

Bureau of Social Hygiene records

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Rockefeller Archive Center

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Table of Contents

Summary Information	3
Biographical/Historical note	3
Scope and Contents note	4
Arrangement note	5
File Plan note	5
Administrative Information	5
Controlled Access Headings	6
Collection Inventory	7
Administration	7
Finances	9
Projects	[]
Projects - Narcotics1	2
Projects - Social Hygiene	6
Projects - Juvenile Delinquency	9
Projects - Criminology	13
Projects - Miscellaneous	(
Leonard V. Harrison Files 4	3
Leonard V. Harrison Files - Narcotics	3
Leonard V. Harrison Files - European Police Systems	4
Leonard V. Harrison Files - Boston-Harvard Survey	9
Leonard V. Harrison Files - Criminology	2
Leonard V. Harrison Files - Miscellaneous	6
New York Police Psychopathic Laboratory	7
Bureau of Social Hygiene photographs	C

Summary Information

Repository: Rockefeller Archive Center

Creator: Bureau of Social Hygiene. (New York, N.Y.)

Title: Bureau of Social Hygiene records

ID: FA060

Date [inclusive]: 1911-1940

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Material:

Preferred Citation

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^ Return to Table of Contents

Biographical/Historical note

The Bureau of Social Hygiene resulted from the appointment of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., to a Special Grand Jury to investigate white slavery in New York City in 1910. In conferences taken in the course of this investigation, Mr. Rockefeller, Jr., became convinced that for a lasting improvement of conditions a permanent organization was needed. On March 22, 1911, The Committee of Three, including Mr. Rockefeller, Jr., Paul Warburg, and Starr Murphy, met. The name "Bureau of Social Hygiene" was first used in October of that year, but not consistently until 1913.

In 1913 the Bureau was incorporated and its purpose was stated as "...the study, amelioration, and prevention of those social conditions, crimes, and diseases which adversely affect the well being of society, with special reference to prostitution and the evils associated therewith." The Bureau would engage in research and education, publish reports, and employ and/or cooperate with other public or private agencies to obtain these goals. The emphasis in the years from 1911 until the reorganization of 1928 was mainly on prostitution, the control of vice, and, through that, the relationships to police organization. Narcotics was also an early interest. Throughout these early years, Katherine Bement Davis, Commissioner of Charities and Correction of New York and later Superintendent of Bedford Hills Reformatory, guided the Bureau as General Secretary.

Miss Davis resigned in 1928 and Lawrence B. Dunham was appointed Director. Under Mr. Dunham's administration, from 1928-1934, the Bureau developed a broadened interest in criminology. In 1929 the certificate of incorporation was amended and the emphasis on prostitution was dropped. Criminology embraced crime reporting, police training and education, penology, criminal law, and juvenile delinquency. While studies and projects were still conducted in narcotics and social hygiene, the main thrust of the organization was crime and criminology.

The Bureau functioned through grants. It was not a foundation and had no set endowment. In the very early years of its existence, financial backing came from several sources including Paul Warburg, the New York Foundation, and John D. Rockefeller, Jr., although throughout the history of the Bureau, Mr. Rockefeller, Jr., was always the main contributor. Grants were occasionally channeled through the Bureau from the Spelman Fund of New York and the Rockefeller Foundation.

Grants were made by the Bureau for a variety of types of work. Research studies were conducted, such as the Institute of Criminology and the Crew Study; books were published, such as "European Police Systems" and "Policewoman's Handbook"; fellowships were given, as were the fellowships in prison study; and experiments were conducted at the Massachusetts State Prison Colony and the Laboratory of Social Hygiene at Bedford Hills. Grants were most often long range covering periods of from three to five years. Although the Bureau did not interfere in the conduct of a project once money had been granted, it was careful in its selection of projects and kept in close touch during the life of the project.

The Bureau ceased making new appropriations in 1934 and by mid-1937 all the previous commitments had been brought to a close. Annual meetings were held until 1940 when the Bureau was dissolved on November 13th.

^ Return to Table of Contents

Scope and Contents note

Important subjects in this collection include: prostitution and white slavery, penal institutions and systems, juvenile delinquency, criminal law, police systems, police training, public administration, narcotics laws and control nationally and internationally, maternal health, sex education, birth control, uniform crime statistics, the relation of mental illness to crime, scientific criminal investigations, probation and parole.

Among the correspondents are: Raymond B. Fosdick, Starr Murphy, Arthur Woods, John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Henry Aslinger, William Draper Lewis, John D. Rockefeller, 3rd, Abraham Flexner, Walter L. Treadway, Felix Frankfurter, J. Edgar Hoover, George Wickersham, Katharine B. Davis, Leonard V. Harrison, Franklin D. Roosevelt, James Bronson Reynolds, Lawrence B. Dunham, and Alfred E. Smith.

It was not the Bureau's practice to keep the research files from any given project. Thus the records for the Sanger Birth Control Clinic are at Harvard, the Laboratory of Social Hygiene records are at Bedford Hills, and so on.

The Bureau of Social Hygiene Collection covers the period from 1911 to 1940.

^ Return to Table of Contents

Arrangement note

This collection is arranged in six series, as follows:

Series 1 - Administration

Series 2 - Finances

Series 3 - Projects

Series 4 - Leonard V. Harrison Files

Series 5 - New York Police Psychopathic Laboratory

Series 1017 - Photographs

^ Return to Table of Contents

File Plan note

Former Classification: IV 2B 03

^ Return to Table of Contents

Administrative Information

Publication Statement

Rockefeller Archive Center

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Processing Information note

Processing was completed as of August 1, 1969. Processing Level 3: Standard Processing. All material is available in acid free manuscript boxes and folders.

Immediate Source of Acquisition note

The papers of the Bureau of Social Hygiene were deposited with the Rockefeller Foundation Archives in January 1938 by Arthur Woods.

^ Return to Table of Contents

Controlled Access Headings

- Maternal health services
- Narcotic laws
- Public health administration
- Police training
- Juvenile delinquency
- Criminal law
- Crime
- Correctional institutions
- Mental health
- Family planning
- Hygiene
- Human rights
- Law

- Mentally ill offenders
- Birth control
- Sexual health
- Prostitution
- Human trafficking
- **United States**

Collection Inventory

Administration

Arrangement note

This series is arranged alphabetically.

Scope and Contents note

This series consists of annual reports, dockets, the Bureau history, minutes, and folders for the members and staff of the Bureau. While there is reference to the various projects, the emphasis of this series is on administration policy.

Title/Description	Instances	
Annual Report, 1928-1930	box 1	folder 1
Scope and Contents note		
This folder contains information on the Crew Study.		
Annual Report, 1929	box 1	folder 2
Annual Report Correspondence, 1929-1932	box 1	folder 3
Scope and Contents note		
This folder contains information on the Crew Study.		
Annual Report, 1931	box 1	folder 4
Armour, Alexander, 1931-1932	box 1	folder 5
Colby, Everett, 1931-1933	box 1	folder 6
Davis, Katherine, 1925-1932	box 1	folder 7
Debevoise, Thomas, 1929-1932	box 1	folder 8
Dockets, 1928-1931	box 1	folder 9
Dockets, 1928-1931	box 1	folder 10
Dockets, 1928-1931	box 1	folder 11
Dockets, 1928-1931	box 1	folder 12

Dunham, Lawrence, 1927-1936	box 2	folder 13
Farnham, John, 1929-1936	box 2	folder 14
Fosdick, Raymond, 1914-1933	box 2	folder 15
Harrison, Leonard, 1932-1936	box 2	folder 16
History - Organization and Bylaws	box 2	folder 17
History - Reorganization, 1915-1916	box 2	folder 18
History - Reorganization, 1928	box 2	folder 19
History - Working Plans	box 2	folder 20
History - Termination, 1932-1935	box 2	folder 21
Meetings, 1930-1935	box 2	folder 22
Minutes, 1911-1916	box 2	folder 23
Minutes, 1911-1916	box 2	folder 24
Minutes, 1911-1916	box 2	folder 25
Minutes, 1911-1916	box 2	folder 26
Minutes, 1911-1916	box 2	folder 27
Minutes, 1911-1916	box 2	folder 28
Minutes, 1917-1940	box 3	folder 29
Minutes, 1917-1940	box 3	folder 30
Minutes, 1917-1940	box 3	folder 31
Minutes, 1917-1940	box 3	folder 32
Minutes, 1917-1940	box 3	folder 33
Minutes, 1917-1940	box 3	folder 34
Minutes, 1917-1940	box 3	folder 35
Minutes, 1917-1940	box 3	folder 36
Minutes, 1917-1940	box 3	folder 37
Minutes, 1917-1940	box 3	folder 38
Minutes, 1917-1940	box 3	folder 39
Minutes, 1917-1940	box 3	folder 40
Minutes, 1917-1940	box 3	folder 41
Minutes, 1917-1940	box 3	folder 42
Minutes, 1917-1940	box 3	folder 43
Minutes, 1917-1940	box 3	folder 44

Minutes, 1917-1940	box 3	folder 45
Minutes, 1917-1940	box 3	folder 46
Minutes, 1917-1940	box 3	folder 47
Minutes, 1917-1940	box 3	folder 48
Minutes, 1917-1940	box 3	folder 49
Packard, A. W., 1930-1934	box 3	folder 50
Plazinski, Thaddeus, 1930-1935	box 3	folder 51
Publications	box 3	folder 52
Rockefeller, John D., Jr., 1912-1933	box 3	folder 53
Rockefeller, John D., 3rd., 1931-1934	box 3	folder 54
Rockefeller Foundation, 1930-1933	box 4	folder 55
Sellin, Thorsten, 1930-1933	box 4	folder 56
Social Sciences, 1921-1930	box 4	folder 57
Spelman Fund Appropriations, 1933-1935	box 4	folder 58
Sutherland, E. H., 1929-1935	box 4	folder 59
Sutherland, E. H., 1929-1935	box 4	folder 60
Topping, Ruth, 1930-1932	box 4	folder 61
Winsor, Max, 1931-1934	box 4	folder 62
Woods, Arthur, 1926-1934	box 4	folder 63
Woods, Arthur, 1926-1934	box 4	folder 64

^ Return to Table of Contents

Finances

Arrangement note

This series is arranged alphabetically and chronologically.

