Inventory of the
Walter Earl Douglas Papers, 1963-1979
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Descriptive Summary

Title: Walter Earl Douglas Papers

Dates: 1963-1979

Creator: Douglas, Walter Earl, 1923-1979

Abstract: Walter Earl Douglas (1923-1979), an African-American newspaper journalist and writer. A staunch conservative Republican, Douglas wrote columns under the byline of "The Earl of Charleston" and "W. Earl Douglas." His columns were featured in South Carolina newspapers including the "Charleston Chronicle," "The Charleston Evening Post" and "Black News" (Columbia), in addition to nationally syndicated papers including the "Union Leader" (Manchester, New Hampshire). Douglas' writings incorporate his position on political conservatism, African-American culture, socioeconomics, United States government and politics, international politics, among numerous other topics. The collection documents Douglas' extensive writings through essays, editorials, newspaper clippings of his editorials; transcripts of his speeches and television show, "Earl's Byline," and personal writings of short stories and poems from 1963 to 1979, with the majority ranging from 1976-1979. Correspondence includes letters from elected government officials (President Jimmy Carter, Senators Strom Thurmond, Jesse Helms, Ernest F. Hollings, and South Carolina Governor James B. Edwards) and newspaper editors, William Loeb, III and Thomas R. Waring.

Call Number: AMN 1127

Repository: Avery Research Center at the College of Charleston

Language of Material: Material in English

Extent: 3.6 Linear feet
(9 boxes)

Biographical Note

Walter Earl Douglas was born on August 13, 1923 in Chicago, Illinois. His early youth was spent on a family farm in Washington state. Douglas later relocated to New York City where he met his future wife, Charleston native, Rosslee Tenetha Green. The couple married in 1952 and raised two children, Lynne Victoria and Sherman Elliott. In
1969, the Douglas' moved to Mt. Pleasant, a neighboring town near Charleston, South Carolina.

A prolific writer, Douglas wrote editorials for the "Charleston Chronicle," in which he was managing editor in the early 1970s, "The Charleston Evening Post," and the "Black News (Columbia, South Carolina). During the years of 1976-1979, Douglas wrote for the "Manchester Union-Leader," under the editorial helm of William "Bill" Loeb, III. Loeb promoted extensively for the syndication of Douglas' politically conservative column to extend his readership across the United States.

Douglas authored and self published "The Freedom Factor" newsletter, in addition to numerous booklets regarding his stance on political conservatism, liberal African-Americans, socioeconomics, international and South African politics. He hosted "Earl's Byline" a television talk show broadcasted on WCBD-TV in Charleston, SC in the mid-1970s.

Befriended by South Carolina Governor James B. Edwards, Douglas was appointed as a Commissioner for the state's Consumer Commission in 1977. He was also a board member of the Charleston County Economic Opportunity Commission. On a national level, Douglas participated in the White House Conference on Balance National Growth and Economic Development under President Jimmy Carter's administration in 1978.

On June 5, 1979, at the height of his writing career, Walter Earl Douglas succumbed to complications from Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis at the age of fifty-six.

Collection Overview

This collection includes the writings, publications, correspondence, transcripts and research materials documenting and supporting the opinions and ideological interests of Walter Earl Douglas.

1. Biographical Information includes resumes, brief sketches, and several handwritten legal pads documenting Douglas' last days of life.

2. Writings contains numerous handwritten and typed drafts of manuscript essays by Douglas written in preparation for his syndicated newspaper columns. The essays are organized by topics and are divided in subseries. The essays relate to African-American social issues; societal ills in Harlem, New York; African-Americans living in South Carolina, many with a focus on Charlestonians during the 1970s; African-Americans in politics and government in South Carolina and the United States; general topic essays examining national and international issues including Blacks in South Africa; United
3. Publications contain Douglas' published articles (final typed manuscripts and photocopied newspaper clippings) in local and nationally syndicated newspapers. Subseries includes newspaper columns and editorials: "The Earl of Charleston," written for "The Chronicle," a Charleston, South Carolina periodical; the "W. Earl Douglas" column, a syndicated editorial published in the "Manchester (New Hampshire) Union Leader," "The Daily Advance" (Lynchburg, Virginia) and the "Charleston Evening Post" (South Carolina). Also included are Douglas' self published newsletter, "The Freedom Factor," and booklets/pamphlets regarding political and socioeconomic issues. Several booklets were published posthumously by his wife, Rosslee Green Douglas.

