

Stanley Edgar Hyman

A Register of His Papers in the Library of Congress

**Prepared by Michael McElderry with the assistance of Scott
McLemee**



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress

Washington, D.C.

1994

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Manuscript Division, 1997**

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Latest revision: 2005-02-09

Collection Summary

Title: Papers of Stanley Edgar Hyman

Span Dates: 1932-1978

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1938-1970)

ID No.: MSS58941

Creator: Hyman, Stanley Edgar, 1919-1970

Extent: 14,000 items; 47 containers; 18.6 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

Repository: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Abstract: Correspondence, memoranda, journal, mss. of articles, book reviews, and books, research material, notes, reports, and other papers relating to Stanley Edgar Hyman's career as literary critic, book reviewer, and professor of language, literature, and the history of myth and ritual at Bennington College, Bennington, Vt. Of special interest are files pertaining to his book review column (May 1961-June 1965) published in the *New Leader* and letters written to Hyman by his wife, Shirley Jackson, and by his friend and mentor, Kenneth Burke.

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.

Names:

Hyman, Stanley Edgar, 1919-1970

Aaron, Daniel, 1912-

Adler, Renata

Arvin, Newton, 1900-1963

Barth, John

Bernstein, Walter

Bodkin, Maud

Burke, Kenneth, 1897-

Campbell, Joseph, 1904-

Cowley, Malcolm, 1898-

Creeley, Robert, 1926-

Delbanco, Nicholas

Eliot, T. S. (Thomas Stearns), 1888-1965

Ellison, Ralph

Empson, William, 1906-

Farrell, James T. (James Thomas), 1904-1979

Fergusson, Francis

Finkel, Donald

Harap, Louis

Hentoff, Nat

Jackson, Shirley, 1919-1965

Jarrell, Randall, 1914-1965

Jeltrup, Thomas

Kostelanetz, Richard

Kramer, Hilton

Lehrman, Walter D.

Lentricchia, Frank

Malamud, Bernard

Mintz, June Mirkin

Mintz, Sidney Wilfred, 1922-

Moore, Marianne, 1887-1972

Nemerov, Howard

Orenstein, Frank
Pynchon, Thomas
Raglan, FitzRoy Richard Somerset, Baron, 1885-
Richards, I. A. (Ivor Armstrong), 1893-
Scher, Louis L.
Sebeok, Thomas Albert, 1920-
Updike, John
Wasserstrom, William
Weisinger, Herbert, 1913-
Williams, Jay, 1914-
Zimmerman, Ben
Bennington College

Subjects:

New leader
African Americans--Social life and customs
American literature--African American authors
Book reviewing
Criticism
Language and languages--Study and teaching
Literature--History and criticism
Literature--Study and teaching
Myth--Study and teaching
Ritual--Study and teaching
Universities and colleges--Vermont

Occupations:

Critics
Educators

Administrative Information

Provenance:

The papers of Stanley Edgar Hyman literary critic and professor, were given to the Library of Congress by Hyman's wife, Phoebe Pettingell, in 1979. Selected items relating to Hyman's first wife, Shirley Jackson, were removed and organized as a separate addition to the Jackson Papers which are also located in the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress.

Transfers:

Audiotapes and folksong lyric sheets have been transferred to the American Folklife Center of the Library of Congress where they are identified as part of these papers. Indexes to this material, labeled appendixes A and B, have been prepared by the staff of the Folklife Center and placed at the end of this register in the Manuscript Division reading room.

Copyright Status:

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Stanley Edgar Hyman is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Preferred Citation:

