



ArchivesSpace

# **Provine (Dorothy) Free Black Research Collection**

## **An inventory of Dorothy Provine at DC Public Library**

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This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on March 26, 2018.

English

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Stage

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository:</b>	Stage
<b>Title:</b>	Dorothy Provine Free Black Research Collection
<b>ID:</b>	139
<b>Date [inclusive]:</b>	1686-1997
<b>Physical Description:</b>	11 cubic feet; 11 boxes
<b>Language of the Material:</b>	English
<b>Language of the Material:</b>	English
<b>Language of the Material:</b>	English
<b>Abstract:</b>	Dorothy Provine served as an archivist in the Civil Archives Division of the National Archives in Washington, D.C., who researched and compiled information about free black life in Washington D.C. The collection contains photocopies of wills, marriage registers, freedom records, manumissions records, research files, writings by Provine, birth records, death records, records of social organizations, genealogy records, and records of black property owners.

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## Biographical / Historical

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Dorothy Provine served as an archivist in the Civil Archives Division of the National Archives in Washington, D.C. Provine authored an article titled, "The Economic Position of the Free Blacks in Washington, D.C., 1800-1860." She continued her work with the release of District of Columbia Free Negroes Register, 1821-1861. In her work, Provine compiles the abstracts of entries in the free black registries in D.C. The records cover 1821-1861, which feature early nineteenth century to just prior to the Civil War. The collection includes the research Provine completed in order to finish her publications. The collection contains a close examination of the ways in which those of African descent were or became free. Some were enslaved and bought their freedom through an outsource process called "being hired out." Others were born free and never enslaved. Still others had been freed through the wills of their owners. In addition to research about free blacks, the collection offers a narrative regarding black

migration to, in and around Washington, D.C. from Maryland. Her work helps to shed light on black life outside of the confines of slavery, while remaining in the discussion of slavery and freedom.

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## Scope and Contents

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The Dorothy Provine Free Black Research Collection contains photocopies of wills, marriage registers, freedom records, manumissions records, research files, writings by Provine, birth records, death records, records of social organizations, genealogy records, and records of black property owners. It should be noted that while the documents in this collection date from 1686 to 1997, nearly all records in this collection are photocopies of original documents, made predominantly in the 1990s.

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## Administrative Information

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### Publication Statement

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### Conditions Governing Use

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## Collection Inventory

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