



The Wittliff Collections

Puckerbrush Press Collection of Mary Gray Hughes 1977-2002

Collection SWWC-078

Descriptive Summary

Creator:	Hughes, Mary Gray
Title:	Puckerbrush Press Collection of Mary Gray Hughes
Dates:	1977-2002
Abstract:	Personal papers, correspondence, newspaper clippings, magazine articles, computer disks and numerous copies of Hughes short stories, story lines, poems, and letters to editors documenting Hughes's 2002 Puckerbrush Press collection, <i>Cora's Seduction and Other Stories.</i>
Identification:	SWWC-078
Extent:	0.75 Linear Feet, 2 boxes
Language:	English
Repository:	The Wittliff Collections, Texas State University

Table Of Contents

Biographical Notes	3
Administrative Information	5
Conditions Governing Access	5
Immediate Source of Acquisition	5
Physical Location	5
Preferred Citation	5
Conditions Governing Use	5
Controlled Access Headings	5
Detailed Description of the Collection	6
Series I: Personal Documents, 1997-2002, undated	6
Series II: Correspondence with James Kelman, 1977-1988, undated	6
Series III: Computer Disks, undated	6
Series IV: Writings by Hughes, undated	6
Short Stories	6
Story Lines	6
Poetry by Hughes	7
Poems	7
Scope and Contents	4
Administrative Information	5
Conditions Governing Access	5
Immediate Source of Acquisition	5
Physical Location	5
Preferred Citation	5
Conditions Governing Use	5
Controlled Access Headings	5
Detailed Description of the Collection	6
Series I: Personal Documents, 1997-2002, undated	6
Series II: Correspondence with James Kelman, 1977-1988, undated	6
Series III: Computer Disks, undated	6
Series IV: Writings by Hughes, undated	6
Short Stories	6
Story Lines	6
Poetry by Hughes	7
Poems	7

Biographical Notes

Mary Gray Hughes, the daughter of Texas author and newspaperman, Hart Stilwell and his first wife, Mary Gray Seabury, was born in Brownsville, Texas on August 25, 1930. A prolific and respected author in her own right, Hughes wrote and was published almost continuously for nearly three decades from 1969 until dying from cancer in Chicago, IL in September, 1999. Throughout her life, she received numerous awards for her writing. She received the National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship in Creative Writing (1978), was Illinois Writer in Residence from 1977-1980, had her stories anthologized in *Best American Short Stories* (1962, 1972), had her stories mentioned in *Best American Stories* (1974-1975), and was elected a member of the Texas Institute of Letters in 1983. Hughes graduated from Brownsville High School in 1947 then attended The University of Mexico for a summer before completing her education at The University of Texas and Barnard College. While at Barnard, she participated in Phi Beta Kappa and graduated Magna Cum Laude in 1951 with a Bachelor of Arts. After receiving a Fulbright Scholarship for two years, she pursued a Master of Letters in Social Anthropology. She graduated in 1953. In this same year, she married J.R.T. Hughes. Moving to Illinois, Hughes gave birth to a son, Benjamin in 1960, and twin girls, Charis and Margaret, in 1962. Starting in 1954, Hughes worked continuously at a variety of jobs – almost all in the teaching, publishing, and writing fields. She was an editor at Bowker Publishing Co. and People's Book Club, and was the Writer in Residence of the Illinois Arts Council. She conducted writing workshops at high schools and colleges; served as consultant for the Illinois Arts Council; was writer-consultant to the graduate program in Creative Writing for the University of South Alabama; lecturer in English at Lake Forest College; lecturer in English at Northwestern University, and a judge for the Texas Institute of Letters. All the while, Hughes worked on her own writing and had numerous short stories, poems, and books published. Notable among her works are the short story collections, *The Calling* and *Cora's Seduction and Other Stories*, and the novel, *The Empty Lot*. This collection of papers represent the materials published by Puckerbrush Press as *Cora's Seduction and Other Stories*, and were donated to Texas State University's Wittliff Collection by the Press in 2003.

