

World War II Rumor Project collection



**American Folklife Center, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
1996**

Contact information: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.afc/folklife.contact>

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/2004695194>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.afc/eadafc.af010004>

Prepared by Stephanie A. Hall with the assistance of Linda Sudmalis
Revised and edited by Nora Yeh

Finding aid encoded by Glenn R. Gardner and Nora Yeh, February 2011
Revised October 2023

Collection Summary

Title: World War II Rumor Project collection

Inclusive Dates: 1942-1943

Call No.: AFC 1945/001

Creator: United States. Office of War Information

Extent (whole collection): approximately 8,000 items

Extent (whole collection): 10 boxes (5 linear feet)

Extent (manuscripts): 141 folders (approx. 8,000 sheets)

Extent (graphic materials): 12 drawings and cartoons : graphite pencil, blue ink, newsprint

Language: Collection material in English

Location: American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/2004695194>

Summary: Manuscript collection created by the Office of War Information in 1942-1943. Field representatives of various federal agencies in 42 states enlisted individuals who collected rumors generated in the United States during World War II. These individuals or "correspondents" included dentists, beauty shop operators, policemen, proprietors, and librarians who had access to rumors in their communities. Reports were submitted to Dr. Eugene Horowitz at the Bureau of Public Inquiries of OWI, who organized the materials. Rumors, jokes, rhymes, and anecdotes about the war were also collected by teachers from African American and white high school and college students; a few drawings and cartoons are included with the submissions from students.

Online Content: The World War II Rumor Project collection is digitized, and images are available to view on the Library of Congress website at <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.afc/collafc.afc1945001>. The collection was transcribed as part of the Library of Congress crowdsourcing program By the People (<https://crowd.loc.gov>) in a campaign called "Information and Disinformation: The World War II Rumor Project." The transcription dataset is available on the Library of Congress website at <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gdc/gdcdatasets.2022360466>. It contains text created by volunteers through a transcription and review process, volunteer-created tags, digital collections metadata, and metadata representing the arrangement of the items in the By the People platform, Concordia.

Provenance

Transfer from the Office of War Information, 1945.

Accruals

No further accruals are expected.

Processing History

World War II Rumor Project collection was processed by Stephanie A. Hall with the assistance of Linda Sudmalis in 1996. The finding aid was revised, edited, and encoded in EAD3 by Glenn Gardner and Nora Yeh in 2011. The collection was digitized in 2019 and made available online in 2022. Hyperlinks to the digitized content were added to the finding aid by Carolina Restrepo in 2022. The finding aid front matter and template were updated by Farrah Cundiff.

Copyright Status

Duplication of collection materials may be governed by copyright and other restrictions.

Access and Restrictions

The World War II Rumor Project collection is open to research. To request materials, please contact the Folklife Reading Room at <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.afc/folklife.contact>

Certain restrictions to use or copying of materials may apply.

Online Content

The World War II Rumor Project collection is digitized, and images are available to view on the Library of Congress website at <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.afc/collafc.afc1945001>.

The collection was transcribed as part of the Library of Congress crowdsourcing program By the People (<https://crowd.loc.gov>) in a campaign called "Information and Disinformation: The World War II Rumor Project." The transcription dataset is available on the Library of Congress website at <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gdc/gdcdatasets.2022360466>. It contains text created by volunteers through a transcription and review process, volunteer-created tags, digital collections metadata, and metadata representing the arrangement of the items in the By the People platform, Concordia.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: [item, date, container number], World War II Rumor Project collection (AFC 1945/001), American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Administrative History

The Office of War Information (OWI) was established by an Executive order on June 13, 1942, for the purpose of achieving a coordinated governmental war information program. The information program was designed to promote an informed and intelligent understanding of the status and progress of the war effort, war policies, activities, and aims of the United States government. All functions of the Office of Facts and Figures and of the Office of Government Reports, and parts of the functions and related records of two other agencies, were transferred to the OWI.

Scope and Content

The World War II Rumor Project Collection contains manuscript materials compiled by the Office of War Information (OWI). Field representatives collected information from community-based correspondents and sent duplicate or triplicate copies of reports of the correspondents to Dr. Eugene Horowitz at the Bureau of Public Inquiries of the OWI. The reports listed rumors and anecdotes that were compiled by Dr. Horowitz and William H. Webber and arranged in alphabetical order by states and by subjects.

