

Guide to the Robert B. Stepto Papers

JWJ MSS 379



by Robert Bartels

2023

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
P. O. Box 208330
New Haven, CT 06520-8330
(203) 432-2977
beinecke.library@yale.edu
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

CALL NUMBER: JWJ MSS 379

CREATOR: Stepto, Robert B.

TITLE: Robert B. Stepto papers

DATES: 1970–2012

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 9.8 linear feet (23 boxes)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: The collection documents the professional career of Robert B. Stepto, professor of African American Studies, American Studies, and English at Yale University.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/Beinecke.stepto>

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use on site, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/Beinecke.stepto>.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Robert B. Stepto, 2022-2023.

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research.

Boxes 19-21 (student records): Restricted until 2098. For further information consult the appropriate curator.

Box 22 (administrative records): Restricted until 2058. For further information consult the appropriate curator.

Box 23 (audiovisual material): Restricted fragile. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.

Separated Materials

Some printed material authored by Robert Stepto was removed from the collection during accessioning for separate cataloging and can be accessed by searching the library's online catalog.

Biographical / Historical

Robert B. Stepto (born 1945) is a professor of African American Studies, American Studies, and English at Yale. He graduated from Trinity College in 1966 and received MA and PhD degrees in English from Stanford University. He taught at Williams College for three years before joining the faculty at Yale University in 1974. From 1978-1981 Stepto was the first director of graduate studies in the African American studies department. Stepto's primary research areas are African American autobiography, fiction, poetry and visual arts since 1840. He is the author of several books, including *From Behind the Veil: A Study of Afro-American Narrative* (1979), *Blue As the Lake: A Personal Geography* (1998), and *A Home Elsewhere: Reading African American Classics in the Age of Obama* (2010). He is currently the John M. Schiff Professor of English Emeritus.

Scope and Contents

The collection documents the professional career of Robert B. Stepto, professor of African American Studies, American Studies, and English at Yale University. Materials include research and subject files relating to Stepto's scholarly work in the fields of African American Studies and English Literature, and teaching files relating to Stepto's academic career at Williams College and Yale University. Also included are manuscript drafts and journal articles written by Stepto, as well as professional correspondence with colleagues at Yale and the wider African American studies profession. Materials include research files and correspondence with notable American Americans authors, scholars, and poets, including Toni Morrison, Michael S. Harper, Robert Hayden, and Sterling A. Brown.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged into four series: Research and subject files; Teaching and Yale files; Writings; and Correspondence.

Collection Contents

Research and subject files

Arranged alphabetically.

b. 1, f. 1	Anson Phelps Stokes institute	1985
b. 23	Audiocassette <i>1 Audiocassette</i> Audiovisual material. Restricted fragile. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.	undated
b. 1, f. 2	Bibliographies	1975–1987
b. 1, f. 3	Bloom, Harold	circa 1970s
b. 1, f. 4	Brown, Sterling	1973–1976
b. 1, f. 5	Cooke, Michael George, paper proposal	circa 1980s
b. 1, f. 6-8	Douglass, Frederick	undated
b. 1, f. 9	Du Bois, W.E.B.	1972
b. 1, f. 10	Frank Yerby Renaissance Project	circa 2000s
b. 23	Frank Yerby Renaissance Project <i>1 CD-R</i> Audiovisual material. Restricted fragile. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.	circa 2000s
b. 2, f. 1	Gilder Lehrman Center working group	2006
b. 2, f. 2	Harper, Michael	2003
b. 23	Harper, Michael, <i>Use Trouble</i> draft <i>1 CD-R</i> Audiovisual material. Restricted fragile. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.	2006 June 5
b. 2, f. 3	Harris, William	1979
b. 2, f. 4	Hayden, Robert	1976–1977
b. 2, f. 5	Hemenway, Robert	1977
b. 2, f. 6-7	Hurston, Zora Neale	circa 1970s
b. 2, f. 8	Inquiry for the Eighties: A Survey of African-American Literary Thought	1981
b. 2, f. 9	Interview with Toni Morrison transcript	1976
b. 3, f. 1	Morse Fellowship proposal	1976
b. 3, f. 2	National Endowment for the Humanities research grant	1980–1981

