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The Papers of Dorothy Brandfon

Accession #2014-010

Dates:	1930-1938; 1942-1943
Bulk:	1930-1938
Creator:	Dorothy Brandfon Bray
Governing Access:	Papers are open for research. Copyright retained by Brooklyn College. Materials can be accessed at the Brooklyn College Archives and Special Collections
Languages:	English
Finding Aid:	The guide is available in-house.
Acquisition/Appraisal	This collection was donated to the College in 2011 by the family of Dorothy Brandfon Bray.
Description Control:	Finding aid content adheres to that prescribed by <i>Describing Archives: Content Standard</i> . Finding aid written by Michelle La Rocco and Pamela Kerns.
Preferred Citation:	Item, folder title, box number, The Papers of Dorothy Brandfon, Brooklyn College Archives and Special Collections, Brooklyn College Library.
Related Materials:	Brooklyn College, City University of New York, <i>Town and Gown</i> (yearbook), 1932.

Subject Headings:

Brooklyn College

Teacher Training---New York City

Public Schools---New York City

Bibliographical Note:

Dorothy Brandfon attended elementary school P.S. 92 located in Brooklyn from 1917-1925 and James Madison High School from 1925 to 1929. She attended Hunter College from 1929-1930. After 1914, Hunter College experienced a huge increase in student enrollments, it was era of the suffrage movement in the United States. The college established branches in Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island. In 1930, Hunter's campus in Brooklyn (women) joined with the City College's Brooklyn campus (men) to form Brooklyn College. Brandfon was one of the early graduates from the newly formed Brooklyn College from 1930-1932.

While at Brooklyn College she served as the editor-in-chief for the *Brooklyn Literary Magazine*, published by the students of the Women's Division of Brooklyn College. Other activities while attending Brooklyn College were: Vice President of Student Council, class representative to Student Council, service on the freshman advisory committee, and a member of *Iota Alpha Pi*, the first national sorority for Jewish women.

She enrolled at New York University from 1935-1937. At New York University, her course of study focused on junior and senior high school English. She received a Master's in English for teaching secondary schools in October, 1937.

Dorothy Brandfon was unemployed from June, 1933 to March, 1934. This was the time of the Great Depression 1929-1941; the impact hit schools in the fall of 1932. Many citizens facing unemployment or reduced incomes could no longer pay their property taxes. In addition, due to NYC youth facing the inability to find jobs, they were staying in school longer. Retrenchment became the buzzword for school budget cutbacks, resulting in reductions in the hours schools operated, increased class sizes, and decreases in teachers' salaries.

From 1932-1935, she worked in several high schools in Brooklyn as a volunteer, and teacher-in-training for which she received her license in 1932 and as a substitute teacher in 1935. She also taught evening high school at Curtis High School on Staten Island. One of the comments from a supervisor was "she was able to evoke the enthusiastic participation of the entire class."

In 1938 she received her license to teach English in day "secondary schools other than junior high schools." She taught at Brooklyn High School for Homemaking located at President Street and Classon Avenue in Brooklyn. The letters and professional reviews included in these papers refer to her as an engaging and dedicated teacher. She organized and taught speech improvement clinic and a choral speaking group, initiated work that resulted in a school newspaper, and taught three terms of journalism and a Regents class in English.

In the 1942-1943, Dorothy was involved with the School and Theater Committee of the English Association, a committee of the N.Y. Teachers of English Association.

Sometime between 1932 and 1935 Brandfon married and her last name appears as Bray.

Scope and Content

This a small collection but one that sits among several interesting periods in United States and world history. The suffrage movement that ended in the U.S. in 1920 was a leading cause of Hunter College establishing several campuses in Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island. The Depression continued in the U.S. from roughly 1929-1939. Brooklyn College was a Works Progress Administration (WPA) project. The school opened with four buildings in 1937. In the Depression, people could not find jobs or were laid off. They went back or stayed in school.

This collection covers two periods in Dorothy Brandfon's life: (1) her education at Brooklyn College and New York University, (2) her early years of teaching high school in the New York City schools.

Her graduation from Brooklyn College occurred during an interesting chapter with the City University of New York. Due to increased enrollments, both Hunter College (for women) and City College (for men) set up additional campuses in Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island. In 1930, the Brooklyn campuses of Hunter and City College merged and formed Brooklyn College. Dorothy spent two years at Hunter and two years at the newly formed Brooklyn College, which early on still maintained a "Women's Division." The current campus of Brooklyn College was not opened until 1937; the classes were held in buildings located in downtown Brooklyn on Court Street and Pearl Street. The collection contains correspondence with these addresses on the letter head. One letter is from William A. Boylan, the first President of Brooklyn College. Today, there is a campus building that bears his name.

