

MG

874

ARCHIE SMITH JR.
PAPERS

The New York Public Library
Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture
515 Malcolm X Boulevard
New York, New York, 10037

ARCHIE SMITH JR. PAPERS, 1962 - 2013
Sc MG 874

Bulk Dates: 1978 - 2002
Extent: 2 record cartons
Linear Feet: 2
Source and Date: Gift of Archie Smith Jr.
Processor's Name: Robby Koehler
Date Finding Aid Completed: 04/18/13
Abstract: Correspondence, unpublished and published papers and sermons, and other materials that document Smith's career as a scholar and pastor
Organization Note: Collection is organized into 3 series: Personal Papers, Professional Papers, and Pastoral Papers.
Access: Unrestricted Access
Reproductions: All request subject to limitations noted in divisional policies on reproduction.
Copyright: Information on copyright (literary rights) available from repository.
Citation: [Item], Archie Smith Jr. Papers, Sc MG 874, Manuscripts, Archives, and Rare Books Division, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, The New York Public Library
Index Terms:
Names: Archie Smith Jr., 1939-
Subjects: African American - Clergy
African American - Study and Teaching - United States
African American Education
African American - Scholars
Counseling and Diversity
Counseling and Pastoral Theology

Preface

This finding aid was prepared as part of an archival processing project arranged through support of New York University's Department of English, in collaboration with the Schomburg Center.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Biography1
Scope and Content2
Container List4
Separation Record6

ARCHIE SMITH JR. (1939-). PAPERS, 1962 - 2013, (bulk dates, 1978 - 2001)
2 record cartons (2 linear feet).

Biographical Sketch

Archie Smith Jr. was born on August 4, 1939, and lived most of his childhood in a multicultural neighborhood in downtown Seattle. He received Master's degrees in Divinity, Sacred Theology, and Social Work; and a Ph.D. in Social Work from Brandeis University in 1973. Smith became the first African-American Associate Professor of Religion and Society at the Pacific School of Religion (PSR) in 1976. Five years later he was appointed as the James & Clarice Foster Professor of Pastoral Psychology and Counseling at PSR, a position he would hold until 2011.

In 1966, two years after being ordained as a minister, Smith was appointed Minister-to-the-Community at First Baptist Church in Worcester, MA, where his work counseling juvenile delinquents and advocating for African-American parishioners led him to begin considering the relationship between the individual experiences he was observing and larger social and cultural systems of power. These concerns with the systemic causes of oppression and discrimination of African Americans led Smith to study Social Work. His dissertation was an analysis of case studies examining drug use in New England during the early 1970s.

Over the course of the 1970s and 1980s, his work became increasingly concerned with the African-American family, exploring and developing methods for teaching and practicing pastoral counseling and care that took into account the systemic difficulties that African Americans faced. His first book *The Relational Self in Ethics and Theology: A Black Church Perspective* (1982) represents a milestone in his career. It contributed to the developing field of Liberation Theology and its relation to black churches, arguing that the purpose of the black church was to challenge and change structures of discrimination and oppression. Smith also addressed the Jonestown mass suicide of 1978, examining what psychological, social, and cultural support the many African-American members of the People's Temple had found in the cult and what ramifications this had for the black church establishment. Jonestown remained a topic of concern through the latter part of Smith's career; he consistently attended the yearly memorial services and the event comes up often in both his published and unpublished writings.

Smith's work in the 1990s and early 21st century maintained these concerns, culminating in the publication of his second book *Navigating the Deep River: Spirituality in African American Families* (1997), which established a systemic and historical approach to understanding African-American family structure and spirituality designed to help counselors provide better psychotherapeutic treatment for African Americans. His third and final book, written with colleague Ursula Riedel-Pfafflin, was titled *Siblings by Choice: Race, Gender, Violence* (2004) and expanded on the counseling strategies outlined in his previous book. Smith's professional career ended in 2011 when he resigned from the PSR faculty due to longstanding concerns about racial discrimination and falling academic standards within the institution.

Scope and Content

The Archie Smith Jr. Papers document Smith's career as a pastor, scholar, and counselor and reflect his interest in placing individual and family experiences within the context of larger social, cultural, and spiritual systems. The collection is divided into three series: **PERSONAL**, **PROFESSIONAL**, and **PASTORAL**.

The brief **PERSONAL PAPERS** series (2 folders) contains correspondence with family and friends as well as with parishioners at Worcester First Baptist Church during his time there from 1966-1975. A "Family and Friends" folder contains bulletins, announcements, and other materials from events where Smith served as minister for individuals he knew, most notably as one of the officiating ministers at the marriage of Clarence Thomas.

