

HUFF, Edmund Newell Jr. (1905-1953) collector, scholar, educator,
painter, set designer, musician, filmmaker

Best remembered today for the Theodore Huff Memorial Film Society
run by William Everson in his honor, Huff can be viewed as a
progenitor of much of contemporary film culture.

The collection of correspondence, program notes and clippings
donated to the Film Study Center in January 1992 by Charles L.
Turner, a close friend of Huff's, attest to his involvement in
archival, educational, aspects of film culture as well as in
the Film Society and film collecting movements of his day.

R. M.
January 28, 1992

LOCATION: FSC Box II #2044-2046

Abbreviations: (info from Charles L. Turner)

LILO = LILO YARSON, a close friend of Dezi Arnez. (They had been children together in Cuba). Appeared in several Hollywood films [FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS, 1943].

L.C. = Library of Congress

MMA = Museum of Modern Art, NYC

Munson = Kent Munson, collaborated with Huff as filmmaker and actor in The Uncomfortable Man/The Stone Man. Script reader, unreliable person ????

SEYMOUR = Seymour Stern, reference is made (by J. Card) to reports that Stern had such proprietary feeling for Huff's collections

KERNS = Museum of Modern Art technical staff that he stood guard in the street outside Huff's apt

LOY = Brad Loy, National Film Archive; Huff's boss building the night after his death to note who

GILLETTE = Melvin Gillette, US Army Signal Corps. Head of Unit that moved to Astoria went i and ou

BOND = Kirk Bond, film fan, historian specializing in German Film, employed at Museum of Modern Art

Huff's father = a physician, walked out on the family

Huff's mother = Marianne Huff

Huff's brother's Wilbur or Wilmer killed by lightning on a golf course in Wash. D.C. area 1951; and George who survived Ted lived with mother 7 Elm Drive, Farmingdale, LI.

Charles Turner's teasing nickname for S. Stern was "the Stirer-upper" since Stern enjoyed creating "situations" between members of film culture of his day.

Huff's film stills collection which Turner estimates to have been between 80,000 - 100,000 stills was given to the George Eastman House (along with some film material as well it appears) and formed the basis of its film stills collection. Correspondence indicates that Card made a determined effort on the archive's behalf with Marianne Huff. Not long before Huff's sudden death, he and Turner had traded collections. Huff getting Turner's stills and Turner getting Huff's 16mm prints.

Huff films: Ghost Town date? (FT Lee film studios)
 (incomplete?) The Uncomfortable Man 1947-48 (print at MoMA)
 The Stone Man 1948-49? (print at GEH)

INVENTORY OF HUFF CORRESPONDENCE

CT = Charles Turner MH = Marianne Huff (Ted's mother)
 TH = Theodore Huff GH = George Huff (Ted's brother)

The bulk of this collection of correspondence is between T.H. and Charles Turner

- 6 July 1942 TH to CT on beginning job at National Film Archive/on work and personnel/
 as triumph over MoMA
- 24 Nov 1942 TH to CT on Howard Walls/on work at National Archive/on film series at
 LC/on cultural life in Wash DC
- 7 Dec 1942 TH to CT on various films: Wedding March, The Cheat, She Done Him Wrong.
- 1 Feb 1943 TH to CT on Walls resignation
- 10 Feb 1943 TH to CT on MoMA/on Walls reinstatement and film material at National Archi
- 2 Mar 1943 TH to CT on various theatrical personalities/on looking at paper prints/
 on LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN editing.
- 22 May 1943 TH to CT on publicity following discovery at National Archive/on Iris Barry
 visit/on politics at National Archive
- 1 May 1944 TH to CT on THE FACE ON THE BARROOM FLOOR and other recent films viewed
- 19 May [1944?] TH to CT on a number of silent films under consideration by CT for screenin
- [19 May [1944?] Part II TH to CT on THE LOVE PARADE
- 5 Mar [1944?] TH to CT on being "gypped" loaning material/on Lilo and gossip re:
 Gish, Garbo, Pickford, Iris Barry/on CAVALCADE/on Bob
 Parrish/on National Archive personnel.
- 1 June 1944 TH to CT on programming films/on collecting stills/on Walls "situation"
- 25 Apr 1946 TH to CT on Turner's film SCRIPT TEAS/on screening TRUE HEART SUSIE/on
 Lubitsch illness
- 5 July 1946 CT to TH on interviewing Gloria Swanson
- 7 July 1946 TH to CT on previous letter/on James Cruze, Ed. Ev. Horton, Kirk Bond
- 11 Nov 1947 TH to Jean Hersholt, AMPAS on Howard Walls career at National Archive
- 10 June 1948 TH to CT on first impressions of Los Angeles/on politics with Walls/on
 Stern
- 12 June 1948 TH to CT on arriving in CA/old Fox Lot/Soc of MP Artists and Designers
 re award for Griffith
- 14 June 1948 TH to CT on CA/USC education-filmmaking program/sightseeing
- 26 June 1948 TH to CT on teaching at USC/life in LA area/visit with DWG/
 Walls/meeting old silent film stars
- 2 July 1948 TH to CT on teaching/NYC vs LA/using Turner's book/Vorkapich/
 Lilo/Lubitsch/Munson and their filmmaking.
- June-July 1948 "Saturday" TH to CT on a Hollywood party with Man Ray, Leyda,
 Dudley Nichols, Renoir, Albert Lewin, Lewis
 Jacobs/sightseeing
- 28 July 1948 TH to CT (formletter) on DWG funeral
- 2 Aug 1948 TH to CT on end of classes/Vorkapich/Robt Russell (MGM)/Munson/
 courses at Astoria NY/what he would like to be paid/
 Hans Richter
- 10 Aug 1948 TH to CT on sightseeing/Kenny Baker/Barry Norton (actor)/Munson
 and Hollywood film project [THE STONE MAN]/Robt
 Russell/Lon/Kirk Bond-"Iris Barry's victims"/
 S Stern/teaching and professional future/Albert
 Lewin and observation on Hollywood at end of epoch/
 his Ft Lee documentary/S Stern on DGW burial(Dell
 Henderson)
- 17 Aug 1948 TH to CT on return to NYC and future/Robt Russell and visit to
 MGM/Munson/Vorkapich/showing of THE UNCOMFORTABLE
 MAN/"the Whitney Bros." [James and John] and exper-
 imental cinema
- 22 Aug 1948 TH to CT on forms for employment with Federal Government (Astoria)
 [copy of 4p form is enclosed. It details employment
 record]/Munson arrival/shooting film/leaving LA