This collection has two distinct components. The first component involved field representatives of various federal agencies in the United States instructed to enlist individuals in their communities who were willing to write down rumors and send them to the field representatives. These individuals or "correspondents" included dentists, beauty shop operators, policemen, proprietors, and librarians who had access to rumors in their communities.

The second component involved rumors, jokes, rhymes, and anecdotes about the war from high school and college students collected by teachers. Subjects include Adolph Hitler, the Japanese, rationing, and other topics. Includes rhymes and stories composed or recorded by students. Correspondence within the folders indicates that some teachers removed some rumors or jokes in order to "show the best of their pupils." Within the documents, race designations vary. For one school, correspondence indicates that students were not asked to identify their race due to local tensions. However, the papers were taken up in order, and the teacher later added a designation as to the race of the student. The designations for African-American students appear as "Negro," "N," "Colored," "Col," or "C." Designations for white students appear as "White" or "W."

Drawings by high school students and a few World War II cartoons appear on and among correspondence in the following folders:

- FOLDER 114
- FOLDER 118
- FOLDER 122

- FOLDER 123
- FOLDER 127

Arrangement

This collection is arranged in five series:

- [Series 1: Administrative Information on World War II Rumor Project](#)
- [Series 2: Administrative Information on Local Rumor-control Projects and Correspondence](#)
- [Series 3: Rumor Reports Gathered by Correspondents](#)
- [Series 4: Rumors from Correspondents and Field Representatives](#)
- [Series 5: Rumors, Jokes, and Anecdotes from High School and College Students](#)

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

People

Horowitz, Eugene

Organizations

United States. Office of War Information

Subjects

College students--United States--Attitudes.
 High school students--United States--Attitudes.
 Rumor--United States.
 Urban folklore--United States.
 World War, 1939-1945--African Americans.
 World War, 1939-1945--Anecdotes.
 World War, 1939-1945--German Americans.
 World War, 1939-1945--Humor.
 World War, 1939-1945--Japanese Americans.
 World War, 1939-1945--Jews.
 World War, 1939-1945--Propaganda.
 World War, 1939-1945--Psychological aspects.
 World War, 1939-1945--Public opinion.

Form/Genre

Correspondence.
 Drawings.
 Manuscripts.
 Poems.

Description of Series

Container

Series

[Series 1: Administrative Information on World War II Rumor Project](#)

[Series 2: Administrative Information on Local Rumor-control Projects and Correspondence](#)

[Series 3: Rumor Reports Gathered by Correspondents](#)

[Series 4: Rumors from Correspondents and Field Representatives](#)

[Series 5: Rumors, Jokes, and Anecdotes from High School and College Students](#)

Container List

Container	Contents
Series 1: Administrative Information on World War II Rumor Project	
BOX-FOLDER 1/1	Rumor Control Project Documents - various editions Digital content available: afc1945001_ms01001
BOX-FOLDER 1/2	Administrative Information and Correspondence, January-March, 1942 Digital content available: afc1945001_ms01002
BOX-FOLDER 1/3	Administrative Information and Correspondence, April-June, 1942 Digital content available: afc1945001_ms01003
BOX-FOLDER 1/4	Administrative Information and Correspondence, July-August, 1942 Digital content available: afc1945001_ms01004
BOX-FOLDER 1/5	Administrative Information and Correspondence, September-December, 1942 Digital content available: afc1945001_ms01005
BOX-FOLDER 1/6	Diagrams of Rumor and Rumor Control Digital content available: afc1945001_ms01006
BOX-FOLDER 1/7	Graphics and Articles Digital content available: afc1945001_ms01007
BOX-FOLDER 1/8	Radio Broadcast "War Information and Military Security" Digital content available: afc1945001_ms01008
Series 2: Administrative Information on Local Rumor-control Projects and Correspondence	
BOX-FOLDER 2/9	Memoranda on Rumors and Rumor Control Groups: Various Drafts Digital content available: afc1945001_ms02009
BOX-FOLDER 2/10	Memoranda on Rumors and Rumor Control Groups: Various Drafts Digital content available: afc1945001_ms02010
BOX-FOLDER 2/11	Memoranda on Rumors and Rumor Control Groups: Dr. Horowitz's File Digital content available: afc1945001_ms02011
BOX-FOLDER 2/12	Correspondents and Rumor Analysis Digital content available: afc1945001_ms02012
BOX-FOLDER 2/13	Rumor Analysis on Several Topics, including compilation of rumors received Digital content available: afc1945001_ms02013
BOX-FOLDER 2/14	Local Rumor Control Projects: Rumor Collectors Digital content available: afc1945001_ms02014
BOX-FOLDER 2/15	Local Rumor Control Projects: Correspondence and Internal Documents Digital content available: afc1945001_ms02015
BOX-FOLDER 2/16	Local Rumor Control Projects: Introduction Letter and Questionnaire Digital content available: afc1945001_ms02016
Series 3: Rumor Reports Gathered by Correspondents	
BOX-FOLDER 2/17	Local Rumor Control Projects: Alabama Digital content available: afc1945001_ms02017