Scope and Contents note

This series included budgets, accounts, treasurer's reports, royalty information on the publications, and pledges and commitments.

Related Archival Materials note:

Related Archival Materials note

The following Bureau financial records are located in JDR financial material: Ledger, Oct. 1, 1925 Cash Journal and Trial Balance, 1920-1924 Ledger, 1926-January 18, 1928

Title/Description	Instances	
Accountant's Reports, 1928-1934	box 1	folder 65
Budgets, 1928-1932	box 1	folder 66
Billerica Trust Company, 1932-1934	box 1	folder 67
Correspondence, 1928-1933	box 1	folder 68
Financial Reports, 1911-1934	box 1	folder 69
Income Tax, 1928-1933	box 1	folder 70
Mt. Kisco National Bank and Trust, 1938	box 1	folder 71
Norfolk Prison Report, 1934-1940	box 1	folder 72
"The Opium Problem", 1937	box 1	folder 73
Pledges and Commitments, 1928-1935	box 1	folder 74
Pledges and Commitments, 1928-1935	box 1	folder 75
Pledges and Commitments, 1928-1935	box 1	folder 76
Pledges and Commitments, 1928-1935	box 1	folder 77
Pledges and Commitments, 1928-1935	box 1	folder 78
Pledges and Commitments, 1928-1935	box 1	folder 79
Pledges and Commitments, 1928-1935	box 1	folder 80
Pledges and Commitments - John D. Rockefeller, Jr., 1911-1940	box 1	folder 80A
Project Reports	box 2	folder 81
Project Financial Reports, 1929-1935	box 2	folder 82
Publication Agreements	box 2	folder 83
Publications	box 2	folder 84
Publications - Correspondence, 1913-1945	box 2	folder 85
Resolutions, 1926-1934	box 2	folder 86
Resolutions, 1926-1934	box 2	folder 87
Disposition of Royalties	box 2	folder 88
Salary Schedules, 1928-1932	box 2	folder 89
Tax, Capital Stock, 1933-1935	box 2	folder 90
Γax, Gift Donees, 1933-1935	box 2	folder 91
Treasurer's Reports, 1928-1940	box 2	folder 92
Unemployment Insurance, 1935	box 2	folder 93

folder 93H folder 93I
folder 93H
folder 93G
folder 93
folder 93E
folder 93
folder 93C
folder 93B
folder 93A

[^] Return to Table of Contents

Projects

Arrangement note

This series is arranged in five subseries, as follows:

Subseries 1 - Narcotics (6 boxes)

Subseries 2 - Social Hygiene (4 boxes)

Subseries 3 - Juvenile Delinquency (4 boxes)

Subseries 4 - Criminology (23 boxes)

Subseries 5 - Miscellaneous (3 boxes)

Scope and Contents note

This series contains project information, as well as general subject information. These files date mainly from the 1928 reorganization through 1935.

Existence and Location of Copies:

Existence and Location of Copies

Scholarly access to original archival material is permitted. User copies of microfilm are also available. The Projects series is reproduced in the microfilm publication of the Bureau of Social Hygiene project and research files, 1913-1940, reels 1-20 (Scholarly Resources Inc., 1980).

Projects - Narcotics

Scope and Contents note

This subseries contains information on publications such as "Dangerous Drugs", the League of Nations Committee, narcotics investigations, and legislation in the area of narcotics control.

Not Used:

Not Used

Persistent ID ref144, Box 1/folder 107Persistent ID ref145, Box 1/folder 108Persistent ID ref146, Box 1/folder 109All deleted because NOT USED

Fitle/Description	Instances	
American White Cross Association on Drug Addiction,	box 1	folder 94
1928-1930	reel 1	
Caldwell, Kenneth, 1928-1930	box 1	folder 95
	reel 1	
Case Histories, 1931-1932	box 1	folder 96
	reel 1	
Committee on Traffic in Opium, 1928-1929	box 1	folder 97
	reel 1	
Dai, Bingham, 1929-1933	box 1	folder 98
	reel 1	
"Dangerous Drugs" by Arthur Woods, 1930-1932	box 1	folder 99
	reel 1	
"Dangerous Drugs" by Arthur Woods, 1930-1932	box 1	folder 100
	reel 1	
"Dangerous Drugs" by Arthur Woods, 1930-1932	box 1	folder 101
	reel 1	
"Dangerous Drugs" by Arthur Woods, 1930-1932	box 1	folder 102
	reel 1	
Farnham, John, 1927-1929	box 1	folder 103
	reel 1	
Farnham, John, 1927-1929	box 1	folder 104

	reel 1	
Farnham, John, 1927-1929	box 1	folder 105
	reel 1	
Farnham, John, 1927-1929	box 1	folder 106
	reel 1	
Farnham, John, 1930-1931	box 2	folder 110
	reel 1	
Farnham, John, 1930-1931	box 2	folder 111
	reel 1	
Farnham, John - Miscellaneous	box 2	folder 112
	reel 1	
Gavit, John, 1927-1928	box 2	folder 113
	reel 1	
League of Nations, 1920-1934	box 2	folder 114
	reel 1	
League of Nations, 1920-1934	box 2	folder 115
	reel 1	
League of Nations, 1920-1934	box 2	folder 116
	reel 1	
League of Nations, 1920-1934	box 2	folder 117
	reel 1	
League of Nations, 1920-1934	box 2	folder 118
	reel 1	
League of Nations, 1920-1934	box 2	folder 119
	reel 1	
League of Nations, 1920-1934	box 2	folder 120
	reel 1	
League of Nations, 1920-1934	box 2	folder 121
	reel 1	
League of Nations, 1920-1934	box 2	folder 122
	reel 2	
League of Nations - Miscellaneous	box 3	folder 123

	reel 2	
Maritime Insurance, 1927-1929	box 3	folder 124
	reel 2	
Massachusetts Narcotics Survey, 1930-1931	box 3	folder 125
	reel 2	
Narcotics, 1924-1931	box 3	folder 126
	reel 2	
Narcotics, 1924-1931	box 3	folder 127
	reel 2	
Narcotics, 1924-1931	box 3	folder 128
	reel 2	
Narcotics, 1924-1931	box 3	folder 129
	reel 2	
Narcotics, 1924-1931	box 3	folder 130
	reel 2	
Narcotics, 1924-1931	box 3	folder 131
	reel 2	
Narcotics, 1932-1935	box 4	folder 132
	reel 2	
Narcotics, 1932-1935	box 4	folder 133
	reel 2	
Narcotics, 1932-1935	box 4	folder 134
	reel 2	
Narcotics, 1932-1935	box 4	folder 135
	reel 2	
Narcotics - Miscellaneous	box 4	folder 136
	reel 2	
Narcotics - Investigations, 1932	box 4	folder 137
	reel 2	
Narcotics - Manufacturers, 1928-1933	box 4	folder 138
	reel 2	
Narcotics - Seizure Cases, 1926-1930	box 4	folder 139

	reel 3		
National Research Council Committee on Drug Addiction,	box 4	folder 140	
1922-1928	reel 3		
National Research Council Committee on Drug Addiction,	box 4	folder 141	
1922-1928	reel 3		
National Research Council Committee on Drug Addiction,	box 5	folder 142	
1929-1933	reel 3		
National Research Council Committee on Drug Addiction,	box 5	folder 143	
1929-1933	reel 3		
National Research Council Committee on Drug Addiction,	box 5	folder 144	
1929-1933	reel 3		
National Research Council Committee on Drug Addiction,	box 5	folder 145	
1929-1933	reel 3		
National Research Council Committee on Drug Addiction,	box 5	folder 146	
1929-1933	reel 3		
National Research Council Committee on Drug Addiction -	box 5	folder 147	
Clippings and Pamphlets, 1929-1933	reel 3		
National Research Council Committee on Drug Addiction -	box 5	folder 148	
Reports, 1929-1933	reel 3		
Nutt, L. C., 1926-1929	box 5	folder 149	
	reel 3		
Opium, 1926-1931	box 5	folder 150	
	reel 3		
Opium Advisory Committee, 1926-1933	box 5	folder 151	
	reel 3		
"The Opium Problem" by Terry and Pellens, 1928-1934	box 6	folder 152	
	reel 3		
Opium Production in Persia, 1925-1928	box 6	folder 153	
	reel 3		
Porter Bills, 1929-1930	box 6	folder 154	
	reel 3		
Porter Bills - Miscellaneous	box 6	folder 155	

	reel 3		
"Report on the Legal Use of Narcotics in Detroit, Michigan and	box 6	folder 156	
Its Environs", 1930-1931	reel 3		
"Report on the Legal Use of Narcotics in Detroit, Michigan and	box 6	folder 157	
Its Environs", 1930-1931	reel 3		
"Report on the Legal Use of Narcotics in Detroit, Michigan and	box 6	folder 158	
Its Environs" - Miscellaneous	reel 3		
Underhill, Frank, 1927-1928	box 6	folder 159	
	reel 4		
Uniform State Narcotics Laws, 1929-1932	box 6	folder 160	
	reel 4		
Uniform State Narcotics Laws - Miscellaneous	box 6	folder 161	
	reel 4		

Projects - Social Hygiene

Scope and Contents note

This subseries includes material on white slavery and prostitution, birth control, sex education, eugenics, venereal disease, and population.

