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Lillian Hyman Katzman Papers

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When Lillian Hyman Katzman volunteered to work with the Democratic Party in New York City in 1948, she was sent over to the office of W.E.B. Du Bois to assist him with some secretarial work. From that beginning, she was hired as a secretary, remaining in Du Bois's employ for several years until she, regretfully, left for higher pay. Hyman later earned her master's degree and taught in the public schools in New York, starting the first class for children diagnosed with brain injury.

The Katzman Papers contains a series of letters and postcards sent by Du Bois during the early 1950s when Katzman worked as

his secretary. Friendly and informal, they concern lecture tours by Du Bois and his wife, Shirley Graham, out west, and arrangements for his home at Grace Court in Brooklyn. The collection also includes a handful of publications by Du Bois, newspaper clippings, and some congratulatory letters to Katzman on her marriage.

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African American

Du Bois, W.E.B.

Background on Lillian Hyman Katzman

Lillian Hyman Katzman was working as a volunteer with the Democratic Party in New York City when she was asked to serve as a temporary secretary for W.E.B. Du Bois. The interim position turned into a permanent one, and Hyman remained in Du Bois's employ for several years. During this time, she credits Du Bois with encouraging her interest in politics and in the Civil Rights Movement. Even though Katzman ultimately left her position as secretary, she remained close friends with Du Bois. Katzman later earned her master's degree and taught in the public schools in New York, starting the first class for children diagnosed with brain injury.

Scope of collection

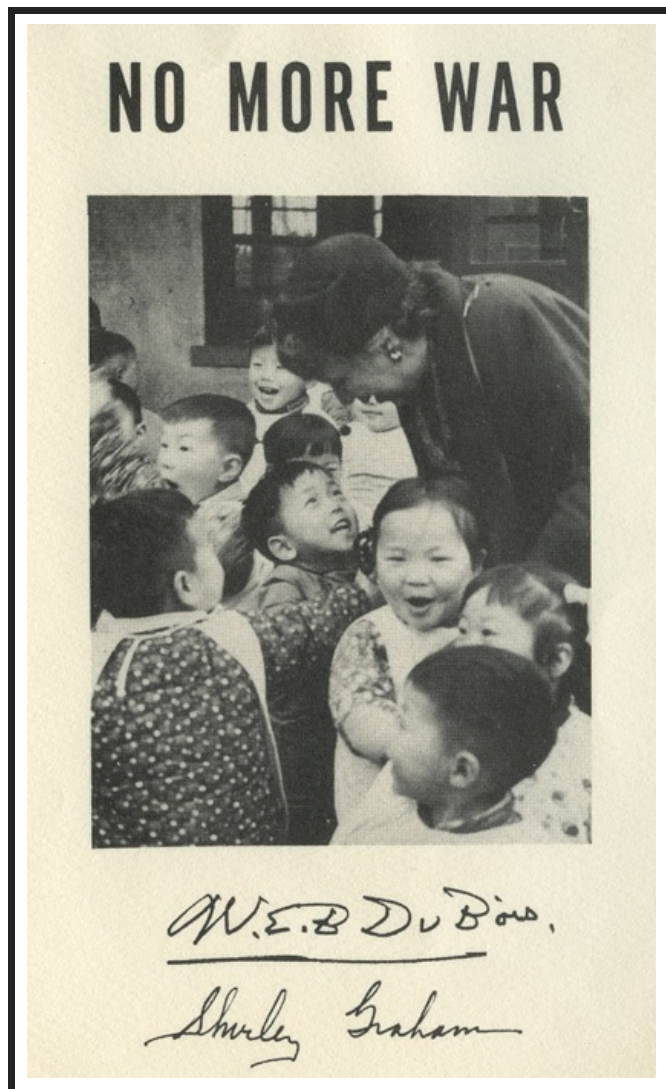
The bulk of the collection consists of letters from W.E.B. Du Bois to Lillian Hyman Katzman during the years 1952 to 1959, a portion of which she was employed as his secretary. Many of the letters were written while Du Bois and his wife, Shirley Graham Du Bois, were traveling or on lecture tours, and the content includes brief descriptions of their locations as well as directions for forwarding important mail, numbers to call, and checks to deposit. In others, Du Bois directs Katzman on how to answer requests for speeches or appearances as well as books and articles. He asks favors such as watering the flowers at his Grace Court apartment, sending air-mail copies of manuscripts to England, or purchasing specific grocery items in advance of their return to "insure us from starvation on arrival."

