



The New York Public Library
Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture,
Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division

Guide to the

Doxey A. Wilkerson papers

1926-1994 [bulk 1950s-1980s]

Sc MG 386

Summary

Creator: Wilkerson, Doxey Alphonso, 1905-1993

Title: Doxey A. Wilkerson papers

Date: 1926-1994 [bulk 1950s-1980s]

Size: 26.63 linear feet (35 boxes)

Source: Gift, Doxey A. Wilkerson and Estate, 1989 and 2000.

Revision History: Finding aid updated by Lauren Stark.

Abstract: An African American educator, Doxey A. Wilkerson made significant contributions to early childhood education and the education of secondary school teachers. The Doxey A. Wilkerson papers reflect Wilkerson's activities at the Jefferson School for Social Science and Yeshiva University; as an educational consultant; and as a board member for many Connecticut-based civic organizations.

Preferred citation: [Item], Doxey A. Wilkerson papers, Sc MG 386, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, The New York Public Library

Language of the Material: English

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Separated Materials:

Transferred to the General Research and Reference Division: printed material.

Transferred to the Photographs and Prints Division: photographs.

Related Materials:

Associated materials Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture:

Creator History

An African American educator, Doxey A. Wilkerson made significant contributions to early childhood education, especially with minority students, and the education of secondary school teachers.

Wilkerson was born in 1905, in Missouri; he earned both his Bachelor's and Master's degrees from the University of Kansas (in 1926 and 1927 respectively), and his Ph.D. from New York University in 1958 (specializing in higher education). Wilkerson was a professor of education at Howard University from 1935-1943, and he served as a research associate for the Carnegie Corporation study of the Negro in America, 1939-1940; he wrote the research memorandum, "The Negro in American Education", which was not included in the study's final publication. He served as national vice president of the American Federation of Teachers (1937-1941), using his office as a vehicle to garner support for federal aid for the education of Black Americans. Wilkerson joined the Communist Party in 1943 and served on its national committee. In 1953, he was investigated by the U.S. Senate subcommittee, chaired by Senator Joseph McCarthy. Wilkerson publicly resigned from the Party in 1957, disillusioned by revelations about Stalin. After leaving Howard University in 1943, Wilkerson became executive editor of the progressive Harlem newspaper, *The People's Voice*; in 1948, he became the Director of Curriculum with teaching responsibilities at Manhattan's Jefferson School of Social Science, known for its Marxist perspective.

In order to help to improve education for Blacks in the South, Wilkerson accepted a position as Head of the Education Division at Bishop College in Marshall, Texas. He was at Bishop for only one year, from 1959 until 1960, because he was accused by the press of being an instigator at Marshall's first peaceful sit-in demonstration and the disclosure that he was a former Communist. From 1963-1973, Wilkerson was a professor of education and chairman of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at Yeshiva University in New York. Also in the 1970s, he served on the board of the Little Red School House and the Elisabeth Irwin High School, a progressive private school in Manhattan. From 1973 until his retirement in 1984, he was a technical coordinator and vice president for MediAx Associates, an educational consulting firm in Westport, Connecticut. This company sought to further the educational growth of children through professional staff development.

Wilkerson published numerous books, book chapters, and journal articles about equality of education for African Americans and the general populace. His earlier articles also focused on Communism. In 1962, he and his wife moved to South Norwalk, Connecticut, where he served on the boards of numerous local civic organizations. Throughout his retirement, he devoted his energy to the improvement of Connecticut. Wilkerson died at age 88 in 1993.

Scope and Content Note

The Doxey A. Wilkerson papers reflect Wilkerson's activities from the 1950s through the 1980s. Documented are his careers at the Jefferson School for Social Science and Yeshiva University, educational consulting, and board memberships for many Connecticut-based civic organizations. Although he also taught at Virginia State College and Howard University from the 1920s to 1940s, there is very little information about these positions, his four years as executive editor of *The People's Voice*, or his membership in the Communist Party.

