

Guide to the Amote Sias papers

2008.017

Finding aid prepared by Cynthia Tobar, with additional description by Rachel M. Oleaga.

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

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March, 2008
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Table of Contents

<u>Summary Information</u>	3
<u>Biographical Note</u>	5
<u>Scope and Contents</u>	5
<u>Arrangement note</u>	5
<u>Administrative Information</u>	6
<u>Controlled Access Headings</u>	6
<u>Collection Inventory</u>	9
<u>Series 1: Personal Papers</u>	9
<u>Series 2: Professional Papers</u>	10
<u>Series 3: Publications and Clippings</u>	12

Summary Information

Repository	Brooklyn Historical Society
Creator	Sias, Amote
Title	Amote Sias papers
Date [inclusive]	1945-1993
Extent	3.0 Linear feet in one manuscript box, one record carton and two oversize flat boxes.
Language	English
Language of Materials	Materials principally in English, some publications are in Spanish.
Abstract	<p>The Amote Sias papers consist of personal essays, legal and financial records, ephemera and various clippings relating to Sias's life and involvement in Brooklyn politics as well as her role as an African-American activist. The majority of the collection focuses on the political environment in Brooklyn from the mid 1970s and 1980s through newspapers, magazines and other publications. The collection is rich with programs, bulletins and manuals from Sias's involvement in various political organizations focusing on social justice, women's rights and Black Nationalism. The collection also documents Sias's political campaign for a seat on the New York City Council in 1989 and her involvement in the Committee to Elect Jesse Jackson for President.</p>

Preferred Citation

Identification of item, date (if known); Amote Sias papers, 2008.017, Box and Folder number; Brooklyn Historical Society.

Biographical Note

Amote Sias is a resilient African American social activist who was an active member of the Brooklyn community of Carroll Gardens and a candidate for city office during the 1970s-1980s. Sias is also a deeply committed educator and leader, having been a teacher at both the elementary and secondary level in the New York City Public School system as early as the 1970s. Sias went on to become a renowned principal at the Brooklyn Collegiate High School, a position she continues to hold as of 2010.

Scope and Contents

The Amote Sias papers contain materials concerning Amote Sias and the activist movements she was involved in during the 1970s and 1980s in Brooklyn, New York.

Financial and administrative materials display Amote's involvement in local politics, specifically materials from her campaign for City Council in 1989 as well as her involvement in the Jesse Jackson for President campaign in 1989. Copies of speeches from meetings and example letters to congressmen are also included.

The large number of programs from meetings, lectures and conferences as well as meeting notes and activist paraphernalia provide insight into the active social movements in Brooklyn and across the United States in the late 1970s and 1980s. This collection also documents a variety of the grassroots social organizations active during this timeframe as well as their goals and efforts.

Newspaper and magazine clippings provide a broad framework for viewing the political, economic and social forces surrounding the period in which Sias was politically active. These materials also display the local and national efforts for social justice and equality.

The personal materials in this collection reflect Amote Sias and her role as an educator. Early papers and examples of student work provide insight into the academic work and influences on Sias in the early stages of her career. Various ephemera includes a Girl Scout badge and a Jesse Jackson for President campaign poster.

Arrangement note

The Amote Sias papers are organized into three series: Series 1: Personal Papers; Series 2: Professional Papers; Series 3: Publications and Clippings.

Users of the collection should be aware that folders labeled with a date range might also include undated documents. Oversize materials have been placed in two oversize boxes.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Brooklyn Historical Society March, 2008

Conditions Governing Access

Open to researchers without restriction.

Conditions Governing Use note

While some materials may be in the public domain, copyright restrictions may also apply for the majority of the materials and permission to publish, quote, or reproduce must be secured from Brooklyn Historical Society and the copyright holder.

Immediate Source of Acquisition note

The Amote Sias papers were found in Brooklyn Historical Society's collections when the institution reopened in 2004. The materials were subsequently accessioned in 2008.