3 July 1950 TH to CT on the military students he taught at USC/booking films from MoMA/s. Stern and showing Sturges films and Stern's anti-communism/working at NBC

6 Aug 1951 TH to CT on death of one of his brothers/size of his collections/Col. David Bradley/Weinberg/on health/friends/Meginnis (manager Little Theatre)

11 Aug 1951 TH to CT on family/"Far Side Of Paradise" novel and adaptation/past acquaintances with Lois Moran, Hyde Gilette/Kent Smith/Richard Griffith, Barry and film preservation at MoMA.

15 Aug 1951 TH to CT on Gene Reynolds/family/on willing his film stills collection - thoughts on archival repositories/on issue of preservation/on proposed article exposing MoMA for Films in Review

?,?,1948 Th to CT (first page missing) describes Ft Lee film studios he visited/B. Windust/Edison stars June?

Tuesday Apr ? 1953 MH to CT on TH tribute at GEH/ James Card

1 Apr 1953 MH to CT on looking through TH material at home

15 Apr 1953 JC to CT on CT's help with Huffs/seeing MH/S. Stern protecting Huff collections

15 Apr 1953 JC to MH (copy) on appointment to visit re: preservation of TH collection.

1 June 1953 MH to CT on TH's conflict w/father/S. Stern visit/John E. Allen visit

7 June 1953 GH to CT (postcard) requesting return of photograph

17 June 1953 MH to CT on future of stills collection/J.E.Allen/on dislike of S. Stern

? June 1953 MH to CT on TH collections/S.Stern/J. E. Allen

undated "8:30PM" Kent Munson to CT note on lateness

Huff Program Notes*

*notes written by Ted Huff

The Washington Workshop: "a cultural activities cooperative organized to provide classes and performances in the arts. Since December, in cooperation with the Motion Picture Service of the US Dept of Agriculture, it has presented regular Sunday programs of revivals of American and foreign film classics at the South Agriculture Auditorium." (from program note)

This film series began roughly in late 1936 early 1937. It was produced in conjunction with the Museum of Modern Art Dept of Film (this fact is noted in printed schedules for the series which in fact resemble the MoMA pamphlet style of the period.) It appears that nearly all of the prints screened were from the MoMA collection. The screenings were cause for some controversy: on Feb, 23, 1938 the screening of BIRTH OF A NATION was picketed by the National Negro Congress and the District Workers' Alliance; and on Mar 2, 1938 the widely publicized revival of THE FOUR HORSEMEN OF THE APOCALYPSE reportedly drew 3000 patrons. Charles Turner claims this attracted the attention of MGM executives and strained relations with studio (subject for verification and further research.) In any event the Washington Workshop screening appear to be the Museum of Modern Art Film Library's first (?) major programming venture outside the NY metropolitan area (this is not to ignore publicity events such as Pickfair screenings); and was noteworthy because of the press attention paid to the diplomats and other government celebrities the screenings attracted.

It is uncertain how many notes for the series were written by Huff. Those donated by Mr. Turner include (most are undated):

Charlie Chaplin Comedies/Plunder (Pearl White serial)
Entr'acte/Sous Les Toits de Paris
The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse
Triumph of the Will
Ballet Mechanique/Ten Days That Shook the World
addendum to (?) program note 28 May 1944
She Done Him Wrong 30 July 1944

The New York Film Society (no background yet on this organization. Turner claims it is not forerunner of "Theodore Huff Memorial Film Society"; he claims that was "The Film Circle" [a name H. Weinberg hated because he thought it sounded like a sewing circle]. There are other program notes in our collection printed in the same style as the Huff Society Notes which have "New York Film Society" on them.)

The following notes are signed by Huff and are printed in a very different style:

Intolerance 11 Oct 1949
The Blue Angel 14 Feb 1950

The Beverly Hills Great Films Society (no background info on this group yet)

The Strong Man 30 Mar 1950

Misc notes: -Gloria Swanson (summary of career and importance/details Huff's holdings re: stills, etc)
 -note from film can 16mm print THE INCOMPLETE MAN
 -filmography "Intro to Motion Pictures: The Silent Film" NYU course 1946-47

Obituaries to FSC file: NY World Telegram and Sun
New York Times
New York Herald
Variety
2 unidentified NY newspapers
manuscript (2p) for Charles Turner Obit for Films in Review

Selection of reviews of Huff's Chaplin book also added to FSC file.

gift of Charles Turner 1/92