Correspondence dated after 1955 is more personal in nature, since Katzman was no longer employed by Du Bois. These letters describe his continuing research and provide updates on his health. Du Bois congratulates Lillian at the time of her marriage to Arthur Katzman, and invites her family to his New Year's Day celebration at Grace Court.

Finally, the correspondence includes letters between Katzman and David Levering Lewis. Lewis is the winner of two Pulitzer prizes for part one and two of his biography on W.E.B. Du Bois. In one letter, she expresses regrets about leaving Du Bois's employment, but says it was necessary for financial reasons.

Katzman's continued interest in Du Bois and his work is reflected in the selection of articles and speeches she saved. The first article, "Forty-Two Years in the U.S.S.R" concerns two visits to the Soviet Union, the first prior to World War II and the second in the aftermath. Du Bois writes about the significant growth of arts and sciences under Communism, and commends advancements towards democracy. The second article, "The Vast Miracle of China Today," concerns his ten-week trip to China, during which he celebrated his 91st birthday. In it he discusses a brief history of China and praises the improvements made in education and equality during "the great leap" to Communism.

A pamphlet containing the keynote address at Madison Square Garden of the first meeting to launch the political campaign for the American Labor Party urges the public to vote for the third party and vote for peace. Another speech written for the annual convention of the Peace Progressive Party of Massachusetts highlights the effort to stop the fighting in Korea. Here he again urges voters to elect neither candidate from the Democratic or Republican parties and to choose a leader from the Progressive Party. There is an original copy of his pamphlet, "Peace is Dangerous," published by the *The Guardian* of his 1951 speech in New York, sponsored by the National Council for Arts, Sciences, & Professions and later revised for an Armistice Day address in



Invitation to the Du Bois home on New Year's Day, 1960

Boston.

Copies of Albert Kahn's pamphlet "Agents of Peace," describe the arraignment of Dr. W.E.B. Du Bois as he faced criminal charges for failing to register the Peace Information Center as a foreign agent. Du Bois helped to establish the Peace Information Center, which endorsed the Stockholm Peace Appeal calling for a ban on atomic weapons. Considered a threat, the Department of Justice branded the Peace Information Center as a foreign agent and demanded that they register under the Foreign Agents Registration Act. The Center was eventually dissolved by the executive board, but they were charged by the Justice Department four months later. Kahn's was one in a series of pamphlets that argued for peace, all written in support of Du Bois during this time.

Articles about Du Bois include a book review from *The Guardian* criticizing Francis Broderick's "W.E.B. Du Bois: Negro Leader in a time of Crisis.". A few articles were written after his death that highlight his long career and describe his funeral in Ghana. Other newspaper clippings include articles from the pages of the *Spectator* and *New York Post* and several other publications, remembering Du Bois's legacy and citing his influence on civil rights and higher education for blacks. Other notable highlights are the New York Post article concerning the denial of a visa for Shirley Graham Du Bois to visit the United States and a New York Times article, concerning the naming of Dr. W.E.B. Du Bois to the Black Academy of Arts and Letters Hall of Fame in 1970.

Inventory

Du Bois, W.E.B.: Correspondence

1952

Box 1: 1

Kimura, Kikuya: Letter to W.E.B. Du Bois

1952 Jan. 30

Shizuoka-shi (Japan) - Thanking him for his letter of Jan. 3; asking his opinion of Herbert Aptheker's "A Documentary History of the Negro People in the U.S.A.".