Series 3: Rumor Reports Gathered by Correspondents

Container	Contents
BOX-FOLDER 2/18	Local Rumor Control Projects: Arizona Digital content available: afc1945001_ms02018
BOX-FOLDER 2/19	Local Rumor Control Projects: Arkansas Digital content available: afc1945001_ms02019
BOX-FOLDER 2/20	Local Rumor Control Projects: California Digital content available: afc1945001_ms02020
BOX-FOLDER 2/21	Local Rumor Control Projects: Colorado Digital content available: afc1945001_ms02021
BOX-FOLDER 2/22	Local Rumor Control Projects: Connecticut Digital content available: afc1945001_ms02022
BOX-FOLDER 2/23	Local Rumor Control Projects: Florida Digital content available: afc1945001_ms02023
BOX-FOLDER 2/24	Local Rumor Control Projects: Georgia Digital content available: afc1945001_ms02024
BOX-FOLDER 2/25	Local Rumor Control Projects: Idaho Digital content available: afc1945001_ms02025
BOX-FOLDER 2/26	Local Rumor Control Projects: Illinois Digital content available: afc1945001_ms02026
BOX-FOLDER 2/27	Local Rumor Control Projects: Indiana Digital content available: afc1945001_ms02027
BOX-FOLDER 2/28	Local Rumor Control Projects: Iowa Digital content available: afc1945001_ms02028
BOX-FOLDER 2/29	Local Rumor Control Projects: Kansas Digital content available: afc1945001_ms02029
BOX-FOLDER 2/30	Local Rumor Control Projects: Kentucky Digital content available: afc1945001_ms02030
BOX-FOLDER 2/31	Local Rumor Control Projects: Louisiana Digital content available: afc1945001_ms02031
BOX-FOLDER 2/32	Local Rumor Control Projects: Maine Digital content available: afc1945001_ms02032
BOX-FOLDER 2/33	Local Rumor Control Projects: Massachusetts Digital content available: afc1945001_ms02033
BOX-FOLDER 3/34	Massachusetts Committee on Public Safety: Documents and Correspondence Digital content available: afc1945001_ms03034
BOX-FOLDER 3/35	Local Rumor Control Projects: Michigan Digital content available: afc1945001_ms03035
BOX-FOLDER 3/36	Local Rumor Control Projects: Minnesota Digital content available: afc1945001_ms03036
BOX-FOLDER 3/37	Local Rumor Control Projects: Missouri Digital content available: afc1945001_ms03037
BOX-FOLDER 3/38	Local Rumor Control Projects: Montana Digital content available: afc1945001_ms03038
BOX-FOLDER 3/39	Local Rumor Control Projects: Nebraska Digital content available: afc1945001_ms03039
BOX-FOLDER 3/40	Local Rumor Control Projects: New Jersey Digital content available: afc1945001_ms03040
BOX-FOLDER 3/41	Local Rumor Control Projects: New Mexico Digital content available: afc1945001_ms03041