The **PROFESSIONAL PAPERS** series (2 lin. ft.) documents his career as a scholar from the early 1960s to the first decade of the 21st century. Many of the letters in the Correspondence sub-series deal with the planning of events at PSR and various other institutions and Smith's employment negotiations and offers. Smith's personal reflections on the course of his career, his employment options, and some of his professional experiences are documented in the faculty reports, journals, and reflections that were either written as part of his duties at PSR or for professional reference.

Notable items in the Unpublished Talks [.3 lin. ft.], Unpublished Writing [.2 lin. ft.], and Published Writing sub-series include papers on homosexuality, abuse, and drugs and

their impact on the black family and church; manuscript annotations and emendations to lecture notes; unpublished talks on the Jonestown mass-suicide and religious cults more generally; and an early draft of a chapter of his first book *The Relational Self*. Smith's experience as a researcher are documented in a folder devoted to a study he led at the Pacific School of Religion in the late 1970s that examined students' religious and spiritual beliefs. The teaching sub-series consists of syllabi, teaching evaluations, and materials relating to Smith's resignation from PSR in 2011, an event that brought his highly productive career to an end.

Throughout his career, Smith delivered sermons for ordinations, commencements, and other events and was also often called on to compose and deliver public prayers. Filed in the **PASTORAL PAPERS** (.4 lin. ft.) are these prayers and sermons, which cover a wide variety of topics and occasions. For example, sermons delivered at Worcester Baptist Church during the late 1960s demonstrate his early attempts to address racism as a systemic issue; this interest is also reflected in the brief Jonestown folder, which includes reflections by Smith on the event and its implications for the black church. Also represented in the series are materials relating to workshops Smith gave on how to practice and improve pastoral prayer. In 2011, Smith was honored by the McGee Ave. Baptist Church for his years of service as a Pulpit Associate, and a folder documents that event.

Provenance

Gift of Archie Smith Jr.
SCM 13-03

Processed by Robby Koehler
2013

Container List

Box Folder

- | | |
|----|--|
| 1 | PERSONAL PAPERS |
| 1 | Correspondence |
| 2 | Family and Friends |
| | PROFESSIONAL PAPERS |
| | Correspondence |
| 3 | 1980-1990 |
| 4 | 1980-1990 |
| 5 | 1991-2009 |
| | Unpublished Lectures and Talks |
| 6 | 1976-1980 |
| 7 | 1981-1985 |
| 8 | 1986-1990 |
| 9 | 1986-1990 |
| 10 | 1991-2000 |
| 11 | 2001-2012 |
| | Unpublished Writing |
| 12 | Ordination Paper, 1964 |
| 13 | Union Theological Seminary Paper |
| 14 | Dissertation, 1973 |
| 15 | Tidings of Comfort and Joy |
| 16 | Brandeis University Course Paper |
| 17 | 1972-1980 |
| 18 | 1981-1990 |
| 19 | 1990-2000 |
| 20 | PSR Study and Report on Spirituality, 1976 |
| 21 | Institute for Ecumenical and Cultural Research |

Container List

Box Folder

- 2 Journals, Reports, Professional Development
 - 1 1979-1990
 - 2 1991-2012
 - 3 Conference Programs and Professional Materials
 - Published Writing
 - 4 1969-1999
 - 5 1999-2012
 - Teaching
 - 6 Syllabi, 1979-1989
 - 7 Syllabi, 1990-2011
 - 8 Student Evaluations
 - 9 Resignation from PSR

PASTORAL PAPERS

- Sermons
 - 10 1967-1980
 - 11 1981-1990
 - 12 2000-2012
- Prayers
 - 13 Pastoral
 - 14 Pastoral
 - 15 Occasional
 - 16 Prayer Workshop
 - 17 Jonestown
 - 18 Appreciation Service

MANUSCRIPTS, ARCHIVES AND RARE BOOKS DIVISION

SEPARATION RECORD

The following items were removed from:

Name of Collection/Papers: Archie Smith Papers

Accession Number: SCM 13-03

Donor: Archie Smith Jr.

Gift X

Date received: January 2013

Date transferred: May 3, 2013

The item(s) listed below have been sent to the division indicated, either to be retained or disposed of there. Any items that should receive special disposition are clearly marked.

Moving Image and Recorded Sound Division:

12 Audio Cassettes, 6 Audio CDs, 21 DVDs

Separated by: Robby Koehler **Date:** 3/8/2013