



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE
AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

**A Finding Aid to the
Jane Evans Papers**

Manuscript Collection No. 745



Collection Summary

Title	Jane Evans Collection
Dates	1921-2001, undated
Collection Number	MS-745
Repository	The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives
Creator	Evans, Jane, 1907-2004
Extent	0.8 linear feet (2 Hollinger boxes)
Language of the Material	English

Administrative Information

Biographical Sketch

Jane Evans was born in New York City on October 31, 1907, the only child of James Evans and Maybelle Holden Evans. Educated at New York University, the University of Cincinnati, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, and Xavier University, she lived for a number of years in the Midwest. It was while she lived in St. Louis and was employed by W&J Sloan that she was approached by Joseph Newman of Emerson Electric Manufacturing Company about the design of the table fan. This led to her eventual invention of the "Silver Swan" fan. The "Silver Swan" is recognized by American collectors as the fan that changed fan design forever!

Choosing never to marry, Evans' involvement in academic, intellectual, and Jewish secular and religious life kept her absorbed and fulfilled. During the San Francisco Conference at which the United Nations Charter was drafted, she served as a consultant to the American delegation. She was President of the National Peace Conference, Chair of the American Jewish Conference's Committee on Displaced Persons, President of the Jewish Braille Institute, Life Honorary Officer of the World Union for Progressive Judaism, President of the Jewish Peace Fellowship, and served on the board of the National Interreligious Service Board for Conscientious Objectors. Her best known affiliation was as Executive Director of the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods, which position she held from 1933-1976. In addition, Evans taught political science at the New School for Social Research in New York. She was recognized as a leading authority on community organization and international affairs.

Among her awards bestowed are a citation as a "Woman of Achievement" by the Federation of Jewish Women's Organizations, the Frank L. Weil Award of the National Jewish Welfare Board, being named "A Woman of Distinction in Religion" by Governor Mario Cuomo of New York, a forest of trees in Israel planted in her honor, and the Jane Evans Garden of Peace and Understanding at the Leo Baeck High School in Haifa, Israel. An avid sports fan, boating enthusiast, art collector and animal lover, Miss Evans remained actively involved in all her pursuits well into her 90's.

Jane Evans passed away, after a year of illness, on March 24, 2004, at the age of 96.

Scope and Content

The collection might best be described as an amalgamation, since the collection is made up of the papers found in her office at the time of her death. The National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods (NFTS) folders in Box 1 consist of transcripts, reports, speeches, adult education materials, resolutions, and two letters. Her writings (mostly speeches) take up two folders and are largely devoted to the topics of the day, but show that she was also capable of delivering sermons, invocations, and prayers. A lengthy interview, the transcript running to 117 pages, occupies another folder, and personal papers, which include a few brief biographies, a newsletter article about a library named in her honor, and a letter from a fan collector, another. A folder of photographs completes Box 1.

Box 2 contains folders about the Dedication of The House of Living Judaism, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the World Union for Progressive Judaism, and an eclectic selection of the writings of others, called Miscellaneous Nearprint. The folder entitled Women and Judaism contains speeches, resolutions, and correspondence regarding a subject this "Woman of Achievement" knew well. For those who would like to know more about Jane Evans' work at the NFTS, the finding aid to the Women of Reform Judaism Records (Manuscript Collection No. 73), should be consulted.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged in one (1) series: A. General.

Terms of Access

The collection is open for use; no restrictions apply.

Preferred Citation

Footnotes and bibliographic references should refer to the Jane Evans Collection and the American Jewish Archives. A suggestion for at least the first citation is as follows:

[Description], [Date], Box #, Folder #. MS-745. Jane Evans Collection. American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Provenance Received from the Union for Reform Judaism, New York, N.Y., June 2004.

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Index Terms

Subjects Jewish women

Personal Names Evans, Jane, 1907-2004

Corporate Names National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods / Women of Reform Judaism (U.S.)

Series A. General, 1921-2001, undated

Box and Folder Listing

Box 1. Folder 1. National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods, 1939-1977

Box 1. Folder 2. National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods, undated

Box 1. Folder 3. Writings by Jane Evans, 1948-2000

Box 1. Folder 4. Writings by Jane Evans, undated

Box 1. Folder 5. Interview of Jane Evans by Allen Kaplan, 1985 August 21

Box 1. Folder 6. Personal.

Box 1. Folder 7. Photographs.

Box 2. Folder 1. House of Living Judaism, Dedication of, 1951 October 26-28

Box 2. Folder 2. Union of American Hebrew Congregations/Union for Reform Judaism, 1921-2001

Box 2. Folder 3. Women and Judaism, 1971-1994

Box 2. Folder 4. World Union for Progressive Judaism, 1963-2000

Box 2. Folder 5. Miscellaneous nearprint.

Box 2. Folder 6. Miscellaneous nearprint.