Roger W. Wilkins Papers

A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress Washington, D.C. 2018

Contact information: https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/mss.contact

Catalog Record: https://lccn.loc.gov/mm2013085777

Additional search options available at: https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms018003

Prepared by Manuscript Division staff

Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2018 Revised 2024 February

Collection Summary

Title: Roger W. Wilkins Papers **Inclusive Dates:** 1861-2012 **Bulk Dates:** 1962-2007

ID No.: MSS85777

Creator: Wilkins, Roger W., 1932-2017

Extent: 18,000 items

Extent: 25 containers plus 1 classified

Extent: 10 linear feet

Extent: 69 digital files (4.20 GB)

Language: Collection material in English

Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

LC Catalog record: https://lccn.loc.gov/mm2013085777

Summary: Civil rights activist, professor of history, journalist, and United States assistant attorney general in President Lyndon B. Johnson's administration. Correspondence, memoranda, speeches, writings, notebooks, teaching material, family papers, newspaper clippings, printed matter, photographs, digital files, and other papers relating to Wilkins's career and civil rights and social activism.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

People

Bell, David E., 1919-2000--Correspondence.

Bradlee, Benjamin C.--Correspondence.

Clark, Ramsey, 1927- -- Correspondence.

Claytor, Helen Jackson, 1907-2005. Helen Jackson Claytor papers.

Collins, LeRoy--Correspondence.

Cooke, Marvel Jackson, 1903-2000. Marvel Jackson Cooke papers.

Edelman, Marian Wright--Correspondence.

Jackson, Jesse, 1941-

Kennedy, Edward M. (Edward Moore), 1932-2009--Correspondence.

King, Martin Luther, Jr., 1929-1968.

Mandela, Nelson, 1918-2013--Travel--United States.

Marshall, Thurgood, 1908-1993--Correspondence.

Powell, Colin L.--Correspondence.

Sulzberger, Arthur Hays, 1891-1968--Correspondence.

Wilkins, Earl W., 1905-1941. Earl W. Wilkins papers.

Wilkins, Roger W., 1932-2017.

Wilkins, Roy, 1901-1981. Roy Wilkins papers.

Organizations

George Mason University--Faculty.

Institute for Policy Studies.

United States. Agency for International Development.

United States. Community Relations Service.

United States. Department of Justice.

Subjects

Affirmative action programs--United States.

African American journalists.

African American youth.

African Americans--Civil rights.

African Americans--Politics and government.

African Americans--Segregation.

American newspapers--New York (State)--New York.

American newspapers--Washington (D.C.)

Civil rights--United States.

Civil rights.

Crime--United States.

Education--United States.

Journalism--United States.

Justice, Administration of--United States.

Political corruption--United States.

Poverty--United States.

Presidents--United States--Election--1984.

Presidents--United States--Election--1988.

Race relations--United States.

Race riots--United States.

Segregation--United States.

Social action--United States.

Social problems--United States.

Suffrage--United States.

Watergate Affair, 1972-1974.

Places

United States--Economic conditions--1945-

United States--Politics and government--1945-1989.

United States--Politics and government--1989-

United States--Race relations.

United States--Social conditions--1945-

Titles

New York times.

Washington post.

Occupations

Civil rights leaders.

Educators.

Journalists.

Lawyers.

Public officials.

Acquisition Information

The papers of Roger W. Wilkins, civil rights activist, professor of history, journalist, lawyer, and United States assistant attorney general, were given to the Library of Congress in 2013. An addition was received in 2018.

Processing History

The papers of Roger W. Wilkins were arranged and described in 2018 by Pang H. Xiong with the assistance of Thomas Bigley and Rosa Hernandez.

Digital files were received as part of the Roger W. Wilkins Papers on a variety of storage media, each of which was assigned a unique digital ID number. Use the digital ID number to request access copies of the files associated with each media. A description of the standard processes taken on all born digital records can be found in the Processing History Note: Born Digital Collection Material at https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.digital.

