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University Place Book Shop records 4079884

This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on January 13, 2025.

Description is written in: English.

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Butler Library, 6th Floor
Columbia University, Mail Code 1127
535 W. 114th St.
New York, NY 10027

Business Number: (212) 854-5153

Fax Number: (212) 854-1365

rbml@libraries.cul.columbia.edu

URL: <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/indiv/rbml/index.html>

Table of Contents

Summary Information	3
Biographical / Historical	3
Summary	5
Arrangement	5
Administrative Information	5
Related Materials	7
Controlled Access Headings	7
Collection Inventory	8
Series I: Book Trade	8
Series II: Chess	9

Summary Information

Repository:	Rare Book and Manuscript Library
Creator:	Goldwater, Walter
Title:	University Place Book Shop records
ID:	4079884
ID:	MS#1277
Date [inclusive]:	1930-1994
Physical Description:	3 linear feet 6 boxes
Language of the Material:	English .
Abstract:	This collection consists of correspondence, business records, and appraisal drafts relating to the University Place Book Shop and its owner and proprietor, Walter Goldwater. The collection also includes material pertaining to Goldwater's involvement in the Marshall Chess Club.

Preferred Citation

Identification of specific item; Date (if known); University Place Book Shop records; Box and Folder; Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University Library.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Biographical / Historical

Walter Goldwater first opened the University Place Book Shop in 1932. He financed the Shop, situated in a loft at 821 Broadway at 12th Street, with the help of a six hundred dollar loan from "a Communist uncle by marriage." Goldwater specialized in African and African American literature, as well as old and rare books. As proprietor of University Place, Goldwater became part of the vibrant community of booksellers whose shops crowded Fourth Avenue from 9th to 14th Streets.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Biographical / Historical

Walter Goldwater was a founding member of Antiquarian Booksellers Association of America and spent much of his time in search of rare books. He married another bookseller, Eleanor Lowenstein, who specialized in rare cookbooks at her Corner Book Shop. Together, the Goldwaters traveled extensively in Europe, looking for stock for their respective shops. Walter Goldwater also maintained a web of contacts throughout Africa and the Caribbean who would send him books not readily accessible in the United States.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Biographical / Historical

Initially catering to a specialized, left-wing audience, Goldwater's sales expanded during the later 1960s and 1970s as research universities developed their Black and Afro American Studies holdings. The University Place Book Shop became a key source of material on African, African American, and Caribbean literature for institutions including Yale and Columbia. Walter Goldwater also helped to broker the sale of many manuscripts and collections relating to labor and Left to NYU's Tamiment Library.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Biographical / Historical

Along with African and Caribbean literature, the University Place Book Shop also offered literature on chess due to Goldwater's personal devotion to the game. At the time of his death, in 1985, Goldwater was the president of the Marshall Chess Club in Greenwich Village. He also helped to organize and promote chess tournaments in Harlem during the 1970s.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Biographical / Historical

Goldwater willed University Place to a friend and employee, William French, who ran the Shop until 1988.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Summary

This collection consists of correspondence, invoices, appraisals, and other business records of the University Place Book Shop and proprietor Walter Goldwater. Also included are correspondence and photographs relating to Goldwater's participation in the chess community and the Marshall Chess Club in New York City.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Arrangement

This collection is arranged in two series.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Revision Description

xml document instance created by Carrie Hintz EAD was imported spring 2019 as part of the ArchivesSpace Phase II migration. 2011-04-01 2019-05-20

Restrictions on Access

This collection is located off-site. You will need to request this material at least three business days in advance to use the collection in the Rare Book and Manuscript Library reading room.

Restrictions on Access

This collection has no restrictions.

Terms Governing Use and Reproduction

Reproductions may be made for research purposes. The RBML maintains ownership of the physical material only. Copyright remains with the creator and his/her heirs. The responsibility to secure copyright permission rests with the patron.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Records, 1930-1994: Source of acquisition--French, William. Method of acquisition--Gift; Date of acquisition--01/05/1996. Accession number--M-96-01-05.

Ownership and Custodial History

Gift of William French, 1996.

Processing Information

Records, 1930-1994 Processed HR 02/26/1996.

Processing Information

This collection processed by Eve Mayer, Pratt Institute 2011.

Processing Information

This finding aid written by Eve Mayer, Pratt Institute, 2011 March 2011.

Accruals

Materials may have been added to the collection since this finding aid was prepared.
Contact rbml@columbia.edu for more information.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Related Materials

Selected Related Material-- Other Repositories

[James T. Farrell Papers, ca. 1960-1964](#). University of Delaware, Special Collections Department.