Scope and Contents

Personal papers, correspondence, newspaper clippings, magazine articles, computer disks and numerous copies of Hughes short stories, story lines, poems, and letters to editors fill .75 linear feet (2 boxes) documenting the writing of Hughes's 2002 Puckerbrush Press book, *Cora's Seduction and Other Stories*. The collection is arranged in four main series, Personal Documents, Correspondence with James Kelman, Computer Disks, and Writings by Hughes. The first series contains letters and documents of a personal nature to Hughes and vary in subject matter. The second series consists exclusively of correspondence with James Kelman, editor of *Cora's Seduction*. Numerous letters from Kelman include newspaper and magazine clippings related to the book. The third series of the collection is Computer Disks related to the publication of the book. Series four comprises the bulk of the collection. Writings by Hughes includes drafts of all of the stories published in *Cora's Seduction*: "Cora's Seduction," "In a Strange Land," "A Few Spoken Words," "Life Blood," "Welcome Strangers, and Others Too," "Third House, on the Left," "Reunion," "Torn Leaves," and "The Long Drive," as well as drafts of numerous other short stories, story lines, poems, poem ideas, that were not selected for the compilation. Further description of this and other series in the collection are available in the following section.

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

Collection is open for research. Contact the Wittliff Collections for information about additional materials from this writer that have not yet been fully processed.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Puckerbrush Press, 2003.

Physical Location

Materials may be stored off-site. Advance notice is required for use:
<https://www.thewittliffcollections.txstate.edu/research/makearesearchappointment.html>.

Preferred Citation

Puckerbrush Press Collection of Mary Gray Hughes, The Wittliff Collections, Texas State University.

Conditions Governing Use

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<https://www.thewittliffcollections.txstate.edu/research/visit/policies/publication.html>

Controlled Access Headings

- Women authors, American -- Texas -- 20th century
- Women poets

Detailed Description of the Collection

Series I: Personal Documents, 1997-2002, undated

Box Folder

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| 1 | 1 | Correspondence, Application, and Curriculum Vitae, 1997-2002, undated |
| | | Letter to Hughes from daughter, January 3, 1977 E-mail letter by son to Hughes, June 14, 1999 E-mail letter from James Bryant and Mary Hill to Hughes, August 9, 1999 Internet Authors Guild Application, August 16, 1999 Postcard from daughter to Connie Hunting, June 10, 2002 Hughes curriculum vitae, undated |

Series II: Correspondence with James Kelman, 1977-1988, undated

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | Correspondence (8), 1977-1998, undated |
| | | October 14, 1977, includes note June 21, 1979 July 14, 1980 October 30, 1989, includes newspaper clipping March 7, 1991 August 23, 1998, includes newspaper clippings |
| | | Undated material: |
| | | unknown originator-vitae of James Kelman 3 letters from James Kelman newspaper clipping about James Kelman Hughes' review of James Kelman with note |

Series III: Computer Disks, undated

- | | | |
|---|---|--------------------|
| 1 | 3 | Computer disks (6) |
|---|---|--------------------|

Series IV: Writings by Hughes, undated

Short Stories

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 4 | "The Beach" "Cora's Seduction" "A Few Spoken Words" "In a Strange Land" "Let Me Take You Away From It All" "Life Blood" |
| 1 | 5 | "The Long Drive" |
| 2 | 1 | "Merging in San Francisco" "A Mother's Love" "New Venture" "The Old Woman of the Mountain" "Reunion" "Third House, On the Left" "Three Ages on a Park Bench" "Torn Leaves" "Welcome Strangers, and Others Too" "The Valley of Zibelu" |
| 1 | 2 | "You Go On" |

Story Lines

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| 2 | 3 | <p>Various story lines</p> <p>“Ashamed”- handwritten draft “The Conflictor”- handwritten draft and note “Death Came at Least”- handwritten notes “Dutiful”- handwritten draft “Everybody Knows Andy”- handwritten note “Faithful”- handwritten draft “The Flight”- handwritten draft with note “Goose Bumps”- handwritten note “How Things Happen”- handwritten draft “Indigenous Fruit”- handwritten draft “Letter to a Lady Long Since Dead”- handwritten draft “Man In Love”- handwritten draft “Once on the Phone”- handwritten notes “Sunday Morning on the Docks”- typescript draft “Virtuous”- handwritten draft untitled handwritten draft</p> |
| 2 | 4 | <p>“Haskell and Millie” - 2 handwritten notes, drafts, typescript draft</p> |

Poetry by Hughes

- | | | |
|---|---|-----------|
| 2 | 5 | Poem list |
|---|---|-----------|

Poems

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| 2 | 6 | <p>Various poems</p> <p>“Alternatives” “Belies Belief” “Bent” “Cold Christmas” “Common Ground” “For Dorothy” “For Lydia” “Gift” “Goose Bumps” “How About Those” “A Mind is a More Complex by Far than Bark” “The Only Sound” “Request” “Requiem” “Revisions May Not Be Improvements”</p> |
|---|---|--|