Title/Description	Instances	
American Birth Control League, 1929-1936	box 7	folder 162
	reel 4	
American Birth Control League, 1929-1936	box 7	folder 163
	reel 4	
American Social Hygiene Association Vice Investigations,	box 7	folder 164
1930-1934	reel 4	
American Social Hygiene Association Vice Investigations -	box 7	folder 165
Reports	reel 4	
Birth Control, 1931-1932	box 7	folder 166
	reel 4	
Birth Control Clinical Research Bureau, 1931-1935	box 7	folder 167
	reel 4	
Boston Dispensary, 1929-1930	box 7	folder 168
	reel 4	
British Social Hygiene Council, 1931	box 7	folder 169

	reel 4		
Canadian Social Hygiene Council, 1931	box 7	folder 170	
	reel 4		
"Commercialized Prostitution in New York" by George	box 7	folder 171	
Kneeland	reel 4		
Committee on Maternal Health, 1923-1934	box 7	folder 172	
Scope and Contents note	reel 4		
This folder contains information on the Crew Study.			
Committee on Maternal Health, 1923-1934	box 7	folder 173	
Scope and Contents note	reel 4		
This folder contains information on the Crew Study.			
Committee on Maternal Health, 1923-1934	box 7	folder 174	
Scope and Contents note	reel 4		
This folder contains information on the Crew Study.			
Committee on Maternal Health - Miscellaneous	box 7	folder 175	
	reel 4		
Cooperative Donor Bureau for Blood Transfusion, 1928	box 8	folder 176	
	reel 4		
"Eugenical Sterilization in the U. S." by Laughlin, 1920-1921	box 8	folder 177	
	reel 4		
Eugenics, 1924-1934	box 8	folder 178	
	reel 4		
"Factors in the Sex Life of 2200 Women" by Katherine Davis,	box 8	folder 179	
1930-1933	reel 4		
Federation Abolitionniste Internationale, 1931	box 8	folder 180	
	reel 4		
International Federation of Eugenical Organization, 1932	box 8	folder 181	
	reel 4		
Johns Hopkins University Department of Syphilis, 1914-1915	box 8	folder 182	
	reel 4		
Kopp, Marie, 1932-1934	box 8	folder 183	

	reel 4	
Lexington Investigation, 1915	box 8	folder 184
	reel 4	
National Research Council Committee on Sex Research,	box 8	folder 185
1927-1932	reel 4	
National Research Council Committee on Sex Research,	box 8	folder 186
1927-1932	reel 4	
National Research Council Committee on Sex Research,	box 8	folder 187
1927-1932	reel 4	
National Research Council Committee on Sex Research -	box 8	folder 188
Reports	reel 5	
National Research Council Committee on Sex Research -	box 8	folder 189
Reports	reel 5	
Population, 1931-1933	box 9	folder 190
	reel 5	
Population Conference, 1931	box 9	folder 191
	reel 5	
"Prostitution in America" by Abraham Flexner, 1914-1918	box 9	folder 192
	reel 5	
"Prostitution in America" by Abraham Flexner, 1914-1918	box 9	folder 193
	reel 5	
"Prostitution in America" by Abraham Flexner, 1914-1918	box 9	folder 194
	reel 5	
"Prostitution in Europe" by Abraham Flexner, 1910-1912	box 9	folder 195
	reel 5	
"Prostitution in Europe" by Abraham Flexner - Translations	box 9	folder 196
	reel 5	
Prostitution - Regulation, 1912-1917	box 9	folder 197
	reel 5	
Prostitution - Regulation, 1912-1917	box 9	folder 198
	reel 5	
Regional Conference in Social Hygiene, 1933	box 9	folder 199

	reel 5	
"A Research in Marriage" by G. V. Hamilton, 1928	box 9	folder 200
	reel 5	
Sex Education, 1932	box 10	folder 201
	reel 5	
Social Hygiene, 1928-1934	box 10	folder 202
	reel 5	
Survey of Traffic in Women and Children, 1928-1933	box 10	folder 203
	reel 5	
Third International Congress of Eugenics, 1932	box 10	folder 204
	reel 5	
University of Minnesota, 1929-1931	box 10	folder 205
	reel 5	
University of Minnesota, 1929-1931	box 10	folder 206
	reel 5	
University of Minnesota, 1929-1931	box 10	folder 207
	reel 5	
University of Minnesota - Miscellaneous	box 10	folder 208
	reel 5	
Venereal Disease, 1931-1933	box 10	folder 209
	reel 5	
Venereal Disease, 1931-1933	box 10	folder 210
	reel 6	
Venereal Disease - Pamphlets	box 10	folder 211
	reel 6	
White House Conference in Child Health and Protection, 1930-1931	box 10	folder 212
	reel 6	
World Population Conference	box 10	folder 213
	reel 6	

Projects - Juvenile Delinquency

Scope and Contents note

This subseries contains information on detention homes, boys clubs, adolescent courts, and the New York University Boys Club Study.

Title/Description	Instances	
Adolescent Court, 1932	box 11	folder 214
Scope and Contents note	reel 6	
Correspondence about the establishment of a court in New York.		
Boys' Clubs, 1927-1931	box 11	folder 215
Scope and Contents note	reel 6	
New York City.		
Brooklyn Continuation School, 1930	box 11	folder 216
	reel 6	
Committee on Boys in Prison, 1930-1931	box 11	folder 217
Scope and Contents note	reel 6	
New York City.		
Delinquency, 1930-1936	box 11	folder 218
	reel 6	
Delinquency Study, 1929-1930	box 11	folder 219
Scope and Contents note	reel 6	
New York.		
East Harlem Health Center, 1925-1926	box 11	folder 220
	reel 6	
Gang Study, 1928	box 11	folder 221
	reel 6	
Girls Schools, 1931-1933	box 11	folder 222
	reel 6	
House of Refuge, 1927-1928	box 11	folder 223
Scope and Contents note	reel 6	
Randall's Island, New York City.		
Hudson Avenue Club for Colored Boys, 1928	box 11	folder 224

	reel 6	
Institute for Juvenile Research, 1930-1932	box 11	folder 225
	reel 6	
International Boys Work Council, 1927-1928	box 11	folder 226
	reel 6	
New York University Boys Club Study, 1927-1932	box 11	folder 227
	reel 6	
New York University Boys Club Study, 1927-1932	box 11	folder 228
	reel 6	
New York University Boys Club Study, 1927-1932	box 11	folder 229
	reel 6	
New York University Boys Club Study, 1927-1932	box 11	folder 230
	reel 6	
New York University Boys Club Study, 1927-1932	box 11	folder 231
	reel 6	
New York University Boys Club Study, 1933-1936	box 12	folder 232
	reel 6	
New York University Boys Club Study - Miscellaneous	box 12	folder 233
	reel 6	
"Jefferson Park Boys Club" by Frederick Thrasher - Volume 1	box 12	folder 233A
	reel 7	
"Jefferson Park Boys Club" by Frederick Thrasher - Volume 2	box 12	folder 233B
	reel 7	
"Jefferson Park Boys Club" by Frederick Thrasher - Volume 3	box 12	folder 233C
	reel 7	
"Jefferson Park Boys Club" by Frederick Thrasher - Volume 4	box 13	folder 233
	reel 7	
"Jefferson Park Boys Club" by Frederick Thrasher - Volume 5	box 13	folder 233E
	reel 7	
"Jefferson Park Boys Club" by Frederick Thrasher - Volume 6	box 13	folder 233
	reel 7	
Judge Baker Foundation, 1931	box 13	folder 234

	reel 7	
Juvenile Courts, 1931-1934	box 13	folder 235
	reel 7	
Juvenile Detention Homes, 1929	box 13	folder 236
	reel 7	
Juvenile Detention Homes, 1930-1933	box 14	folder 237
	reel 7	
Juvenile Detention Homes, 1930-1933	box 14	folder 238
	reel 7	
Juvenile Detention Homes, 1930-1933	box 14	folder 239
	reel 8	
Juvenile Detention Homes, 1930-1933	box 14	folder 240
	reel 8	
Juvenile Detention Homes - Clippings and Pamphlets	box 14	folder 241
	reel 8	
New Jersey State Home for Boys, 1929	box 14	folder 242
	reel 8	
New School for Social Research, 1932	box 14	folder 243
	reel 8	
New York State Training School for Boys, 1932-1936	box 14	folder 244
	reel 8	
"The Police and Boys' Work" by Leroy Peterson, 1927-1928	box 14	folder 245
	reel 8	
Welfare Council, 1926-1934	box 14	folder 246
Scope and Contents note	reel 8	
New York City.		
Welfare Council, 1926-1934	box 14	folder 247
Scope and Contents note	reel 8	
New York City.		
Whittier School Project, 1929	box 14	folder 248
	reel 8	
Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), 1925	box 14	folder 249

Scope and Cont	tents	note
----------------	-------	------

reel 8

New York survey.

Pamphlets box 14 folder 250

Scope and Contents note

reel 8

Includes Children's Village (Dobbs Ferry, New York) and the New York Training School for Boys.

Projects - Criminology

Scope and Contents note

This subseries has material on projects such as the Massachusetts State Prison Colony, Associates for Government Service, Uniform Criminal Statistics, Police Training Schools, and the Institute of Criminology at Columbia. It also contains information on publications like "European Policy Systems" and general information on criminology, prisons, and probation.

