion* New York: CORE n.d. unpaginated, 6 leaves


*Chasan, Dan.* All about CORE. New York: CORE n.d. Unpaginated, 10 leaves

*Civil Rights and Civil Wrongs.* Hollywood, CA; Front Page Publications, 1964. 98pp


*Free at last. A history of the Civil Rights Movement and those who died in the struggle.* Montgomery, AL: Southern Poverty Law Center n.d.104pp


*Justice?* New York: CORE n.d. 33pp pamphlet


*Sit-In Songs.* New York: CORE, 1962. 19pp

*This is CORE* (foldout leaflet). New York: CORE n.d.


6.2 4 pieces of artwork 9” x 10.5” by lomonaco, mounted on board

6.3 Bibuld family photographs numbered 2 through 8. (Photograph no. 1 missing, 1/5/2012) with captions printed on 2 separate sheets.

6.4.1 Photocopied compilations of poems. *Poems of Protest* (photocopies.) various authors, various dates.

6.4.2 Photocopied compilation of poems. *Illustration sources for poems of protest*

6.4.3 *Untitled, image of chained slave on cover of 4-fold binder*

6.5 Ephemera


One paper armband inscribed “Birmingham Children.”

One photocopied greeting card with image of Birmingham children

6 original pins

Various flyers, leaflets and photocopies.

**Series IV: Black News**

Arranged chronologically in 5 boxes numbered 7 to 12, location MR Shelves 1.5 and 1.7


See *Black News Table of Contents* for a detailed listing of articles by issue.

Box 7: Location MR 1.5

7.1 *Black News* Covers


Box 8: Location MR 1.7


8.4 *Black News* Vol. 1, No. 44 – 46, November 1, 1972 – March 15, 1973

8.5 *Black News* Vol. 2, No. 1 – 2, April 1, 1973 – April 15, 1973
Box 9: Location MR 1.7


Box 10: Location MR 1.7

10.5 Black News Vol. 3, No. 20 – 25, October, 1977 – September 1978

Box 11: Location MR 1.7

11.1 Black News Vol. 4, No. 1 – 9, October 1978 – September 1979