4. Speeches and Media Programming Transcripts contain Douglas' typed and handwritten speeches given at various South Carolina civic organizations. Of note is a transcript Douglas' talk delivered at the Republican Party State Convention in Columbia, South Carolina (1978). Also included are transcripts from Douglas' local television program, "Earl's Byline" broadcasted on WCBD-TV in Charleston, South Carolina. Transcripts include topics on African-American culture and race identity; Apartheid in South Africa; labor and unions; politics and government.

5. Personal Writings comprises Douglas' biographical drafts; draft essays on his fictional characters, "Willie and the Professor;" various themed short stories, poems and plays.

6. Correspondence includes letters mostly written to Douglas by newspaper publishers, political figures, and readers of his editorials and writings. A significant portion of letters are written by William "Bill" Loeb, III, the president and publisher of the Manchester (New Hampshire) Union Leader (1977-1979). Loeb writes of expanding Douglas' readership by promoting his work to nationally syndicated newspapers. He also expresses concern over Douglas' diagnosis of Peroneal Nerve Palsy which resulted in his declining health and ultimate death. The subseries also holds letters from United States Senators Strom Thurmond, Jesse Helms and Ernest F. Hollings, and Governor James B. Edwards. Letters sent by Douglas includes replies to his editorial readers and to Thomas R. Waring, editor of the "Charleston Evening Post."

8. Research Materials comprises reports, journal essays, newspapers and magazines articles written by others, and assembled by Douglas as reference sources for his writings.

Collection Arrangement

1. Biographical Information, 1961-1979


5. Personal Writings, 1964-1970, and undated

6. Correspondence, 1972-1979, and undated

7. Civic and Political Involvement, 1976-1979


Subject Headings

- Carter, Jimmy, 1924-
- Douglas, Rosslee Tenetha Green, 1928-2011
- Edwards, James B., 1927-
- Helms, Jesse, 1921-2008
- Hollings, Ernest F., 1922-
- Thurmond, Strom, 1902-2003
- Waring, Thomas R., 1907-1993
- Affirmative Action--United States--20th century
- African American journalists -- South Carolina -- Charleston.
- African American newspapers.
- African Americans -- Race relations.
- African Americans -- South Carolina -- Social conditions -- 20th century.
- Apartheid -- South Africa.
- Conservatism--United States--20th century
• Discrimination in employment--United States.
• International politics--20th century
• Manchester (New Hampshire) Union Leader--Newspaper--United States
• Newspaper editors--United States--20th century
• Republican party--United States--20th century
• Socio-economic status--United States--20th century
• South Africa--Politics and government--20th century
• United States--Politics and Government--20th century

Administrative Information

ACCESS RESTRICTIONS

No restrictions.

PROCESSING INFORMATION

Processed by Georgette Mayo, 2013

Encoded by Aaron Spelbring, November 2013

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Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Septima P. Clark Papers, Avery Research Center, College of Charleston, Charleston, SC, USA.
Detailed Description of the Collection


Box 1  Folder 1
Resumes and biographical sketches, 1961-1976, undated

Box 1  Folder 2
Handwritten notes of Douglas' last days, May -June, 1979


Typed and handwritten essay drafts by Douglas for his syndicated newspapers columns, "The W. Earl Douglas Column." Essays are organized alphabetically by topic.


Drafts of essays and newspaper editorials specifically address African American topics and issues. Topics are arranged alphabetically.

