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John P. Diggins Papers
1966-2008
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**Lea Jordan
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Table of Contents

Summary	iii
Related materials note	iv
Biographical note	v
Scope and content note	vi
Arrangement note	vi
Series descriptions and container list	1
I. CORRESPONDENCE, 1966-2008.....	1
II. PROJECT FILES, 1974-2008	1
III. TEACHING AND LECTURE FILES.....	1

Summary

- Main entry:** Diggins, John P.
- Title:** John P. Diggins papers, 1966-2008
- Size:** 5 linear feet (12 boxes)
- Source:** Gift of Elizabeth Harlan, April 2010
- Abstract:** John Patrick Diggins (1935-2009) was an intellectual historian, university professor, and the author of numerous publications, including *Mussolini and Fascism; the view from America* (1972), *The American Left in the Twentieth Century* (1973), *The Promise of Pragmatism: Modernism and the Crisis of Knowledge and Authority* (1994), and *Ronald Reagan: Fate, Freedom and the Making of History* (2007). His papers consist of correspondence, project files, and teaching files.
- Access:** Advance notice required. Apply at <http://www.nypl.org/mssref>.
- Preferred citation:** John P. Diggins Papers, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

Related materials note

John P. Diggins letters received, 1969-1989
Hoover Institution
Stanford University
Stanford, CA 94305-6010

Note: Letters from James Burham and Sidney Hook

Biographical note

John Patrick Diggins (1935-2009) was an intellectual historian, university professor, and the author of numerous publications, including *Mussolini and Fascism; the view from America* (1972), *The American Left in the Twentieth Century* (1973), *The Promise of Pragmatism: Modernism and the Crisis of Knowledge and Authority* (1994), and *Ronald Reagan: Fate, Freedom and the Making of History* (2007). He earned his doctorate at the University of Southern California in 1964 and went on to teach at San Francisco State College, the University of California, Irvine, and the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. In addition to his full-length historical works, Diggins also wrote articles for many publications including the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *London Review of Books*, and the *American Political Science Review* and acted as a consultant for several documentary films.

Scope and content note

The John P. Diggins papers consist of correspondence, project files, and teaching files. His correspondence contains chiefly letters from colleagues and other readers of his work, many of whom who contacted Diggins to support or refute his arguments and to share information. The correspondence also includes copies of the many “letter to the editor” that Diggins wrote in response to newspaper and magazine articles. Routine correspondence concerns the publication of his writing, his speaking engagements, and consultation work. Notable correspondents in the Diggins Papers include philosophers Will Herberg and Sidney Hook, historians Theodore Draper, Lewis Mumford, and Arthur Schlesinger Jr., sociologists Daniel Bell and David Riesman, economist John Kenneth Galbraith, Heritage Foundation official Robert Huberty, and authors Susan Sontag and Joan Didion. Letters from Sidney Hook and James Burnham are photocopies of originals given by Diggins to the Hoover Institution. Original letters by Diggins which were returned after his death are also present.

The project files, arranged by the book title to which they refer, include correspondence, book contracts, research notes, and comments from other historians. In addition to files on some of his published works, there are files on proposed projects, such as a festschrift honoring Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. and an unfinished work on Reinhold Niebuhr. Much of the material in this series consists of translations and notes on the writings of Max Weber, related to his 1998 publication of *Max Weber: Politics and the Spirit of Tragedy*. There is also correspondence and materials within the *Portable John Adams* book materials relating to Diggins' consultation work on the HBO miniseries, *John Adams*.

The teaching files contain correspondence, typed lecture notes, syllabi, examination questions, and research material used in classroom and public presentations. In some instances, essays by Diggins are included within these files. Many of the files contain full lecture scripts which provide evidence of Diggins' style of presentation as well as his perspective on a broad variety of topics. The teaching files cover most of Diggins' career. Several folders contain handouts received by Diggins as an undergraduate and graduate student. Lecture topics fall loosely into his teaching field of intellectual history but also cover such general topics in U.S. history as Puritanism, World War I, and Populism. The folder titles are Diggins' own.

