

PAUL A. SCHILPP (1897-1993) PAPERS, 1936-1993

Series 11/3/20/7

Box 1 (half-size box)

Biography

Controversy and debate seemed to follow philosopher Paul Schilpp around for most of his life. Throughout his long career at Northwestern University, and within the field of philosophy in general, Schilpp sought to provoke thought and encourage discussion.

Paul Arthur Schilpp was born in Dillenburg, Germany on February 6, 1897. His father, a Methodist minister, moved the family to the Midwest when Schilpp was 16. In 1913 he enrolled at Baldwin-Wallace College, Ohio. Although he was still unable to speak English; he taught himself the language as he attended school. In 1916, he received his A.B. from Baldwin-Wallace College. In 1918 he became the minister of Calvary Church in Terre Haute, Indiana. After three years Schilpp decided to return to school, and in 1922 he received a Bachelor's of Divinity from Garrett Theological Seminary and an M.A. in Philosophy and Religion from Northwestern University. He spent one semester at the University of California, Berkeley in 1924 and audited courses at the University of Munich in 1928. In 1936 Schilpp received his Ph.D. from Stanford University for his dissertation entitled "A Critical Analysis of Kant's Ethical Thought of the Pre-Critical Period." He received four honorary doctorates over the course of his life, from Baldwin-Wallace College, Springfield College in Massachusetts, Kent State University, and Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

Schilpp joined Northwestern University as a lecturer in the Department of Philosophy in 1936 after being fired from his previous positions at the College of Puget Sound, WA (1922-23) for religious radicalism and the College of the Pacific, CA (1923-36) for political, economic, and social radicalism. He was named Associate Professor in 1936 and became a full professor in 1950. While at Northwestern Schilpp was appointed to many special lectureships around the United States and the world. He was invited to teach at the University of Munich in 1948, the first American professor invited to teach at a German university since the end of World War II. Schilpp also received a grant from the Watumuli Foundation to lecture for a year (1950-51) at over fifteen Indian, Kashmiri, and Ceylonese universities.

Over the course of his career at Northwestern he was frequently at the center of controversy. Shortly after Franklin D. Roosevelt's death Schilpp gave a speech that labeled FDR a Judas Iscariot for leading the United States into World War II. This declaration caused an outcry among students, with many calling for the University administration to formally censure Schilpp. His sometimes rocky relationship with the University administration during the early part of his career was reflected in his being the only faculty member not to receive an automatic pay raise in 1947. In spite of these problems, Schilpp remained at Northwestern for nearly thirty years, retiring from the University when he reached its mandatory retirement age of 68. He did not, however, stop teaching. After leaving Northwestern in 1965 as Professor Emeritus, he became the Visiting Distinguished Professor of Philosophy at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, a position that he held for fifteen years until he finally retired for good in 1980.

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Despite a number of important individual texts, including *Kant's Pre-Critical Ethics*, *Do We Need a New Religion?*, *The Quest for Religious Realism*, *Human Nature and Progress* and *The Crisis in Science and Education*, Schilpp is best known for founding, editing, and contributing to the first nineteen volumes of the *Library of Living Philosophers* series. The first volume, on John Dewey, was published in 1939. The series includes works covering the work of Bertrand Russell, George Santayana, G. E. Moore, and Albert Einstein among others. After his retirement from Southern Illinois University in 1980 Schilpp stepped down as Editor of the Series, which is still being published today.

Schilpp was also active outside of the university setting. He remained a Methodist minister all his life, even though his viewpoints on religion differed widely from those of mainstream Methodists. He was an avowed advocate of world government and of prohibiting the use and production of nuclear energy and weapons. He was on the Board of Directors of the ACLU, the National Board of SANE (an anti-nuclear energy group), and was a member of the Board of Directors of the United World Federalists.

Schilpp met his first wife, Louise Gruenholz while he attended Baldwin-Wallace College. They had four children: Erna, a Northwestern University graduate; Marjorie; Robert; and Walter. In 1950 he married his second wife, Madelon Golden (WCAS 1945), a reporter who was a former student of Schilpp's. They adopted two children: Erich in 1958 and Margot Marlene in 1962. Schilpp died on September 6, 1993, at age 96, of respiratory failure.

Description of the Series

The Paul A. Schilpp Papers fill one box, spanning the years 1935 to 1993, and providing an overview of Schilpp's life and career. The bulk of the materials consist of newspaper clippings, press releases, and articles and reprints of journal publications as well as a small amount of biographical material and correspondence. The material in each folder is organized chronologically.

Biographical materials span the years 1935 to 1993 and include biographical sketches, dedications, alumni information sheets, undated CVs, and Schilpp's obituary from the *New York Times*.

The correspondence file contains a small number of letters and memos relating primarily to his professional life, dating between 1962 and 1986.

The magazine and newspaper clippings included are comprehensive, dating from 1936 to 1980. They cover both Schilpp's professional and personal life, with articles dealing with the publication of the *Library of Living Philosophers* series, his extensive academic travels, as well as his second marriage and the adoption of his son. Most of the individual clippings were photocopied for preservation and ease of use during the processing of this collection.

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Press releases are also extensive, spanning the period between 1938 and 1969. They are primarily Northwestern University press releases, but also include a number of later releases from Southern Illinois University as well as one pertaining to the change in publisher for his *Living Philosopher* series.

Publications include reprints of Schilpp's articles, dating between 1939 and 1961, many of them addressing the role of the philosopher in the modern, atomic age. One folder contains book reviews written by Schilpp dating from 1956 to 1960; another holds scholarly reviews of various volumes of the *Library of Living Philosophers* series, dating from 1940 to 1950, and pamphlets about individual volumes of his Living Philosophers series. Three radio transcripts document Schilpp's participation in Northwestern University's *Reviewing Stand* radio shows. Schilpp's speeches on the topic of the philosophy of education are represented by a typescript (1959), a reprint of an excerpt from the *NU Alumni News* (1963), and an undated mimeograph. Announcements relating to the *Library of Living Philosophers* date between 1939 and 1961.

A grant application dated 1940 sought more funds to continue the *Library of Living Philosophers* series.

Cross References

Alumni Biographical Files, Box 428 (Series 51/14).

Southern Illinois University holds the Paul Schilpp Papers, 1945-1987, Collection 17-19-F2, and the Records of the Library of Living Philosophers, 1938-1969, Collection 20, 59 boxes (<http://www.lib.siu.edu/spcol/inventory/SC020.html>).

Provenance: The Paul Schilpp Papers are made up of materials from the University Archives' Faculty Biographical Files (Accession # 79-19) and Alumni Biographical Files.

Restrictions: None.

Separations: One half inch of extraneous and duplicate material was discarded.

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Container List

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	1	Biographical Material	1935-1993, n.d.
	2	Correspondence	1962-1986
	3	Magazine and Newspaper Clippings	1936-1980
	4	Press Releases	1938-1969, n.d.
	5	Publications: Articles and Reprints	1936-1963, n.d.
	6	Publications: Book Reviews by Schilpp	1956-1960
	7	Publications: Book Reviews of Schilpp's work	1940-1950
	8	Publications: Radio Transcripts	1949, 1952
	9	Publications: Speeches/Addresses	1959, 1963, n.d.
	10	Publications: <i>Library of Living Philosophers</i> Announcements	1939-1961
	11	Research: Grants	1940