Box 1  Folder 3
Agricultural laborers/Farm labor, undated

Box 1  Folder 4
Businesses, undated

Box 1  Folder 5
Conflicts of generations, undated

Box 1  Folder 6
Conservatism, undated

Box 1  Folder 7
Crime and race, undated

Box 1  Folder 8
Culture, 1979, undated

Box 1  Folder 9
Drug abuse, undated

Box 1  Folder 10
Economics, undated

Box 1  Folder 11
Inventory of the Walter Earl Douglas Papers, 1963-1979

Avery Research Center at the College of Charleston

Education, undated

Box 1  Folder 12
Employment, 1978, undated

Box 1  Folder 13
History, undated

Box 1  Folder 14
Land Ownership, undated

Box 1  Folder 15
Low-income housing, undated

Box 1  Folder 16
Mass Media/Press/Public Broadcasting, undated

Box 1  Folder 17
Poverty, 1978, undated

Box 1  Folder 18
Public Welfare, undated

Box 1  Folder 19
Race identity, undated

Box 1  Folder 20
Race relations, undated

Box 1  Folder 21
Socio-economic status, undated

Box 2  Folder 1
Unemployment (youth), undated

Box 2  Folder 2
Unions, undated.

Box 2  Folder 3
Various general essays, undated.
Contains untitled essays.

Undated essays written in the early and mid-1970s.
Box 2 Folder 4
Crime, undated.

Box 2 Folder 5
Gambling, undated

Box 2 Folder 6
Poverty, undated

Box 2 Folder 7
Various General essays re: Harlem, undated


Essays and newspapers editorials written pertaining to African-Americans in South Carolina, many with a focus on Charlestonians, written during the mid-1970s.

2.3.1. General, undated.

Box 2 Folder 8
African-American neighborhoods, undated
Includes housing and property taxes in Charleston, South Carolina.

Box 2 Folder 9
African-American Police Officers (Charleston), undated.

Box 2 Folder 10
Death (Charleston), undated
Mostly pertaining to incidents at Roper Hospital.

Box 2 Folder 11
Economic Conditions (Charleston), undated.

Box 2 Folder 12
Education (Charleston), undated

Box 2 Folder 13
Employment (Charleston), undated

Box 2 Folder 14
History and Culture (Charleston), undated
Medical care (Charleston), undated
Re: Roper Hospital.

2.3.2. Politics and Government in Charleston and South Carolina, undated.

Essays pertaining to the subject with an African-American focus.

Box 2  Folder 16
Civil Rights, undated

Box 2  Folder 17
South Carolina Legislative Black Caucus, undated

Box 2  Folder 18
Voting in South Carolina, undated.

Box 2  Folder 19
Taxation, undated


Essays and newspaper editorials (undated, written during the mid-1970s) focusing on African-Americans in United States politics.

Box 2  Folder 20
Affirmative Action, undated

Box 2  Folder 21
African-American Leadership, 1978 and undated

Box 2  Folder 22
Civil Rights, undated

Box 2  Folder 23
Conservatism, undated

Box 2  Folder 24
Liberalism, undated

Box 2  Folder 25
Various General Essays re: African-American Politics, undated
Contains untitled essays.

Drafts of essays and newspaper editorials written by Douglas with a national and international focus, mostly undated, written in the mid to late 1970s. Topics are arranged alphabetically.

**Box 3 Folder 1**
Blacks in South Africa, undated
Re: Politics and government.

**Box 3 Folder 2**
Crime, undated

**Box 3 Folder 3**
Cults, c. 1978
Re: The Jonestown Massacre/ "The Peoples Temple in Guyana."

**Box 3 Folder 4**
Consumerism, 1978

**Box 3 Folder 5**
Education, undated

**Box 3 Folder 6**
Employment, undated

**Box 3 Folder 7**
Energy consumption, undated

**Box 3 Folder 8**
Functional illiteracy, undated

**Box 3 Folder 9**
Housing, undated

**Box 3 Folder 10**
Human Rights advocacy, undated

**Box 3 Folder 11**
Labor and Unions, undated

**Box 3 Folder 12**
Law-(United States), undated

**Box 3 Folder 13**
Lesbians, undated
Box 3 Folder 14
Liberalism, undated

Box 3 Folder 15
Mass Media/Press/Public Broadcasting, undated

Box 3 Folder 16
Patriotism-(United States), undated

Box 3 Folder 17
People, 1972, 1977, undated
Includes essays on: Cooke, Alvena Margaret, registered nurse, (Charleston, SC), Powell, Jr., Adam Clayton, New York City politician and Schuyler, George, conservative essayist.