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Stanley Edgar Hyman Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
1919, June 11	Born, New York, N.Y.
1940	A.B., Syracuse University, Syracuse, N.Y. Married Shirley Jackson (died 1965)
1940-1970	Staff writer, <i>New Yorker</i>
1945-1946	Faculty member, Bennington College, Bennington, Vt.
1948	Published <i>The Armed Vision</i> (New York: A. A. Knopf. 417 pp.)
1953-1970	Faculty member, Bennington College, Bennington, Vt.
1956	Published <i>The Critical Performance</i> (New York: Vintage Books. 337 pp.)
1959	Fellow, American Council of Learned Societies
1961	Published <i>Poetry and Criticism</i> (New York: Atheneum. 178 pp.)
1961-1965	Literary critic, <i>New Leader</i>
1962	Published <i>Nathanael West</i> (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. 48 pp.) Published <i>The Tangled Bank</i> (New York: Atheneum. 492 pp.)
1963	Published <i>Darwin for Today</i> (New York: Viking Press. 435 pp.) Published <i>The Promised End</i> (Cleveland: World Publishing Co. 380 pp.)
1966	Married Phoebe Pettingell Published <i>Flannery O'Connor</i> (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. 48 pp.) Published <i>Standards</i> (New York: Horizon Press. 286 pp.)
1967	National Institute of Arts and Letters award in literary criticism
1970	Visiting professor, State University of New York, Buffalo, N.Y. Published <i>Iago</i> (New York: Atheneum. 180 pp.)
1970, July 29	Died, Bennington, Vt.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Stanley Edgar Hyman (1919-1970) span the years 1932-1978, with the bulk of the material dated from 1938 to Hyman's death in 1970. An innovative and prominent literary critic, Hyman sought to redefine the criteria by which the standards of his craft were judged and, by so doing, to create a new critical sensibility. Noted for his incisive and witty style, Hyman argued persuasively for the creation of a new critical methodology with the publication of his first book, *The Armed Vision*. The [Literary File](#) contains manuscript drafts, notes, outlines, proofs, and reviews for this and many other books by Hyman, as well as for the articles and book reviews he wrote for a variety of periodicals, including the *New Leader*, the *New Masses*, the *New Republic*, and the *New Yorker*.

Although widely recognized for his achievements as a book reviewer and critic, Hyman was also a highly-respected and popular teacher at Bennington College, where for many years he taught classes in language and literature and the history of myth and ritual. The collection contains correspondence from Hyman's colleagues and students at Bennington. Notes and drafts of Hyman's classroom lectures and files documenting his contributions to faculty life at Bennington are located, respectively, in the [Literary File](#) and the [Subject File](#). While Hyman's letters to editors, publishers, scholars, and writers outline many of the ideas and theories central to his view of contemporary literary criticism, those to his family and friends suggest his brash and lively nature and reflect the personal fondness his friends and associates felt for him.

The [Family Papers](#) contain an important group of letters written to Hyman by his wife, the American short-story writer Shirley Jackson, whose most famous story, "The Lottery," is considered a classic of its genre. The letters, begun while Jackson was a classmate of Hyman's at Syracuse University and continued through the early years of their marriage, portray the growing interdependence of the couple and suggest the degree to which they influenced each other's work. A complementary set of letters written to Jackson from Hyman during the same time period, 1938-1942, is available in the [Shirley Jackson Papers](#) which are also located in the Manuscript Division. Read together, these letters reflect the dynamic chemistry that combined to produce one of the more unconventional marriages in American letters.

While still a student at Syracuse University, Hyman was introduced to the critic and philosopher, Kenneth Burke, who became Hyman's mentor and lifelong friend. A collection of letters written by Burke to Hyman over a thirty-year period forms the single largest and most significant file in the [Correspondence](#) series. The letters chart the intellectual give and take of their relationship, as Burke explores the world of books and ideas, examining and criticizing selected examples of Hyman's writings, while defending his own speculations on the nature of literature and scholarly criticism. In addition to the letters he sent, Burke also forwarded occasional copies of drafts and working notes to Hyman for his review, providing the researcher with original sources of Burke's writings.

At Burke's recommendation, Hyman first accepted a position at Bennington College in 1945. In addition to related material in the [Subject File](#), the [Correspondence](#) series contains letters addressed to Hyman from fellow instructors and colleagues at Bennington, including those of writer Bernard Malamud and poet Howard Nemerov. The latter was a close friend of Hyman's, and although his letters are of a personal nature, typescript copies of his poetry are also included in his file. Of equal importance is the correspondence file of Ralph Ellison. Although many of Ellison's letters highlight personal and social topics, many more contain references to his own writings and critical responses to Hyman's essays on African-American literature and culture. Other scholars and writers whose correspondence is worthy of note include: journalists Renata Adler, Nat Hentoff, Richard Kostelanetz, and Hilton Kramer; literary critics Newton Arvin, Maud Bodkin, Malcolm Cowley, William Empson, Francis Fergusson, Frank Lentricchia, I. A. Richards, and Herbert Weisinger; novelists John Barth, Nicholas Delbanco, James T. Farrell, Thomas Pynchon, and John Updike; poets Robert Creeley, T. S. Eliot, Donald Finkel, Randall Jarrell, and Marianne Moore; and scholars Daniel Aaron, Joseph Campbell, FitzRoy Richard Somerset (Baron Raglan), Thomas A. Sebeok, and William Wasserstrom. Personal friends and associates who corresponded with Hyman and whose files also contain material of research value include Walter Bernstein, Louis Harap, Thomas Jelstrup, Walter Lehrman, Sidney and June Mirkin Mintz, Frank E. Orenstein, Louis L. Scher, Jay Williams, and Ben Zimmerman.