Arrangement note

The John P. Diggins Papers are organized in the following series:

- I. Correspondence, 1966-2008
- II. Project files, 1974-2008
- III. Teaching and lecture files

Series descriptions and container list

I. Correspondence, 1966-2008

<u>Box</u>	<u>Fol</u>	
1	1-2	1966-1979
	3-4	1980-1989
2	1-4	1990-1999
3	1-5	2000-2008

II. Project files, 1974-2008

<u>Box</u>	<u>Fol</u>	
4	1	<i>American Exceptionalism</i> , 1996
	2	<i>The American Left in the Twentieth Century</i> , 1973
	3	<i>Eugene O'Neill's America: Desire Under Democracy</i> , 2007
	4	<i>John Adams and Machiavelli</i> , undated
	5	<i>Mussolini and Fascism: The View from America</i> , 1972
	6	Niebuhr
	7-8	<i>On Hallowed Ground: Abraham Lincoln and the Foundations of American History</i> , 2000
	5	1
2		<i>Power and Authority</i> , undated
3-4		<i>The Promise of Pragmatism: Modernism and the Crisis of Knowledge and Authority</i> , 1995
5		<i>Rise & Fall Of The American Left</i> , 1992
6		<i>Ronald Reagan: Fate, Freedom, and the Making of History</i> , 2008
6	1	<i>Ronald Reagan: Fate, Freedom, and the Making of History</i> , 2008
	2	Schlesinger, Arthur, undated
	3	<i>Thorstein Veblen</i> , 1999
	4-7	<i>Weber: Politics And The Spirit Of Tragedy</i> , 1998

III. Teaching and lecture files

<u>Box</u>	<u>Fol</u>	
7	1	Adams, Henry
	2	Adams, John
	3	Agrarian Revolt
	4	America - 40s and 50s
	5	America as a Mass Society
	6	American Mind
	7	American Revolution
	8	American Socialism
	9	Civil rights
	10-12	Cold War
	13	Communism and Fascism
	14	Conservatism and the Constitution
	15	Contextualism
	16	Cooley
	17	Coolidge
	18	Darwinism
	19	Decline of rural life
	20	Dewey, John
	21	Diplomatic history

<u>Box</u>	<u>Fol</u>		
8	1	Eisenhower administration	
	2	English Romanticism	
	3	Enlightenment	
	4	Existentialism in America	
	5	FDR as a politician	
	6	FDR and the Supreme Court	
	7	Founding Fathers	
	8	Freudianism in America	
	9	Gilded Age	
	10	Hamilton, Alexander	
	11-12	Hawthorne - City of Innocence	
	13	Holmes, Oliver Wendell	
	14	Hoover and the Depression	
	15	Hutchinson, Anne	
	16-17	Impact of Industrialism	
	18	Impact of Totalitarianism	
	19	Intellectuals and the Civil War	
	20	Jackson - Intellectual Currents	
	21	Jacksonianism	
	9	1	James, William
		2-4	Jefferson, Thomas
5		Labor and Socialism	
6		Labor and the United States	
7		Left Opposition to New Deal	
8		Liberal Social Philosophy	
9		Liberalism and Anxiety in America	
10-11		Lincoln, Abraham	
12		Lippmann	
13		Long and Coughlin	
14		Lost Generation	
15		Lovejoy, Arthur	
10		1-2	Madison, James
		3	Marxism
		4	Mind of the South
	5	Negroes in the 20s	
	6	Negro voting	
	7-9	New American Right	
	10	New Industrialism	
	11	Organization and Mass Conformity	
	12	Oyster and Pearl	
	13	Patterns of Fundamentalism	
	14	Peirce	
	15	Populism	
	16	Potsdam and the Democrats	
	17	Pragmatism	
	18	Principles of the American Constitution	
	11	1	Power and Suspicion
		2-3	Progressive Movement
		4-17	Puritanism
18		Race	
19		Radical Tuning of the Intellectuals	
20		Reds	
21		Religion and Existentialism	

<u>Box</u>	<u>Fol</u>	
11	22	Roosevelt and the First New Deal
	23	Royce
12	1	Sino-Soviet dispute
	2	Slavery
	3	Three Presidents in Search of Foreign Policy 1845-1902
	4	Thoreau
	5	Tocqueville
	6-9	Transcendentalism
	10	Trilling lecture
	11	Truman, Harry
	12-13	Twentieth Century Studies Program
	14	Utopian Thought
	15	Winthrop, John
	16	Wittgenstein
	17	World War I