Box 3 Folder 18
Poverty and Public Welfare, undated

Box 3 Folder 19
Race Relations and Racism, undated

Box 3 Folder 20
School busing for integration, undated

Box 3 Folder 21
Socialism, undated

Box 3 Folder 22
Sports, undated
Re: Leon Spinks

Box 3 Folder 23
2.5.1 Various General Opinion Essays, Contains essays in health, culture, holidays and untitled writings. undated.

Box 3 Folder 24
Miscellaneous writings, Handwritten drafts on legal pads re: various topics. undated.


Drafts of essays with topics pertaining to political issues and elected officials in South Carolina and the United States. Most writings are undated. Topics are arranged in alphabetical order.
Box 4 Folder 1
Affirmative Action, 1977-1978, undated
Re: Allan Bakke.

Box 4 Folder 2
Civil Rights, undated
Contains untitled essays.

Box 4 Folder 3
Democratic Party, undated

Box 4 Folder 4

Box 4 Folder 5
Military, undated

Box 4 Folder 6
Panama Canal, undated

Box 4 Folder 7
President Jimmy Carter, undated

Box 4 Folder 8
Proposition 13, 1978, undated
Re: California property tax initiative

Box 4 Folder 9
Pro-life movement, undated

Box 4 Folder 10
Republican Party, undated

Box 4 Folder 11
Separation of Church and State, undated

Box 4 Folder 12
Social Security, undated

Box 4 Folder 13
South Carolina Politics and Government, undated

Box 4 Folder 14
Washington, D.C., undated
**Series 3: Publications, 1973-1979, undated.**

Douglas' published articles in local and syndicated newspapers, in addition to self published booklets and pamphlets.

**3.1. Publications: Newspaper columns and editorials, 1972-1979, undated.**

Includes Douglas' published essays for South Carolina newspapers, "The Earl of Charleston," and the nationally syndicated column, written under the by-line, "W. Earl Douglas."

**3.1.1. "The Earl of Charleston," column, 1972, undated.**

Editorial columns written by Douglas under the name of "William Earl," for "The Chronicle," a Charleston, South Carolina based weekly newspaper focusing on current issues pertaining to the local African-American community.

**Box 5   Folder 1**
"The Earl of Charleston," January-September 1972
Editorial columns.

**Box 5   Folder 2**
"The Earl of Charleston," 1972
Scattered collection of columns

**3.1.2. The "W. Earl Douglas" Column, 1977-1979, undated.**


**Box 5   Folder 3**
Editorials for the Manchester (N.H.) Union Leader, 1977-1979, undated
Douglas' column for the "Behind the Headlines Commentary on Our Times" section.

**Box 5   Folder 4**
Editorials by William Loeb, 1976, 1979, undated
Written by "Manchester (N.H.) Union Leader's publisher, William Loeb. Several of the editorials are written in support of Douglas' columns. Also includes several "Letters to the Editor" (1979).

**Box 5   Folder 5**

Box 5  Folder 6
Editorials for the "Charleston (S.C) Evening Post," 1976-1979, undated
Photocopied newspaper clippings of Douglas' syndicated column for the "Comment & Opinion" section.


Box 5  Folder 7
"The Freedom Factor," 1977
Promotion material and letters announcing the publication of Douglas' newsletter.

Box 5  Folder 8
"The Freedom Factor" newsletters, 4 May-14 Dec 1977
Published editions.

Box 5  Folder 9

Box 5  Folder 10
Typed drafts and published booklets.

Box 5  Folder 11
"The Freedom Factor" editorials, 1977, undated
Photocopied editorial columns for "The Charlestown Patriot" and the "Somerville Chronicle" (Massachusetts) and unidentified syndicated newspapers.

Box 5  Folder 12
Drafts and notes for "The Freedom Factor," 1977

Douglas' self published writings on political and socio-economic issues. Several booklets were published post-humously by his wife, Rosslee Green Douglas.

Box 5  Folder 13
Pamphlet: "An Amendment to the Constitution," c. 1978
Douglas' position paper to provide for representation of the District of Columbia for the South Carolina General Assembly.

**Box 5  Folder 14**

**Box 5  Folder 15**
Includes draft of preface.

**Box 5  Folder 16**
Includes drafts.

**Box 5  Folder 17**
Book Outlines, undated

**Series 4: Speeches and Media Programming, 1977-1978.**
Contains transcripts of Douglas' speeches and his community television show, "Earl's ByLine."

