

10-1-2015

HIMES, CHESTER B.

MSRC Staff

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#### Recommended Citation

Staff, MSRC, "HIMES, CHESTER B." (2015). *Manuscript Division*. Paper 94.  
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CHESTER HIMES LETTERS  
Collection 48-1

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June 1980

MANUSCRIPT DIVISION

## Scope Note

The Chester Himes letters were acquired through purchase in 1966. The collection, which measures ?? linear foot, consists of letters written in 1955 and 1956. This correspondence is between Chester Himes and Walter Freeman, Associate Editor, *New American Library*, regarding Himes' novels: *The Primitive*, *The Third Generation*, and Mamie Mason.

The correspondence between Himes and Freeman detail the editing and revision of Himes' manuscripts. Mr. Himes' personal perception on character development, inferences, and plot strategy are revealed. The correspondence also deals with his concerns about publication, copyright, contracts, and the long distance relationship with his agent, since Mr. Himes lived in Paris in 1956.

### Additions

Photocopies of eight additional letters dated 1956, were donated in 1988. They include Himes' correspondence with Walter Freeman and other publishers.

## Biographical Sketch

- 1909 July 29 Born in Jefferson City, Missouri.
- 1913 Family moved to Cleveland, Ohio.
- 1926 January Graduated from high school.
- 1926 Sept. Entered Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio.
- 1928 to 1935 Served a seven and one-half prison term for armed robbery.
- 1934 First short story, published in Esquire Magazine.
- 1945 Published his first novel *If He Hollers Let Him Go*.
- 1947 Published *The Lonely Crusade*.
- 1952 Published *Cast the First Stone*.
- 1953 Sailed to France and befriended by Richard Wright.
- 1954 Published *The Third Generation*.
- 1955 Published *The-Primitive*.
- 1965 Published *Pinktoes*.
- 1966 Published *Cotton Comes to Harlem*, foreign edition
- 1968 Published *The Big Gold Dream*, foreign edition
- 1969 Published *All Shot Up*, foreign edition  
Published *Blind Man with A Pistol*
- 1970 Published *Hot Day, Hot Night*

## Series Description

**Series A:**

Box 48-1

Additions

**Correspondence**

Eleven letters between Himes and Walter Freeman, Associate Editor of the New American Library, regarding Himes' works.

eight letters between Himes and various publishers, including Walter Freeman.

Container List

<b>Series A:</b>	<b>Correspondence</b>
<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>
48-1	I Letters, 1955-1956