Title/Description	Instances	
American Bar Association, 1928-1935	box 15	folder 251
	reel 8	
American Law Institute, 1927-1935	box 15	folder 252
	reel 8	
American Law Institute, 1927-1935	box 15	folder 253
	reel 8	
"American Police Systems" by Raymond Fosdick, 1914-1930	box 15	folder 254
	reel 8	
American Prison Association, 1928-1934	box 15	folder 255
	reel 8	
Associates for Government Service, 1927-1932	box 15	folder 256
	reel 8	
Associates for Government Service, 1927-1932	box 15	folder 257
	reel 8	
Associates for Government Service - Miscellaneous	box 15	folder 258
	reel 8	
Association of Grand Jurors, 1928-1933	box 15	folder 259
Scope and Contents note	reel 8	
New York County.		
Association of Grand Jurors, 1928-1933	box 15	folder 260

Scope and Contents note	reel 8		
New York County.			
Association of Grand Jurors, 1928-1933	box 15	folder 261	
Scope and Contents note	reel 8		
New York County.			
Association of Grand Jurors - Clippings and Pamphlets	box 15	folder 262	
Scope and Contents note			
New York County.			
Processing Information: Processing Information			
Omitted from the microfilm.			
Association of Grand Jurors - Clippings and Pamphlets	box 15	folder 263	
Scope and Contents note	reel 8		
New York County.			
Barry, A. G., 1929-1930	box 15	folder 264	
	reel 8		
Bates, Sanford, 1928-1933	box 15	folder 265	
	reel 8		
Berkeley Behavioral Research Clinic, 1931	box 15	folder 266	
	reel 8		
Case Histories - Sample Forms, 1932	box 16	folder 267	
	reel 8		
Cockerell's Reading Course, 1929-1931	box 16	folder 268	
	reel 8		
Committee of 14, 1928-1933	box 16	folder 269	
Scope and Contents note	reel 8		
New York City.			
Conference on Penal Statistics, 1931	box 16	folder 270	
	reel 9		
Conference on Penal Statistics, 1931	box 16	folder 271	

	reel 9	
Crime Prevention Bureau, 1930-1932	box 16	folder 272
Scope and Contents note	reel 9	
New York City Police Department.		
Crime Studies, 1927-1928	box 16	folder 273
	reel 9	
Crime Statistics, 1927-April 1930	box 16	folder 274
	reel 9	
Crime Statistics, 1927-April 1930	box 16	folder 275
	reel 9	
Crime Statistics, 1927-April 1930	box 16	folder 276
	reel 9	
Crime Statistics, May 1930-1933	box 17	folder 277
	reel 9	
Crime Statistics, May 1930-1933	box 17	folder 278
	reel 9	
Crime Statistics, May 1930-1933	box 17	folder 279
	reel 9	
Crime Statistics, May 1930-1933	box 17	folder 280
	reel 9	
Crime Statistics, May 1930-1933	box 17	folder 281
	reel 9	
Crime Statistics, May 1930-1933	box 17	folder 282
	reel 9	
Crime Statistics - Miscellaneous	box 17	folder 283
	reel 9	
Criminal Justice, 1933-June 1934	box 17	folder 284
	reel 9	
Criminal Justice, 1933-June 1934	box 17	folder 285
	reel 9	
Criminal Justice, July 1934-1935	box 18	folder 286
	reel 9	
Criminal Justice, July 1934-1935	box 18	folder 287

	reel 10	
Criminology, 1914-1934	box 18	folder 288
	reel 10	
Criminology, 1914-1934	box 18	folder 289
	reel 10	
Criminology, 1914-1934	box 18	folder 290
	reel 10	
Criminology, 1914-1934	box 18	folder 291
	reel 10	
Criminology, 1914-1934	box 18	folder 292
	reel 10	
Criminology, 1935-1936	box 19	folder 293
	reel 10	
Criminal Legislation, 1914-1933	box 19	folder 294
	reel 10	
Criminal Legislation, 1914-1933	box 19	folder 295
	reel 10	
Criminological Research Bulletin, 1932-1936	box 19	folder 296
	reel 10	
Criminological Research Project, 1934-1935	box 19	folder 297
	reel 10	
"Criminology Survey" by Leonard Harrison, 1935-1936	box 19	folder 298
	reel 10	
"Criminology Survey" by Leonard Harrison, 1935-1936	box 19	folder 299
	reel 10	
"Criminology Survey" by Leonard Harrison - Reports	box 19	folder 300
	reel 10	
Commercial Crime Commission, 1934	box 19	folder 301
	reel 10	
"Decline of the Prison Population of England" by E. H.	box 20	folder 302
Sutherland, 1929-1934	reel 10	
"Decline of the Prison Population of England" by E. h. Sutherland - Reports	box 20	folder 303

	reel 11		
Detroit Bureau of Governmental Research, 1929-1931	box 20	folder 304	
	reel 11		
Eastern-Southern Conference on State Institutional Labor, 1930	box 20	folder 305	
	reel 11		
"European Police Systems" by Raymond Fosdick, 1912-1935	box 20	folder 306	
	reel 11		
"European Police Systems" by Raymond Fosdick, 1912-1935	box 20	folder 307	
	reel 11		
"European Police Systems" by Raymond Fosdick - Charts	box 20	folder 308	
Processing Information:			
Processing Information			
Omitted from microfilm.			
"European Police Systems" by Raymond Fosdick -	box 20	folder 309	
Acknowledgements	reel 11		
"European Police Systems" by Raymond Fosdick -	box 20	folder 310	
Acknowledgements	reel 11		
"European Police Systems" by Raymond Fosdick -	box 20	folder 311	
Acknowledgements	reel 11		
"European Police Systems" - Clippings	box 21	folder 312	
Processing Information: Processing Information			
Omitted from the microfilm			
"European Police Systems" - Clippings	box 21	folder 313	
Processing Information:			
Processing Information			
Omitted from microfilm.			
"European Police Systems" - Clippings	box 21	folder 314	
Processing Information:			
Processing Information			
Omitted from microfilm.			
Fall River Project, 1932	box 21	folder 315	

		reel 11	
Federal Council of Churc	ches, 1930-1931	box 21	folder 316
		reel 11	
Fellowships - Maurice B	lodgett, 1933	box 21	folder 317
		reel 11	
Fellowships - John Dicke	ey, 1931	box 21	folder 318
		reel 11	
Fellowships - Howard Le	eahy, 1930-1931	box 21	folder 319
		reel 11	
Fellowships - Rudolf Lel	nmann, 1931	box 21	folder 320
		reel 11	
Fellowships - Alexander	Paterson, 1929-1933	box 21	folder 321
		reel 11	
Fellowships - Alexander	Paterson, 1929-1933	box 21	folder 322
		reel 11	
Fellowships - A. W. Stea	rns, 1930-1931	box 21	folder 323
		reel 11	
Fellowships - Richard W	inslow, 1930-1931	box 21	folder 324
		reel 11	
Fingerprint Indexing, 192	29-1935	box 21	folder 325
		reel 11	
Folton, Edgar, 1928-193	l	box 21	folder 326
		reel 11	
Fordham University, 192	8	box 22	folder 327
		reel 11	
Gates, Merrill, 1929-193	1	box 22	folder 328
		reel 11	
Gaudet Project, 1930-193	31	box 22	folder 329
		reel 11	
Gill, Howard, 1934		box 22	folder 330
		reel 11	
Harvard Crime Survey, 1	926-1935	box 22	folder 331

	reel 11	
Harvard Crime Survey, 1926-1935	box 22	folder 332
	reel 11	
Harvard Crime Survey, 1926-1935	box 22	folder 333
	reel 11	
Harvard Crime Survey, 1926-1935	box 22	folder 334
	reel 11	
Harvard Crime Survey, 1926-1935	box 22	folder 335
	reel 12	
Harvard Crime Survey - Draft, 1933	box 22	folder 336
	reel 12	
Harvard Crime Survey - Draft, 1933	box 22	folder 337
	reel 12	
Harvard Institute of Criminal Law, 1929-1932	box 22	folder 338
	reel 12	
Harvard Institute of Criminal Law, 1929-1932	box 22	folder 339
	reel 12	
Harvard Institute of Criminal Law, 1933-1935	box 23	folder 340
	reel 12	
Identification Methods, French and English, 1926	box 23	folder 341
	reel 12	
Individualization Conference, 1931	box 23	folder 342
	reel 12	
Institute of Criminological Research, 1933-1934	box 23	folder 343
	reel 12	
Institute of Criminology, 1929-1936	box 23	folder 344
	reel 12	
Institute of Criminology, 1929-1936	box 23	folder 345
	reel 12	
Institute of Criminology, 1929-1936	box 23	folder 346
	reel 12	
Institute of Criminology, 1929-1936	box 23	folder 347

	reel 12	
Institute of Criminology, 1929-1936	box 23	folder 348
	reel 12	
Institute of Criminology, 1929-1936	box 23	folder 349
	reel 12	
Institute of Criminology, 1929-1936	box 23	folder 350
	reel 12	
Institute of Criminology, 1929-1936	box 23	folder 351
	reel 12	
Institute of Criminology, 1929-1936	box 23	folder 352
	reel 12	
Institute of Criminology - Miscellaneous	box 24	folder 353
	reel 12	
Institute of Criminology - Comments and Criticisms	box 24	folder 353A
	reel 13	
Institute of Criminology - Opinions	box 24	folder 353B
	reel 13	
Institute of Criminology - Opinions	box 24	folder 353C
	reel 13	
Institute of Criminology - Social Science Research Council	box 24	folder 354
Comments	reel 13	
Institute of Criminology - Harrison Critique	box 25	folder 355
	reel 13	
International Association of Police Chiefs, 1931-1934	box 25	folder 356
	reel 13	
Joint Committee on the Improvement of Criminal Justice,	box 25	folder 357
1932-1934	reel 13	
Judicial Council of New Jersey, 1935-1936	box 25	folder 358
	reel 13	
Karpman Study of the Criminally Insane, 1929-1930	box 25	folder 359
	reel 13	
Laboratory of Social Hygiene - Bedford Hills, 1912-1913	box 25	folder 360

	reel 13	
League of Nations Penal Administration, 1931	box 25	folder 361
	reel 13	
Massachusetts Prison Association Parole Study, 1930	box 25	folder 362
	reel 13	
"Measuring Crime vs. Estimating Crime" by Leonard Harrison,	box 25	folder 363
1932	reel 13	
Merriam, Charles, 1927-1933	box 25	folder 364
	reel 13	
"Microscopy" by Albert Schneider, 1929-1930	box 25	folder 365
	reel 13	
Minnesota Parole Study, 1930	box 25	folder 366
	reel 13	
Minnesota Prisons, 1928	box 25	folder 367
	reel 13	
National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement,	box 25	folder 368
1929-1935	reel 13	
National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement,	box 25	folder 369
1929-1935	reel 13	
National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement -	box 26	folder 370
Miscellaneous	reel 13	
National Committee on Prisons and Prison Labor, 1928-1935	box 26	folder 371
	reel 14	
National Committee on Prisons and Prison Labor, 1928-1935	box 26	folder 372
	reel 14	
National Committee on Prisons and Prison Labor, 1928-1935	box 26	folder 373
	reel 14	
National Committee on Prisons and Prison Labor, 1928-1935	box 26	folder 374
	reel 14	
National Committee on Prisons and Prison Labor - Clippings	box 26	folder 375
and Pamphlets	reel 14	
National Committee on Prisons and Prison Labor - Clippings and Pamphlets	box 26	folder 376