Series 3: Rumor Reports Gathered by Correspondents

Container	Contents
BOX-FOLDER 3/42	Local Rumor Control Projects: New York Digital content available: afc1945001_ms03042
BOX-FOLDER 3/43	Local Rumor Control Projects: North Carolina Digital content available: afc1945001_ms03043
BOX-FOLDER 3/44	Local Rumor Control Projects: North Dakota Digital content available: afc1945001_ms03044
BOX-FOLDER 3/45	Local Rumor Control Projects: Ohio Digital content available: afc1945001_ms03045
BOX-FOLDER 3/46	Local Rumor Control Projects: Oklahoma Digital content available: afc1945001_ms03046
BOX-FOLDER 3/47	Local Rumor Control Projects: Oregon Digital content available: afc1945001_ms03047
BOX-FOLDER 3/48	Local Rumor Control Projects: Pennsylvania Digital content available: afc1945001_ms03048
BOX-FOLDER 3/49	Local Rumor Control Projects: Rhode Island Digital content available: afc1945001_ms03049
BOX-FOLDER 3/50	Local Rumor Control Projects: South Carolina Digital content available: afc1945001_ms03050
BOX-FOLDER 3/51	Local Rumor Control Projects: Tennessee Digital content available: afc1945001_ms03051
BOX-FOLDER 3/52	Local Rumor Control Projects: Texas Digital content available: afc1945001_ms03052
BOX-FOLDER 3/53	Local Rumor Control Projects: Utah Digital content available: afc1945001_ms03053
BOX-FOLDER 3/54	Local Rumor Control Projects: Virginia Digital content available: afc1945001_ms03054
BOX-FOLDER 3/55	Local Rumor Control Projects: Washington (State) Digital content available: afc1945001_ms03055
BOX-FOLDER 3/56	Local Rumor Control Projects: Washington D.C. Digital content available: afc1945001_ms03056
BOX-FOLDER 3/57	Local Rumor Control Projects: West Virginia Digital content available: afc1945001_ms03057
BOX-FOLDER 3/58	Local Rumor Control Projects: Wisconsin Digital content available: afc1945001_ms03058
BOX-FOLDER 3/59	Local Rumor Control Projects: Wyoming Digital content available: afc1945001_ms03059

Series 4: Rumors from Correspondents and Field Representatives

BOX-FOLDER 4/60	Anti-British Digital content available: afc1945001_ms04060
BOX-FOLDER 4/61	Armed Forces: Health Digital content available: afc1945001_ms04061
BOX-FOLDER 4/62	Army-Navy Commissions Digital content available: afc1945001_ms04062
BOX-FOLDER 4/63	Army-Navy Training Digital content available: afc1945001_ms04063

Series 4: Rumors from Correspondents and Field Representatives

Container	Contents
BOX-FOLDER 4/64	Civilian Defense Digital content available: afc1945001_ms04064
BOX-FOLDER 4/65	Civilian Front: Criticism of Government Digital content available: afc1945001_ms04065
BOX-FOLDER 4/66	Civilian Front: Security and Treatment of Enemy Aliens Digital content available: afc1945001_ms04066
BOX-FOLDER 4/67	Criticism of U.S. Government Digital content available: afc1945001_ms04067
BOX-FOLDER 4/68	Defense Workers Digital content available: afc1945001_ms04068
BOX-FOLDER 4/69	Defense Workers: Pay Digital content available: afc1945001_ms04069
BOX-FOLDER 4/70	Discards as non-rumor Digital content available: afc1945001_ms04070
BOX-FOLDER 4/71	Economic Front: War Bonds and Stamps Digital content available: afc1945001_ms04071
BOX-FOLDER 4/72	Farmers Digital content available: afc1945001_ms04072
BOX-FOLDER 4/73	Government Information: Policy and Practice Digital content available: afc1945001_ms04073
BOX-FOLDER 4/74	Inflation Digital content available: afc1945001_ms04074
BOX-FOLDER 4/75	Labor Relations and Union Activities Digital content available: afc1945001_ms04075
BOX-FOLDER 5/76	Military: High commands Digital content available: afc1945001_ms05076
BOX-FOLDER 5/77	Military: Movement of troops Digital content available: afc1945001_ms05077
BOX-FOLDER 5/78	Military: Woman Auxiliaries Digital content available: afc1945001_ms05078
BOX-FOLDER 5/79	Military Losses: Human Combatants Digital content available: afc1945001_ms05079
BOX-FOLDER 5/80	Military Losses: Prisoners Digital content available: afc1945001_ms05080
BOX-FOLDER 5/81	Military Losses: Warships Digital content available: afc1945001_ms05081
BOX-FOLDER 5/82	Military Officers Digital content available: afc1945001_ms05082
BOX-FOLDER 5/83	Military Organization: General Digital content available: afc1945001_ms05083
BOX-FOLDER 5/84	Military Recruitment (Military Selective Service) Digital content available: afc1945001_ms05084
BOX-FOLDER 5/85	Military Strategy: American Front Digital content available: afc1945001_ms05085
BOX-FOLDER 5/86	Military Strategy: Far East Front Digital content available: afc1945001_ms05086
BOX-FOLDER 5/87	Military Strategy: Russian Front Digital content available: afc1945001_ms05087