Dorothy was editor-in-chief for the *Brooklyn Literary Magazine*. Included in this collection are two copies of the *Magazine* dated May, 1931 #2. Located here are several letters that from the administration of Brooklyn College expressing praise on the content. Boylan himself commented that the issue is "quite attractive and has considerable merit." Brandfon's diploma from Brooklyn College is included.

Also in this collection, are the transcripts of Brandfon's grades from New York University.

An interesting section in this collection is the process Dorothy Brandfon had to follow to be given a teacher's license to teach in New York City schools. Each step of the process is documented in this collection from teacher in training, to substitute teacher, to an English teacher in high school. All levels needed a license from the Board of Education. In 1938, she received her license to teach in high school. From the "reports of service" reviews located in the collection, she was an excellent teacher. It is interesting to note the steps the Board of Education required to become a teacher and the review reports done yearly.

It also appears that Brandfon was an officer on the *School and Theater Committee* a part of the English Association of New York. Checks with her signature are included. This appears to be a local chapter.

Collection Outline

Subgroup I: Education

Series 1: Brooklyn College

Series 2: New York University

Subgroup II: New York City Board of Education

Series 1: Becoming a Teacher

Series 2: The School and Theater Committee of the English Association

Subgroup I: Education

Dates: 1930-1932, 1935-1937

Extent: One archival box

In the Brooklyn College folders, one can find reading lists for American Literature, the Modern Drama and English 635. Included are also class notes from several of these courses. There are three copies of the *Brooklyn Literary Magazine*. Correspondence relating to its publication came from Adelbert G. Fradenburgh, a Dean at the College and William A. Boylan, President of the College. A handwritten note written by Adele Bildersee mentioned the sincerity and genuineness of the writings in the publication. From her studies at New York University, only Brandfon's grades are included. Here also one can find Dorothy's Brooklyn College diploma, a small undated snap shot, and small piece of art work that Dorothy sent to a newspaper, and a 7 X 9 portrait of her.

Series 1: Brooklyn College

Dates: 1930-1932

Bulk: 1930-1932

Extent: ½ standard archival box

Arrangement: Chronological

Brandfon's years at Brooklyn College including class notes, reading assignments, correspondence, and diploma.

Series 2: New York University

Dates: 1935-1937

Bulk: 1935-1937

Extent: One folder in an archival box

Arrangement: Chronological

There is one folder with Dorothy's New York University grades listing her specialization in English for secondary schools. There is also a small undated snap shot and a small piece of art work that Dorothy sent to a newspaper. There is also an undated formal photograph of her.

Subgroup II: NYC Board of Education

Dates: 1934-1938

Extent: Part of one archival box

After graduation, Brandfon started the process to become a teacher in New York City public schools. There are three folders in this collection that document this process from the application form, instructions for the examination for the licenses, and the results of the exam itself. Her score earned her a license as a teacher of English in Day Secondary School other than Junior High Schools. The collection also contains reports on teaching service from administration at New Utrecht High School and the Brooklyn High school for Homemaking. Her reviews were outstanding. Contained also are papers concerning *The School and Theater Committee of the English Association* of the English Association. Research reveals that there was a professional association called New York English Teachers Association during this period. Dorothy appears to have been an officer of the local chapter.

Series 1: Becoming a Teacher

The collection gives the researcher a glance into the required steps for an individual to become a school teacher in New York City. For Dorothy it took 1934-1938, to receive her full license to teach in day high school. Along the way, records show she was a teacher in training, substitute teacher, and received a Masters from New York University. She appears to have joined a teacher's professional association focusing on drama and English.

Container Listing

Subgroup I: Education

Series 1: Brooklyn College

Box 1

Folder 1: Reading lists from Brooklyn College for American Literature, the Modern Drama, and English 635.

Folder 2: class notes by Brandfon in various English classes.

Folder 3: *Brooklyn Literary Magazine*

Folder 4: correspondence in reference to Brooklyn Literary Magazine

Folder 5: Diploma of Graduation from Brooklyn College, 1932

Subgroup I: Education

Series 2: New York University; miscellaneous

Box 1

Folder 6: New York University school of Education, 1935, grades

Folder 7: "Magic of Speech Leaflet, Word study (no date)

Folder 8: small photo of Brandfon; larger formal portrait of Brandfon

Subgroup II: New York City Board of Education

Series 1: Becoming a Teacher

Box 1

Folder 9: Board of Education application for License, 1935

Folder 10: Report of Teaching Service, 1934-1938

Folder 11: License to Teach in Day Secondary Schools other than junior high; assignment of teaching location; salary deductions memo

Subgroup II: New York City Board of Education

Series 2: The School and Theater committee of the English Association

Box 1

Folder 12: cancelled checks, etc. for the Association, 1942-1943

Folder 13: Miscellaneous

Folder 14: Accounting sheet with Clinton Trust Company of New York for the English Association