4.1. **Speeches, 1978, undated.**

Douglas speeches, many with typed and handwritten drafts. Organized by topic in alphabetical order.

**Box 6  Folder 1**
Speech re: Black conservative, 1978
Douglas's stance on African American conservatism with a brief summary of his life, delivered to the South Carolina Rotary Club.

**Box 6  Folder 2**
Speeches re: Conservatism and the Republican Party, 1978, undated
Given at the Republican Party State Convention, Columbia, SC.

**Box 6  Folder 3**
Speech re: Historic Preservation, undated
Delivered to a Charleston, SC Environmental group.

**Box 6  Folder 4**
Speech re: Proposition 13, 1978
Box 6  Folder 5
Speech re: "Right-to-Life Movement," undated

Box 6  Folder 6
Speeches re: Socialism, 1978, undated
Delivered to Kiwanis Club, 17 Aug 1978 and an unknown organization.

Box 6  Folder 7
Speech re: Labor unions, undated
Final speech with drafts re: African American involvement in unions.

Typed transcripts from Douglas television segment, "Earl's Byline" which as
broadcasted on Charleston, SC station, WCBD-TV.

Box 6  Folder 8
Media Transcripts, c.1977-1978
Douglas' programming topics include: Affirmative Action; African-American culture;
African-Americans-race identity; Apartheid-South Africa; Education;
Humanism/Religious; Labor Unions; Liberalism; Poverty; Pro-life movement; Racism;
United States--Politics and Government-20th century.

Contains Douglas' biographical drafts, draft essays on his fictional characters, "Willie
and the Professor," short stories, poems (several published) and plays.

Box 6  Folder 9
Biographical essays, undated
Untitled handwritten and typed drafts.

Box 6  Folder 10
Essays: "Willie and the Professor," c.1970s, undated
Drafts of essays written partly in vernacular, regarding African-American topics and
issues, many focusing on life in Charleston and South Carolina. Several of the essays
were later published as newspaper editorials.

Box 6  Folder 11
Short Stories, undated
Drafts of fictional stories re: Christmas and love.

Box 6  Folder 12
Drafts (handwritten and typed) and published copies of verses written by Douglas.
Box 6  Folder 13
Plays, undated
Draft outlines of potential plays.

Series 6: Correspondence, 1972-1979, undated.
Contains mostly letters written to Douglas by newspaper publishers, (mainly William "Bill" Loeb, III), political figures, and editorial readers. Letters sent by Douglas includes replies to his editorial readers, and to Thomas R. Waring, editor of the "Charleston Evening Post."

President and publisher of the Manchester (New Hampshire) Union Leader. Major topics include suggestions to Douglas regarding expanding his newspaper column syndication circulation, and Loeb's concern over Douglas' diagnosis of Peroniol Palsy resulting in his declining health. Letters are organized chronologically by year.

Box 7  Folder 1
July-December, 1977

Box 7  Folder 2
January-August, 1978

Box 7  Folder 3
September-December, 1978

Box 7  Folder 4
January-June, 1979

Includes letters to Douglas from United States Senators Strom Thurmond, Jesse Helms and Ernest F. Hollings; South Carolina Governor James B. Edwards, and state representatives.

Box 7  Folder 5
Letters from U.S. Senator Strom Thurmond, 1977-1979

Box 7  Folder 6
Letters from U.S. Senators Jesse Helms and Ernest F. Hollings, 1978

Box 7  Folder 7
Letters from the South Carolina Office of the Governor, 1977-1979
Includes letters from Governor James B. Edwards.

**Box 7  Folder 8**
Letters from South Carolina state representatives and officials, 1977-1979

**Box 7  Folder 9**
Letters from various politicians and international representatives, 1977-1979
Includes letters from South African Consulate General, members of the House of Representatives and various United States politicians.

6.3. Correspondence: Business and General Correspondence, 1972-1979.

Contains letters and invitations, mostly from Douglas' editorial readership. Also includes correspondence with Thomas R. Waring, editor of "Charleston Evening Post," (SC).

**Box 7  Folder 10**
Invitations, 1977-1978
Invites to political functions and committee meetings.

**Box 7  Folder 11**
Letters written to Douglas, 1976-1979
Re: readers response to his editorials published in various syndicated newspapers.