Du Bois, W.E.B.: Letter to Lillian Hyman

1952 Feb. 16

Brooklyn (New York, N.Y.) - Asking her to check the mail at his apartment at 31 Grace Court.

Du Bois, W.E.B.: Letter to Lillian Hyman

1952 Jul. 24

Brooklyn (New York, N.Y.) - Letter her know that he "will not need you until the first"; informing her of his and Shirley's trip to Chicago and Milwaukee and the death of Shirley's mother.

Du Bois, W.E.B.: Letter to Lillian Hyman

1952 Oct. 6

Brooklyn (New York, N.Y.) - Asking her to contact Penn Station lost and found to retrieve his copy of Costain's "Silver Chalice" left behind in a seat

Adams and Charles Black (Firm): Postcard from the office of Who's Who to W.E.B. Du Bois

1952 Nov. 6

London (England) - Asking Du Bois for corrections to his enclosed biography for Who's Who.

Du Bois, W.E.B.: Correspondence

1953

Box 1: 2

Du Bois, W.E.B.: Letter to Lillian Hyman

1953 Feb. 19

Los Angeles (Calif.) - Informing her of his and Shirley's trip to Los Angeles and future travel plans; asking her to return an NAACP receipt and to ask Harcourt & Brace to "write Murphy what they have written me" and that "Murphy is well able to pay".

Du Bois, W.E.B.: Memorandum to Lillian Hyman

1953 Feb. 23

Nassau (Bahamas) - Including instructions for receipt of mail while in the Bahamas, asking her to deposit checks, to not book any speeches and "in case of articles or books, write or wait until return".

Du Bois, W.E.B.: Letter to Lillian Hyman

1953 Feb. 24

San Francisco (Calif.) - Informing her of his and Shirley's speaking engagements in California, travel plans to Chicago and arrival in New York.

Du Bois, W.E.B.: Letter to Lillian Hyman

1953 Apr. 28

Nassau (Bahamas) - Asking her to retrieve a letter from Mrs. Worrell at his 31 Grace Court home in Brooklyn and forward it to him in the Bahamas.

Du Bois, W.E.B.: Letter to Lillian Hyman

1953 May 4

Nassau (Bahamas) - Asking her to send a manuscript to Montague, (J. D.) Bernal and (George) Padmore in England with a note saying that a principal copy has been send to Budapest in care of Joliot-Curie, fearing that his mail is being tampered with; asking her to also send a copy to Gloria Agrin to solicit her opinion.

Du Bois, W.E.B.: Letter to Lillian Hyman

1953 May 5

Nassau (Bahamas) - Informing her of a planned trip to visit the outer islands of the Bahamas and to Long Cay "where my grandfather was born"; asking her to: write William Kerner that "the proposed pamphlet is all right", to tell Faulkner he will speak for the club "if they can afford \$50 and transportation", and to make copies of his letter to Budapest and to send manuscripts to Montague, (J. D.) Bernal and (George) Padmore in England.

Du Bois, W.E.B.: Letter to Lillian Hyman

1953 May 11

Nassau (Bahamas) - Informing her of trip to visit the outer islands of the Bahamas, to the home of his grandfather where they "found no documents, but much interesting lore", and their scheduled return on May 17; asking her to secure food for their return to New York. Written on "Color and Democracy, Colonies and Peace" letterhead.

Du Bois, W.E.B.: Invitation from W.E.B. Du Bois and Shirley Graham Du Bois to Lillian Hyman

1953 June 3

Brooklyn (New York, N.Y.) - Inviting her to attend a reception for the "Seminar on Africa" to be given at their home at 31 Grace Court.

Du Bois, W.E.B.: Correspondence

1954

Box 1: 3

Unidentified correspondent: Envelope to W.E.B. Du Bois (Moscow, Russia)

1954

Du Bois, W.E.B.: Postcard to Carol Hyman

1954 June 5

Los Angeles (Calif.) - Writing from the Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles: "This is really very nice".