Transfers

Audiovisual material has been transferred to the Motion Picture, Broadcasting, and Recorded Sound Division where they are identified as part of these papers.

Other Repositories

Other papers of Roger W. Wilkins can be found in the Special Collections and Archives of the George Mason University, Fairfax, Va.

Copyright Status

Copyright in these papers is reserved. Consult reference staff in the Manuscript Division for further information.

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Roger W. Wilkins are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use. Access to digital content is available onsite only in the Manuscript Reading Room and requires advanced notice. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting.

Security Classified Documents

Government regulations control the use of security classified material in this collection. Manuscript Division staff can furnish information concerning access to and use of classified materials.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container or digital ID number, Roger W. Wilkins Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

Date	Event
1932, Mar. 25	Born, Kansas City, Mo.
1953	B.A., University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich.
1956	J.D., University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich.
	Married Eve Tyler (divorced 1976)
1958	Associate, Delson, Levin, and Gordon, New York, N.Y.
1962-1964	Special assistant to the administrator, United States Agency for International Development,
	Washington, D.C.
1964-1965	Assistant director, director, Community Relations Service, Department of Commerce, Washington, D.C.
1966-1969	Assistant attorney general, Community Relations Service, Department of Justice, Washington, D.C.
1969-1972	Program director, Ford Foundation, New York, N.Y.
1972	Shared in Pulitzer Prize for public service awarded to <i>Washington Post</i> for its investigation of the Watergate Affair
1972-1974	Editorial board, Washington Post, Washington, D.C.

1974-1979	Editorial board, columnist, New York Times, New York, N.Y.
1980-1981	Associate editor, columnist, Washington Star, Washington, D.C.
1981	Married Patricia Ann King
1982	Published A Man's Life: An Autobiography. New York: Simon and Schuster
1982-1992	Senior fellow, Institute for Policy Studies, Washington, D.C.
1986-2007	Clarence J. Robinson professor, George Mason University, Fairfax, Va.

1988 Published with Fred R. Harris *Quiet Riots: Race and Poverty in the United States*. New York:

Pantheon Books

2001 Published Jefferson's Pillow: The Founding Fathers and the Dilemma of Black Patriotism.

Boston: Beacon Press

2017, Mar. 26 Died, Kensington, Md.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Roger W. Wilkins (1932-2017) span the years 1861-2012, with the bulk of the material dating from 1962 to 2007. The papers pertain to Wilkins's career in education, government service, journalism, and law; civil rights and social activism; and childhood and family. Included are correspondence, memoranda, speeches, writings, notebooks, teaching material, family papers, newspaper clippings, printed matter, photographs, digital files, and other papers. The papers are in English and are organized into the following series: Family Papers, Professional File, <a href="Speeches and Writings File, Miscellany, Digital Files, and Classified.

The Professional File consists of the bulk of the papers and contains material relating to the full range of Wilkins's career from 1958 to 2007 as an assistant attorney general of the United States, journalist, lawyer, professor, publisher, radio commentator, senior fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies, and special assistant to the administrator of the United States Agency for International Development. Prominent in the series are papers relating to the Community Relations Service, established under the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The series documents Wilkins's efforts at the Community Relations Service, as director and assistant attorney general, to help communities resolve racial conflicts and tensions through conciliation and mediation. Additionally, as one of the first African-American editorial board members of the *Washington Post* and *New York Times*, Wilkins's work in journalism is reflected in the papers. Correspondence and memoranda in this series chronicle Wilkins's professional activities and include personal letters. Topics include affirmative action, African-American youth, civil rights, education, poverty, racial tension in the United States, race riots, and social activism. Correspondents include David E. Bell, Benjamin C. Bradlee, Ramsey Clark, Helen Jackson Claytor, LeRoy Collins, Marian Wright Edelman, Edward M. Kennedy, Thurgood Marshall, Colin L. Powell, Roy Wilkins, and Arthur Hays Sulzberger.

