HIMES, CHESTER B.

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CHESTER HIMES LETTERS
Collection 48-1

Prepared and Revised by:
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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

1970        Published *Hot Day, Hot Night*
### Series Description

**Series A:** Correspondence  
Box 48-1  

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

**Additions**  

Eight letters between Himes and various publishers, including Walter Freeman.
| Series A: | Correspondence |
| Box | Folder |
| 48-1 | Letters, 1955-1956 |