Processing Information note

The Amote Sias papers were processed in March 2008 by Cynthia Tobar, under the supervision of Leilani Dawson. Additional processing and description were done in December 2010 by Rachel M. Oleaga.

Controlled Access Headings

Corporate Name(s)

- Congressional Black Caucus.
- Democratic National Committee (U.S.).
- Jesse Jackson for President '88 Committee.
- Madre (Organization).

Genre(s)

- Administrative records
- Clippings (information artifacts)
- Correspondence
- Financial records
- Magazines (periodicals)
- Manuals (instructional materials)
- Memorandums
- Newspapers
- Petitions
- Playbills
- political posters
- Programs (documents)
- Voters' lists

Geographic Name(s)

- Brooklyn (New York, N.Y.)
- Brooklyn (New York, N.Y.) |x Politics and government |y 20th century
- Brooklyn (New York, N.Y.) |x Social life and customs |y 20th century

Occupation(s)

- Politicians |z New York (State) |z Kings County

Personal Name(s)

- Jackson, Jesse, 1941-
- Sias, Amote

Subject(s)

- African Americans |x Politics and government |y 20th century
- Black nationalism |z United States |x History |y 20th century
- Community activists
- Local elections |z New York (State) |z Kings County
- Political participation |z New York (State) |z Kings County
- Political parties |z United States
- Politicians |z New York (State)
- Social movements |z United States
- Voter registration

Series 1: Personal Papers

Collection Inventory

Series 1: Personal Papers 1971-1980, 0.1 Linear feet

Arrangement note

The materials in Series 1 are arranged alphabetically within genre.

Scope and Contents

Series 1 is comprised of examples of essays used for college instruction by Sias, as well as handwritten notes from university lectures and research Sias conducted. Also included is a scrapbook example of a student's work from Sias's time as an teacher in the public school system, autographed theater programs from the plays *Bubbling Brown Sugar* and *Don't Bother Me, I Can't Cope*, and a Girl Scout badge.

	Dates	Box	Folder
Articles and papers by Sias.	1980	1	S1:1
Girl Scout badge.	undated	1	S1:2
Notes.	1974	1	S1:3
Autographed playbills.	1974-1977	1	S1:4
General note			
Playbills from performances of <i>Bubbling Brown Sugar</i> and <i>Don't Bother Me, I Can't Cope</i> .			
<i>The World Today</i> scrapbook.	1971	1	S1:5

Series 2: Professional Papers**Series 2: Professional Papers 1976-1989, 0.9 Linear feet****Scope and Contents**

Professional Papers contain materials concerning the professional political life of Amote Sias. The bulk of the material in this series surrounds the many facets of the committee to elect Amote Sias to the City Council. Included are the financial records, campaign materials, posters, and signed petitions of support and opposition to her election. Multiple specifications of objections listing the number of valid and invalid signatures from these petitions are also present. Also included are a list of campaign ideas and agendas for committee meetings. Voter guides in English and Spanish for local election in New York City and memos covering voter instructions are also included.

The series also includes a variety of programs, notes from meetings, and clippings from multiple political conferences, youth educational outreach activities and other social activist and grassroots workshops that Sias had attended and was actively involved in. Copies of speeches from these organizations are also present along with workshop materials and census records. Her involvement in the Jesse Jackson for President campaign can be seen as well as her interaction with the Latin American community in Brooklyn through MADRE. Multiple political organizations are highlighted in this series including the United Nations, the Democratic National Convention and the Congressional Black Caucus.

Arrangement note

The materials in Series 2 are arranged alphabetically within organization or social group. Materials found in box 3 are oversize documents.

