Finding Aid to the Merritt Thompson Papers, 1896-1970 Coll2013.039

Finding aid prepared by Kyle Morgan
Processing this collection has been funded by a generous grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission.
ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives, USC Libraries, University of Southern California
909 West Adams Boulevard
Los Angeles, California, 90007
(213) 741-0094
askone@ONEarchives.org
(c) 2013
Title: Merritt Thompson papers
Identifer/Call Number: Coll2013.039
Contributing Institution: ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives, USC Libraries, University of Southern California
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 2.3 linear feet. 3 archive cartons + 1 flat box
Date (inclusive): 1896-1970
Abstract: The Merritt Thompson papers, 1896-1970, consists of Thompson's professional and family correspondence, manuscripts and articles he wrote and collected on the topic of education, course materials used in his education classes, translated Inca stories, photographs of his professional and personal life, and documentation of his travels. Thompson was an education professor at the University of Southern California as well as a founding member of ONE Institute of Homophile Studies, the first academic institution in the United States devoted to the study of homosexuality.
creator: Thompson, Merritt Moore
Conditions Governing Access
The collection is open to researchers. There are no access restrictions.
Conditions Governing Use
All requests for permission to publish or quote from manuscripts must be submitted in writing to the ONE Archivist. Permission for publication is given on behalf of ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives at USC Libraries as the owner of the physical items and is not intended to include or imply permission of the copyright holder, which must also be obtained.
Processing Information
Collection processed by Kyle Morgan, 2013.
Preferred Citation
[Box/folder #, or item name] Merritt Thompson Papers, Coll2013-039, ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives, USC Libraries, University of Southern California.
Acquisition
Date and method of acquisition unknown.
Scope and Contents
The Merritt Thompson papers, 1896-1970, consists of Thompson's professional and family correspondence, manuscripts and articles he wrote and collected on the topic of education, course materials used in his education classes, translated Inca stories, photographs of his professional and personal life, and documentation of his travels. The bulk of the collection documents his career as an educator and provides limited information regarding his life as a gay man.
Biography
Merritt Moore Thompson (1884-1970) was a lifelong educator and gay education activist. Thompson was born and raised in New Jersey. He started teaching in a local one-room country schoolhouse, then went abroad to teach in the Philippines in 1905. He returned to the United States two years later and got a bachelor's degree at the University of Denver. After a time teaching in South America, he moved to California where he taught Spanish at the University of Southern California. He got his masters and doctorate in education at the University of Southern California and became the university's director of student teaching for 31 years. Thompson's writings include *The History of Education* published in 1951.
Thompson was one of four members of ONE Incorporated's Education Planning Committee that developed a curriculum for an academic institution devoted to the specialized study of homosexuality. The resulting ONE Institute of Homophile Studies opened its doors in 1956 to ONE Incorporated staff members and then the next year to the general public, becoming the first institution in the United States to offer such studies.
Related Archival Materials note
For documentation of Thompson's gay education activism, please see:
ONE Incorporated records, Coll2011.001, ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives, Los Angeles, California.
Jim Kepner papers, Coll2011-002, ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives, Los Angeles, California.
ONE audiovisual collection, ARR0153, ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives, Los Angeles, California.
Subjects and Indexing Terms
Correspondence
Education--Study and teaching
Educator
Gay men's writings, American
Gays in higher education

**Merritt Thompson papers 1896-1970**

**Arrangement**

This collection is arranged in alphabetical order.

Box 4, Folder 4  Address labels undated
Box 1, Folder 1  American Humanist Association papers 1957-1961
Box 1, Folder 2  Bibliographies in education, compiled by Thompson undated
Box 1, Folder 3-5  Correspondence, family 1905-1914

**Physical Description:** [3 folders]

Box 1, Folder 6  Correspondence, professional 1940-1967
Box 1, Folder 7-10  Course material 1934-1948

**Physical Description:** [4 folders]

Scope and Contents note

Materials for four courses: Facism and Democracy as Social Theories, Philosophy and its Implications for Education, Philosophy of Education, and Values in Education.

Box 1, Folder 11  Inca stories, translations circa 1967
Box 2, Folder 1  Inca stories, correspondence 1967-1968

**Interviews with Thompson 1969**

**Physical Description:** [2 open-reel audiotapes]

**Separated Materials note**

Separated to the ONE audiovisual collection.

Box 2, Folder 2  Newspaper clippings 1941-1959
Box 2, Folder 3  Personal papers 1950-1970, undated
Box 4, Folder 1  Photograph of Thompson, mounted undated
Box 2, Folder 4  Photographs 1946-1953, undated

**Scope and Contents note**

Black-and-white photographs (17 negatives, 5 photographic prints, and 3 negative strips) of Merritt Thompson, unidentified people, and unidentified locations.

Box 2, Folder 5  Ranch records 1938-1950

**Scope and Contents note**

Records of a ranch deeded to Thompson in 1938.

Box 2, Folder 6-9  Research, articles 1939-1968

**Physical Description:** [4 folders]

Box 3, Folder 1  School and early teaching records 1896-1930
Box 4, Folder 3  Schematics and architectural drawings, with notes 1940, undated
Box 4, Folder 2  Student work and correspondence 1906-1907
Box 3, Folder 2  Syllabi, examinations, and handouts 1932-1949, undated
Box 3, Folder 3  Teaching reference material 1931-1938
Box 3, Folder 4  Travel itineraries and narratives written by Thompson 1906-1907
Box 3, Folder 5-8  Writings by Thompson, manuscripts and published papers 1936-1965, undated

**Physical Description:** [4 folders]

**Scope and Contents note**

Includes unidentified manuscripts that cannot definitively be attributed to Thompson.