	reel 14		
National Committee on Public Education for Crime Control,	box 26	folder 377	
1934-1935	reel 14		
National Crime Commission, 1930-1932	box 26	folder 378	
	reel 14		
National Police Council, 1932	box 26	folder 379	
	reel 14		
National Prison Emergency Committee, 1930-1931	box 26	folder 380	
	reel 14		
National Probation Association, 1932	box 26	folder 381	
	reel 14		
New York Prison Association, 1930-1934	box 27	folder 382	
	reel 14		
New York Prison Association, 1930-1934	box 27	folder 383	
	reel 14		
New York Prison Association - Miscellaneous	box 27	folder 384	
	reel 14		
Nonpayment of Fines, 1927-1928	box 27	folder 385	
	reel 14		
Northwestern Criminal Law Administration Program, 1930	box 27	folder 386	
	reel 14		
Osborn Association (National Society of Penal Information),	box 27	folder 387	
1922-1935	reel 14		
Osborn Association (National Society of Penal Information),	box 27	folder 388	
1922-1935	reel 14		
Osborn Association (National Society of Penal Information),	box 27	folder 389	
1922-1935	reel 14		
Osborn Association (National Society of Penal Information),	box 27	folder 390	
1922-1935	reel 14		
Panzran, Carl #31614 United States Penitentiary Leavenworth - "My Ideas, My Complaints, My Suggestions", 1930	box 27	folder 391	
	reel 14		
Parole, 1928-1936	box 27	folder 392	

	reel 15	
Philadelphia Municipal Court, 1929-1930	box 27	folder 393
	reel 15	
Police, 1914-1936	box 28	folder 394
	reel 15	
Police, 1914-1936	box 28	folder 395
	reel 15	
Police, 1914-1936	box 28	folder 396
	reel 15	
Police Education	box 28	folder 397
	reel 15	
Police Social Service Fund, 1917-1918	box 28	folder 398
	reel 15	
Police Training Schools, 1927-1936	box 28	folder 399
	reel 15	
Police Training Schools, 1927-1936	box 28	folder 400
	reel 15	
Police Training Schools, 1927-1936	box 28	folder 401
	reel 15	
Police Training Schools, 1927-1936	box 28	folder 402
	reel 15	
Police Training Schools, 1927-1936	box 28	folder 403
	reel 15	
Police Training Schools - Colorado, 1930	box 28	folder 404
	reel 15	
Police Training Schools - New York, 1929-1931	box 28	folder 405
	reel 15	
Police Training Schools - New York, 1929-1931	box 28	folder 406
	reel 15	
Police Training Schools - New York, 1932-1934	box 29	folder 407
	reel 15	
Police Training Schools - New York - Miscellaneous	box 29	folder 408

	reel 15		
Police Training Schools - Oregon	box 29	folder 409	
	reel 15		
Police Training Schools - Rhode Island, 1929-1934	box 29	folder 410	
	reel 15		
Police Training Schools - Virginia, 1929-1932	box 29	folder 411	
	reel 15		
Police Training Schools - Miscellaneous	box 29	folder 412	
	reel 15		
Policewomen, 1928-1932	box 29	folder 413	
	reel 15		
Policewomen, 1928-1932	box 29	folder 414	
	reel 15		
"Policewomen's Manual" by Eleanor Hutzel, 1928-June 1932	box 29	folder 415	
	reel 15		
"Policewomen's Manual" by Eleanor Hutzel, 1928-June 1932	box 29	folder 416	
	reel 15		
"Policewomen's Manual" by Eleanor Hutzel, 1928-June 1932	box 29	folder 417	
	reel 15		
'Policewomen's Manual" by Eleanor Hutzel, July 1932-1935	box 30	folder 418	
	reel 16		
"Policewomen's Manual" by Eleanor Hutzel, July 1932-1935	box 30	folder 419	
	reel 16		
"Policewomen's Manual" - Distribution	box 30	folder 420	
	reel 16		
"Policewomen's Manual" - Notes	box 30	folder 421	
	reel 16		
"Policewomen's Manual" - Notes	box 30	folder 422	
	reel 16		
Prison Architecture, 1930-1934	box 30	folder 423	
	reel 16		
Prison Diets, 1931-1932	box 30	folder 424	

	reel 16	
Prisoners Employment Service, 1931-1932	box 30	folder 425
Scope and Contents note	reel 16	
New York.		
Prison Libraries, 1929-1933	box 30	folder 426
	reel 16	
"Prison Life in the Soviet Union" by Elias Tobenkin, 1932-1935	box 30	folder 427
	reel 16	
Prisons, 1924-1932	box 30	folder 428
	reel 16	
Prisons, 1924-1932	box 30	folder 429
	reel 16	
Prisons, 1933-1936	box 31	folder 430
	reel 16	
Probation, 1928-1935	box 31	folder 431
	reel 16	
Probation, 1928-1935	box 31	folder 432
	reel 16	
Probation - Miscellaneous	box 31	folder 433
	reel 16	
Probation Forms - Erie County, New York, 1928	box 31	folder 434
	reel 16	
Probation Schools, 1931	box 31	folder 435
	reel 16	
Probation Schools - Curriculum	box 31	folder 436
	reel 16	
Psychiatry and Crime Prevention, 1930	box 31	folder 437
	reel 16	
"Rural Criminal Justice" by Bruce Cobb, 1925-1934	box 31	folder 438
	reel 16	
Sacco and Vanzetti, 1927	box 31	folder 439
	reel 17	
Scandinavian Study, 1930	box 31	folder 440

	reel 17	
Carl Schurz Memorial Foundation, 1933-1934	box 31	folder 441
	reel 17	
"Scientific Aspects of Crime" by Max Winsor, 1928	box 32	folder 442
	reel 17	
Scientific Crime Detection Lab, 1928-1934	box 32	folder 443
	reel 17	
Scientific Crime Detection Lab, 1928-1934	box 32	folder 444
	reel 17	
Seabury Investigation, 1930-1932	box 32	folder 445
	reel 17	
"Single Fingerprints", 1930-1934	box 32	folder 446
	reel 17	
"Single Fingerprints", 1930-1934	box 32	folder 447
	reel 17	
"Single Fingerprints", 1930-1934	box 32	folder 448
	reel 17	
"Single Fingerprints", 1930-1934	box 32	folder 449
	reel 17	
"Society's Offenders" by E. H. Sutherland, 1932	box 32	folder 450
	reel 17	
State Police, 1934-1935	box 32	folder 451
	reel 17	
State Prison Colony, Norfolk, Massachusetts, 1929-1931	box 32	folder 452
	reel 17	
State Prison Colony, Norfolk, Massachusetts, 1929-1931	box 32	folder 453
	reel 17	
State Prison Colony, Norfolk, Massachusetts, 1932-1937	box 33	folder 454
	reel 17	
State Prison Colony, Norfolk, Massachusetts, 1932-1937	box 33	folder 455
	reel 17	
State Prison Colony, Norfolk, Massachusetts, 1932-1937	box 33	folder 456

	reel 17		
State Prison Colony, Norfolk, Massachusetts, 1932-1937	box 33	folder 457	
	reel 17		
State Prison Colony, Norfolk, Massachusetts, 1932-1937	box 33	folder 458	
	reel 17		
State Prison Colony, Norfolk, Massachusetts - Diary, 1932-April	box 33	folder 459	
1933	reel 17		
State Prison Colony, Norfolk, Massachusetts - Diary, 1932-April	box 33	folder 460	
1933	reel 17		
State Prison Colony, Norfolk, Massachusetts - Diary, 1932-April	box 33	folder 461	
1933	reel 17		
State Prison Colony, Norfolk, Massachusetts - Diary, 1932-April	box 33	folder 462	
1933	reel 18		
State Prison Colony, Norfolk, Massachusetts - Diary, 1932-April	box 33	folder 463	
1933	reel 18		
State Prison Colony, Norfolk, Massachusetts - Diary, May-	box 34	folder 464	
December 1933	reel 18		
State Prison Colony, Norfolk, Massachusetts - Diary, May-	box 34	folder 465	
December 1933	reel 18		
State Prison Colony, Norfolk, Massachusetts - Diary, May-	box 34	folder 466	
December 1933	reel 18		
State Prison Colony, Norfolk, Massachusetts - Howard Gill,	box 34	folder 467	
1934	reel 18		
Stearns, Warren, 1929-1934	box 34	folder 468	
	reel 18		
"Therapeutic Value of Psychiatry as Applied in Our Penal	box 34	folder 469	
Institutions" by Max Winsor	reel 18		
Thomas, W. I., 1928-1934	box 34	folder 470	
	reel 18		
Thomas, W. I., 1928-1934	box 34	folder 471	
	reel 18		
Thomas, W. I Reports	box 34	folder 472	

