Finding Aid to the George T. Davis Papers

Lara Michels
The Bancroft Library

2018
The Bancroft Library
University of California
Berkeley, CA 94720-6000
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URL: http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/libraries/bancroft-library
Language of Material: English
Contributing Institution: The Bancroft Library
Title: George T. Davis papers
Creator: Davis, George Thomas
Identifier/Call Number: BANC MSS 2003/320 c
Physical Description: 10 linear feet (4 cartons, 7 volumes, 2 boxes, 2 oversize boxes, 1 oversize folder)
Date (inclusive): approximately 1913-1990
Language of Material: Collection materials are in English.
Physical Location: Many of the Bancroft Library collections are stored offsite and advance notice may be required for use. For current information on the location of these materials, please consult the library's online catalog.
Conditions Governing Access
Collection is open for research, with the exception of Box 1, which is restricted until 2064 because of attorney-client privilege.
Immediate Source of Acquisition
The George T. Davis papers were gifted to the Bancroft Library by George T. Davis in 1999.
Biographical / Historical
George T. Davis was a criminal defense attorney based in San Francisco. He was known for his larger-than-life trial persona and his high-profile cases, many of which involved the death penalty. Davis graduated from law school at UC Berkeley in 1931 and served as assistant San Francisco district attorney for more than a decade. He ran for Attorney General of the state of California in 1942. He spent most of his career as a criminal defense attorney. His first major case was that of Tom Mooney, the labor organizer convicted for the 1916 Preparedness Day bombing in San Francisco. In 1935, Davis managed to secure a new trial for Mooney and, in 1939, Mooney was pardoned by Governor Culbert Olson. The Mooney case was an international sensation and established Davis' reputation as a criminal defense attorney. During the 1950s, Davis spent five years working on the death penalty appeal of Caryl Chessman and, in 1989, Davis represented televangelist Jim Bakker in a high-profile fraud and conspiracy case. Davis was also active in Democratic Party politics and ran the Northern California campaigns of Presidents Franklin D. Roosevelt and Harry S. Truman.
Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], George T. Davis papers, BANC MSS 2003/320c, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.
Processing Information
Processed by Lara Michels in November 2018.
Scope and Contents
Consists of some biographical material, including manuscript drafts of an autobiography; case files, including files on Tom Mooney, Caryl Chessman, and James Bakker, among others; some speeches and writings; subject files; clippings, including scrapbooks of clippings relating to Davis' cases; and photographs, including photos relating to the Tom Mooney and Caryl Chessman cases.
Conditions Governing Use
Some materials in these collections may be protected by the U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S.C.). Copyright for material created by Alan Copeland has been assigned to the University of California Regents, managed by The Bancroft Library. In addition, the reproduction of some materials may be restricted by terms of University of California gift or purchase agreements, donor restrictions, privacy and publicity rights, licensing and trademarks. Transmission or reproduction of materials protected by copyright beyond that allowed by fair use requires the written permission of the copyright owners. Works not in the public domain cannot be commercially exploited without permission of the copyright owner. Responsibility for any use rests exclusively with the user. All requests to reproduce, publish, quote from, or otherwise use collection materials must be submitted to The Bancroft Library. See: http://bancroft.berkeley.edu/reference/permissions.html
Subjects and Indexing Terms
Davis, George Thomas, 1907-2006 -- Archives
Mooney, Thomas J., 1882-1942
Chessman, Caryl, 1921-1960
Bakker, Jim, 1940-
Criminal law
Criminal defense lawyers -- California
Trials -- California
Capital punishment
Photographs

Series 1: Personalia approximately 1945-1990

carton 1, folder 1-4
Biographical materials and interviews 1950-1990

carton 1, folder 5
Autobiography, manuscript undated
Military service records 1945-1946

Series 2: Politics 1942-1976

carton 1, folder 8
Campaign for State Attorney General, correspondence 1942
Appointment and resignation letters re: position as assistant district attorney of San Francisco 1947-1948

Northern California Campaign Committee for Truman, correspondence and press releases 1948

Correspondence with James Roosevelt (regarding Truman) 1950

Jimmy Carter campaign 1976

Soong Ching Ling Foundation 1974

Series 3: Case files 1913-1990

Carton 1, Folder 14-24
Caryl Chessman 1950-1974

Tom Mooney approximately 1913-1937

Tom Mooney approximately 1930-1938

Jim Bakker 1989-1990

Jim Bakker 1989-1990

Jim Bakker 1989-1990

Conditions Governing Access
This box of correspondence is restricted until 2064 due to attorney-client privilege.