b. 3, f. 3	Nordic Association for American Studies	1982
b. 23	<p>Rodriguez, Richard, interview 1 Videocassette (VHS)</p> <p>Note on original case reads, "Prof. Stepto: At around H9971 the Moyers interview with Richard Rodriguez begins. I taped as much as I could. It aired during the last week in April. You may want to use the phone and address that Moyers shows at the end of his programs if you would like to order the full interview. Thank you for everything, Felice".</p> <p>Audiovisual material. Restricted fragile. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.</p>	undated
b. 3, f. 4-7	<p>Printed material</p> <p>Consists of published articles and journals, and photocopies of articles and book chapters covering topics relating to African American studies and English literature. Some contain handwritten notes and comments by Stepto.</p>	circa 1970s–2000s
b. 4, f. 1-7	<p>Printed material</p> <p>Consists of published articles and journals, and photocopies of articles and book chapters covering topics relating to African American studies and English literature. Some contain handwritten notes and comments by Stepto.</p>	circa 1970s–2000s
b. 5, f. 1-7	<p>Printed material</p> <p>Consists of published articles and journals, and photocopies of articles and book chapters covering topics relating to African American studies and English literature. Some contain handwritten notes and comments by Stepto.</p>	circa 1970s–2000s
b. 6, f. 1-5	<p>Printed material</p> <p>Consists of published articles and journals, and photocopies of articles and book chapters covering topics relating to African American studies and English literature. Some contain handwritten notes and comments by Stepto.</p>	circa 1970s–2000s
b. 7, f. 1-5	<p>Printed material</p> <p>Consists of published articles and journals, and photocopies of articles and book chapters covering topics relating to African American studies and English literature. Some contain handwritten notes and comments by Stepto.</p>	circa 1970s–2000s
b. 8, f. 1-5	<p>Printed material</p> <p>Consists of published articles and journals, and photocopies of articles and book chapters covering topics relating to African American studies and English literature. Some contain handwritten notes and comments by Stepto.</p>	circa 1970s–2000s
b. 9, f. 1-6	<p>Printed material</p> <p>Consists of published articles and journals, and photocopies of articles and book chapters covering topics relating to African American studies and English literature. Some contain handwritten notes and comments by Stepto.</p>	circa 1970s–2000s
b. 10, f. 1	Williams College	1974
b. 10, f. 2-4	Wilson, August	circa 1990s
b. 23	<p>Wilson, August, symposium 2 CD-Rs</p> <p>Audiovisual material. Restricted fragile. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.</p>	undated

b. 10, f. 5

Wright, Jay

1982-1984

Teaching and Yale files

Arranged alphabetically.

b. 11, f. 1	Admissions Committee	1993–1994
b. 11, f. 2	Black Tie Society	1983–1985
b. 11, f. 3	Brown, Sterling, lecture	1973–1974
b. 23	Brown, Sterling, lecture and poetry reading at Williams College <i>1 Audiotape Reel</i> Audiovisual material. Restricted fragile. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.	1973 October 25
b. 22	Budget report for academic year 2008-2009 Administrative record restricted until 2058.	2008
b. 11, f. 4	Curriculum vitae	1983
b. 11, f. 5	Davis, Charles T., memorial	1981
b. 11, f. 6-10	Ephemera Consists of Yale-related ephemera, mainly promototional materials for departmental events or lectures.	1960s–2010s
b. 18, f. 1	Ephemera Consists of Yale-related ephemera, mainly promototional materials for departmental events or lectures	1960s–2010s
b. 11, f. 11	Giamatti, A. Bartlett, memorial	1991
b. 11, f. 12	Haverford College seminar	1984
b. 12, f. 1	Inventing America anthology	1996
b. 23	La Casa Cultural, The Latino Cultural Center presents a Slice of Life at Yale College <i>1 CD-R</i> Audiovisual material. Restricted fragile. Reference copies may be requested. Consult Access Services for further information.	circa 2000s
b. 12, f. 2	Modern Language Association Commission on the Literatures and Languages of America	1977
b. 12, f. 3	Report of the Committee on Restructuring the Faculty of Arts and Sciences	1992
b. 19	Student files Restricted until 2098. For further information consult the appropriate curator.	circa 1980s–2010s
b. 20	Student files Restricted until 2098. For further information consult the appropriate curator.	circa 1980s–2010s
b. 21	Student files Restricted until 2098. For further information consult the appropriate curator.	circa 1980s–2010s
b. 12, f. 4	Syllabi and course overviews	1976–1982

