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A Guide to the
William T.V. (Thomas Valeria) Fontaine Papers
1966-circa 1968, undated

0.5 Cubic feet

UPT 50 F678

Prepared by Timothy H. Horning
December 2014

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PROVENANCE

The William T.V. Fontaine papers were donated to the University Archives by Mrs. Samuel L. Bullock in November 1980 (accession number 20-80).

ARRANGEMENT

The William T. V. Fontaine papers are organized into two series, Writings and Miscellaneous, which are arranged alphabetically.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

William T. V. (Thomas Valeria) Fontaine was a Professor of Philosophy at the University of Pennsylvania from 1950 to 1968. He was the University of Pennsylvania's first fully-affiliated and first tenured African-American faculty member.

William T. V. Fontaine was born in Chester, Pennsylvania on December 2, 1909, the second of thirteen children of a steelworker father and his wife. His parents stressed the value of education and his Fontaine's widowed Aunt Nettie provided the funds needed for him to attend college; Fontaine graduated *cum laude* from Lincoln University in 1930.

He enrolled at the University of Pennsylvania to pursue graduate studies in philosophy, taking a Masters Degree in 1932 and a Doctor of Philosophy in 1936 with a dissertation titled "Concept of Fortune in Boethius and Giordana Bruno." Fontaine believed that philosophy was not only an academic discipline, but also the foundation on which human society was based.

After taking his Ph.D., Fontaine accepted a position at Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, teaching philosophy and history; he eventually became chair of the Department of Social Sciences. In 1943 Fontaine left Southern University to enlist in the United States Army where he served as a sergeant doing vocational training until 1946. After leaving the Army, he became chair of the Department of Philosophy and Psychology at Morgan State College in Baltimore, Maryland.

In 1947 Fontaine took a leave of absence from Morgan to teach as a Visiting Lecturer at the University of Pennsylvania. After two successful years in this role, the University of Pennsylvania offered Fontaine a permanent position as an Assistant Professor. Fontaine resigned from Morgan to take the position. The Assistant Professor position made Fontaine the first full-affiliated African-American faculty member. When he became Associate Professor in 1963, Fontaine became the University's first tenured African-American faculty member.

William T. V. Fontaine died in December 1968 after having suffered the lingering effects of a bout with tuberculosis he contracted in the summer of 1949. After his death, the Fontaine Fellowship was established in his honor at the University of Pennsylvania. The fellowship provides funding necessary for minority students to pursue full-time doctoral studies.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The William T. V. Fontaine papers consist mostly of loose, handwritten notes by Dr. Fontaine on various writings, most of which are related to his book *Reflections on Segregation, Desegregation, Power and Morals* (1967).

CONTROLLED ACCESS HEADINGS

Occupation(s)

- African American educators

Subject(s)

- African Americans--Pennsylvania--Philadelphia.
- Philosophy--Study and teaching--United States.

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INVENTORY

WRITINGS	Box	Folder
Article: Josiah Royce and the American Race Problem, undated	1	1
Draft: Segregation, Desegregation, Power and Morals, undated (1)	1	2
Draft: Segregation, Desegregation, Power and Morals, undated (2)	1	3
Manuscript Notes: Harry S. Truman: The Committee on Civil Rights, undated	1	4
Manuscript Notes: Moral Power plus Massive Economic Power, undated (1)	1	5
Manuscript Notes: Moral Power plus Massive Economic Power, undated (2)	1	6
Manuscript Notes: Negro Continuum from Dominant Wish to Collective Act, undated	1	7
Manuscript Notes: Segregation, Desegregation, Power and Morals , Chapter Two: Anatomization, undated (1)	1	8
Manuscript Notes: Segregation, Desegregation, Power and Morals , Chapter Two: Anatomization, undated (2)	1	9
Manuscript Notes: Segregation, Desegregation, Power and Morals ,Chapter Three: White Americans for Desegregation, undated	1	10
Manuscript Notes: Segregation, Desegregation, Power and Morals , Chapter Four: White Power Struggles, Expediency and Token Desegregation, undated	1	11

Manuscript Notes: Separation by Social Distance, undated	1	12
Manuscript Notes: Separation by Spacial Distance, undated	1	13
Manuscript Notes: Separation by Temporal Distance, undated	1	14
MISCELLANEOUS		
Letter: John Davis to Dr. J. Gikonyo Kiano (copy), 1967 April 5	1	15
Letter: William Fontaine to Congressman Robert Nix (draft), c. 1968	1	16
Review: Fontaine's Reflections on Segregation, Desegregation, Power and Morals by W. Edward Farrison, undated	1	17
Society of Afro and Afro-American Students: Constitution, undated	1	18
Society of Afro and Afro-American Students: Minutes, 1966 October 14	1	19