

The Charles L. Blockson
Afro-American Collection

presents



**Women Activists in Philadelphia:
From Civil Rights to Black Power**

Thursday, March 7, 2013

3:00 p.m.

The Charles L. Blockson
Afro-American Collection
at Sullivan Hall

Temple University Libraries
Philadelphia, PA



Karen Jordan grew up in North Philadelphia near Girard College and participated in the NAACP protests at the school between 1965 and 1968. Ms. Jordan gives her recollections of the demonstrations and the police response, as well as her reflections on the role of women in the modern Civil Rights Movement. Ms. Jordan also shares her memories of the Philadelphia chapter NAACP President Cecil B. Moore, the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and other prominent civil rights leaders.



L-R: Angela Davis, Stokely Carmichael & Barbara Easley-Cox

Barbara Easley-Cox grew up in Philadelphia and has lived here most of her life, with stints in Oakland, North Korea and Algeria. She and her husband Don Cox (1936-2011), who was in exile in the French Pyrenees, were part of the leadership of the Black Panther Party, Oakland chapter. They later joined the International Section in Algeria. She is the vice chair of Treehouse Books, a non-profit youth outreach center and bookstore in North Philadelphia. Ms. Easley-Cox shares her memories of Angela Davis, Stokely Carmichael and the Black Panther Party in Oakland, New York and Philadelphia.

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Introduction

Diane D. Turner, Curator

Charles L. Blockson Afro-American Collection

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Speakers

Karen Jordan

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Barbara Easley-Cox

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The Charles L. Blockson Afro-American Collection is one of the nation's leading research facilities for the study of the history and culture of people of African Descent. Its mission is to collect, preserve and disseminate the histories of people of African descent, in Africa and the Diaspora. The collection holds materials with a special emphasis on the experiences of African Americans in Philadelphia and the Delaware Valley region. The collection holds over 500,000 items in all formats. Materials date from 1581.

215-204-6632 / blockson@temple.edu

<http://library.temple.edu/collections/blockson>

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Black Power Movement: Philadelphia and Beyond

The Black Power Movement was not only a political and economic movement but also a social and cultural one, evolving from the Civil Rights Movement where Black women like Rosa Parks, Ella Baker, Fannie Lou Hamer, Coretta Scott King, C. Delores Tucker and Karen Asper-Jordan took a stand. Participants of the Black Power Movement included Black women such as Angela Davis, Kathleen Cleaver, Elaine Brown, Sonia Sanchez, Regina Jennings and Barbara Easley-Cox, who emphasized racial pride and the development of black political and cultural institutions that would cultivate and advance black collective interests and values. Political goals included protection, in the form of self-defense, from racial oppression and police brutality as well as the importance of maintaining and creating social and cultural institutions to promote and preserve African and African American history and culture. The political agenda also included black autonomy and a self-sufficient black economy to create jobs and employment opportunities as well as resources to the urban black communities throughout the United States.

Black women played pivotal roles in the Civil Rights and Black Power movements. The City of Philadelphia was where the Girard College struggles against educational injustice were fought. From 1848 to 1968, the institution, which was situated in the heart of the African American community, was a private school for white orphan males, ages six to 18 years old. Karen Asper-Jordan was among the courageous Black females who stood up for justice at the wall. She experienced and witnessed police brutality, racial slurs and danger as one of the youth associated with Cecil B. Moore.

While a student at San Francisco Community College in California, Barbara Easley-Cox joined the Black Panther Party in 1967. She was committed to serve the people. She worked at the Black Panther Party headquarters in Oakland, California as well as New York, Philadelphia and overseas. During June 1970, she was assigned to the International Section in North Africa and Europe. She also worked with African American soldiers in Germany during the Vietnam War. She was a tireless servant of the people raising money for the Panther survival programs, serving children free breakfasts and soliciting donations for the Panther's Free Clothing Program.

Today, the Charles L. Blockson Afro-American Collection, Temple University Libraries celebrates Karen Asper-Jordan and Barbara Easley-Cox. Listen as they share their stories, remember their stories and pass them on.