Series 4: Rumors from Correspondents and Field Representatives

Container	Contents
BOX-FOLDER 5/88	Military Strategy: Second Front Digital content available: afc1945001_ms05088
BOX-FOLDER 5/89	Military Strength Digital content available: afc1945001_ms05089
BOX-FOLDER 5/90	Military Strength of the United States: Perceptions Digital content available: afc1945001_ms05090
BOX-FOLDER 5/91	Military Tactics Digital content available: afc1945001_ms05091
BOX-FOLDER 6/92	Miscellaneous (Permalife copies) Digital content available: afc1945001_ms06092
BOX-FOLDER 6/93	Miscellaneous (Original copies) Digital content available: afc1945001_ms06093
BOX-FOLDER 6/94	Morals Digital content available: afc1945001_ms06094
BOX-FOLDER 6/95	Operations, Actual and Potential: In United States and along United States Coast Digital content available: afc1945001_ms06095
BOX-FOLDER 6/96	Operations: Aleutians Digital content available: afc1945001_ms06096
BOX-FOLDER 6/97	Operations: Russian Front Digital content available: afc1945001_ms06097
BOX-FOLDER 6/98	Post World-War Digital content available: afc1945001_ms06098
BOX-FOLDER 6/99	Predictions of Duration Digital content available: afc1945001_ms06099
BOX-FOLDER 6/100	Rationing: Miscellaneous (Permalife copies) Digital content available: afc1945001_ms06100
BOX-FOLDER 6/101	Rationing: Miscellaneous (Original copies) Digital content available: afc1945001_ms06101
BOX-FOLDER 7/102	Rationing: Rubber and tire rationing Digital content available: afc1945001_ms07102
BOX-FOLDER 7/103	Rationing: Sugar Digital content available: afc1945001_ms07103
BOX-FOLDER 7/104	Russia's Arms and War Effort (1) Favorable and neutral and (2) Unfavorable Digital content available: afc1945001_ms07104
BOX-FOLDER 7/105	Social problems: General Digital content available: afc1945001_ms07105
BOX-FOLDER 7/106	Social problems: Poverty and Unemployment Digital content available: afc1945001_ms07106
BOX-FOLDER 7/107	Social Problems: Race discrimination Digital content available: afc1945001_ms07107
BOX-FOLDER 7/108	Social Problems: Race discrimination, other: Japanese, German Digital content available: afc1945001_ms07108
BOX-FOLDER 7/109	Strategy: General Digital content available: afc1945001_ms07109
BOX-FOLDER 7/110	War arms: General and Miscellaneous Digital content available: afc1945001_ms07110
BOX-FOLDER 7/111	War causes Digital content available: afc1945001_ms07111

Series 4: Rumors from Correspondents and Field Representatives

Container

Contents

BOX-FOLDER 7/112 War Production Management
[Digital content available: afc1945001_ms07112](#)

Series 5: Rumors, Jokes, and Anecdotes from High School and College Students

BOX-FOLDER 8/113 Instruction sheet for High School and College Instructors
[Digital content available: afc1945001_ms08113](#)

BOX-FOLDER 8/114 Alabama. Parker High School, Birmingham
[Digital content available: afc1945001_ms08114](#)
Includes 2 drawings, graphite pencil