Arrangement: Papers organized into four series: I. Personal; II. Professional; III. Civic affiliations; and IV. "To Read and File"

Key Terms

Subjects

African American civic leaders
African American college teachers
African American communists
African American educators
African American intellectuals
African Americans -- Education
Authors, Black
Educational sociology
Segregation in education

Names

Wilkerson, Doxey Alphonso, 1905-1993
American Federation of Teachers
George Washington Carver Community Center (Norwalk, Conn.)
Jefferson School of Social Science (New York, N.Y.)
Little Red School House (New York, N.Y.)
Norwalk Economic Opportunity Now
Operation SPEAR (Norwalk, Conn.)
Village Creek Homeowners Association (Norwalk, Conn.)
Yeshiva University

Container List

Personal 1926-1994

The Personal series includes biographical information and copies of Wilkerson's Master's thesis and Ph.D. dissertation. Material related to his membership and association with the Communist Party includes his testimony pertaining to the Smith Act in 1952, during which he provided testimony about his own participation in the affairs and activities of the Communist Party. Other documents related to Wilkerson's Communist affiliation concern his appearance before the U.S. Senate's Jenner Committee (the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee) in 1953; his resignation from the Communist Party in 1957; and a statement presented to the House on Un-American Activities (HUAC) in 1958. There are also FBI reports on Wilkerson, obtained through the Freedom of Information Act. Of interest is a 1983 interview about Paul Robeson conducted by Martin Duberman for his biography on Robeson.

Biographical

- b. 1 f. 1 Resumes
- b. 1 f. 2 Certificates
- b. 1 f. 3 Correspondence 1945-1959
- b. 1 f. 4 Printed matter
- b. 1 f. 5 Wedding 1944

Correspondence

- b. 1 f. 6 1927-1989
- b. 1 f. 7 Wilkerson, Yolanda 1960
- b. 1 f. 8 Incoming 1943-1959

Miscellaneous

- b. 1 f. 9 1949-1991
- b. 1 f. 10 Notes and publications 1947-1959
- b. 1 f. 11 Wilkerson's trial testimony, Smith Act, Connecticut 1952
- b. 1 f. 12 McCarthy Committee and Jenner Committee 1953
- b. 1 f. 13 Resignation from Communist Party 1957
- b. 1 f. 14 House Un-American Activities Committee 1957-1958
- b. 1 f. 15 Employment opportunities correspondence 1968-1970
- b. 1 f. 16 Rubinos vs. Board of Examiners, outline of testimony of Wilkerson 1975
- Dailey, Maceo
- b. 1 f. 17 Transcript of interview 1979
- b. 1 f. 18 Letters and manuscripts with Ernest Washington 1981-1989
- b. 1 f. 19 Duberman, Martin interview transcript with Wilkerson on Paul Robeson 1983
- b. 1 f. 20 China trip 1987
- b. 1 f. 21 Disposition of Wilkerson's library 1994

Education

- b. 1 f. 22 High School science notebooks
- b. 2 f. 1-2 Academic records
- b. 2 f. 3 Report, "Approaches to Curriculum Improvement in a Small High School" 1957
- b. 2 f. 4 Term paper 1958
- b. 2 f. 5 Master's thesis, University of Kansas, "The Influence of Chronological Age Versus Mental Age of the Play Activities of Boys" 1926

Personal (cont.)
Education (cont.)

- b. 2 f. 6-9 **Ph.D. dissertation, New York University, "Some Correlates of Recent Progress toward Equalizing White and Negro Schools in Virginia" 1958**
Includes outline in folder 6.

