

**Gilbert Jonas Company Records**  
**A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress**



**Manuscript Division, Library of Congress**  
**Washington, D.C.**  
**2024**

Contact information: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/mss.contact>

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Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms009286>

Prepared by Manuscript Division staff

Finding aid encoded by Manuscript Division staff, 2010  
Revised 2023 September

## Collection Summary

**Title:** Gilbert Jonas Company Records

**Inclusive Dates:** 1947-2006

**Bulk Dates:** 1956-2006

**ID No.:** MSS84716

**Creator:** Gilbert Jonas Company

**Extent:** 23,550 items

**Extent:** 66 containers plus 1 classified and 2 oversize

**Extent:** 26.4 linear feet

**Extent:** 76 digital files (0.62 MB)

**Language:** Collection material in English

**Location:** Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

**LC Catalog record:** <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm00084716>

**Summary:** Public relations firm founded by Gilbert Jonas specializing in fundraising for nonprofit organizations and civil rights and public interest causes. Direct mail campaign files, financial statements, solicitation letters, reports, correspondence, subject files, memoranda, donor lists, newspaper clippings, and printed matter.

## Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

### People

Bell, Derrick, 1930-2011--Correspondence.

Evers, Charles, 1922-2020.

Robinson, Jackie, 1919-1972.

Wei, Jingsheng--Correspondence.

Wofford, Harris--Correspondence.

### Organizations

Africa League.

American Civil Liberties Union. Roger Baldwin Foundation.

American Committee on Africa.

American Friends of Vietnam.

Democratic Party (Miss.)

Fund for an Open Society (Philadelphia, Pa.)

Gilbert Jonas Company.

Hale House (New York, N.Y.)

Harlem Youth Development Foundation.

Holy Land Conservation Fund.

International Civil Rights Center & Museum (Greensboro, N.C.)

International Rescue Committee.

Minority Business Enterprise Legal Defense and Education Fund (Organization)

Northside Center for Child Development.

Oram Group, Inc.

Physicians for Social Responsibility (U.S.)

Scholarship, Education and Defense Fund for Racial Equality.

Sex Information and Education Council of the U.S.

World Federalist Association (U.S.)

### Subjects

African Americans--Mississippi.

Child welfare--United States--Societies, etc.

Civil rights--Mississippi.

Civil rights--United States--Societies, etc.  
Economic assistance--United States--Societies, etc.  
Fund raising.  
Nonprofit organizations--United States.  
Public interest--United States--Societies, etc.  
Public relations firms.  
Social action--United States--Societies, etc.  
Suffrage--Mississippi.

### **Places**

Fayette (Miss.)--History.  
Mississippi--Politics and government--20th century.  
Vietnam--Description and travel.

## **Acquisition Information**

The records of the Gilbert Jonas Company were given to the Library of Congress by Gilbert Jonas Company in 1995. Additional material was given by Joyce Jonas in 2013.

## **Processing History**

The records of the Gilbert Jonas Company were arranged and described by Joseph K. Brooks with the assistance of Paul Colton and Brian McGuire in 2010. An addition was processed and the finding aid revised by Joseph K. Brooks and Rachel McNellis, with the assistance of Matthew Darby and Chanté Flowers in 2023. Some papers in the addition have undergone mold remediation.

Digital files were received as part of the Gilbert Jonas Company Records on a single floppy disc. A description of the standard processes taken on all born digital records can be found in the Processing History Note: Born Digital Collection Material at <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.digital>.

## **Related Material**

Related material in the Manuscript Division includes records documenting the company's relationship with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People located in Parts VII and X of the NAACP Records (see <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms008007>).

## **Copyright Status**

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of the Gilbert Jonas Company is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

## **Access and Restrictions**

The records of the Gilbert Jonas Company are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

## **National Security Classified Information**

Government regulations control the use of national security classified items in this collection. Manuscript Division staff can furnish information concerning access to and use of classified material.

## Technical Requirements

Digital files were created in an MS-DOS operating system. The content is primarily text files in WordPerfect for MS-DOS v.5.1 format. The files can be viewed with file viewer tools or opened in LibreOffice with some loss of formatting.

## Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container or digital ID number, Gilbert Jonas Company Records, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

## Biographical Note

Date	Event
1930, July 22	Born in Brooklyn, N.Y.
1951	B.A., communications, Stanford University
1953	Married Barbara L. Selby (divorced 1961)
1953-1955	Private, United States Army, Public Information Office
1955	M.A., international affairs, Columbia University
1955-1959	Member, Board of Directors, American Committee on Africa
1956-1957	Executive secretary, American Friends of Vietnam
1958-1961	Vice president, Harold L. Oram, Inc.
1959-1961	Executive secretary, American Medical Center for Burma, New York, N.Y.
1962-1996	Founder and president, Gilbert Jonas Company
1964	Married Paulette Joyce Theise
1965-1995	Development counsel, NAACP
1967	Assisted Charles Evers in establishing the Medgar Evers Fund
1967-1969	Fundraising consultant, Roger Baldwin Foundation of the American Civil Liberties Union
1967-1971	Fundraising consultant, Scholarship, Education and Defense Fund for Racial Equality
1971	Coordinator, Charles Evers for Governor of Mississippi
1996-1997	Fundraising consultant, International Civil Rights Center & Museum, Greensboro, N.C.
1998-2002	Member, Board of Directors, Harlem Youth Development Foundation
2001-2004	Chair and member, Board of Directors, World Federalist Association, Greater Metro New York Chapter
2006, Sept. 21	Died, New York, N.Y.

## Scope and Content Note

The records of the Gilbert Jonas Company span the years 1947-2006, with the bulk of the material dating from 1956 to 2006. Gilbert Jonas (1930-2006) founded the Gilbert Jonas Company in 1962, and for many years the company was the principal fundraiser for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. These records, however, document the fundraising and public relations work of the Gilbert Jonas Company on behalf of nonprofit, child welfare, foreign aid, civil rights, and social action organizations other than the NAACP.

Some of the larger client files relate to the Fund for an Open Society (OPEN), Hale House (New York, N.Y.), Harlem Youth Development Foundation, Holy Land Conservation Fund, International Civil Rights Center & Museum (Greensboro, N.C.), International Rescue Committee, Minority Business Enterprise Legal Defense and Education Fund, Northside Center for Child Development, Physicians for Social Responsibility, Roger Baldwin Foundation of the American Civil Liberties Union, Scholarship, Education and Defense Fund for Racial Equality (SEDFRE), Sex Information and Education Council of the U.S. (SIECUS), and World Federalist Association. The first part of the collection is composed entirely of client files that include direct mail campaigns, financial statements, solicitation letters, reports, correspondence, subject files,

memoranda, donor lists, newspaper clippings, and publications of the client organizations. The bulk of the 2023 addition is composed of more extensive client files but also includes Jonas's personal correspondence, miscellany, subject files, and a file on Mississippi civil rights leader and politician Charles Evers. Correspondents include Derrick Bell, Jingsheng Wei, and Harris Wofford. Notable in the subject files is material on Lafayette High School in Brooklyn, New York, where Jonas was a sports reporter for the student newspaper. Captured as part of his beat, and included in the file, are photographs of Jackie Robinson during his 1948 rookie year with the Brooklyn Dodgers.

Before Gilbert Jonas founded the Gilbert Jonas Company in 1962, he was employed in several capacities by the Harold L. Oram Group, an organization with a mission similar to what would become Jonas's company. Files on the Africa League, American Committee on Africa, American Friends of Vietnam, and the Harold L. Oram delegation to Vietnam in 1959 shed light on this phase of his career before he started his company.

A large file on Gilbert Jonas's friend, Charles Evers, the older brother of assassinated civil rights leader and NAACP official Medgar Wiley Evers, stands apart from the client files. Charles Evers was a civil rights leader in his own right and a politician. The Charles Evers file documents his efforts to bring out, organize, and empower the newly enfranchised Black vote in Mississippi through campaigns for the United States House of Representatives (1968), governor of Mississippi (1972-1973), and the United States Senate (1978-1979), all of which he lost, and for mayor of Fayette, Mississippi, which he won in 1969 and in several subsequent campaigns. The Evers file documents the Gilbert Jonas Company's fundraising and public relations support for Mississippi political campaigns on the national level, and fundraising, organizational and other administrative support during Evers tenure as mayor of Fayette, Mississippi. For example, the Gilbert Jonas Company coordinated through SEDFRE for a Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, police officer to train the all-Black Fayette Police Department after the white officers quit en masse when Evers was first elected mayor in 1969. The Evers file also documents Evers's participation in the transition of the Democratic Party in Mississippi from an all-white "regular" party through several stages, from the Freedom Democratic Party and the Loyal Democrats of Mississippi, to an integrated Democratic Party in Mississippi representing all races.

## **Arrangement of the Collection**

This collection is arranged alphabetically by subject or type of material, followed by an addition.

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