From May 1961 to June 1965, Hyman wrote what many critics considered to be among the best regularly published bookreview columns of the period. Despite their brevity and the constraints of publishing a biweekly review, Hyman's columns in the *New Leader* were characterized by their seriousness of purpose and condensed but graceful prose. The [Literary File](#) contains manuscript drafts, notes, and outlines used for these reviews, many of which were collected in Hyman's book, *Standards*, as well as for many of the other articles and essays he wrote. In addition to being a disciplined and dedicated reader, Hyman was also a methodical collector and organizer. These characteristics are most evident in a series of reference notes which he maintained throughout his life as a convenient fact file for use while drafting articles, lectures, and reviews. These reference notes are also located in the [Literary File](#).

Organization of the Papers

The collection is arranged in six series:

- [Journal, 1942](#)
- [Family Papers, 1932-1973, n.d.](#)
- [Correspondence, 1933-1970, n.d.](#)
- [Literary File, 1932-1978, n.d.](#)

- Subject File, 1940-1970, n.d.
- Miscellany, 1935-1973, n.d.

Description of Series

Container

Series

BOX 1

Journal, 1942

Daybook entries kept by Hyman as a journal recounting his daily activities.
Arranged chronologically.

BOX 1-2

Family Papers, 1932-1973, n.d.

Letters received, notes, postcards, telegrams, and miscellaneous items and enclosures.
Organized alphabetically by family member and arranged chronologically therein.

BOX 3-18

Correspondence, 1933-1970, n.d.

Letters received, postcards, telegrams, and miscellaneous items and enclosures.
Organized alphabetically by correspondent and arranged chronologically therein.

BOX 18-42

Literary File, 1932-1978, n.d.

Correspondence, manuscript drafts, research materials, notes, proofs, outlines, royalty statements, printed matter, and miscellaneous items relating to Hyman's published and unpublished articles, books, lectures, reference notes, and reviews.
Organized by type of material and arranged alphabetically by author, subject, or title therein.
Publication dates of books are given in parentheses.

BOX 43-45

Subject File, 1940-1970, n.d.

Correspondence, memoranda, reports, minutes of meetings, notes, drafts, financial papers, printed matter, and miscellaneous items and enclosures.
Organized alphabetically by subject or type of material and arranged chronologically therein.

BOX 45-47

Miscellany, 1935-1973, n.d.

Correspondence, drawings and illustrations, notes, cards, photographs, printed matter, and miscellaneous items.
Organized alphabetically by type of material.

Container List

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 1	Journal, 1942 Daybook entries kept by Hyman as a journal recounting his daily activities. Arranged chronologically.
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BOX 1-2	Family Papers, 1932-1973, n.d. Letters received, notes, postcards, telegrams, and miscellaneous items and enclosures. Organized alphabetically by family member and arranged chronologically therein.
BOX 1	Hyman, Arthur M. (brother), 1967-1970, n.d. Hyman, Barry (son) Correspondence, 1952-1969, n.d. Miscellany, 1950, 1967-1969, n.d. Hyman, Harry Z. and Anna (uncle and aunt), 1958, 1968-1969, n.d. Hyman, Joanne (daughter) Correspondence, 1950-1966, n.d. Miscellany, n.d. Hyman, Laurence (son) and Corinne Correspondence, 1944-1970, n.d. (2 folders) Hyman v. Weidlich, 1950-1954 Miscellany, n.d. Hyman, Moe and Lulu (father and mother) Correspondence, 1932, 1947-1961, n.d. Miscellany, 1959-1962
BOX 2	Jackson, Leslie H. and Geraldine B. (father- and mother-in-law), 1968-1970, n.d. Jackson, Shirley (wife), letters to Stanley Hyman, June 1938-Feb. 1942, 1951, n.d. (3 folders) Other family members, 1966-1973, n.d. Stewart, Sarah Hyman (daughter) Correspondence 1950-1951, 1958-1970 Undated (3 folders) Miscellany, n.d. Notes, n.d.
BOX 3-18	Correspondence, 1933-1970, n.d. Letters received, postcards, telegrams, and miscellaneous items and enclosures. Organized alphabetically by correspondent and arranged chronologically therein.
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Correspondence, 1933-1970, n.d.