BOX-FOLDER 8/115 Alabama. Tuskegee Institute, Tuskegee. (Permalife copies)
[Digital content available: afc1945001_ms08115](#)

BOX-FOLDER 8/116 Alabama. Tuskegee Institute, Tuskegee. (Original copies)
[Digital content available: afc1945001_ms08116a](#)

BOX-FOLDER 8/116 Alabama. Tuskegee Institute, Tuskegee. (Original copies)
[Digital content available: afc1945001_ms08116b](#)

BOX-FOLDER 8/117 Illinois. Du Sable High School, Chicago
[Digital content available: afc1945001_ms08117](#)

BOX-FOLDER 8/118 Illinois. Englewood High School, Chicago
[Digital content available: afc1945001_ms08118](#)
Includes 1 drawing, blue ink; and 1 drawing, graphite pencil

BOX-FOLDER 8/119 Illinois. Englewood High School, Chicago
[Digital content available: afc1945001_ms08119](#)

BOX-FOLDER 8/120 Illinois. Englewood High School, Chicago
[Digital content available: afc1945001_ms08120](#)

BOX-FOLDER 8/121 Illinois. Englewood High School, Chicago
[Digital content available: afc1945001_ms08121](#)

BOX-FOLDER 8/122 Illinois. Englewood High School, Chicago
[Digital content available: afc1945001_ms08122](#)
Includes 3 photocopied political cartoons

BOX-FOLDER 8/123 Illinois. Englewood High School, Chicago
[Digital content available: afc1945001_ms08123](#)
Includes 2 sketches, graphite pencil; 1 drawing, blue ink; 1 political cartoon, newsprint, black and white

BOX-FOLDER 9/124 Illinois. Englewood High School, Chicago
[Digital content available: afc1945001_ms09124](#)

BOX-FOLDER 9/125 Illinois. Englewood High School, Chicago
[Digital content available: afc1945001_ms09125](#)

BOX-FOLDER 9/126 Illinois. Englewood High School, Chicago
[Digital content available: afc1945001_ms09126](#)

BOX-FOLDER 9/127 Illinois. Englewood High School, Chicago
[Digital content available: afc1945001_ms09127](#)
Includes 1 political cartoon, newsprint, black and white

BOX-FOLDER 9/128 North Carolina. Washington High School, Raleigh
[Digital content available: afc1945001_ms09128](#)

BOX-FOLDER 9/129 Ohio. East High School, Columbus
[Digital content available: afc1945001_ms09129](#)

BOX-FOLDER 9/130 Ohio. East High School, Columbus
[Digital content available: afc1945001_ms09130](#)

Series 5: Rumors, Jokes, and Anecdotes from High School and College Students

Container	Contents
BOX-FOLDER 9/131	Ohio. Dennison College, Granville Digital content available: <u>afc1945001_ms09131</u>
BOX-FOLDER 9/132	Ohio. Wilberforce University, Wilberforce (Permalife copies) Digital content available: <u>afc1945001_ms09132</u>
BOX-FOLDER 10/133	Ohio. Wilberforce University, Wilberforce (Original copies) Digital content available: <u>afc1945001_ms10133</u>
BOX-FOLDER 10/134	Washington, D.C., Howard University Digital content available: <u>afc1945001_ms10134</u>
BOX-FOLDER 10/135	West Virginia. Bluefield State Teachers College, Bluefield Digital content available: <u>afc1945001_ms10135</u>
BOX-FOLDER 10/136	West Virginia. West Virginia State College, Institute Digital content available: <u>afc1945001_ms10136</u>
BOX-FOLDER 10/137	Unknown High School Digital content available: <u>afc1945001_ms10137</u>
BOX-FOLDER 10/138	Unknown High School Digital content available: <u>afc1945001_ms10138</u>
BOX-FOLDER 10/139	Unknown High School Digital content available: <u>afc1945001_ms10139</u>
BOX-FOLDER 10/140	Unknown School Digital content available: <u>afc1945001_ms10140</u>
BOX-FOLDER 10/141	Unknown School Digital content available: <u>afc1945001_ms10141</u>