	reel 18	
Thomas, W. L Crime and Psychopathology - Abstracts	box 35	folder 473
	reel 18	
Thomas, W. L Crime and Psychopathology - Methods	box 35	folder 474
	reel 18	
Thomas, W. L Crime and Psychopathology - Biological	box 35	folder 475
Factors	reel 18	
Thomas, W. L Crime and Psychopathology - Anthropological	box 35	folder 476
Factors	reel 18	
Thomas, W. L Crime and Psychopathology - Physiological	box 35	folder 477
Factors	reel 18	
Thomas, W. L Crime and Psychopathology - Psychological	box 35	folder 478
Factors	reel 18	
Thomas, W. L Crime and Psychopathology - Sociological	box 35	folder 479
Factors	reel 18	
Thomas, W. L Crime and Psychopathology - Economic	box 35	folder 480
Factors	reel 18	
Thomas, W. L Crime and Psychopathology - Statistics	box 35	folder 481
	reel 18	
Thomas, W. L Crime and Psychopathology - Prison and	box 35	folder 482
Reformatories	reel 18	
Thomas, W. L Crime and Psychopathology - Probation	box 35	folder 483
	reel 18	
Thomas, W. L Crime and Psychopathology - Parole	box 35	folder 484
	reel 18	
Thomas, W. L Crime and Psychopathology - Juvenile	box 35	folder 485
Detention	reel 18	
Thomas, W. L Crime and Psychopathology - Crime	box 35	folder 486
Prevention	reel 18	
Thomas, W. L Crime and Psychopathology - Psychopathology	box 35	folder 487
	reel 18	
Thomas, W. L Crime and Psychopathology - Recidivism	box 35	folder 488

	reel 18	
Thomas, W. L Crime and Psychopathology - Criminal Organizations	box 35	folder 489
	reel 18	
Thomas, W. L Crime and Psychopathology - Courts and Legal	box 35	folder 490
Procedures	reel 18	
Thomas, W. L Crime and Psychopathology - Police	box 35	folder 491
	reel 18	
Thomas, W. L Crime and Psychopathology - Narcotics	box 35	folder 492
	reel 18	
Thomas, W. L Crime and Psychopathology - Prostitution and	box 35	folder 493
Homosexuality	reel 18	
"Undermining Crime" by Leonard Harrison, 1932	box 35	folder 494
	reel 19	
Uniform Crime Classification, 1932-1934	box 36	folder 495
	reel 19	
Uniform Crime Classification, 1932-1934	box 36	folder 496
	reel 19	
Uniform Crime Classification, 1932-1934	box 36	folder 497
	reel 19	
United States Federation of Justice, 1927-1928	box 36	folder 498
	reel 19	
University of California, 1929-1934	box 36	folder 499
	reel 19	
University of Lwow, 1929-1930	box 36	folder 500
	reel 19	
University of Southern California, 1929-1930	box 36	folder 501
	reel 19	
Voluntary Defenders Committee, 1928-1930	box 36	folder 502
	reel 19	
Welfare League Association, 1928-1932	box 36	folder 503
	reel 19	
Welfare League Association, 1928-1932	box 36	folder 504

	reel 19	
Women's Prison Association, 1932	box 37	folder 505
	reel 19	
"Women's Reformatories in the United States", 1930-1931	box 37	folder 506
	reel 19	
Women's Reformatories, 1930-1935	box 37	folder 507
	reel 19	
Women's Reformatories, 1930-1935	box 37	folder 508
	reel 19	

Projects - Miscellaneous

Scope and Contents note

This subseries contains information not administrative but in which the Bureau had a special interest, such as the Institute for Family Relations, The Ohio Institute, and housing.

itle/Description	Instances	
American Orthopsychiatric Association, 1932-1933	box 38	folder 509
	reel 19	
American Sociological Society, 1930-1931	box 38	folder 510
	reel 19	
Buffalo Municipal Research Bureau, 1931	box 38	folder 511
	reel 19	
Case Work Forms, 1932	box 38	folder 512
	reel 19	
Clippings	box 38	folder 513
	reel 19	
Clippings	box 38	folder 514
	reel 19	
Directories of Social Agencies, 1931-1932	box 38	folder 515
	reel 19	
Emergency Exchange, 1932-1933	box 38	folder 516
	reel 19	
George Junior Republic, 1932	box 38	folder 517
	reel 20	
Housing, 1927-1934	box 38	folder 518

Scope and Contents note	reel 20	
Sunnyside Co-ops (New York City) and Radburn, New Jersey.		
Institute of Family Relations, 1931-1932	box 38	folder 519
Scope and Contents note	reel 20	
New York City.		
Institute of Human Relations, 1933	box 38	folder 520
	reel 20	
Leprosy Eradication Fund, 1927-1929	box 38	folder 521
	reel 20	
Mussolini City, 1928	box 38	folder 522
Scope and Contents note	reel 20	
Westchester County, New York.		
Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1928-1931	box 38	folder 523
	reel 20	
Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1928-1931	box 38	folder 524
	reel 20	
Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1932-1935	box 39	folder 525
	reel 20	
Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1932-1935	box 39	folder 526
	reel 20	
National Consumer's League, 1927	box 39	folder 527
	reel 20	
National Health Council, 1928	box 39	folder 528
	reel 20	
Ohio Institute, 1928-1933	box 39	folder 529
	reel 20	
Ohio Institute, 1928-1933	box 39	folder 530
	reel 20	

Ohio Institute, 1928-1933

Ohio Institute - Miscellaneous

box 39

reel 20

box 39

folder 531

folder 532

	reel 20	
Open Road, 1932	box 39	folder 533
	reel 20	
People's Foundation, 1932	box 39	folder 534
	reel 20	
President's Emergency Committee for Unemployment, 1932	box 39	folder 535
	reel 20	
Puerto Rico, 1928	box 39	folder 536
	reel 20	
Social Science Research Council, 1928-1929	box 39	folder 537
	reel 20	
Social Science Research Council, 1930-1933	box 40	folder 538
	reel 20	
Social Science Research Council, 1930-1933	box 40	folder 539
	reel 20	
Social Science Research Council, 1930-1933	box 40	folder 540
	reel 20	
Social Science Research Council, 1930-1933	box 40	folder 541
	reel 20	
Social Science Research Council - Miscellaneous	box 40	folder 542
	reel 20	
Social Sciences	box 40	folder 543
	reel 20	
Soldiers and Sailors Club, 1926	box 40	folder 544
Scope and Contents note	reel 20	
New York City.		
Sunnyside Housing Project, 1927-1928	box 40	folder 545
Scope and Contents note	reel 20	
Queens, New York.		
Traffic - 5th Avenue and 42nd, 1928	box 40	folder 546
	reel 20	
Traveller's Aid Society, 1925	box 40	folder 547

	reel 20		
University Housing, 1927-1928	box 40	folder 548	
Scope and Contents note	reel 20		
Dormitory for SUNY Oswego.			
Wakefield National Memorial Association, 1928	box 40	folder 549	
	reel 20		

[^] Return to Table of Contents

Leonard V. Harrison Files

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Scholarly access to original archival material is permitted. User copies of microfilm are also available. The Leonard V. Harrison Files are reproduced in the microfilm publication of the Bureau of Social Hygiene project and research files, 1913-1940, reels 21-31 (Scholarly Resources Inc., 1980).

Arrangement note

This series is arranged in five subseries, as follows:

Subseries 1 - Narcotics (2 boxes) Subseries 2 - European Police Systems (12 boxes) Subseries 3 - Boston-Harvard Survey (4 boxes) Subseries 4 - Criminology (6 boxes) Subseries 5 - Miscellaneous (2 boxes)

Scope and Contents note

This series consists of Leonard Harrison's own files, as distinct from the Bureau's files. There is much material in this series which relates to studies in Series 3 - Projects. In fact, much of this series is background research for those projects. Research in Series 3 will be more fruitful if this series is also consulted.

Leonard V. Harrison Files - Narcotics

Title/Description	Instances	
Case Notes	box 1	folder 550
	reel 21	
Case Notes	box 1	folder 551
	reel 21	
Clinical Work in Opium Addiction - First Annual Summary	box 1	folder 552
	reel 21	
Committee on Drug Addiction - Reports, 1921-1928	box 1	folder 553
	reel 21	
Committee on Drug Addiction - Survey of Scientific Opinion	box 1	folder 554

Systems	
reel 22	
box 2	folder 568
reel 22	
box 2	folder 567
reel 21	
box 2	folder 566
reel 21	
box 2	folder 565
reel 21	
box 2	folder 564
	101401 505
	folder 563
	101061 302
	folder 562
	folder 561
	foldon 5/1
	folder 560
	6.11 . 500
	folder 559
	0.11
	folder 558
box 1	folder 557
reel 21	
box 1	folder 556
reel 21	
box 1	folder 555
	reel 21 box 1 reel 21 box 2

box 3

folder 569

European Police Authorities, 1913-1914

	reel 22	
"European Police Systems", 1913-1933	box 3	folder 570
	reel 22	
"European Police Systems", 1913-1933	box 3	folder 571
	reel 22	
"European Police Systems", 1913-1933	box 3	folder 572
	reel 22	
"European Police Systems", 1913-1933	box 3	folder 573
	reel 22	
"European Police Systems", 1913-1933	box 3	folder 574
	reel 22	
"European Police Systems" - Draft	box 3	folder 575
	reel 22	
Austria	box 3	folder 576
Related Archival Materials note: Related Archival Materials note	reel 22	
Photographs.		
Austria	box 3	folder 577
Related Archival Materials note: Related Archival Materials note	reel 22	
Photographs.		
Austria	box 3	folder 578
Related Archival Materials note: Related Archival Materials note	reel 22	
Photographs.		
Austria	box 3	folder 579
Related Archival Materials note: Related Archival Materials note		
Photographs.		
Austria - "Offentliche Sicherheit", 1930-1933	box 4	folder 580
Austria - "Offentliche Sicherheit", 1930-1933	box 4	folder 581
Austria - "Offentliche Sicherheit", 1930-1933	box 4	folder 582
Belgium	box 4	folder 583

	reel 22	
Belgium	box 4	folder 584
	reel 22	
Belgium	box 4	folder 585
	reel 22	
Czechoslovakia	box 4	folder 586
	reel 22	
Denmark	box 4	folder 587
	reel 22	
Denmark	box 5	folder 588
Denmark	box 5	folder 589
Denmark	box 5	folder 590
England	box 5	folder 591
	reel 22	
England	box 5	folder 592
	reel 22	
England	box 5	folder 593
	reel 22	
England	box 6	folder 594
	reel 23	
England	box 6	folder 595
	reel 23	
England	box 6	folder 596
	reel 23	
Leeds	box 6	folder 597
	reel 23	
Liverpool	box 6	folder 598
Related Archival Materials note: Related Archival Materials note	reel 23	
Photographs.		
London	box 6	folder 599
	reel 23	
London	box 7	folder 600

	reel 23	
London	box 7	folder 601
	reel 23	
London	box 7	folder 602
	reel 23	
Manchester	box 7	folder 603
	reel 23	
West Riding	box 7	folder 604
	reel 23	
Glasgow	box 7	folder 605
	reel 24	
Edinburgh	box 7	folder 606
	reel 24	
Edinburgh	box 7	folder 607
	reel 24	
Finland	box 8	folder 608
	reel 24	
France	box 8	folder 609
	reel 24	
France	box 8	folder 610
	reel 24	
France	box 8	folder 611
	reel 24	
France	box 8	folder 612
	reel 24	
France	box 8	folder 613
France	box 8	folder 614
France	box 8	folder 615
	reel 24	
Paris	box 8	folder 616
	reel 24	
Paris	box 8	folder 617
Paris	box 9	folder 618

Related Archival Materials note:

reel 24

Related Archival Materials note

Photographs.

