Guide to the William M. Yoffee Collection 1789-1992

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### Descriptive Summary

**Identifier**  
ICU.SPCL.YOFFEEW

**Title**  
Yoffee, William A. Collection

**Date**  
1789-1992

**Size**  
6.5 linear feet (5 boxes)

**Repository**  
Special Collections Research Center  
University of Chicago Library  
1100 East 57th Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.

**Abstract**  
The William M. Yoffee Collection consists of print publications, audio and video recordings, and figurines, most of which are directly related to black culture in the United States and United Kingdom. Many of these items, including children’s books, comics, and figurines, reflect racist stereotypes perpetuated against black people in these countries throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. Other parts of the collection reflect the achievements of African-American cultural production, including musical records, narrative storytelling in audio format, and print publications.

### Information on Use

**Access**
The collection is open for research.

**Citation**
When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Yoffee, William A. Collection, [Box #, Folder #], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

### Biographical Note

William “Bill” Morris Yoffee (1932-2018) graduated from the University of Chicago in 1952 and worked on the international staff of the Social Security Administration from 1962-1983. Yoffee and his wife Barbara opened the Children’s Book Adoption Agency in Silver Spring, Maryland, where they bought and sold out-of-print children’s books, with a special focus on books related to black culture in the United States and United Kingdom.

### Scope Note

The William M. Yoffee Collection primarily consists of items directly related to black culture in the United States and United Kingdom. Many of these items, including children’s books,
comics, and figurines, reflect racist stereotypes perpetuated against black people in these countries throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. Other parts of the collection reflect the achievements of African-American cultural production, including musical records, narrative storytelling in audio format, and print publications. Also included are other items related to American history or children’s literature, such as a copy of the first publication of the Bill of Rights from 1789 and a children’s bookshelf from 1971. The collection is organized chronologically and by item size.

Stereotypical, racist characters documented in this collection include “Little Black Sambo,” later changed to “Little Brave Sambo,” the subject of children’s books by Helen Bannerman beginning in 1899 in England (Box 1); “Pore Lil Mose,” appearing in comics by Richard F. Outcault beginning in 1899 in New York (Boxes 2-3); “Golliwogg,” created by Florence K. Upton and Bertha Upton in 1895 in England (Box 1); the related “Golly” character used widely in advertising from 1910-2002 by Robertson’s, a British marmalade and fruit preserves company (Box 1 Folder 1 and Box 4); and “Amos ‘n’ Andy,” the subjects of a popular but controversial radio show in the United States from 1928-1960 and television show from 1943-1955 (Box 5).

Items related to African-American cultural production include vinyl records by Mahalia Jackson, Josh White, and Freddie Mitchell (Box 2); cassette tapes that record “Gullah stories,” narratives told by South Carolina-born Tita Heins or “Aunt Tita” (Box 1); and a calendar related to Bert Andrews’ 1989 photo-essay “In the Shadow of the Great White Way: Images from the Black Theatre,” celebrating the achievements of black stage actors in New York City (Box 2).

**Related Resources**
Browse finding aids by topic.

**Subject Headings**
- Jackson, Mahalia, 1911-1972
- Greenaway, Kate, 1846-1901
- Yoffee, William M.
- Bannerman, Helen, 1862-1946
- Sambo (Fictitious character) -- Juvenile fiction
- Racism -- United States
- Racism -- England
- Racism -- Great Britain
- Racism in art
- Racism in literature
- Racism in popular culture -- United States
-  
-  
-  
-
INVENTORY

Box 1
Folder 1
Miscellaneous advertisements and pamphlets, 1884-1990s

Box 1
Folder 2
Little Black Sambo’s Jungle Band book and 2 vinyl records, 1939

Box 1
Folder 3
“Dramatizing Little Black Sambo” pamphlet, 1940

Box 1
Folder 4
Little Black Sambo book and vinyl record, 1941

Box 1
Folder 5
Little Black Sambo stories photocopies, 1946

Box 1
Folder 6
Little Brave Sambo vinyl record, 1949

Box 1
Folder 7
Little Brave Sambo and Ten Little Indians vinyl record, 1949

Box 1
Folder 8
“Roy Kisses Joe’s Bride,” Roy Campanella and Joe Louis photograph, 1955

Box 1
Folder 9
Little Brave Sambo vinyl record and story book, 1958

Box 1
Folder 10
Little Brave Sambo vinyl record and story book, 1958

Box 1
Folder 11
“Ten Piccaninnies” card game, 46 playing cards, 1965

Box 1
Folder 12
A Ride on High vinyl record, 1966

Box 1
Folder 13
“Aunt Tita’s Gullah Stories” 2 cassette tapes, 1986-1987

Box 1
Folder 14
“Kate Greenaway: The Cadence of Childhood,” article by Catherine Calvert, Victoria Magazine, 1991
Folder 15
Kate Greenaway, photographs and notes, 1991

Box 1
Folder 16

Box 1
Folder 17
“Steiff Golliwogg Circa 1908,” paper dolls, 1992

Box 1
Folder 18
Little Black Sambo 16mm film by Castle Films, Inc., n.d.

Box 2
Folder 1
“Gazette of the United States, Aug. 29, 1789,” “First Publication of the Bill of Rights as introduced in Congress, Aug. 24, 1789,” 1789

Box 2
Folder 2
R. F. Outcault, “Lil’ Mose’s Pet Chicken,” print, ca. 1902

Box 2
Folder 3

Box 2
Folder 4
Freddie Mitchell and his Orchestra, “That Boogie Beat,” LP Record, 1956

Box 2
Folder 5
“Storyland,” vinyl record, 1962

Box 2
Folder 6
LIFE magazines, 1947 and 1968

Box 2
Folder 7

Box 2
Folder 8
“In the Shadow of the Great White Way: Images from the Black Theatre” Calendar, 1992

Box 2
Folder 9
“Minty: A Story of Young Harriet Tubman” Poster, 1996

Box 3
Folder 10
R. F. Outcault, “A True Ghost Story by Pore Lil’ Mose,” framed print, ca. 1902

Box 3
Folder 11
R. F. Outcault, “Why Poor Lil’ Mose Left School, Poor Lil’ Mose,” framed print, ca. 1902

Box 4
Folder 12
7 “Robertson’s Golly Band” Figurines, n.d.
“Robertson’s Golly Lollipop Man” Figurine, n.d.

**Box 4**
Robertson’s “Golden Shred Fun Eraser” with “Golly” figure, n.d.

**Box 4**
5 small figurines, n.d.

**Box 5**
Peter Rabbit Book Shelf, 1971

**Box 5**
“Amos ‘n’ Andy” 14 cassette tapes, 1977-1982