- b. 3-4 **FBI Freedom of Information Act files**

Professional 1936-1993

The Professional series includes Wilkerson's alphabetical files; these files contain material on Councilman Benjamin J. Davis, Jr.'s reelection in 1949, Paul Robeson's struggle to secure his passport, and the attempt by Edna Winston to have the prison sentence of her husband Henry Winston (African American Communist Party leader) commuted. The Employment subseries contains Wilkerson's manuscripts and supporting documentation for the research memorandum, "Negro in American Education", 1939-1940, which he wrote for the Carnegie Corporation study, "The Negro in America". Wilkerson's years as director of curriculum at the Jefferson School of Social Science, 1948-1956, are represented by his teaching notes, study guides, and curricula for courses he taught in philosophy, psychology, and political economy. There is printed material, including course listings, and files about the closing of the school in 1956. Wilkerson's one-year stint at Bishop College in Marshall, Texas (1959-1960), is documented via a file regarding his forced resignation due to media reports that he was an instigator of student demonstrations. The Yeshiva University files, 1963-1973, focus on his involvement in designing programs for prospective elementary school teachers of socially disadvantaged children; they include a report and related information about Project Beacon and teaching material for the course "Teaching the Black Experience". Wilkerson's employment with MediAx Associates, an educational firm, is represented by files for projects such as the Boston Middle School Reading Program, Head Start Program, and various projects for Public Education Associates (PEA). Among the documents in the PEA files is Wilkerson's testimony regarding the value of Board of Examiners' teacher examinations. The Consultancies subseries, 1962-1990, contain files on the American Jewish Congress (New York City school integration project, 1962-1963); Chicago Public Schools; and Norwalk (Connecticut) Public Schools (which includes several programs involving minorities, students of differing socioeconomic statuses, and desegregation). The subseries Subject files, 1947-1987, contains printed material, correspondence, and notes. Of special interest are files pertaining to W. E. B. Du Bois which include his 1947 address, "The United Nations and Colonies"; a 1954 typescript by Du Bois, "The Passing of Alain Locke"; Wilkerson's manuscript regarding Du Bois's indictment of the Peace Information Center; and correspondence between the two men. In addition, in the folder "School for Drug Addicts", 1972, there is information about a New York City school operating independently of a school board. The subseries Writings is divided into Wilkerson's writings about communism and education. Most of his writings concern ways of improving teaching methods for Black and socioeconomic disadvantaged youth, and reporting on the changing social status of Blacks in the North. There are also writings about education by other authors. In the Professional affiliations subseries are files from Wilkerson's service on boards of national- and New York-based educational organizations. Of interest are his addresses given before the American Federation of Teachers (1937), one with an appeal for federal aid to schools in the South teaching Black children (1937-1944). Records from the Little Red School House and the Elisabeth Irwin High School in Manhattan (a progressive private school) include minutes, director's reports, and financial records. Files for the National Committee on the Education of Migrant Children reflect some of the organization's activities.

Arranged into 7 subseries: 1. A-Z file; 2. Employment; 3. Consultancies; 4. Conferences; 5. Subject files; 6. Writing; and 7. Professional affiliations.

A-Z file 1941-1993

- b. 5 f. 1 **A 1958-1990**
- b. 5 f. 2 **Alpha Phi Lambda Fraternity 1960-1974**
- b. 5 f. 3 **B 1952-1991**
- b. 5 f. 4 **Blakeley, Delois 1981**
Includes proposed plan for the Harlem Institute of Science and Technology.
- b. 5 f. 5 **C 1943-1988**
- b. 5 f. 6 **D 1958-1990**
- b. 5 f. 7 **Daniel, Walter G 1987-1988**
Includes information regarding book on Charles H. Thompson.
- b. 5 f. 8 **Davis, Benjamin J., Jr 1952-1988**

Professional (cont.)

A-Z file (cont.)

- b. 5 f. 9 Du Bois, W. E. B. and David Levering Lewis, biographer 1949-1993
- b. 5 f. 10 E 1959-1974
- b. 5 f. 11 F 1952-1961
- b. 5 f. 12 Frasoni, Pablo and Nancy 1990
- b. 5 f. 13 G 1957-1990
- b. 6 f. 1 Grain, Walter ("Jack Stone") 1958
- b. 6 f. 2 Guyana (British) 1962-1963
- b. 6 f. 3 H 1957-1991
- b. 6 f. 4 Howard University 1941-1943
- b. 6 f. 5 Hunton, Alphaeus and Dorothy ca. 1965-1988
- b. 6 f. 6 J 1954-1991
- b. 6 f. 7 K 1956-1989
- b. 6 f. 8 L 1976-1992
- b. 6 f. 9 Letters of recommendation by Wilkerson 1974-1987
- b. 6 f. 10 M 1959-1990
- b. 6 f. 11 Mc 1953-1959
- b. 6 f. 12 Mailing lists undated
- b. 6 f. 13 Museums undated
- b. 6 f. 14 N 1976-1989
- b. 6 f. 15 O 1959-1971
- b. 6 f. 16 P 1943-1991
- b. 7 f. 1 Professional organizations 1959-1960
- b. 7 f. 2 R 1957-1991
- b. 7 f. 3 Robeson, Paul 1954-1970
- b. 7 f. 4 S 1959-1992
- b. 7 f. 5 Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture 1988-1991
- b. 7 f. 6 Seidman, Ann and Robert 1988-1991
- b. 7 f. 7 Squier, George 1985
- b. 7 f. 8 T 1943-1990
- b. 7 f. 9 U 1958-1969
- b. 7 f. 10 W 1956-1991
- b. 7 f. 11 Winston, Henry and Edna 1957-1986

Employment 1940-1962

- Carnegie-Myrdal Study, "The Negro in American Education" 1940-1942
- b. 8 f. 1 Vocational education and employment opportunities
- b. 8 f. 2 Johnson, Guy B. Manuscript on Dallas youth for Atlanta Labor Conference 1942 March
- b. 8 f. 3 Surveys and polls on attitudes toward Negroes
- b. 8 f. 4 History of Negro education, U.S. Education, and organized labor
- b. 8 f. 5 Legal status of Negro education (court decisions and legislation)
- b. 8 f. 6 Colleges and universities in the North for Negroes

Professional (cont.)

