

Fyke Farmer Papers
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2006

Contact information: <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/mss.contact>

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Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms007002>

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Collection Summary

Title: Fyke Farmer Papers

Span Dates: 1875-1997

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1945-1953)

ID No.: MSS85312

Creator: Farmer, Fyke, 1901-1997

Extent: 2,100 items

Extent: 7 containers

Extent: 2.8 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm2006085312>

Summary: Lawyer and activist. Correspondence, court documents and legal papers, speech material, writings, notes, press clippings, journal articles, and other material concerning mainly Farmer's legal work and interest in the espionage case of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

People

Appel, Ethel Rosenberg--Correspondence.

Bloch, Emanuel H.--Correspondence.

Edelman, Irwin--Correspondence.

Eisenhower, Dwight D. (Dwight David), 1890-1969--Correspondence.

Farmer, Fyke.

Greenglass, David, 1922-2014--Trials, litigation, etc.

Kaufman, Irving R. (Irving Robert), 1910-1992--Trials, litigation, etc.

Perlin, Marshall, 1920-1998--Correspondence.

Plotkin, Norman A.--Correspondence.

Rosenberg, Ethel, 1915-1953--Trials, litigation, etc.

Rosenberg, Julius, 1918-1953--Trials, litigation, etc.

Sobell, Morton--Trials, litigation, etc.

Subjects

Income tax--United States.

International organization.

Nuclear energy--International cooperation.

Trials (Conspiracy)--New York (State)--New York.

Trials (Espionage)--New York (State)--New York.

Occupations

Lawyers.

Provenance

The papers of Fyke Farmer, lawyer and activist, were given to the Library of Congress by the International Spy Museum in 2006.

Copyright Status

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Fyke Farmer is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Fyke Farmer are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Fyke Farmer Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

Date	Event
1901, Nov. 25	Born, Cedar Hill, Tenn.
1923	B.A., Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tenn.
1925	Law degree, Yale University, New Haven, Conn.
circa 1925	Lawyer with the firm of Bass, Berry, and Sims, Nashville, Tenn.
1928	Married Fanny Leake
1936	Began law firm of Farmer, Denney, and Leftwich, Nashville, Tenn.
1950	Delegate, World Constituent Assembly, Geneva, Switzerland
1953	Worked to overturn the espionage conviction of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg
1997, May 23	Died, Nashville, Tennessee

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Fyke Farmer (1901-1997), span the years 1875-1997, with the bulk dating from 1945 to 1953, and consist of correspondence, court documents and legal papers, speech material, writings, notes, press clippings, journal articles, and other printed matter. Farmer was a lawyer and activist who became interested in the Julius and Ethel Rosenberg espionage case. Convinced of the Rosenbergs' innocence, Farmer argued that the couple was tried under the wrong law, claiming that the Atomic Energy Act, which did not carry a death penalty, should have been applied rather than the Espionage Act of 1917. On the basis of Farmer's arguments, a temporary stay was granted to the Rosenbergs by Justice William O. Douglas on 17 June 1953. The Supreme Court vacated Douglas's stay by a 6-3 vote, and the Rosenbergs were executed on 19 June 1953.

The majority of the collection focuses on the Rosenberg case and includes correspondence with the lawyers who represented the couple and other supporters, court documents, partial trial transcripts, drafts and filings of complaints, briefs and petitions, and other legal filings by Farmer. Also in the Rosenberg legal papers are files relating to Farmer's law suit (*United States ex rel. Farmer v. Kaufman*) in 1990 against Irving R. Kaufman, the judge who presided over the Rosenbergs' trial. There are also extensive press clippings about the Rosenberg case and documents released by the Federal Bureau of Investigation under the Freedom of Information Act relating to other accused spies David Greenglass and Morton Sobell. Correspondents in the Rosenberg files include Ethel Rosenberg Appel, Emanuel H. Bloch, Irwin Edelman, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Marshall Perlin, and Norman A. Plotkin.

The collection reflects Farmer's endeavors to create a "one world government" and his advocacy for international control of atomic energy. In the writings file is an untitled book by Farmer advocating those philosophies. Also in the papers is

material relating to Farmer's unsuccessful law suit against the Internal Revenue Service defending his refusal to pay federal income tax based on the argument that the Korean War was illegal.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged alphabetically by topic and type of material.

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1	Atomic bomb and atomic technology, 1944-1950, 1965, 1972-1974, 1981-1991, undated (5 folders)
BOX 1	Biographical information, 1981, 1997, undated
BOX 1	Correspondence, 1953-1963, 1981-1997, undated (9 folders)
BOX 1	Miscellany, 1945-1948, 1954, 1975-1977, 1983-1993, undated
BOX 1	Rosenberg, Julius and Ethel, espionage case
BOX 1	Background material and notes, 1875, 1881, 1917, 1935, 1945-1953, 1959-1961, 1972-1977, 1991, undated (2 folders)
BOX 1	Brothman, Abraham, and Miriam Moskowitz, 1950-1953
BOX 2	Correspondence, 1952-1953, 1960, 1973-1997, undated (13 folders)
BOX 2	Court documents and legal papers
BOX 2	General
BOX 2	1951-1952
BOX 2	1953 (3 folders)
BOX 3	(4 folders)
BOX 3	Undated (2 folders)
BOX 3	United States <i>ex rel.</i> Farmer v. Kaufman
BOX 3	Correspondence, 1989-1990, undated (4 folders)
BOX 3	Miscellany, 1989, undated
BOX 3	Pleadings 1990 (3 folders)
BOX 4	Edelman, Irwin, 1952-1959, undated (11 folders)
BOX 4	Eisenhower, Dwight D., 1953 (2 folders)
BOX 4	Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1973-1975, 1992, undated
BOX 4	Gold, Harry, 1950, 1957, 1974, 1987, undated
BOX 5	Greenglass, David and Ruth, 1950-1958, 1987-1988, undated (6 folders)
BOX 5	Miscellany, 1952-1954, 1989-1990, undated
BOX 5	National Committee to Secure Justice in the Rosenberg Case, 1952-1954, undated (2 folders)
BOX 5	Notebook, 1919, 1938, 1948-1953, 1961-1966, 1983
BOX 5	Press clippings and journal articles, 1950-1957, 1969-1997, undated (8 folders)
BOX 5	Printed matter, 1953-1954, 1983-1989

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 6	Sobell, Morton, 1953-1958 (2 folders)
BOX 6	Speech and television appearances, 1975, 1989
BOX 6	Writings
BOX 6	By Farmer, undated (2 folders)
BOX 6	By others
BOX 6	Miscellaneous, 1977, undated
BOX 6	Sharlitt, Joseph H., <i>Fatal Error</i> , draft, 1988 (3 folders)
BOX 6	Tax lawsuit, 1952-1959, undated
BOX 6	Truman, Harry S., 1945-1948, 1955, 1991, undated (3 folders)
BOX 7	World federalism and world government, 1946-1951, 1963, 1987-1990, undated (3 folders)
BOX 7	Writings by Farmer
BOX 7	Book, untitled, undated (3 folders)
BOX 7	Letter to the editor, 1956