Du Bois, W.E.B.: Note to Lillian Hyman

1954

Asking her to revise a speech by "Harriet" to "make it sound probable". Possibly referring to Harriet G. Eddy

Du Bois, W.E.B.: Correspondence

1955

Box 1: 4

Du Bois, W.E.B.: Memorandum to Lillian Hyman

1955 Feb. 25

Port-au-Prince (Haiti) - Informing her of his address while in Haiti; asking her to open mail and forward "only that which is VERY important", and to "put all displaced books on the shelves".

Du Bois, W.E.B.: Letter to Lillian Hyman

1955 Mar. 17

Port-au-Prince (Haiti) - Informing her of the details of his and Shirley's return to New York, and his intention to "stop into the office Monday between noon and two p.m."

Du Bois, W.E.B.: Letter to Lillian Hyman

1955 Jul. 27

Brooklyn (New York, N.Y.) - Expressing distress at her leaving his employment, wishing her well, and thanking her "for your faithful work".

Du Bois, W.E.B.: Letter to Lillian Hyman

1955 Oct. 25

Brooklyn (New York, N.Y.) - Expressing how much he misses her; informing her of the completion of his book; hoping she will "get rich soon".

Du Bois, W.E.B.: Letter to Lillian Hyman

1955 Nov. 10

Brooklyn (New York, N.Y.) - Asking if she knows where his revised version of his Rosenberg poem is.

Du Bois, W.E.B.: Correspondence

1956

Box 1: 5

Du Bois, W.E.B.: Letter to Lillian Hyman

1956 Oct. 16

Brooklyn (New York, N.Y.) - Responding to her recent letter; informing her: that "my office is very lonely and I plan to move it to my Brooklyn home this Fall", that Elizabeth Lawson has helped him occasionally, that Shirley had a bad injury in the surf at Fire Island in July, of Masses & Mainstream's intention to publish his Black Flame Trilogy, of an invitation to attend a Chinese celebration of the 250th anniversary of the birth of Benjamin Franklin in Peking and to the March 1957 Ghana independence celebrations.

Du Bois, W.E.B.: Letter to Lillian Hyman

1956 Dec. 21

Brooklyn (New York, N.Y.) - Informing her of his move from his office at 23 West 26th St. to his home at 31 Grace Court in Brooklyn and inviting her and her daughter Carol to come and visit after the holidays.

Du Bois, W.E.B.: Correspondence

1959

Box 1: 6

Du Bois, W.E.B.: Letter to Lillian Hyman

1959 June 6

London (England) - Informing her of his arrival in New York upon completion of his trip to the Soviet Union, Germany, Czechoslovakia, China, Sweden and Britain and asking her to "find me a perfect part time secretary to help me answer all my unanswered letters and write all the books I've promised to write and the history of this miraculous trip and my autobiography and lectures I've promised to deliver etc., etc."

Du Bois, W.E.B.: Letter to Lillian Hyman

1959 Nov. 5

Brooklyn (New York, N.Y.) - Congratulating her on her marriage and regretting that a copy of his book "The Ordeal of Mansart" was not ready to send as a gift. Misaddressed to "Lillian Katyman".

Du Bois, W.E.B.: Letter to Lillian Hyman

1959 Dec. 6

Brooklyn (New York, N.Y.) - Inviting her and her husband to an open house on New Year's day from 3-6.

Du Bois, W.E.B.: Greetings: Invitation to open house for Lillian Hyman

1959

Brooklyn (New York, N.Y.) - Invitation from Shirley and W. E. B. Du Bois to an open house at their home on New Years Day.

