

OBAMA, BARACK.

Barack Obama letters to Alexandra McNear, 1982-1984

Emory University
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Descriptive Summary

Creator: Obama, Barack.
Title: Barack Obama letters to Alexandra McNear, 1982-1984
Call Number: Manuscript Collection No. 1388
Extent: .25 linear feet (1 box)
Abstract: Letters from former president Barack Obama to his college girlfriend Alexandra McNear.
Language: Materials entirely in English.

Administrative Information

Restrictions on Access

Unrestricted access.

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Related Materials in This Repository

[Feast](#), The Literary Journal of Occidental College includes two poems by Barack Obama.

Source

Acquired 2014.

Citation

[after identification of item(s)], Barack Obama letters to Alexandra McNear, Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

Processing

Arranged and described at the folder level by Sarah Quigley, January 2017.

Collection Description

Biographical Note

Barack Obama was born in Honolulu, Hawaii, on August 4, 1961, to Anne Dunham and Barack Obama, Sr. He attended Occidental College in Los Angeles, California for two years before transferring to Columbia University (New York, New York), where he graduated with a bachelor's degree in political science in 1983. After college, he worked for a year for the Business International Corporation as a research assistant. In 1985, he moved to Chicago, Illinois, to begin work as a community activist on the city's South Side. He eventually became involved in Illinois politics. Obama was elected to the Illinois State Senate in 1996. He ran for United States Congress in 2000 but was defeated; in 2004, he won a seat in the United States Senate. He was elected President of the United States in 2008 and again in 2012. He married attorney Michelle Robinson in 1992 and the couple have two daughters, Malia and Sasha.

Scope and Content Note

The collection consists of nine letters from Barack Obama to former college girlfriend Alexandra McNear from 1982-1984. The letters document Obama's senior year in college, a post-graduation trip to Singapore and Indonesia, and the early months of his employment at Business International Corporation. In the letters he writes about his experiences at school and his course of study and makes numerous book recommendations to McNear. He also writes about forming his own identity and his experiences of racism, particularly in the workplace. The majority of the letters focus on his relationship with McNear and their budding philosophies about identity, masculinity, feminism, and community. There are only brief mentions of his mother and grandparents. There are no return letters from McNear but some letters have brief annotations by her in response to questions or statements from Obama.

Arrangement Note

Arranged in chronological order.

Container List

| Box | Folder | Content |
|------------|---------------|--|
| 1 | 1 | Letters to Alexandra McNear, 1982-1984 |
| 1 | 2 | Letters to Alexandra McNear, 1982-1984 [photocopies] |