Employment (cont.)

Carnegie-Myrdal Study, "The Negro in American Education" (cont.)

- b. 8 f. 7 Glazer, Nathan
- b. 9 f. 1 Field notes
- b. 9 f. 2 Community survey summaries of Northern states
- b. 9 f. 3 Manuscripts on social structure and historical development
- b. 9 f. 4 Prospectus
- b. 9 f. 5 Structural aspects of public education for Negroes in the North and South
- b. 9 f. 6 Principles of Negro education
- b. 9 f. 7 Negro education in Chicago
- b. 10 f. 1
- b. 10 f. 2 Negro education in New York City
- b. 10 f. 3 Social attitudes and teachers' information
- b. 10 f. 4 Manuscript
- b. 10 f. 5 Reports
- b. 10 f. 6 Drop-outs, grade placement, and selective elimination from school
- b. 10 f. 7 Curriculum and textbook studies
- b. 10 f. 8 Adult education
- b. 10 f. 9 Manuscript 1940
- Jefferson School of Social Science 1944-1962
- b. 10 f. 10 Wilkerson's writing
- b. 10 f. 11-12 Meeting minutes, reports, and statements 1950-1957
- b. 10 f. 13-15 Education in New China
- Courses
- b. 10 f. 16-17 Seminar on China and the Far East 1950
- b. 10 f. 18 The New China 1952
- b. 10 f. 19 Jewish history
- b. 11 f. 1-2 The Negro People in the United States Today
Includes course notes and study guide.
- b. 11 f. 3-6 Philosophy and Psychology
- b. 11 f. 7-13 Political Economy (printed matter and notes)
- b. 11 f. 14-17 The Woman Question 1952
- b. 11 f. 18 Professor Balakian's French reading
- b. 11 f. 19 Course listings 1944-1957
- b. 11 f. 20 Printed matter 1949-1955
- b. 11 f. 21-23 U.S. Department of Justice closing of school 1957-1962
Wilkerson was a trustee during this time.
- b. 11 f. 24 Proposals for an institute of Marxist studies 1957
- b. 11 f. 25 Miscellaneous
- Bishop College 1959-1961
- b. 12 f. 1 Dr. Curry's report for proposal to move 1959-1961
- b. 12 f. 2 Wilkerson's forced resignation 1960
- b. 12 f. 3 News clippings 1960

Professional (cont.)

Employment (cont.)

Bishop College (cont.)

- b. 12 f. 4 Annual report 1960
Includes discussion on Wilkerson.

- b. 12 f. 5-22 Yeshiva University

- b. 13 f. 1-26

- b. 14 f. 1-3

- b. 14 f. 4-17 Mediav Associates

- b. 15 f. 1-4

Consultancies 1961-1977

- b. 16 f. 1 American Institute for Research
- b. 16 f. 2-6 American Jewish Congress 1962-1966
- b. 16 f. 7 Chicago Public Schools 1961
- b. 16 f. 8 Children's Television Network 1975
- b. 16 f. 9 City College 1971
- b. 16 f. 10 Alex Efthim Defense Committee 1974-1977
- b. 16 f. 11-18 Norwalk Public Schools
- b. 16 f. 19-20 Williamsburg Legal Services

Conferences 1938-1980

- b. 17 f. 1 Afro-Caribbean and Black Americans Experiences: Comparative Perspectives 1971
- b. 17 f. 2 American Educational Research Association 1972
- b. 17 f. 3 Black-Jewish Relations Seminar 1969
- b. 17 f. 4 National Center for Research and Information on Equal Educational Opportunity 1972
- b. 17 f. 5 National Conference on the Problems of the Negro and Negro Youth 1939
- b. 17 f. 6 National Institute for Community Development 1980
- b. 17 f. 7 The Waste of Human Potential 1973-1974: A Year of Decision for New York City Schools 1973
- b. 17 f. 8-9 1938-1975