	Dates	Box	Folder
Black on Black Love Campaign.	1983	1	S2:1
City Council Election, Committee to Elect Amote Sias (4 folders).	1989	1	S2:2-5

Series 2: Professional Papers

Congressional Black Caucus.	1983-1984	1	S2:6
Congressional Black Caucus, Workshop on Political Empowerment, Voter Participation and Network Development.	1984	1	S2:7
Congressional Districts of the 98th Congress (NY), Population and Housing Census.	1980	1	S2:8
Democratic National Convention (San Francisco), Guides.	1984	1	S2:9
Democratic National Committee.	1984	1	S2:10
Election for Delegate to the Democratic National Convention.	1984	1	S2:11
Encampment for Citizenship.	1977	1	S2:12
Jesse Jackson for President Committee.	1984-1985	1	S2:13
Jesse Jackson for President Poster.	circa 1984.	3	S2:14
JFK Democratic Club Annual Dinner and Dance, Program.	1976	1	S2:15
MADRE Delegation.	1985	1	S2:16
Meeting Notes.	undated	1	S2:17
Minority Business Enterprise Legal Defense Fund.	undated	1	S2:18
National Black Women's Political Caucus.	1984	1	S2:19
New York City Community Board, Manuals (2 folders).	1987-1988	1	S2:20-21

Series 3: Publications and Clippings

Peace and Environmental Convention Coalition.	1984	1	S2:22
Rivers State of Nigeria.	1979-1982	1	S2:23
Summer Youth Instructional Tennis.	1981	1	S2:24
UN Conference on Women.	1985	1	S2:25

Series 3: Publications and Clippings 1945-1993, 2.0 Linear feet**Arrangement note**

The materials in Series 3 were arranged alphabetically within publication name. Material designated as housed in box 3 or 4 is oversize material.

Scope and Contents

The publications and clippings in this series include a variety of magazine and newspaper articles that Amote Sias collected from the 1970s and 1980s. Publications include both independent activist media sources, as well as mainstream and local newspaper publications. The bulk of the materials are from the United States, especially the greater New York City region, but a few are from Latin American countries and political groups, including *Barricada*, a Spanish Sandinista newspaper.

	Dates	Box	Folder
<i>African Educator</i> , v. 9 n.1.	1985	2	S3:1
<i>Barricada</i> , Spanish Sandinista Publication.	1985	3	S3:2
<i>Tony Brown's Journal</i> , 3rd Quarter.	1985	2	S3:3

Series 3: Publications and Clippings

<i>Cape Cod Standard-Times.</i>	1974	3	S3:4
<i>The City Sun.</i>	1984-1985	3	S3:5
<i>Daily News.</i>	1973-1975	3	S3:6
<i>Dallas Times Herald.</i>	1984	3	S3:7
<i>Delegate</i> (2 folders).	1983-1984	2	S3:8-9
<i>The Des Moines Register.</i>	1991	3	S3:10
<i>Folio.</i>	1984	3	S3:11
<i>Frontline.</i>	1985	3	S3:12
<i>Future</i> , v. 18-20 (3 folders).	1980-1982	2	S3:13-15
<i>JCI World</i> , v. 18 n. 2.	1980	2	S3:16
<i>The Kansas City Star.</i>	1991	3	S3:17
<i>Mother Jones</i> , v. 9 n. 7.	1984	2	S3:18
<i>New Amsterdam News.</i>	1984	3	S3:19
<i>New York Newsday</i> , Brooklyn Voters Guide.	1991	3	S3:20
<i>New York Post.</i>	1945, 1974	3	S3:21
<i>New York Times.</i>	1975-1993	4	S3:22
<i>El Nuevo Diario</i> , Spanish paper.	1985	4	S3:23
<i>The Star.</i>	1977	4	S3:24

Series 3: Publications and Clippings

<i>Street</i> , Issue 14.	1975	2	S3:25
<i>Sunday Mirror</i> .	1945	4	S3:26
Unidentified clippings.	1975	4	S3:27
Various Independent News Media Articles covering the 1984 U.S. Presidential Election.	1984	2	S3:28
<i>The Village Voice</i> .	1984-1985	4	S3:29