Carton 3, folder 10-12
Kenneth Long 1949-1988

Tommy Harrington 1948

Carton 3, Folder 13
Bart Caritativo 1955-1958

Jack Kirschke 1977

David Fields 1985

Turncoat cases (Otho Bell, William Cowart, Lewie Griggs) 1955

Gail Lavery 1965

Carton 3, folder 14
Alfred Krupp 1949

George T. Davis/Dixon Lee conspiracy indictment 1950

Carton 3, folder 15
Materials from assorted cases 1942-1982

Carton 3, folder 16
Series 4: Speeches, remarks, and other writings 1935-1983

Carton 3, folder 17-18

Carton 3, folder 19-20

Carton 3, folder 21

Carton 3, folder 22-25

Carton 3, folder 26
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<th>Carton 3, Folder 27-28</th>
<th>Assorted speeches approximately 1940-1990</th>
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<td>carton 4, folder 1-4</td>
<td>Assorted speeches 1940-1990</td>
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<td>Political and campaign speeches 1935-1940</td>
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<td>Remarks at Harvard Law School, National College of Advocacy 1974</td>
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<td>Statement on the confirmation of Rose Bird 1977</td>
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<td>Davis’ remarks at Mooney mass meeting 1937</td>
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<td>Trial by Prejudice (speech at Ate-y Club, San Francisco) undated</td>
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<td>carton 4, folder 10</td>
<td>Chicago Civil Liberties Committee speech 1939</td>
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<td>carton 4, folder 11</td>
<td>National Lawyers Guild Convention speech (Chicago) 1939</td>
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<td>carton 4, folder 12</td>
<td>Speech and other materials on Pacific Gas and Electric and public power 1974-1989</td>
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<td>carton 4, folder 13</td>
<td>China report/memo 1977</td>
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<td>Carton 4, Folder 14</td>
<td>John Hinkley verdict--memo on 1982</td>
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<td>Carton 4, Folder 15</td>
<td>Comstock Club (Sacramento) speech--only correspondence regarding speech, no transcript) 1983</td>
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<td>Carton 4, Folder 16</td>
<td>How to handle a tax evasion case--speech 1974</td>
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<td>Carton 4, Folder 17</td>
<td>Prosecutorial misconduct--speech undated</td>
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<td>carton 4, folder 18</td>
<td>The George T. Davis Story: Capital Punishment (manuscript) undated</td>
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<tr>
<td>carton 4, folder 19</td>
<td>Rambling Thoughts (manuscript) 1982</td>
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<tr>
<td>carton 4, folder 20</td>
<td>Philosophy of Good Government (manuscript) 1942</td>
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Series 5: Subject files 1926-1980

| Carton 4, Folder 21-22 | Hypnosis for lawyers 1966 |
| Carton 4, Folder 23   | Clarence Darrow speech--What to do About Crime (transcript) 1926 |
| Carton 4, Folder 24-27 | Capital punishment, assorted approximately 1970-1980 |
| Carton 4, Folder 28   | Unreliability of eyewitness testimony--memo to GTD undated |
| Carton 4, Folder 29   | Habeus Corpus in One Act by Milt Phinney undated |
| Carton 4, Folder 30   | Persuasion research undated |
| Carton 4, Folder 31   | Raker Act, assorted 1941-1977 |
| Carton 4, Folder 32   | Materials relating to Brad Williams’ Due Process book on G.T. Davis 1960 |

Series 6: Clippings/press 1921-1990

| box 2, Folder 1-5     | Clippings/press on George T. Davis approximately 1940-1990 |
| oversize_folder 1    | Oversize clippings 1938 |
| box 2, Folder 6      | Eugene Rayond Pacelli case clippings 1962 |
| box 2, Folder 7      | Sam Amalu case clippings 1963 |
| box 2, Folder 8      | Sen. Benigno Aquino, Jr. case clippings 1977 |
| box 2, Folder 9      | Clippings scrapbook 1921-1933 |
| volume 1             | Clippings scrapbook 1934-1937 |
| volume 2             | Clippings scrapbook 1934-1937 |
| volume 3             | Clippings scrapbook 1936-1938 |
| volume 4             | Clippings scrapbook 1938-1942 |
| volume 5             | Clippings scrapbook 1940-1942 |
| volume 6             | Clippings scrapbook 1939-1940 |
| volume 7             | Clippings scrapbook 1947-1989 |

Series 7: Photographs 1916-1986
oversize_box 1, folder 1
Caryl Chessman case 1950-1960

oversize_box 1, folder 2-4
Tom Mooney case 1916-1938

oversize_box 2, folder 1-3
Tom Mooney case 1916-1938

oversize_folder 1
Tom Mooney case 1916

oversize_box 2, folder 4
Mooney-Billings case (pardon of Billings) 1961

oversize_box 2, folder 5
Tommy Harrington case 1948

oversize_box 2, folder 6
The People Against McQuade (photos from the set) 1956

oversize_box 2, folder 7
Assorted professional photos 1949-1986

Scope and Contents
Photograph of George T. Davis at a rally to free Bhutto in 1986 in San Francisco; photograph of George T. Davis with Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black in Washington D.C. (1949); portrait photograph of U.S. Senator Claire Engel; photograph of Andy Thomas, George T. Davis, Dr. Angel and two unidentified men in Acapulco, Mexico celebrating George Christopher’s election as mayor of San Francisco (approximately 1955).

oversize_box 2, folder 8
Personal photos 1940-1985