6 · 1		
Germany	box 9	folder 619
	reel 24	
Germany	box 9	folder 620
Germany	box 9	folder 621
Baden	box 9	folder 622
Bavaria	box 9	folder 623
Berlin	box 9	folder 624
Related Archival Materials note: Related Archival Materials note	reel 24	
Photographs.		
Hamburg	box 10	folder 625
	reel 24	
Prussia	box 10	folder 626
	reel 24	
Prussia	box 10	folder 627
Prussia	box 10	folder 628
Saxony	box 10	folder 629
	reel 24	
Wurtemburg	box 10	folder 630
	reel 25	
Germany	box 11	folder 631
	reel 25	
Germany	box 11	folder 632
Germany	box 11	folder 633
Germany	box 11	folder 634
Germany	box 11	folder 635
Holland	box 11	folder 636
Amsterdam	box 12	folder 637
The Hague	box 12	folder 638

	reel 25	
Rotterdam	box 12	folder 639
	reel 25	
Hungary	box 12	folder 640
Italy	box 12	folder 641
	reel 25	
Italy	box 12	folder 642
Italy	box 12	folder 643
Italy	box 12	folder 644
Rome	box 12	folder 645
	reel 25	
Norway	box 13	folder 646
	reel 25	
Norway	box 13	folder 647
Norway	box 13	folder 648
Oslo	box 13	folder 649
Oslo	box 13	folder 650
Sweden	box 13	folder 651
Sweden	box 13	folder 652
Stockholm	box 14	folder 653
Switzerland	box 14	folder 654
	reel 25	
International	box 14	folder 655
	reel 25	
Notes	box 14	folder 656
	reel 25	
Notes	box 14	folder 657
	reel 25	
Notes on Hue de Grais	box 14	folder 658
	reel 25	
Notes on Weidlich	box 14	folder 659
	reel 25	

Leonard V. Harrison Files - Boston-Harvard Survey

de/Description	Instances	
Boston Police Survey, 1929	box 15	folder 660
	reel 25	
Boston Police Survey, 1929	box 15	folder 661
	reel 25	
Boston Police Survey - First Draft	box 15	folder 662
	reel 25	
Statistics	box 15	folder 663
	reel 25	
Appendix	box 15	folder 664
	reel 25	
Working Papers	box 15	folder 665
	reel 26	
Working Papers	box 15	folder 666
	reel 26	
Working Papers	box 15	folder 667
	reel 26	
Plazinski Notes	box 15	folder 668
	reel 26	
Plazinski Notes	box 16	folder 669
	reel 26	
Plazinski Notes	box 16	folder 670
	reel 26	
Plazinski Notes	box 16	folder 671
	reel 26	
Plazinski Notes	box 16	folder 672
	reel 26	
Plazinski Notes	box 16	folder 673
	reel 26	
Charts, 1932	box 16	folder 674
	reel 26	
General Orders, 1930-1932	box 16	folder 675

	reel 26	
Police School, 1932-1933	box 16	folder 676
	reel 26	
Police School, 1932-1933	box 16	folder 677
	reel 26	
Metropolitan Boston	box 16	folder 678
	reel 26	
Metropolitan Boston	box 17	folder 679
	reel 26	
Metropolitan Boston	box 17	folder 680
	reel 26	
Clippings and Pamphlets	box 17	folder 681
	reel 26	
Harvard Crime Study, 1926-1929	box 17	folder 682
	reel 26	
Harvard Crime Study, 1926-1929	box 17	folder 683
	reel 27	
Harvard Crime Study, 1926-1929	box 17	folder 684
	reel 27	
Harvard Crime Study, 1926-1929	box 17	folder 685
	reel 27	
Harvard Crime Study, 1926-1929	box 17	folder 686
	reel 27	
Harvard Crime Study, 1926-1929	box 17	folder 687
	reel 27	
Harvard Crime Study - Reports, 1929	box 18	folder 688
	reel 27	
Harvard Crime Study, 1930-1933	box 18	folder 689
	reel 27	
Harvard Crime Study, 1930-1933	box 18	folder 690
	reel 27	
Harvard Crime Study, 1930-1933	box 18	folder 691

	reel 27		
Harvard Crime Study - Clippings	box 18	folder 692	
Harvard Crime Study - Criticisms, 1931	box 18	folder 693	
	reel 27		
Harvard Crime Study - Miscellaneous	box 18	folder 694	
	reel 27		
Garett Case, 1930	box 18	folder 695	
	reel 27		
Garett Case, 1930	box 18	folder 696	
Garett Case, 1930	box 18	folder 697	
Garett Case, 1930	box 18	folder 698	
	reel 27		
Leonard V. Harrison Files - Criminology			
Citle/Description	Instances		
American Journal of Police Science, 1929-1930	box 19	folder 699	
American Journal of Police Science, 1929-1930	reel 27	Tolder 099	
Briarcliff Conference, 1927	box 19	folder 700	
Scope and Contents note	reel 27	Tolder 700	
National Conference on Police Statistics.	1001 27		
rational conference on Fonce Statistics.			
Charlestown State Prison Employment Questionnaire	box 19	folder 701	
	reel 27		
Cleveland Association for Criminal Justice, 1927-1929	box 19	folder 702	
	reel 27		
Cost of Crime, 1925	box 19	folder 703	
	reel 27		
"Criminal Justice", 1927	box 19	folder 704	
	reel 27		
Crime Prevention Data, 1927	box 19	folder 705	
	reel 27		
Crime Statistics	box 19	folder 706	
	reel 27		
Crime Statistics	box 19	folder 707	

	reel 28		
"The Decrease in the English Prison Population" by E. H.	box 19	folder 708	
Sutherland	reel 28		
Detectives, 1927	box 19	folder 709	
	reel 28		
Detroit Crime Statistics, 1928	box 19	folder 710	
	reel 28		
Detroit Police Forms	box 19	folder 711	
	reel 28		
Durant Award, 1928	box 19	folder 712	
	reel 28		
German Institute of Criminology, 1930-1931	box 19	folder 713	
	reel 28		
"Identity" by Giuseppi Falco, 1923	box 19	folder 714	
	reel 28		
Institute of Criminology	box 20	folder 715	
	reel 28		
Institute of Criminology - Scientific Method	box 20	folder 716	
	reel 28		
Institute of Criminology - Clippings and Comments	box 20	folder 717	
	reel 28		
"An Institute of Criminology and of Criminal Justice" by	box 20	folder 717A	
Michael and Adler, 1932	reel 28		
International Police Chiefs Emergency Crime Committee, 1933	box 20	folder 718	
	reel 28		
"A Job Analysis of Several Prisons" by Max Winsor, 1931	box 20	folder 719	
	reel 28		
Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial Criminology Report,	box 20	folder 720	
1928	reel 28		
Los Angeles Crime Statistics, 1928-1929	box 20	folder 721	
	reel 28		
Los Angeles Police Forms	box 20	folder 722	

	reel 28		
Matheson Murder - Clippings, 1927	box 20	folder 723	
"Measuring Crime vs. Estimating Crime" by Leonard Harrison	box 20	folder 724	
	reel 28		
"Measuring Crime vs. Estimating Crime" by Leonard Harrison	box 21	folder 725	
	reel 29		
Merchant's Association of New York, 1927-1930	box 21	folder 726	
	reel 29		
Merchant's Association of New York - Miscellaneous	box 21	folder 727	
	reel 29		
National Commission for Law Observance and Enforcement,	box 21	folder 728	
1929-1932	reel 29		
"Police Journal", 1928-1929	box 21	folder 729	
	reel 29		
Police Department - Organization Charts	box 21	folder 730	
	reel 29		
Police Department - Appointments	box 21	folder 731	
	reel 29		
Police Department - Appointments	box 21	folder 732	
	reel 29		
Police Department - Patrol Operations, 1929	box 21	folder 733	
	reel 29		
Police Department - Education, 1927-1928	box 22	folder 734	
	reel 29		
Police Department - Forms	box 22	folder 735	
	reel 29		
Police Department - Tests	box 22	folder 736	
	reel 29		
Police Department - Prosecution, 1929	box 22	folder 737	
	reel 29		
Police Department - Records and Reports	box 22	folder 738	
	reel 29		
Police Department - Recruitment and Training	box 22	folder 739	

	reel 29	
Police Department - Salaries, Ranks and Grades	box 22	folder 740
	reel 29	
Police Department - Special Services - Flying Squadron	box 22	folder 741
	reel 29	
Police Department - Special Services - Policewomen	box 22	folder 742
	reel 29	
Police Department - Special Services - Vice Squad	box 22	folder 743
	reel 29	
Police Department - Stationhouse Command	box 22	folder 744
	reel 29	
Policewomen	box 22	folder 745
	reel 30	
"Policewomen's Handbook" by Eleanor Hutzel, 1932	box 23	folder 746
	reel 30	
"Policewomen's Handbook" by Eleanor Hutzel, 1932	box 23	folder 747
	reel 30	
"Prison Life in the Soviet Union" by Elias Tobenkin	box 23	folder 748
	reel 30	
Prison Statistics, 1928-1929	box 23	folder 749
	reel 30	
"Resumes of the Wickersham Reports" by Abbott Ingalls,	box 23	folder 750
1931-1932	reel 30	
Shalloo, J. P Bibliography	box 23	folder 751
	reel 30	
Shalloo, J. P Bibliography	box 23	folder 752
	reel 30	
"Undermining Crime" by Leonard Harrison	box 23	folder 753
	reel 30	
"Undermining Crime" by Leonard Harrison	box 23	folder 754
	reel 30	
Uniform Crime Reporting, 1927-1932	box 24	folder 755

	reel 30		
Uniform Crime Reporting, 1927-1932	box 24	folder 756	
	reel 30		
Uniform Crime Reporting, 1927-1932	box 24	folder 757	
	reel 30		
Uniform Crime Reporting, 1927-1932	box 24	folder 758	
	reel 30		
Uniform Crime Reporting, 1927-1932	box 24	folder 759	
	reel 30		
Weekly Report Statistics	box 24	folder 760	
	reel 30		

