

Guide to the Alice Key oral history interview

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Summary Information

Repository:	University of Nevada, Las Vegas. University Libraries. Special Collections and Archives.
Creator:	Key, Alice, 1911-2010
Contributor:	African Americans in Las Vegas: a Collaborative Oral History Project
Title:	Alice Key oral history interview
ID:	OH-00533
Date:	2007 August 16
Physical Description:	3 Digital Files (0.120 GB) MP3
Language of the Material:	English
Abstract:	Oral history interview with Alice Key conducted by Claytee D. White on August 16, 2007 for the African Americans in Las Vegas: a Collaborative Oral History Project. In this interview, Key talks about her birth in Kentucky, upbringing in Riverside, California, high school graduation in 1928 and enrollment at UCLA. She describes at length her entry into the entertainment business as a dancer in 1929, her work and travels with dance companies, and her decision to retire in 1937. She continues discussing the roots of her political activism in Los Angeles, her journalism career, her work to end restrictive covenants, racism in Hollywood hiring, and poor representation for Black dancers in the industry. She then explains what prompted her move to Las Vegas, Nevada in 1954 and describes the levels of racism and inequality in Las Vegas during this period. She remarks on many notable Las Vegas leaders, including Dr. Charles West, Dr. James McMillan, Mabel Hoggard, Woodrow Wilson, and others. She also discusses the role of the NAACP, her work as a deputy registrar of voters, and creating the first all-Black television show in the country: <i>Talk of the Town</i> .

Preferred Citation

Alice Key oral history interview, 2007 August 16. OH-00533. [Cite format consulted: Audio recording or Transcript.] Oral History Research Center, Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

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Scope and Contents Note

Oral history interview with Alice Key conducted by Claytee D. White on August 16, 2007 for the African Americans in Las Vegas: a Collaborative Oral History Project. In this interview, Key talks about her birth in Kentucky, upbringing in Riverside, California, high school graduation in 1928 and enrollment at UCLA. She describes at length her entry into the entertainment business as a dancer in 1929, her work and travels with dance companies, and her decision to retire in 1937. She continues discussing the roots of her political activism in Los Angeles, her journalism career, her work to end restrictive covenants, racism in Hollywood hiring, and poor representation for Black dancers in the industry. She then explains what prompted her move to Las Vegas, Nevada in 1954 and describes the levels of racism and inequality in Las Vegas during this period. She remarks on many notable Las Vegas leaders, including Dr. Charles West, Dr. James McMillan, Mabel Hoggard, Woodrow Wilson, and others. She also discusses the role of the NAACP, her work as a deputy registrar of voters, and creating the first all-Black television show in the country: *Talk of the Town*. Digital audio available; no transcript available.

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Administrative Information

Access Note

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Acquisition Note

This interview was conducted and transcribed by the Oral History Research Center (OHRC) which is part of the UNLV University Libraries Special Collections and Archives Division.

Processing Note

Interview materials were processed by UNLV Libraries Special Collections and Archives in 2018 and 2023. Melise Leech wrote the collection description. Access copies were created for born-digital audio and/or transcript files. The audio has been minimally reviewed and all readily available information has been included in the description.

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Names and Subjects

- Clark County (Nev.) -- Politics and government
- Race discrimination
- Entertainment
- African American journalists
- Oral histories (document genres)
- West, Charles I., 1908-1984
- McMillan, James B., 1917-1999
- Hoggard, Mabel, 1905-1989
- Wilson, Woodrow, 1915-1999