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American Folklore Society, 1948-1964, n.d.
American Scholar, 1947, 1956-1964
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Antioch Review, 1942-1961
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Arnold, Leslie, 1942-1948
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Arvin, Newton, 1952, 1962
Atheneum, 1959-1969, n.d.
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Avon Books, 1963-1966
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Barber, Joseph, 1952-1969
Barth, John, 1965, 1970
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Beigel, Uli, 1955-1959, n.d.
Bentley, Eric, 1945-1946, 1957, 1968, n.d.
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BOX 4 Bernstein, Walter and Marva, 1934-1958, n.d.
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Black, Susan, 1962-1966
Blake, Richard and Frances, 1942-1946, n.d.
Blinken, M. H., 1943-1944
Block, Arthur L., 1935-1936
Blocker, Joel, 1961-1965, n.d.
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Bodkin, Maud, 1958-1961, 1967
Bollingen Foundation, 1958-1959
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Correspondence, 1933-1970, n.d.

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	Burke, Libby and Butchie, 1951-1952, n.d.
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	Butler Hall, 1958-1959
	“B” miscellany, 1933-1969, n.d.
	Cambridge School of Weston, Weston, Mass., 1961-1963
	Cambridge University Press, 1966-1967
	Campbell, Joseph, 1950-1952, 1959
	<i>Carleton Miscellany</i> , 1960-1968
	Carpenter, Edmund S., 1953-1960
	Carr, Arthur, 1942-1948, 1968, n.d.
	Carter, Ellen, n.d.
	Chapman, Ted and Charlotte, 1946-1948, n.d.
	Chase, Linda, 1962-1968, n.d.
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	Cohen, Philip and Ruth, 1934-1944
	College Center of the Finger Lakes, Corning, N.Y., 1967-1968
	<i>College English</i> , 1958
	<i>Collier's Encyclopedia</i> , 1970
BOX 6	Columbia University, New York, N.Y., 1953-1970, n.d.
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	<i>Commentary</i> , 1949-1969
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	Cook, Reginald L., 1962-1963
	Cook, Thomas and Joan, n.d.
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	Creeley, Robert, 1959-1960
	Criterion Books, 1955-1957, 1966
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	<i>Daedalus</i> , 1959-1964
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	Derleth, August, 1943
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Container

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Fishwick, Marshall, 1954-1958
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Fredericks, Claude, 1962-1968, n.d.
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George Macy Companies, 1968-1970
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Gibbons, Robert, 1966
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Correspondence, 1933-1970, n.d.

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Correspondence, 1933-1970, n.d.

Container

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- Mason, Winifred, 1945-1947, n.d.
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McVitty, Albert, Jr., 1949-1950, n.d.
Mercier, Vivian, 1947-1967
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Merman, Lois Wisner, 1944-1948, n.d.
Michigan State College Press, 1950-1953
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Midcentury Authors, 1965-1966
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Mintz, Sidney and June Mirkin, 1938-1969, n.d.
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Correspondence, 1933-1970, n.d.