Other series provide additional documentation on Wilkins's personal and professional activities. The Family Papers relate to Wilkins's childhood, family history, and the life and accomplishments of Helen Jackson Claytor (mother), Marvel Jackson Cooke (aunt), Earl Wilkins (father), Roy Wilkins (uncle), and other family members. The Writings and Speeches File contains handwritten, printed, and typed drafts of published and unpublished writings and speeches. Also included are correspondence and supporting material. Topics on which Wilkins wrote include apartheid in South Africa, *Brown v. Board of Education*, civil rights, crime, Jesse Jackson's presidential campaigns, Martin Luther King, Jr., race relations in the United States, segregation, voting rights, and the Watergate Affair. Wilkins's involvement in Jesse Jackson's presidential campaigns of 1984 and 1988 and role as national coordinator of Nelson Mandela's 1990 trip to the United States are featured in the Miscellany series. Also included in the series is material relating to the documentary *Throwaway People*, which was commentated by Wilkins.

The <u>Digital Files</u> consist of sixty-nine audio and video files orginally received on two DVDs. In 1993, Wilkins was a commentator on the segment "Out of the Ashes" for *CBS News Sunday Morning*, and he discussed the Kerner Commission's twenty-fifth anniversary. In 2004, Wilkins was interviewed about *Brown v. Board of Education* by Nadjia Varney for George Mason University Television's show *School Talk*. The digital files pertain to both television events.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged in six series:

- <u>Family Papers</u>, 1861-2007
- Professional File, 1958-2010
- Speeches and Writings File, 1964-2012
- <u>Miscellany, 1953-2012</u>
- Digital Files, 2005-2007
- Classified, 1963-1968

Description of Series

Container Series

BOX 1-3 **Family Papers, 1861-2007**

Correspondence, genealogical material, legal papers, newspaper clippings, photographs, printed matter, tributes, writings, and other miscellaneous material.

Arranged alphabetically by name of individual, topic, or type of material.

BOX 4-16 Professional File, 1958-2010

Awards, correspondence, legal documents, memoranda, minutes, newspaper clippings, notebooks, reports, research material, scrapbooks, teaching and lecture material, transcripts, printed matter, and other papers.

Arranged alphabetically by organization or place of employment.

BOX 16-22 Speeches and Writings File, 1964-2012

Handwritten, printed, and typed drafts and copies of articles, book reviews, books, editorials, and speeches with supporting material.

Arranged alphabetically by type of material and therein alphabetically or chronologically.

BOX 22-25 <u>Miscellany, 1953-2012</u>

Awards, correspondence, newspaper clippings, notebooks, photographs, printed matter, topical files, and transcripts.

Arranged alphabetically by topic or type of material.

Digital Files, 2005-2007

Audio and text files relating to two of Wilkins's television appearances. The series comprises sixty-nine files and 4.5 GB of data. The files were originally received on two DVDs, and each media was assigned a unique digital ID number. Request files using the digital ID number.

Arranged alphabetically by title.

BOX CL Classified, 1963-1968

Agendas, correspondence, memoranda, minutes, reports, transcript, and other papers.

Arranged according to the series, container, and folder from which the items were removed.

