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BROOKLYN COLLEGE DRAMATICS CLUBS

Accession #90-003



- Dates** Inclusive dates: 1930-1972; Bulk dates: 1930-1956
- Extent** 2 boxes; 1 cu.ft.
- Creator** Brooklyn College
- Access/Use** Collection is open to researchers.
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Files can be accessed at the Brooklyn College Library Archives, 2900 Bedford Ave., Room 130, Brooklyn, New York
- Language** English
- Finding Aid** Guide is available in house only.
- Acquisition/Appraisal** Collection was donated to the archive by the Brooklyn College Dramatics Club.
- Description Control** Finding aid adheres to one prescribed by *Describing Archives: A Content Standard*.
- Preferred Citation** Item, folder title, box number, Brooklyn College Dramatics Clubs, Brooklyn College Archive, Brooklyn College Library
- Subject Heading** Brooklyn College -- History.

Historical Note

The Brooklyn College Dramatics Club, created in 1927, was the brainchild of longtime Brooklyn College dramatics director, Prof. Joseph “Skipper” Davidson, who founded and ran the College’s theater department for over forty years. As professor of theater at the School of General Studies, Davidson directed over 150 plays during his long tenure.

Professor Jane Herendeen organized Brooklyn College’s Women’s Division of the Dramatics Club in the Spring of 1930. In 1931, the Little Theater opened on the 15th floor of the Court Street building in downtown Brooklyn. Soon the Brooklyn College Masquers (women’s division of the dramatics department) were presenting a wide variety of plays supervised by the College’s Speech department.

Before Brooklyn College’s Walt Whitman Auditorium opened, performances on the Midwood Campus were held in Boylan Hall.

Scope and Content Note

This collection consists of items that pertain to the Brooklyn College Dramatics Clubs for both the day and evening divisions of the college. There are posters, flyers, scripts, faculty correspondences, newspaper clippings, but, primarily, a wide assortment of programs. The items span almost a half century of dramatic clubs at Brooklyn College, which began when the college was founded, and documents the steady evolution of the theater program from the 1930s through the 1960s.

Sub-Group / Series Outline

Series 1: Programs

Series 2: Administrative

Series 3: Scripts

Sub-Group / Series Descriptions

Series 1: Programs

This series accounts for half of the entire collection. Contained within these 12 folders (.5 cu.ft.), you will find programs from various performances by the Brooklyn College Dramatics Clubs, from the 1930s into the 1960s. They feature the earliest productions presented by the Brooklyn College Varsity Players. Titles of these plays include *Antigone*, Lillian Hellman's *The Little Foxes*, George Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan*, *The 13th Chair*, scenes from *Cyrano* and many more. The Brooklyn College Dramatics Club, Evening Division, consisted of performances by the BC Players. There were quite a number of plays performed between the 1930s and the 1960s. They include, as these playbills demonstrate, *The Rainmaker*, Noel Coward's *Hay Fever*, Kaufman & Hart's *The Man Who Came to Dinner*, *My Three Angels*, *Golem*, *Dr. Knock*, and many more. Another one of the dramatics clubs was, the Masquers, created by the department specifically for women in the early 1930s. The productions that the Masquers performed included but are not limited to, *The Death of Eve* and *Miss Julia*. This series contains programs from other clubs as well, such as the Shakespeare Club, the department of Speech and Theater and the Opera Guild. In addition to these groups and their performances, this series also includes various programs from senior and other important club events throughout the years.

Series 2: Administrative

Within this series, you will find eleven folders. There is one that contains correspondence (from the 1950s) where there is a request for special rates, a letter about the eligibility regulations for performing in plays if students are not registered at the college, and the appointment of a Staff Technical Director of the BC Players. This series also contains director's reports, subscription and production lists, as well as ticket stubs, invitations, financial information event posters and miscellaneous items pertaining to the various BC Dramatics Clubs.

Series 3: Scripts

Included in this series are 5 scripts in their entirety. These scripts are *Electra*, *The Firefly*, *Harlequinade*, *Little Hell*, and *The Thracian Horses*.

Container List

Series 1: Programs

Box #1

- Folder #1 – BC Players (Day Session)
- Folder #2 - BC Players (Evening Session)
- Folder #3 – Dept. of Speech & Theater
- Folder #4 – Masquers
- Folder #5 – Opera Guild
- Folder #6 – Seniors
- Folder #7 – Shakespeare Club
- Folder #8 – Varsity Players 1935 - 1947
- Folder #9 – Varsity Players 1948 - 1952
- Folder #10 – Varsity Players 1953 - 1961
- Folder #11 – Other BC Events
- Folder #12 – Unknown BC Organizations

Series 2: Administrative

Box #2

- Folder #1 – Correspondence
- Folder #2 – Director Reports
- Folder #3 – Event Posters and Flyers
- Folder #4 – Event Tickets and Stubs
- Folder #5 – Financial Information: Deposit Slips/Dues
- Folder #6 – Financial Information: Orders and Receipts
- Folder #7 – Financial Information: Miscellaneous
- Folder #8 – Lists: Productions
- Folder #9 – Lists: Subscriptions
- Folder #10 – News/Newspaper Clippings
- Folder #11 – Miscellaneous

Series 3: Scripts

Box #2

- Folder #12 – Script: Electra
- Folder #13 – Script: The Firefly
- Folder #14 – Script: Harlequinade
- Folder #15 – Script: Little Hell
- Folder #16 – Script: The Thracean Horses