Container

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Perspectives USA, 1952-1953
Pettingell, Nancy, 1966-1968, n.d.
Pettit, Margaret, 1957-1966, n.d.
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Phillips, Robert S., 1961-1968
Plagemann, William, 1950-1952
Pocket Books, 1943-1944
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Posner, Richard, 1940-1953, n.d.
Princeton University Press, 1955-1961
Pynchon, Thomas, 1965
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Robinson, Leonard Wallace, n.d.
Rockefeller Foundation, 1967-1969
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	Sacks, Moses, 1934-1938, n.d.
	Salzburg Seminar in American Studies, 1951-1957
	<i>Saturday Evening Post</i> , 1947, 1958-1965
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	Saws, Mary Ellen, n.d.
	Sayre, Nora, 1966, n.d.
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	Schneider, Isidor, 1942-1953, n.d.
	Schroeder, Harry, 1962-1963
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	Seaver, Edwin, 1943-1945
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	Shiple, Clarke, 1968-1969
	Siegel, Florence, 1961, n.d.
BOX 16	Simon and Schuster, 1945-1955, 1964, n.d.
	Smith, Grover, 1950-1951
	Smith, Barbara H., 1966-1969, n.d.
	South Atlantic Modern Language Association, 1970
	<i>Southern Folklore Quarterly</i> , 1949-1956
	Spectorsky, A. C., 1957-1958
	Speirs, John and Ruth, 1950-1970
	Spraker, Nancy Gene, 1955-1958, 1965-1966, n.d.
	Sprogell, Lyn, 1964-1968, n.d.
	Stallman, Robert, 1947-1950
	State University of New York at Buffalo, N.Y., 1968-1970
	Steegmuller, Francis, 1949-1957, n.d.
	Stodolsky, Sholom and Nina
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	Strauss, Robert M., 1936-1940
	Street, James, 1942-1943
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	"S" miscellany, 1936-1970, n.d.
	Tamiment Institute, New York, N.Y., 1958-1959
	Taylor, Alexander, 1944-1946
	Taylor, Julie, 1941-1945, n.d.
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	Tyler, Parker, 1951, n.d.
	"T" miscellany, 1938-1970, n.d.
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	Updike, John, 1961, n.d.
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	Van Ghent, Dorothy, 1961, n.d.
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	W. W. Norton & Co., 1962-1970
	Wallace, Connie, n.d.
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	Wasserstrom, William, 1959-1963
	Wayne State University, Detroit, Mich., 1957-1964
	Weisinger, Herbert
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	White, Leslie A., 1958, 1968
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"Aaron to Zwingli," n.d.
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"Afterword" and "Glossary" concerning *A Clockwork Orange* by Anthony Burgess (New York: W. W. Norton, 1963, c1962.), *New Leader*, Jan. 1963
"The American Folksy," 1949

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"American Negro Literature and the Folk Tradition," n.d.
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"A Critical Look at Psychology," n.d.
"A Darwinian Sidelight: The Shape of a Young Man's Nose," n.d.
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	"Freud and Boas as Secular Rabbis," 1954, 1963, n.d.
	"A Garland for John Skelton," n.d.
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	"Images of the Child," n.d.
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	"In Defense of Pornography," n.d.
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	"Intellect, Personality, and Other Measurements," 1955
	Introduction to <i>The Golden Bough</i> by James George Frazer, 1969-1970
	Introduction to <i>The Magic of Shirley Jackson</i> , edited by Hyman (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1966), n.d.
	Introduction to <i>Riverside Poetry</i> , selected by Horace Gregory, Josephine Miles, and Howard Nemerov (New York: Twayne Publishers, n.d.), 1960, n.d.
	"James Gould Cozzens and the Art of the Possible," 1949
	"Jessie Weston and the Forest of Broceliande," n.d.
	"A Jewish Identity," n.d.
	"Jungle Booking," n.d.
	"The Language of Scottish Poetry," 1954
	"The Last Days of the Machine Age," n.d.
	Letters to the editor, 1941, 1953, 1958, n.d.
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BOX 21	<i>Murray-Go-Round</i> pieces, n.d.
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	<i>New Masses</i> pieces, 1941, n.d.
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BOX 25	"The Tragic Vision," 1958, n.d. "The Transatlantic Blues," n.d. "The Well of Togetherness," n.d. "William Troy's Work as a Model for Literary Criticism," n.d. "Words and Sensibilities," n.d.

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"Pocket Book of Modern American Humor" (unpublished), n.d.

The Armed Vision (1948)

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Notes and outlines, n.d.

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Perspectives by Incongruity/Terms for Order, by Kenneth Burke (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, [1964]), edited by Hyman, drafts and notes, 1963, n.d.

Poetry and Criticism (1961), draft, n.d.

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BOX 33	High school papers, 1933-1935, n.d. Humor, n.d. Journalism, 1932-1936 (2 folders) Miscellany, n.d. Poetry, 1938, n.d. Reference notes, ca. 1940-1970 African literature American critics American humorists American literature Anthologies Anthropology Arthurian romance Auden, W. H. Babel, Isaac Baldwin, James Barker, A. L. Barnes, Djuna Barth, John Baseball Bellow, Saul

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Auden, W. H., *The Dyer's Hand*
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Wedding

Correspondence, 1966-1967
Marriage certificate, 28 Dec. 1966
Miscellany, 1966
Wedding announcement, 13 Aug. 1940
Writings of others, n.d.