Writings

Arranged alphabetically.

b. 13, f. 1-3	<i>African American Cultures, European Perspectives</i>	1984
b. 13, f. 4	"After Modernism, After Hibernation: Michael Harper, Robert Hayden, and Jay Wright"	1979
b. 13, f. 5	"After the 1960's: The Boom in Afro-American Fiction"	1987
b. 13, f. 6-7	<i>Alien Land</i> , foreword to 2006 edition	2006
b. 13, f. 8	<i>Chant of Saints: A Gathering of Afro-American Literature, Art, and Scholarship</i>	1978
b. 13, f. 9	<i>The Death and Life of Malcolm X</i> , review	circa 1973
b. 14, f. 1-2	<i>From Behind the Veil: Afro-American Reform Literature at the Turn of the Century</i> , PhD thesis	1973-1974
b. 14, f. 3	Harper, Michael S., writings and remarks	circa 1970s-1980s
b. 14, f. 4	<i>Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave</i> , introduction	2009
b. 14, f. 5	Publicity and book reviews	1980s
b. 14, f. 6	Remarks delivered in sessions at the American Studies Association Convention and the Modern Language Association Convention	1977
b. 14, f. 7	Report on "Ralph Ellison: The Genesis of an Artist"	1980
b. 15, f. 1-3	Reviews of books by Robert B. Stepto	1970s-2000s
b. 15, f. 4	"Sterling Brown's Return"	1973
b. 15, f. 5	"Storytelling in Early Afro-American Fiction: Frederick Douglass's <i>The Heroic Slave</i> "	1981
b. 15, f. 6	"Three Questions Concerning Richard Wright and the Afro-American Literary Tradition"	1975
b. 15, f. 7	"When de Saints go Ma'chin' Home: Sterling Brown's Blueprint for a New Negro Poetry"	1981
b. 15, f. 8-9	<i>Write Me a Tale: Storytelling in the Afro-American Narrative</i> , drafts	1982

Correspondence

Arranged alphabetically.

b. 16, f. 1	General	1973–1983
b. 16, f. 2	Baker, Houston	1980
b. 16, f. 3	Bauman, Richard	1981
b. 16, f. 4	Callahan, John	1977–1980
b. 16, f. 5	<i>Callaloo, A Journal of African Diaspora Arts and Letters</i> , publishing correspondence	1983–1987
b. 16, f. 6	Chan, David Marshall	1991
b. 16, f. 7	Colter, Cy	1976–1977
b. 16, f. 8	Davis, Charles T.	1974
b. 16, f. 9	Dixon, Melvin	1980
b. 16, f. 10	Gandhi, Natwar M.	1984
b. 16, f. 11	Heinz, Rebecca	1986
b. 16, f. 12	Huddle, Daniel	2000–2001
b. 16, f. 13	Lenz, Gunther	1982–1983
b. 16, f. 14	Morrison, Toni	1975
b. 16, f. 15	Olney, James	1980–1981
b. 16, f. 16	Rampersad, Arnold	1977–1978
b. 16, f. 17	Reed, Ishmael	1980
b. 16, f. 18	Ro, Sigmund	1981
b. 17, f. 1	Singh, Amritjit, Eduardo Gonzales, and Michael Harper	1973
b. 17, f. 2	Turner, Fred	1976–1979
b. 17, f. 3	Wolcott, Derek	1977
b. 17, f. 4	Wentworth, Richard L.	1976–1978
b. 17, f. 5	Wright, Jay	1977
b. 17, f. 6	Young, Al	1973–1980

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Subjects

African American authors
African American authors -- 20th Century
African American poets
African American poets -- 20th Century
American literature -- Study and teaching
English literature -- 20th Century
Yale University -- Faculty

Genres / Formats

Audiovisual materials