Summary

Creator: Johnson, Oakley C., 1890-

Title: Oakley C. Johnson papers

Date: 1946-1957

Source: Gift of Oakley Johnson, 1968

Abstract: Case files from the Louisiana Civil Rights Congress including pamphlets, legal transcripts and briefs, press releases, news clippings, and correspondence which documents the legal activities of the Congress, particularly its attempt to secure justice for Paul Washington and Ocie Jugger, both sentenced to death on rape charges. Material from Johnson's hearing before the House Un-American Activities Committee, 1957; and manuscripts and materials from his research for several writing projects, including "Marxism and the Negro," "Mask of Justice," and a "Glossary of Twenty-five Historic Civil Rights Cases." Also, notes, source materials, and manuscripts of his extensive writings on civil liberties and segregation, together with material concerning a trip through the South in 1957.

Access: Advance notice required.

Conditions Governing Access: Researchers are restricted to microfilm copy.

Alternative Form Available: Collection available on microfilm; Scholarly Resources, Inc.; call number Sc Micro R-972

Preferred citation: Oakley C. Johnson papers, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, The New York Public Library

Language of the Material: English

Processing note: Processed by Stanton F. Biddle; Machine-readable finding aid created by Apex Data Services; revised by Terry Catapano.

Creator History
Chronology
1890, March 22 Born in Standish, Michigan; son of Calvin and Elizabeth Gibbon Johnson.
1908-1912 Served as rural schoolteacher and took summer courses at Ferris Institute, Big Rapids, Michigan.
1912 Joined Socialist Party of America.
1913 Married Mary Olmsted (d.1949)
1917 Received diploma and state teachers’ life certificate from Michigan State Normal College, Ypsilanti, Michigan.
1919 Delegate to Chicago Communist Party Organizing Convention.
1920 Received A.B. degree cum laude (Phi Beta Kappa) from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan.
1920-1928 Instructor in English and Rhetoric at the University of Michigan.
1921 Received M.A. degree in English from the University of Michigan.
1928 Received Ph.D. in English from University of Michigan. Subject of doctoral dissertation was Literary Allusion in Contemporary American Literature, as characterized in the field of rhetoric and aesthetics.
1928-1930 Assistant Professor of English at Long Island University, Brooklyn, New York
1930-1932 Instructor of English at the College of the City of New York (evening session), New York, New York
1933-1935 Newspaper reporter (Daily Worker), editor (The Monthly Review), teacher (New York Worker School), lecturer
1935-1937 and 1939 Traveled in Europe
1935-1936 Assistant Professor of English at the Institute of Modern Languages, Moscow, U.S.S.R.
1938-1942 Taught intermittently at the Workers Schools, New York, and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
1940-1944 Served on staff of Daily Worker
1945-1946 Taught at Augusta Savage School, New York (Harlem), New York
1946-1947 Assistant Professor of English at Talladega College, Talladega Alabama
1947-1948 Received Carnegie Grant-in-Aid for a study of “Preventive Remedial English in the Negro Secondary School.”
1947-1951 Associate Professor of English, Dillard University, New Orleans, Louisiana
1948 Married Mary Lea Jackson
1949-1951 Served as Executive Secretary of the Louisiana Civil Rights Congress
1951-1951 Received Carnegie Grant-in-Aid for a study of “Unequal Justice in Louisiana.”
1951-1952 Associate Professor of English, Tillotson College, Austin, Texas
1954-1955 Taught at Jefferson School of Social Science, New York, New York
1957, April Investigated by the House of Representative Committee on Un-American Activities for alleged communist activities

Scope and Content Note
The Oakley C. Johnson Papers, numbering eight boxes, focus on the activities and interests of this English professor and civil liberties advocate from approximately 1946 to 1957. Of special interest is the data relating to Johnson’s involvement with Louisiana Civil Rights Congress, and his manuscripts of writings on racial prejudice in the United States. The collection is organized into two series, corresponding to Johnson’s years of teaching in the South from 1946 to 1952 and his activities after
returning North in 1952.

**Arrangement:** Papers organized into two series: I Southern Period, 1946-1953; and II Post Southern Period, 1952-1959

**Key Terms**

**Subjects**
African Americans -- Civil rights
African Americans -- Political activity
African Americans -- Segregation
African Americans -- Societies, etc
Civil rights -- Louisiana
Civil rights -- United States
Criminal justice, Administration of -- United States
Segregation -- United States
Socialism -- United States
Trials (Rape) -- United States

**Occupations**
Civil rights workers

**Geographic Names**
Louisiana -- Social conditions
Southern States -- Description and travel
Southern States -- Social conditions
United States -- Politics and government -- 1953-1961
United States -- Social conditions -- 1945-

**Names**
Johnson, Oakley C., 1890-
Jugger, Ocie
Washington, Paul M., 1921-2002
Civil Rights Congress of Louisiana
United States. Congress. House. Committee on Un-American Activities
## Container List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Series</th>
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<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Southern Period 1949-1952</td>
<td>1949-1952</td>
<td>Contains material relating to Johnson's academic pursuits at Talladega College (Alabama), Dillard University (Louisiana), and Tillotson College (Texas); as well as data concerning his role as Executive Secretary of the Louisiana Civil Rights Congress from 1949 to 1951. This material (pamphlets, legal transcripts and briefs, press releases, clippings, correspondence) involves the legal activities of the Congress, particularly its attempt to secure justice for Paul Washington and Ocie Jugger, two men accused, convicted, and sentenced to die on a charge of rape.</td>
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**Talladega College 1946-1947**