**Box 7  Folder 12**
Letters written by Douglas, 1972-1979
Majority of letters written in response to his readership and editorials written by others.

**Box 7  Folder 13**
Letters to and from editor Thomas R. Waring.

**Box 7  Folder 14**
Personal and general solicitation letters to Douglas and his family.

**Series 7: Civic and Political Involvement, 1976-1979.**

Includes South Carolina civic participation and United States governmental involvement.

Includes Douglas' work on various committees.

Box 8  Folder 1
Charleston County Economic Opportunity Commission, 1978
Douglas’ involvement as the Chairman on the Personnel Committee. Includes meeting minutes and grievance report.

Douglas participation as a commissioner with the South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs and Committees in Economic Development

Box 8  Folder 2
South Carolina Commission on Consumer Affairs, 1978-1979
Includes agenda, budget and process report.

Box 8  Folder 3
Report re: "Governor's Special Committees in Economic Development," 1977

Comprised of letters, reports and supporting documents of Douglas involvement of this conference.

Box 8  Folder 4
Letters from The White House, 1977-1978

Box 8  Folder 5
Pre-Conference Reports: South Carolina, 1997-1978
Report submitted to Governor Edwards by State Delegation, in which Douglas was a member.

Box 8  Folder 6
Pre-conference materials, 1977
Booklets and pamphlets regarding upcoming White House conference.

Box 8  Folder 7
Pre-conference published statements. 1977
Prepared by participating committees for the conference.

Box 8  Folder 8
Agendas and itineraries, 1977-1978
Informational and documents pertaining to the Economic conference, including participant rosters, and delegates' handbook.

Box 8 Folder 9
Conference workshop guides, 1978

Box 8 Folder 10
Newspaper articles re: White House Conference, 1977-1978
Photocopies of clippings.

Box 8 Folder 11
Final Reports and Summaries, 1978
Vol 1.: Summary of Conference Proceedings, Vol 2.: Workshop Reports; and summary recommendations.

Reports, journal essays, newspaper and magazine articles used in reference for Douglas' writings. Organized as topical subjects in alphabetical order.

North America, 1900-1979.

Box 9 Folder 1
Includes booklet, pamphlets and newspaper articles.


Box 9 Folder 2
1. Newsletters, 1976-1977
Published by the South African Embassy, Washington, D.C.

Box 9 Folder 3
The country is currently known as Zimbabwe.

Box 9 Folder 4

Box 9 Folder 5
4. The Department of State (United States) publications, 1977-1978
Includes newspaper articles and pamphlets re: Africa/South African.

Box 9 Folder 6
Charleston Country Medical Examiner's Office, South Carolina, 1972-1973
Contains reports and statistics.

**Box 9 Folder 7**  
"Civil Rights Act of 1964," 1964  
With summary of act in "Civil Rights Digest."

**Box 9 Folder 8**  
Business and Consumerism, 1977-1979

**Box 9 Folder 9**  
"Directory of the American Right," 1979

**Box 9 Folder 10**  

**Box 9 Folder 11**  
Education, 1972, 1975, 1979

**Box 9 Folder 12**  

**Box 9 Folder 13**  
Human Rights, 1977-1978

**Box 9 Folder 14**  
International relations, 1977, undated

**Box 9 Folder 15**  
Jewish people, 1976, undated

**Box 9 Folder 16**  
King, Jr., Dr. Martin Luther, 1963, 1965, 1978  
Contains newsletters and articles opposing Dr. King's efforts.

**Box 9 Folder 17**  
Religion, 1976, 1978

**Box 9 Folder 18**  
"Roots" Television Mini-Series, 1977, 1979  
Contains newspaper and Douglas' "Letter to the Editor" of "Human Events" (21 Apr 1979) re: his displeasure with the series.

**Box 9 Folder 19**  
Socialism, c. 1970s
Box 9  Folder 20
South Carolina, General topics, 1976, 1978-1979
Re: Folly Beach; Fort Sumter.

Box 9  Folder 21
South Carolina Politics, 1977, 1979, undated

Box 9  Folder 22
United States Government and Politics, 1975-1978