

Lewis Mumford letters to Harry T. Moore

Ms. Coll. 1361

Finding aid prepared by Sam Allingham.

Last updated on August 08, 2018.

University of Pennsylvania, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts

2018 August 8

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Summary Information

Repository	University of Pennsylvania: Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts
Creator	Moore, Harry T. (Harry Thornton), 1908-1981
Title	Lewis Mumford letters to Harry T. Moore
Call number	Ms. Coll. 1361
Date [inclusive]	1942-1976
Extent	0.2 linear feet (1 box)
Language	English
Abstract	Harry T. Moore (1909-1981) was a professor English literature at Southern Illinois University and a specialist in the works of D.H. Lawrence. Lewis Mumford (1895-1990) was an influential literary and social critic. This collection contains detailed letters from Mumford to Moore, concerning both literary and personal matters.

Cite as:

Lewis Mumford Letters to Harry T. Moore, 1942-1976, MsColl 1361, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania

Biography/History

Harry T. Moore, born in 1909 in Oakland, California, was a professor of English literature at Southern Illinois University and a specialist in the works of D.H. Lawrence. He earned degrees at the University of Chicago, Northwestern University, and Boston University. His 1974 biography of Lawrence, *The Priest of Love*, was made into a movie by the English director Christopher Mills. He was also the author of *20th Century French Literature*, *20th Century German Literature*, and, with Albert Parry, *20th Century Russian Literature*. He died in 1981 in Carbondale, Illinois.

Lewis Mumford was born on October 19, 1895 in Flushing, New York City, NY, and graduated from Stuyvesant High School in 1912. He studied at the City College of New York and The New School for Social Research, but became ill with tuberculosis and never finished his degree. In 1918, he joined the navy to serve in World War I and was assigned as a radio electrician. He was discharged in 1919 and became associate editor of *The Dial*, an influential modernist literary journal. He later worked for *The New Yorker*, where he wrote architectural criticism and commentary on urban issues. Mumford's earliest books in the field of literary criticism have had a lasting impact on contemporary American literary criticism. *The Golden Day* (1926) contributed to a resurgence in scholarly research on the work of 1850s American transcendentalist authors and *Herman Melville: A Study of His Life and Vision* (1929) effectively launched a revival in the study of the work of Herman Melville. Soon after, with the book *The Brown Decades* (1931), he began to establish himself as an authority in American architecture and urban life, which he interpreted in a social context. In his early writings on urban life, Mumford was optimistic about human abilities and wrote that the human race would use electricity and mass communication to build a better world for all humankind. He would later take a more pessimistic stance. His early architectural criticism also helped to bring wider public recognition to the work of Henry Hobson Richardson, Louis Sullivan and Frank Lloyd Wright.

In 1963, Mumford received the Frank Jewett Mather Award for art criticism from the College Art Association. Mumford received the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1964; in 1975, Mumford was made an honorary Knight Commander of the Order of the British Empire (KBE); in 1976, he was awarded the Prix mondial Cino Del Duca; and in 1986, he was awarded the National Medal of Arts. His 1961 book, *The City in History*, received the National Book Award. Lewis Mumford died at the age of 94 at his home in Amenia, New York on January 26, 1990.

Scope and Contents

This collection contains letters from literary and social theorist Lewis Mumford to literary scholar Harry T. Moore. The correspondence is wide-ranging and intimate, ranging from literary and social subjects, such as Moore's books on D.H. Lawrence and Mumford's books on urban planning and social theory, to more personal matters like Moore's marriage, love affairs, and family life.

Administrative Information

University of Pennsylvania, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts

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Finding aid prepared by Sam Allingham.

Access Restrictions

This collection is open for research use.

Use Restrictions

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Source of Acquisition

Purchased from Swann Galleries, 2005

Related Materials

Related Archival Materials note

At Southern Illinois University:

Harry T. Moore Papers, 1903-1967 (bulk: 1903-1930), 3/RG 4/FP 17-8-F2

At the University of Pennsylvania, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts:

Lewis Mumford papers, circa 1905-1987, Ms. Coll. 2

Lewis Mumford supplementary collection, 1926-1978, Ms. Coll. 1350

Sophia Wittenberg Mumford papers, 1875-1997, Ms. Coll. 958

Controlled Access Headings

FORM/GENRE(S)

- Correspondence

PERSONAL NAME(S)

- Mumford, Lewis, 1895-1990 -- Correspondence

SUBJECT(S)

- Authors
- Authors, American--20th century
- Literature

Collection Inventory

	Box	Folder
1942-1948.	1	
1955-1959.	1	2
1960-1968.	1	3
1971-1976.	1	4