Leonard V. Harrison Files - Miscellaneous **Title/Description Instances** American Peace Society, 1928-1931 box 25 folder 761 reel 30 American Peace Society, 1928-1931 box 25 folder 762 reel 31 box 25 folder 763 City Manager reel 31 box 25 folder 764 Clippings box 25 folder 765 Fosdick, Raymond, 1928-1931 reel 31 Fosdick, Raymond, 1928-1931 box 25 folder 766 reel 31 Harrison, Leonard, 1928-1931 box 25 folder 767 reel 31 box 25 folder 768 Memos, 1928-1929 reel 31 folder 769 Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1927-1935 box 25 reel 31 box 25 folder 770 Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1927-1935 reel 31 Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1927-1935 box 25 folder 771

	reel 31	
Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1927-1935	box 25	folder 772
	reel 31	
Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1927-1935	box 25	folder 773
	reel 31	
Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1927-1935	box 25	folder 774
	reel 31	
Miscellaneous Notes, 1931-1933	box 26	folder 775
	reel 31	
New York City Governmental Research Organization, 1929	box 26	folder 776
	reel 31	
Woods, Arthur, 1928-1929	box 26	folder 777
	reel 31	
"The World" - Final Copy, February 27, 1931	box 26	folder 778
"The World-Telegram" - First Copy, February 27, 1931	box 26	folder 779
Miscellaneous Pamphlets	box 26	folder 779A
	reel 31	

^ Return to Table of Contents

New York Police Psychopathic Laboratory

Scope and Contents note

This series contains the remnant files of the New York Police Psychopathic Laboratory, which were used in conjunction with a study on mental disease and crime. They contain material on cases and drafts of several reports.

Title/Description	Instances	
"Abnormals"	box 1	folder 780
Adler, Herman	box 1	folder 781
American Psychiatric Association, 1926-1927	box 1	folder 782
"Are Criminals Abnormal: A Policeman's Point of View" - Chapter 1, 1927	box 1	folder 783
"Are Criminals Abnormal: A Policeman's Point of View" - Outlines	box 1	folder 784
"New York Police Psychopathic Laboratory" by Arthur Woods, 1927	box 1	folder 785
Report - Section 1	box 1	folder 786

Report - Section 2	box 1	folder 787
Report - Section 3	box 1	folder 788
Report - Statistics	box 1	folder 789
Report - Draft	box 1	folder 790
Report - Draft	box 1	folder 791
Report - Miscellaneous Chapters	box 1	folder 792
Report - Miscellaneous Notes	box 1	folder 793
Australia	box 2	folder 794
Baker Cases	box 2	folder 795
Baumes Commission, 1928	box 2	folder 796
Feeble Minded and Insane, 1915-1929	box 2	folder 797
Scope and Contents note		
New York.		
Cases	box 2	folder 798
Cases	box 2	folder 799
Cases	box 2	folder 800
Clippings and Pamphlets	box 2	folder 801
Clippings and Pamphlets	box 2	folder 802
Correspondence, 1926-1928	box 2	folder 803
Crime Breakdown	box 2	folder 804
Darrow, Clarence - Notes	box 2	folder 805
Definitions	box 2	folder 806
Forms	box 2	folder 807
Graphs	box 2	folder 808
Interviews	box 2	folder 809
Laboratory and Control Cases, 1927	box 2	folder 810
Laboratory Costs	box 2	folder 811
Laboratory Reports, 1915-1917	box 3	folder 812
Laboratory Comments	box 3	folder 813
Laboratory - Mitigating Factors	box 3	folder 814
Laboratory - Cases to Use	box 3	folder 815
Notes	box 3	folder 816

Notes	box 3	folder 817
Overholser, Winfred	box 3	folder 818
Procedures	box 3	folder 819
Reports, 1915-1917	box 3	folder 820
Reports, 1915-1917	box 3	folder 821
Reports, 1915-1917	box 3	folder 822
District of Columbia	box 3	folder 823
Florida	box 3	folder 824
Georgia	box 3	folder 825
Illinois	box 3	folder 826
Indiana	box 3	folder 827
Kansas	box 3	folder 828
Louisiana	box 3	folder 829
Massachusetts	box 3	folder 830
Michigan	box 3	folder 831
Mississippi	box 3	folder 832
Missouri	box 3	folder 833
Nebraska	box 3	folder 834
New Jersey	box 3	folder 835
New York	box 3	folder 836
Ohio	box 3	folder 837
Oklahoma	box 3	folder 838
Oregon	box 3	folder 839
Pennsylvania	box 3	folder 840
Tennessee	box 3	folder 841
Texas	box 3	folder 842
Wisconsin	box 3	folder 843
Wyoming	box 3	folder 844
Thomas, W. I Notes	box 4	folder 845
Tunney, Thomas, 1927	box 4	folder 846
Winsor, Max, 1926-1928	box 4	folder 847
Woods, Arthur - Notes	box 4	folder 848

Woods Survey Summaries	box 4	folder 849
Woods Survey Summaries	box 4	folder 850
Woods Survey Summaries	box 4	folder 851
Woods Survey Summaries	box 4	folder 852
Woods Survey Summaries	box 4	folder 853
Woods Survey Summaries	box 4	folder 854
Woods Survey Summaries	box 4	folder 855

[^] Return to Table of Contents

Bureau of Social Hygiene photographs, 1926-1929

Biographical / Historical

The Bureau of Social Hygiene resulted from the appointment of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., to a Special Grand Jury to investigate white slavery in New York City in 1910. In conferences taken in the course of this investigation, Mr. Rockefeller, Jr., became convinced that for a lasting improvement of conditions a permanent organization was needed. On March 22, 1911, The Committee of Three, including Mr. Rockefeller, Jr., Paul Warburg, and Starr Murphy, met. The name "Bureau of Social Hygiene" was first used in October of that year, but not consistently until 1913.

In 1913 the Bureau was incorporated and its purpose was stated as "...the study, amelioration, and prevention of those social conditions, crimes, and diseases which adversely affect the well being of society, with special reference to prostitution and the evils associated therewith." The Bureau would engage in research and education, publish reports, and employ and/or cooperate with other public or private agencies to obtain these goals. The emphasis in the years from 1911 until the reorganization of 1928 was mainly on prostitution, the control of vice, and, through that, the relationships to police organization. Narcotics was also an early interest. Throughout these early years, Katherine Bement Davis, Commissioner of Charities and Correction of New York and later Superintendent of Bedford Hills Reformatory, guided the Bureau as General Secretary.

Miss Davis resigned in 1928 and Lawrence B. Dunham was appointed Director. Under Mr. Dunham's administration, from 1928-1934, the Bureau developed a broadened interest in criminology. In 1929 the certificate of incorporation was amended and the emphasis on prostitution was dropped. Criminology embraced crime reporting, police training and education, penology, criminal law, and juvenile delinquency. While studies and projects were still conducted in narcotics and social hygiene, the main thrust of the organization was crime and criminology.

The Bureau functioned through grants. It was not a foundation and had no set endowment. In the very early years of its existence, financial backing came from several sources including Paul Warburg, the New York Foundation, and John D. Rockefeller, Jr., although throughout the history of the Bureau, Mr. Rockefeller, Jr., was always the main contributor. Grants were occasionally channeled through the Bureau from the Spelman Fund of New York and the Rockefeller Foundation.

Grants were made by the Bureau for a variety of types of work. Research studies were conducted, such as the Institute of Criminology and the Crew Study; books were published, such as "European Police Systems" and "Policewoman's Handbook"; fellowships were given, as were the fellowships in prison study; and experiments were conducted at the Massachusetts State Prison Colony and the Laboratory of Social Hygiene at Bedford Hills. Grants were most often long range covering periods of from three to five years. Although the Bureau did not interfere in the

conduct of a project once money had been granted, it was careful in its selection of projects and kept in close touch during the life of the project.

The Bureau ceased making new appropriations in 1934 and by mid-1937 all the previous commitments had been brought to a close. Annual meetings were held until 1940 when the Bureau was dissolved on November 13th.

Controlled Access Headings:

Photographs

Title/Description	Instances		
Decline of the Prison Population in England, 1929	box 3	folder 28	
Scope and Contents note			
Prisons, Germany.			
European Police Systems - France	box 3	folder 29	
Scope and Contents note			
Law enforcement, vehicles.			
European Police Systems	box 3	folder 29A	
Scope and Contents note			
Law enforcement, fingerprints, England, Germany, Austria.			
Narcotics, 1926-1927	box 3	folder 30	
Scope and Contents note			
Merck, industry, Germany.			
New York Police Psychopathic Laboratory, 1928	box 3	folder 31	

Scope and Contents note

Insanity, law enforcement.

[^] Return to Table of Contents