Subject files

- b. 18 f. 1 Black dialect and education
- b. 18 f. 2-3 Du Bois, W. E. B 1947-1959
- b. 18 f. 4 Joseph McVicker Hunt Memorial Project 1991-1992
- b. 18 f. 5 Improving public schools
- Ku Klux Klan
- b. 18 f. 6 South 1960-1962
- b. 18 f. 7 Contempt debate in court
- b. 18 f. 8 NAACP
- Race
- b. 18 f. 9-10 Affirmative action
- b. 18 f. 11 Anti-Communism and integration
- b. 18 f. 12 Southern politics
- b. 18 f. 13-14 General
- b. 18 f. 15 School for people addicted to drugs
- b. 18 f. 16 School integration

Professional (cont.)

Writing 1936-1979

- b. 19 f. 1-11 **Communism**
Includes published and unpublished material.

Education

- b. 20 f. 1-33 **Manuscripts**
b. 21 f. 1-8

Published articles

- b. 22 f. 1 **A 1937-1951**
b. 22 f. 2 **B-D 1936-1968**
b. 22 f. 3 **E 1937-1979**
b. 22 f. 4 **F-I 1942-1972**
b. 22 f. 5 **N-O 1939-ca. 1964**
b. 23 f. 1 **P 1939-1965**
b. 23 f. 2 **R-Se 1943-1966**
b. 23 f. 3 **So-St 1939-1977**
b. 23 f. 4 **T-W 1939-1971**

- b. 24 f. 1-16 **Published books**

- b. 25 f. 1-19 **Writing by others**
b. 26 f. 1-13

Professional affiliations

- b. 27 f. 1 **American Federation of Teachers 1937-1944**
b. 27 f. 2 **Children's Television Workshop**
b. 27 f. 3 **Foundation for Change**
b. 27 f. 4-13 **Little Red School House**
b. 27 f. 14-19 **National Center for Educational Research and Development**
b. 27 f. 20-22 **National Council on Assistance to Classroom Teachers**
b. 28 f. 1-3 **National Education of Intergroup Relations Officials**
b. 28 f. 4-6 **National Organization on Migrant Children**
b. 28 f. 7 **New Future Foundation**
b. 28 f. 8-12 **The Teachers Inc**

Civic affiliations

This reflects Wilkerson's commitment to education and the advancement of Blacks. He served on the board of a wide range of organizations in his home state of Connecticut, particularly Norwalk. Some of the organizations include the George Washington Carver Foundation (a community-based organization which provides programs for low income minority youth), Norwalk Economic Opportunity Now (provides assistance programs to economically disadvantaged residents of the greater Norwalk area), the Operation SPEAR, Norwalk Drug Abuse Committee, and the Village Creek Homeowners Association (a cooperative community formed in 1949 that was open to blacks and other minorities; Wilkerson resided in this community). The records of the organizations in this series consist of minutes, reports, correspondence, planning documents, and financial records.

Arranged alphabetically by organization name.

- b. 29 f. 1-21 **Arts Council of Norwalk**
b. 29 f. 23-39 **Carver Foundation**
b. 30 f. 1-34
b. 31 f. 1-3

Civic affiliations (cont.)

- b. 31 f. 4 Charter Group for a Pledge of Conscience
- b. 31 f. 5 Committee for a Mixed Army Unit
- b. 31 f. 6-11 Greater Norwalk Community Council
- b. 31 f. 12-14 Lifetime Learning Institute
- b. 31 f. 15 National Negro Congress
- b. 31 f. 16-21 Norwalk Community College
- b. 31 f. 22 Norwalk Economic Opportunity Now
- b. 32 f. 1-6
- b. 32 f. 7-8 Norwalk Planning and Zoning Commission
- b. 32 f. 9-10 Norwalk Senior Center
- b. 32 f. 11-16 Norwalk Symphony Orchestra
- b. 32 f. 17 Project Intergroup
- b. 33 f. 1-2 Senior Services Coordinating Council
- b. 33 f. 3-14 Southwestern Connecticut Agency on Aging
- b. 33 f. 15-18 Special Prevention, Education and Recovery Norwalk Drug Abuse Committee
- b. 34 f. 1-2 United Way of Norwalk
- b. 34 f. 3-12 Village Creek Homeowners' Association
- b. 35 f. 1-15 "To Read and File"

This series contains files on which Wilkerson had intended to work, and it retains his title. The material includes correspondence, reports, clippings, and other printed material.