

FINDING AID FOR
Eugene Sparrow Papers



Meadville Lombard Theological School Archives
Unitarian Universalist Sankofa Special Collection
610 South Michigan Avenue
Chicago, IL, 60605
(773) 256-3000 ext. 629

Collection Description

Title: Eugene Sparrow Papers

ID: MLTS.US.5009

Creator: Sparrow, Eugene

Date Range: 1944-1978

Extent: 2 linear feet (4 half boxes)

Language(s): Materials entirely in English.

Scope and Content: This collection contains the papers of African American Unitarian minister and activist Eugene Sparrow. It includes personal documents, correspondence, work documents, and sermons. The collection dates from 1944-1978, with the bulk of materials dated between 1960-1970.

Arrangement: This collection is divided into four series: Series I Personal; Series II Correspondence; Series III Sermons; and Series IV Professional. Series II Correspondence is further divided into three subseries: Subseries I General Correspondence; Subseries II Family Correspondence; Subseries III Topical Correspondence. Series divisions reflect the original filing structure used by Sparrow as much as possible. Series I-III are arranged chronologically and alphabetically thereunder. Series IV is arranged alphabetically.

Series I Personal consists of personal documents, primarily legal and financial documents. Series II Correspondence consists of correspondence in accordance with the aforementioned subseries divisions. Series III Sermons consists of published sermons, manuscripts of sermons, sermon drafts, and research materials used in writing sermons. Series IV Professional consists of documents and correspondence related Sparrow's professional career that he filed separately from his correspondence.

Box and folder numbers function as unique identifiers for any digital surrogates of materials. [e.g. B1.F1]

Biographical Note: Eugene Sparrow was a Unitarian minister, teacher and social activist. He was born in 1921 in Boston, MA, adopted, and raised in a Congregational church. He graduated from Boston Latin School and in 1942

enlisted in the army. Following World War II he attended the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor with concentrations in Spanish and sociology. With his wife Donna, Sparrow rented a room in the Ann Arbor Unitarian Church parsonage. His friendship with the minister influenced his decision to become a Unitarian and study ministry at Harvard. The American Unitarian Association (AUA) Department of Ministry first interviewed Sparrow in 1946. He served as an assistant at a congregation in Somerville, Massachusetts from 1948-1949. Following his graduation from Harvard in 1949, when no Unitarian congregation could be found that would settle him, he took a position as the dean of men at Jarvis Christian College in Texas. Soon thereafter, the AUA granted him preliminary fellowship as a Unitarian minister. In 1950 he candidated at Detroit's Church of Our Father for the position of Director of Youth Activities, but was not brought on. Although he was ordained by the Ann Arbor Unitarian Church and was listed as minister-at-large, Sparrow was never settled in a Unitarian congregation. During the 50s and 60s Sparrow held an array of positions. He was acting director of the Urban League in Springfield, MA; director of Massachusetts' Camp Atwater; director of a recreational center in Connecticut; the Human Relations Councils in Cincinnati, OH and Grand Rapids; and served the Western Unitarian Conference as Director of Field Services from 1960-1962. In 1968 Sparrow began teaching at Widener College in Chester, PA and remained a professor there until his death in 1978.

Subjects and Index Terms: African American Unitarian Universalists -- Ohio --
Cincinnati -- 20th Century
Unitarian Universalist churches -- Clergy
Sparrow, Eugene -- Sermons

Restrictions: This collection is open for research use.

Processed by: Sarah Levine, May 2016

Inventory

Series I: Personal

Box 1 - MLTS.US.5009.B1

Box 1 Folder 1	Legal and Financial Documents [1 of 2]	1959-1968
Box 1 Folder 2	Legal and Financial Documents [2 of 2]	1959-1968
Box 1 Folder 3	Addiction	1967-1976
Box 1 Folder 4	Journals	1977
Box 1 Folder 5	Memorial Service	1978
Box 1 Folder 6	Guitar	undated

Series II: Correspondence

Subseries I: General Correspondence

Box 1 Folder 7	Correspondence (Photocopies)	1940-1949
Box 1 Folder 8	Correspondence	1949-1959
Box 1 Folder 9	Correspondence	1960
Box 1 Folder 10	Correspondence	1961
Box 1 Folder 11	Correspondence	1962-1978
Box 1 Folder 12	Undated Correspondence	undated
Box 1 Folder 13	Donna Sparrow	1944

Subseries II: Family Correspondence

Box 1 Folder 14	Family Correspondence	1960
Box 1 Folder 15	Family Correspondence	1961
Box 1 Folder 16	Family Correspondence [1 of 2]	1962
Box 1 Folder 17	Family Correspondence [2 of 2]	1962
Box 1 Folder 18	Family Correspondence	1963

Box 2 - MLTS.US.5009.B2

Box 2 Folder 1	Family Correspondence	1964-1975
Box 2 Folder 2	Family Correspondence	undated

Subseries III: Topical Correspondence

Box 2 Folder 3	Jarvis Christian College	1952-1953
Box 2 Folder 4	Job Correspondence [1 of 2]	1961-1968
Box 2 Folder 5	Job Correspondence [2 of 2]	1961-1968
Box 2 Folder 6	Los Angeles Board of Education	1959
Box 2 Folder 7	Military Service	1936-1947

Box 2 Folder 8	Unitarian Universalist Correspondence	1951-1964
Box 2 Folder 9	Urban League of Springfield	1956-1959

Series III: Sermons

Box 2 Folder 10	Sermons [1 of 4]	ca. 1945-1965
Box 2 Folder 11	Sermons [2 of 4]	ca. 1945-1965
Box 2 Folder 12	Sermons [3 of 4]	ca. 1945-1965
Box 2 Folder 13	Sermons [4 of 4]	ca. 1945-1965

Box 3 - MLTS.US.5009.B3

Box 3 Folder 1	Sermon Fragments	undated
Box 3 Folder 2	Sermon Materials [1 of 6]	1945-1965
Box 3 Folder 3	Sermon Materials [2 of 6]	1945-1965
Box 3 Folder 4	Sermon Materials [3 of 6]	1945-1965
Box 3 Folder 5	Sermon Materials [4 of 6]	1945-1965
Box 3 Folder 6	Sermon Materials [5 of 6]	1945-1965
Box 3 Folder 7	Sermon Materials [6 of 6]	1945-1965
Box 3 Folder 8	Sermon Materials - Unitarian Symposium	1958-1959

Series IV: Professional

Box 3 Folder 9	Camp Atwater	ca. 1957
Box 3 Folder 10	Letters of Recommendation and Transcripts	1942-1967
Box 3 Folder 11	Lincoln Farm Work Camp	1951-1961

Box 4 - MLTS.US.5009.B4

Box 4 Folder 1	Mayor's Friendly Relations Committee	1951-1963
Box 4 Folder 2	Midwest Unitarian Universalist Conference	1961-1964
Box 4 Folder 3	Ministerial Settlement	1961-1962
Box 4 Folder 4	Military	1944
Box 4 Folder 5	State Department	1951-1962
Box 4 Folder 6	Miscellaneous	ca. 1957-1962
Box 4 Folder 7	R.E. Materials	1959-1961
Box 4 Folder 8	Teaching Certificates	1952-1962
Box 4 Folder 9	University of Michigan Placement	1950-1969
Box 4 Folder 10	Western Unitarian Conference	1956-1965
Box 4 Folder 11	Youth Issues	undated