



# Nelson Algren in the Newberry Collection

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## Selected Works by Nelson Algren

***Never Come Morning***, 1942, Second Edition, with an introduction by Richard Wright. **Call #: Y 255 .A41**. Algren's second novel, written after his tenure with the WPA. Commanding the slang and ethnographic speech of its time and place, this horror-romance takes place among the down and out of Chicago's Northwest side. Among Algren's early and most vociferous champions, Ernest Hemingway called *Never Come Morning* "the best book to come out of Chicago."

***The Neon Wilderness***, 1947. **Call #: Y 255 .A408**. This collection of 24 short stories serves as demonstrable evolution of Algren's literary voice and the essence of his major works to come. These sketches of the accused and abused would prove imperative to his next novel.

***The Man with the Golden Arm***, 1949, First Edition. **Call #: Y 255 .A407**. The story of Frankie Machine, a Division Street drug addict and poker dealer. Winner of the 1950 National Book Award. Algren revised his manuscript for what was then titled "Hustler's Heart," with a Newberry Fellowship in 1948.

***Chicago: City on the Make***, 1951, First Edition. **Call #: G 8962 .026 Multiple Holdings**. Algren's seminal prose poem, an ode to the Chicago's history of graft, braggadocio and the human condition. *City*

*on the Make* evolved from a piece on the city originally written for *Holiday Magazine* in 1951. Where *Golden Arm* confronted Middle America's willful ignorance of the chronically down and out, *City on the Make* speaks to a newly paranoid nation in a nascent Cold War/McCarthy era.

***A Walk on the Wild Side***, 1956, First Edition. **Call #: Y 255 .A415**. A partial rewrite of his first novel and some early stories, tinged with his own experiences of depression era drifting, Nelson Algren's fourth novel pours out from Chicago to New Orleans and East Texas.

***Who Lost an American?*** 1963. **Call #: PS3501.L4625 W5 1963**

***Notes from a Sea Diary: Hemingway All the Way***, 1965. **Call #: PS3501.L4625 N6 1965**.

Eschewing the novel for travel diary/diatribe, the middle 1960s found Algren dispatching from the world's great cities on the nature of Americanism, consumerism, and identity. His trade heretofore had been depicting America—and in particular its microcosmic distillation Chicago—in a tragicomic realism. These works show the writer courting a self-referential disassembly of genre foreshadowing literary postmodernism.

***Nonconformist: Writing on Writing***, afterword by Daniel Simon, notes by Daniel Simon and C.S. O'Brien, 1996. **Call #: PS3501.L4625 Z465 1996.** A philosophic companion piece to *Chicago: City on the Make*, this is Algren on writing and the moral duty

of the writer in speaking truth to power. Worked on from 1950-1953, declined by Doubleday and unpublished until the 1990's. *Nonconformity* serves as Algren's credo and an essential supplement to the close reading of his prose, poetry and fiction.

## Nelson Algren Papers and Manuscripts

**Nelson Algren papers, 1960-1975. Call #: Midwest MS 152.** Includes typescripts of two short stories and an essay by Algren: "The woman one roof away," "God bless the lonesome gas man," signed, and the essay "The Chevalier of Vain Regrets" signed. Also two articles about Algren when he left Chicago in 1975.

**Nelson Algren manuscript, published article, and two photographs, ca. 1975. Call #: Midwest MS 69.** Original untitled typescript manuscript of an article on "old" Chicago by Nelson Algren, the printed article in *Chicago Magazine* of September 1975, and two photographs of the author. The manuscript, typed on University of Florida letterhead, but with a Paterson NJ return address, is an *ubi sunt* meditation on the loss of the old Chicago of Riverview Park, White City, Haymarket Burlesque, and the Star & Garter. Algren remembers fishing off Municipal Pier, Grover Cleveland Alexander pitching at Cubs Park, the great pleasure steamer "Eastland" boarding passengers every Sunday morning under the Michigan Avenue Bridge. Where did it all go? Text includes some additions in pencil, some editorial

markings in red ink, and Algren's signature in black marker at the bottom of page 3 of the manuscript.

**Nelson Algren short stories and postcard, 1949-1972. Call #: Midwest MS 114b.** Typescript drafts of two short stories, "The Father and Son Cigar," of 1962, and "The Last Carousel," undated, first published in *Playboy Magazine* in 1962 and 1972, respectively. Also a typed postcard to Nolan Miller of Antioch College, November 4, 1949, commenting on the writing ability of author James T. Farrell.

**Series 03: Administrative Subject Files. Fellowships - Rockefeller Grants - Fellows - Algren, Nelson Papers of Stanley Pargellis. Call #: Newberry Archives 03/05 Box 4, Folder 109.** Materials concerning Algren's application to and fellowship with the Newberry Library to finish what would become *The Man with the Golden Arm*. Contains correspondence between Algren and Pargellis, Algren and Ken McCormick, Algren's publisher at Doubleday, and a proposal for a second fellowship for a scholarly paper on Chicago street slang. This second proposal was declined.

## Selected Materials on Nelson Algren

**H.E.F. Donohue, *Conversations with Nelson Algren***, 1964, First Edition. **Call #: Y 255 .A405.**

***Writing in the First Person: Nelson Algren, 1909-1981***: 1988 Exhibit Catalog from Grand Army of the Republic Museum, the Chicago Public Library Cultural Center, February 20-May 21, 1988, organized by the Division, the Chicago Public Library, 1988. **Call #: PS3501.L4625 Z93 1988.** Contains photographs of Algren and related artifacts with three essays: An introduction to Algren's life and work by Catherine Ingraham, Roger Groening's memoir of Algren in Vietnam and Patterson, New Jersey, and Michael Anania's "Nelson Algren and the City".

***Nelson Algren's Chicago; photographs by Art Shay***, 1988. **Call #: folio F548.37 .S52 1988.** Photo-essay by Algren's close friend and renowned photographer. With supplementary memoir and detailed notes. As much a biographic piece on Algren as it is a document of Old Weird Chicago.

This quick guide was created for a Meet the Author event, **Mary Wisniewski, *Algren, A Life***, held at the Newberry on March 7, 2017.

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