

Guide to the James Baldwin Correspondence with Orilla Miller Winfield

JWJ MSS 156



Michael Forstrom

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Table of Contents

Collection Overview	3
Requesting Instructions	3
Administrative Information	4
Immediate Source of Acquisition	4
Conditions Governing Access	4
Conditions Governing Use	4
Preferred Citation	4
Existence and Location of Copies	4
Content Description	4
Arrangement	4
Collection Contents	5
Selected Search Terms	6

Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
P. O. Box 208330
New Haven, CT 06520-8330
(203) 432-2977
beinecke.library@yale.edu
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

CALL NUMBER: JWJ MSS 156

CREATOR: Baldwin, James, 1924-1987 , author

TITLE: James Baldwin correspondence with Orilla Miller Winfield

DATES: 1955-1990

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 0.25 linear feet (1 box)

LANGUAGE: English (Latin script)

SUMMARY: Collection of twenty pieces of correspondence, including autograph and typed letters, signed, dating from 1955 to 1985 between American author James Baldwin and Orilla Winfield, who was employed by the Federal Theatre Project in New York City in the 1930s. Baldwin often referred to Winfield as "Bill Miller," using a nickname for Orilla and her surname before marriage. Letters concern literary, social, and personal matters, including their early collaboration at P.S. 124, where Baldwin assisted Winfield in putting on plays, as well as Baldwin's subsequent literary work, his involvement in the civil rights movement, and meetings between Baldwin and Winfield. Some letters are addressed to and from Orilla Winfield and her husband, Evan Winfield. Accompanied by seven letters, dating from 1977 to 1990, between Winfield and Baldwin's mother, Berdis E. Baldwin, and one autograph postcard, signed, to Winfield from Baldwin biographer David Leeming. Also accompanied by a digitized photograph of Baldwin with Orilla and Evan Winfield and digital recordings of an interview with Orilla Winfield, possibly by Lynn Scott.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.baldwinwinfield>

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.baldwinwinfield>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to beinecke.images@yale.edu.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Lynn O. Scott and Kenneth Winfield, 2014.

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research

Conditions Governing Use

Digital files: Restricted fragile material. Access copies of digital files may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.

Preferred Citation

James Baldwin Correspondence With Orilla Winfield. James Weldon Johnson Collection in the Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Existence and Location of Copies

The entire collection is available in digital form.

Content Description

Collection of twenty pieces of correspondence, including autograph and typed letters, signed, dating from 1955 to 1985 between American author James Baldwin and Orilla Winfield, who was employed by the Federal Theatre Project in New York City in the 1930s. Baldwin often referred to Winfield as "Bill Miller," using a nickname for Orilla and her surname before marriage. Letters concern literary, social, and personal matters, including their early collaboration at P.S. 124, where Baldwin assisted Winfield in putting on plays, as well as Baldwin's subsequent literary work, his involvement in the civil rights movement, and meetings between Baldwin and Winfield. Some letters are addressed to and from Orilla Winfield and her husband, Evan Winfield. Accompanied by seven letters, dating from 1977 to 1990, between Winfield and Baldwin's mother, Berdis E. Baldwin, and one autograph postcard, signed, to Winfield from Baldwin biographer David Leeming. Also accompanied by a digitized photograph of Baldwin with Orilla and Evan Winfield and digital recordings of an interview with Orilla Winfield, possibly by Lynn Scott.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged chronologically.

Collection Contents

b. 1, f. 1-2	Correspondence <i>2 Folders</i>	1955-1990, undated
	Interview of Orilla Winfield, edited and unedited Original digital files are restricted. Reference copies of electronic files may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.	undated
	Photograph of James Baldwin with Evan and Orilla Winfield Original digital files are restricted. Reference copies of electronic files may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.	undated
b. 1, f. 3	"Writing a Biography of James Baldwin," typescript	circa 1989

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Subjects

American literature -- 20th Century
Civil Rights movements -- United States

Occupations

Authors, American -- 20th Century
Authors -- United States -- 20th Century

Genres / Formats

Audiovisual materials
Born digital
Electronic documents
Photographic prints

Names

Baldwin, Emma Berdis Jones (Emma Berdis),
-1999
Leeming, David Adams, 1937-
Winfield, Orilla