- **b. 1 f. 1 r. 1** Financial Materials
- **b. 1 f. 2 r. 1** Photographs
- **b. 1 f. 3 r. 1** Student Publications And Programs

**Dillard University 1947-1951**

- **b. 1 f. 4 r. 1** Class Register
- **b. 1 f. 5 a r. 1** Correspondence
- **b. 1 f. 5 b r. 1** Correspondence - Ira De. A. Reid
- **b. 1 f. 6 r. 1** Pamphlets And Speeches
- **b. 1 f. 7 r. 1** Programs
- **b. 1 f. 8 r. 1** School Publications
- **b. 2 f. 9 r. 1** Student Publications (four folders)

**Tillotson College 1951-1952**

- **b. 2 f. 10 r. 1** Class Register
- **b. 2 f. 11 r. 1** English Department
- **b. 2 f. 12 r. 1** General
- **b. 2 f. 13 r. 1** Personal
- **b. 2 f. 14 r. 1** Student Publications
- **b. 2 f. 15 r. 1** Yearbook

**Louisiana Civil Rights Congress 1949-1951**

- **b. 3 f. 16 a r. 2** Cases
- **b. 3 f. 16 b r. 2** Cases - Roy Brooks
- **b. 3 f. 16 c r. 2** Cases - Honeycutt
- **b. 3 f. 16 d r. 2** Cases - Trenton Six, “Trials For Murder (Alleged)”
- **b. 4 f. 17 a r. 2** Cases - Jugger / Washington (4 folders)
- **b. 4 f. 17 b r. 2** Cases - Jugger / Washington (3 folders)
- **b. 4 f. 18 r. 3** Correspondence
- **b. 4 f. 19 r. 3** Correspondence - Jugger / Washington Case (4 folders)
- **b. 4 f. 20 r. 3** Miscellaneous (2 folders)
- **b. 5 f. 21 r. 3** Press Clippings
- **b. 5 f. 22 r. 3** Press Releases (4 folders)
- **b. 5 f. 23 r. 3** Progressive Party
- **b. 5 f. 24 r. 3** Young Progressive Party
Southern Period (cont.)
Carnegie Grant-In-Aid For “Study Of Unequal Justice Louisiana,” 1950-1951
b. 5 f. 25 r. 3 Corrеспondence
b. 5 f. 26 r. 3 Proposal, Outline And Study
b. 5 f. 27 r. 3 Source Materials (Clippings and Pamphlets)
General 1948-1952
b. 5 f. 28 r. 3 Federated Press Releases (Dillard Oaks)
b. 5 f. 29 r. 3 Genocide - Speech To Unitarians, Austin Texas 1952
b. 5 f. 30 r. 3 Miscellaneous
b. 5 f. 31 r. 3 Various Legal Documents

Post-Southern Period 1952-1959
The second series Post Southern Period, 1952-1959, covers Johnson's teaching, writing, and civil rights activities after he returned to New York in 1952. Notes, source materials, and manuscripts of his extensive writings on civil liberties and segregation are included in this section, together with material concerning a trip through the South in 1957.

b. 6 r. 4 Professional Interests And Activities
b. 6 f. 1 r. 3 Application Folder (Teaching)
b. 6 f. 2 r. 3 Brooklyn College 1952
b. 6 f. 3a r. 3 Civil Rights Congress - Statement Of Purpose 1954
b. 6 f. 3b r. 3 Civil Rights Congress Publications 1952-1956
b. 6 f. 4 r. 3 Clippings, Letters, Leaflets
b. 6 f. 5 r. 3 Correspondence
b. 6 f. 6 r. 3 Correspondence - Photo Evidence Of Segregation
b. 6 f. 7 r. 3 Help To A Lawyer On A Brief 1954
b. 6 f. 8 r. 3 House Un-American Activities Committee Material, (Investigation Of Hearing Regarding Oakley Johnson) 1957 -
b. 6 f. 9 r. 3 March On Washington 1959
b. 6 f. 10 r. 3 Patterson, William
b. 6 f. 11 r. 3 Petition 1954
b. 6 f. 12 r. 3 Tutoring And Special Classes

Manuscripts, Publications And Materials
b. 7 f. 13 r. 3 Book On Negroes - Various Planned Writings
b. 7 f. 14 r. 3 Caracas Letter: Six Year Retrogression Toward A Police State” (By W. L. Patterson)
b. 7 f. 15 r. 3 “Civil Rights Congress: Cases In The Courts” - Notes (3 folders)
b. 7 f. 16 r. 3 “The Decline Of Freedom In The U.S.A.”
b. 7 f. 17a r. 3 Glossary Of Twenty-Five Historic Civil Rights Cases (2 folders)
b. 7 f. 17b r. 3 Glossary - Preliminary Sketches
b. 7 f. 18 r. 3 Marxism And The Negro (Material For Book) (2 folders)
b. 8 f. 19 r. 3 “The `Mask` Of Justice” (2 folders)
b. 8 f. 20 r. 3 “The `Mask` Of Justice” - Genocide Source Material
b. 8 f. 21 r. 3 “The `Mask` Of Justice” - The Letter Of The Law
b. 8 f. 22 r. 3 Metropolitan Music School Brochure 1954
Texas Efforts To Do A Study Of Unequal Justice In That State 1952-1954?
Southern Trip 1957
General Report
Jenkins Case (3 folders)
Appendix: Comprises Additional Materials Received Into The Oakley
Johnson Papers Following The Collection's Initial Completion In August, 1968
1963
Correspondence 1966-1968
National Committee To Secure Justice For Morton Sobell 1958