Selected Related Material-- Other Repositories

[Max Shachtman Papers, TAM 103 \(R-7203\)](#), New York University Tamiment Library & Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives.

Selected Related Material-- Other Repositories

[University Place Book Shop Papers, 1968-1988](#). University of Delaware, Special Collections Departments, MS 207.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Controlled Access Headings

- American literature -- African American authors
- Antiquarian booksellers
- Blacks -- History
- Bookstores -- New York (State) -- New York
- Booksellers and bookselling
- Chess
- Chess clubs
- Out-of-print books
- Radicalism -- United States
- Rare books
- Africa -- Politics and government
- Photographs

- Financial records
- Manuscripts (documents)
- Notes (documents)
- Authors
- Businessmen
- Chess players
- Goldwater, Walter
- Shachtman, Max, 1903-1972
- Antiquarian Booksellers Association of America
- Marshall Chess Club

Collection Inventory

Series I: Book Trade, 1930-1994

Scope and Contents

This series consists of four boxes of material relating to the operation of the University Place Book Shop. The majority of the material is correspondence to and from the Book Shop's proprietor, Walter Goldwater. Although nearly all of the correspondence relates to the book trade or the shop, some of it is also personal in nature, documenting Goldwater's personal friendships, rivalries, and partnerships. Correspondence with university departments and libraries during the 1960s and 1970s documents the growing interest in African and African diaspora literature in that period. Also included is a small amount of material relating to Goldwater's professional activities as an appraiser and seller of rare books and manuscript collections, including the papers of Trotskyist leader Max Shachtman.

Title/Description	Instances	
Undated <u>Physical Description:</u> (2 Folders)	box 1	folder 1 to 2
1930-1959	box 1	folder 3
1960-1969	box 1	folder 4
1970	box 1	folder 5
1971	box 1	folder 6
1972	box 1	folder 7
1973 <u>Physical Description:</u> (5 Folders)	box 1	folder 8 to 12
1974	box 1	folder 13
1974 <u>Physical Description:</u> (6 Folders)	box 2	folder 1 to 6
1975	box 2	folder 7 to 12

<u>Physical Description:</u> (6 Folders)		
1976 <u>Physical Description:</u> (2 Folders)	box 2	folder 13 to 14
1976 <u>Physical Description:</u> (2 Folders)	box 3	folder 1 to 2
Max Shachtman, 1976-1979 <u>Physical Description:</u> (4 Folders)	box 3	folder 3 to 6
1977 <u>Physical Description:</u> (3 Folders)	box 3	folder 7 to 9
1978 <u>Physical Description:</u> (4 Folders)	box 3	folder 10 to 13
1979	box 3	folder 14
1979 <u>Physical Description:</u> (3 Folders)	box 4	folder 1 to 3
1980 <u>Physical Description:</u> (5 Folders)	box 4	folder 4 to 8
1981 <u>Physical Description:</u> (2 Folders)	box 4	folder 9 to 10
1982	box 4	folder 11
1983 <u>Physical Description:</u> (2 Folders)	box 4	folder 12 to 13
1984	box 4	folder 14
1985-1994	box 4	folder 15

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series II: Chess, 1941-1990

Scope and Contents

The materials in this two-box series document Walter Goldwater's interest and involvement in the game of chess. Some of the material related to Goldwater's membership in the Marshall Chess Club. Other materials include records and photographs of the Harlem Chess Tournament he helped to organize, and correspondence from Book Shop customers interested in books on chess and other board games.

Title/Description	Instances	
Undated	box 5	folder 1
Score sheets, undated	box 5	folder 2 to 3

Physical Description: (2 Folders)

Score sheets, 1941-1953	box 5	folder 4 to 7
<u>Physical Description:</u> (4 Folders)		
1958-1973	box 5	folder 8
1974	box 5	folder 9
1975	box 5	folder 10 to 12
<u>Physical Description:</u> (3 Folders)		
1976	box 5	folder 13 to 15
<u>Physical Description:</u> (3 Folders)		
Photographs, 1976-1978	box 6	folder 1
1977	box 6	folder 2 to 5
<u>Physical Description:</u> (4 Folders)		
1978	box 6	folder 6 to 9
<u>Physical Description:</u> (4 Folders)		
1979	box 6	folder 10
1980	box 6	folder 11
1981	box 6	folder 12
1982-1990	box 6	folder 13

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)