Container List

Container	Contents
вох 1-3	Family Papers, 1861-2007
	Correspondence, genealogical material, legal papers, newspaper clippings, photographs, printed matter, tributes, writings, and other miscellaneous material.
	Arranged alphabetically by name of individual, topic, or type of material.
BOX 1	Childhood, 1937-1941, undated
BOX 1	Cooke, Cecil Gladstone (uncle), 1925-1929, 1972, 1978
BOX 1	Cooke, Marvel Jackson (aunt)
BOX 1	Awards, 1998
BOX 1	Correspondence, 1962, 1969, 1977-2001, undated
nov 1	(2 folders) Death, 2000-2001
BOX 1 BOX 1	
BOX 1	General, 1901, 1913-1914, 1929, 1935-1947, 1964, 1980-2002, undated (2 folders)
вох 1	Robeson, Paul, 1974-1976, 1982, 1990, undated
BOX 1	Will, 1960, 1989
BOX 1	Claytor, Helen Jackson (mother)
BOX 1	Correspondence, 1937, 1944-1949, 1955-1956, 1965, 1983, 1991-1996, undated
BOX 1	General, 1967-1992, 2005-2006
	(2 folders)
BOX 2	Minnesota, 1990-2005, undated
BOX 2	Claytor, Robert W. (stepfather), 1976, 1989
BOX 2	Family history, 1861, 1884, 1936, 1952, 1985-1992, 2002, undated
BOX 2	General, 1928, 1949-1953, 1960, 1987-1990, 2002-2007
BOX 2	Jackson, Zelma (aunt), 1952, 1960, 1978, 1994, 2004, undated
BOX 2	King, Patricia Ann (wife), 1992
BOX 2	Photographs, 1918-1923, 1936, 1982, 1996-2000, undated
BOX 2	University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich., 1951-1952, 1993, 2004-2006
BOX 2	Wilkins, Earl W. (father), 1917, 1926-1934, 1940-1941, 1978, 1986-1992
BOX 2	Wilkins, Roy (uncle)
BOX 2	Correspondence, 1953-1955, 1972, 1981-1982, 1988, undated
BOX 2	General, 1982, 1988, 1994, 2001, undated
BOX 3	NAACP, 1944, 1955-1971, 1977-1986, 2000-2003 (2 folders)
вох 3	Obituary, 1981
вох 3	Photographs, 1953, 2003, undated
вох 3	Roy Wilkins Chair and Center in Human Relations and Social Justice, Ann Arbor, Mich., 1989-1995, undated
вох 3	Tributes, 1977, 1981

BOX 3	Container	Contents
BOX 4-16	вох 3	Writings, 1932, 1964-1982, 1988-2002
Awards, correspondence, legal documents, memoranda, minutes, newspaper clippings, notebooks, reports, research material, scrapbooks, teaching and lecture material, transcripts printed matter, and other papers. Arranged alphabetically by organization or place of employment. BOX 4 Community Relations Service, Justice Department BOX 4 Activities, eastern and southern region, undated (2 folders) BOX 4 Annual report, 1968 BOX 4 Appointment book, 1965 BOX 4 Appointment book, 1965 BOX 4 Appointment book, 1968 BOX 4 Civil rights, 1966-1970, 2005 See also Classified (3 folders) BOX 5 Correspondence BOX 5 1964 (2 folders) BOX 6 (1 folder) BOX 7 (2 folders) BOX 7 (4 folder) BOX 7 (2 folders) BOX 7 (3 folders) BOX 8 (4 folders) BOX 9 (4 folders) BOX 9 (4 folders) BOX 9 (4 folders) BOX 1 (2 folders) BOX 1 (2 folders) BOX 1 (2 folders) BOX 1 (2 folders) BOX 3 (4 folders) BOX 4 (4 folders) BOX 5 (4 folders) BOX 6 (4 folders) BOX 7 (4 folders) BOX 8 (4 folders) BOX 9 (
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Printed matter, and other papers.		
Arranged alphabetically by organization or place of employment. BOX 4		
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BOX 7 Memoranda to the president and vice president, 1962-1968 BOX 7 "Military and Domestic Tranquility" by Jack Rosenthal, 1968 BOX 8 National conference, 1968 BOX 8 Notebooks, 1967-1968 BOX 8 Police investigation, Los Angeles, Calif., 1965 BOX 8 Report of the Civil Rights Task Force, 1966 (2 folders) BOX 8 Scrapbooks, 1966-1969 BOX 8 Summer review, 1968 See also Classified (2 folders) BOX 8 Third International Conference on Black Power, Phildelphia, Pa., 1968 BOX 8 Transcript of Wilkins's interview, 1967 BOX 9 Delson, Levin, and Gordon BOX 9 Cases, 1958-1962	BOX /	
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BOX 9 Cases, 1958-1962		
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DF	Digital Files, 2005-2007
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