Du Bois, W.E.B.: "Forty-Two Years of the USSR"

1959

Box 1: 7

Du Bois, W.E.B.: Pamphlet: Labor Party speech

1952

Box 1: 8

Du Bois, W.E.B.: Peace is Dangerous

1951

Box 1: 9

Du Bois, W.E.B.: Progressive Party and Peace

1952

Box 1: 10

Du Bois, W.E.B.: "Vast Miracle of China Today"

1959

Box 1: 11

Kahn, Albert: Agents of Peace

1951

Box 1: 12

Croton-on-Hudson (N.Y.) - Describing the origins of the Peace Information Center, W. E. B. Du Bois's steadfast peace activism, and the founding principles and initiatives of the Center; outlining the audacious circumstances behind his indictment; and indicating how readers can contribute to the cause in his defense, or order further copies of the pamphlet at hand. Stamped CASE WON on the next to last page.

Correspondence: Lewis, David Levering

1986

Box 1: 13

Katzman, Lillian Hyman: Collection of Du Bois materials and books

1986 Oct. 29

Aurora (Colo.) - List of books, letters, memos, and other material on W. E. B. Du Bois in Katzman's possession.

Katzman, Lillian Hyman: Letter to David Levering Lewis

1986 Oct. 30

Aurora (Colo.) - Enclosing a list of material in her possession on W. E. B. Du Bois for Lewis's biography of Du Bois; offering to xerox the letters and clippings.

Katzman, Lillian Hyman: Letter to David Levering Lewis

1986 Oct.

Aurora (Colo.) - Enclosing newspaper clippings on W. E. B. Du Bois' for Lewis's biography of him; listing other material in her possession and asking if he would like copies.

Katzman, Lillian Hyman: List of Du Bois materials sent

1986 Oct.

Aurora (Colo.) - List of xeroxed copies of clippings sent to David Levering Lewis for his biography of W. E. B. Du Bois.

Katzman, Lillian Hyman: Letter to David Levering Lewis

1986 Dec. 24

Aurora (Colo.) - Explaining that W. E. B. Du Bois' typing style was not due to him being "sloppy" but due to his "hunt and peck" method of typing and the age of his typewriters; regretting that she left Du Bois' employ; recalling fondly her time with him. In response to Lewis's biography of Du Bois.

Nelson, Truman: "W.E.B. Du Bois: Prophet in Limbo"

1958

Box 1: 14

Newspaper clippings: Du Bois, W.E.B.

1959-1964

Box 1: 15

Newspaper clippings: Du Bois, W.E.B.

1970-1976

Box 1: 16

Newspaper clippings: Du Bois, W.E.B.

1986-1989

Box 1: 17

Negative: Du Bois, W.E.B.

ca.1955

Box 1: 18

Photograph: Du Bois, W.E.B.

1953 Feb

Box 1: 20

Inscribed by Du Bois with love to Lillian.

Who's Who: W.E.B. Du Bois

1952

Box 1: 19

London (England) - Biography of W. E. B. Du Bois sent to him for review before publication in the forthcoming edition of Who's Who in America.

Administrative information

Access

The collection is open for research.

Provenance

Acquired from Lillian Hyman Katzman and Carol L. Goldstein, 2009.

Processing Information

Processed by Mary Fahey and Samantha Cardone, 2010.

Digitized content

The Katzman Papers have been digitized and are available in Credo

Related Material

For materials related to Lillian Hyman Katzman or W.E.B. Du Bois, see:

Conversation with Lillian Hyman Katzman

W.E.B. Du Bois Papers (finding aid)

W.E.B. Du Bois Papers (online)

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Subjects

African Americans--Civil rights--History

Du Bois, Shirley Graham, 1896-1977

Du Bois, W. E. B. (William Edward Burghardt), 1868-1963

Contributors

Katzman, Lillian Hyman [main entry]

Katzman, Lillian Hyman

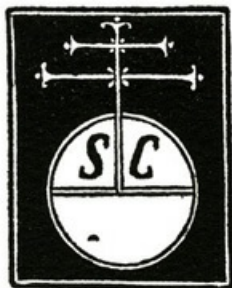
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