

Robert G. Spivack Papers
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Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
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Prepared by Manuscript Division staff

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Collection Summary

Title: Robert G. Spivack Papers

Inclusive Dates: 1931-1970

Bulk Dates: 1936-1970

ID No.: MSS85367

Creator: Spivack, Robert G., 1915-1970

Extent: 16,800 items

Extent: 48 containers plus 2 oversize

Extent: 19.2 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

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

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm2007085367>

Summary: Journalist. Correspondence, articles, book projects, columns, newsletters, newspapers, material relating to speaking engagements, topical files, records of organizations, scrapbooks, printed matter, and miscellaneous material relating to Spivack's career as a newspaper reporter, syndicated columnist, and newsletter publisher and to his participation in student groups and other organizations seeking the intervention of the United States in World War II prior to the Pearl Harbor attack.

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

Agar, Herbert, 1897-1980--Correspondence.

Bade, Wilbur E. (Wilbur Emil), 1906-1954--Correspondence.

Bell, Ulric, 1891-1960--Correspondence.

Brewster, Owen, 1888-1961.

Bye, George T.--Correspondence.

Cohen, Elliot E., 1899-1959--Correspondence.

Costello, Frank, 1891-1973.

Cowan, Louis G., 1909-1976--Correspondence.

Dewey, Thomas E. (Thomas Edmund), 1902-1971.

Eckman, Fern Marja--Correspondence.

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

Goldstein, Jonah J., 1886-1967.

Hagan, Lloyd D.--Correspondence.

Ives, Irving McNeil, 1896-1962.

Johnson, Lyndon B. (Lyndon Baines), 1908-1973.

Lash, Joseph P., 1909-1987--Correspondence.

Lazarus, Reuben A. (Reuben Avis), 1895-1971--Correspondence.

McCarthy, Joseph, 1908-1957--Correspondence.

Morris, Newbold--Correspondence.

Morris, Newbold.

Nagourney, Herbert--Correspondence.

O'Dwyer, William, 1890-1964.

O'Sheel, Shaemas, 1886-1954--Correspondence.

Pilat, Oliver, 1903-1987--Correspondence.

Roosevelt, Eleanor, 1884-1962--Correspondence.

Roosevelt, Franklin D. (Franklin Delano), 1882-1945.

Rosenthal, Arthur J. (Arthur Jesse), 1919-2013--Correspondence.

Sann, Paul--Correspondence.

Schiff, Dorothy, 1903-1989--Correspondence.

Sengstacke, John Herman Henry, 1912-1997--Correspondence.
Sevareid, Eric, 1912-1992--Correspondence.
Sirkin, Abraham M.--Correspondence.
Sommers, Martin--Correspondence.
Spivack, Robert G.
Starr, Mark, 1894- --Correspondence.
Stout, Rex, 1886-1975--Correspondence.
Wechsler, James A. (James Arthur), 1915-1983--Correspondence.

Organizations

Fight for Freedom (Organization)
International Student Service.
University of Cincinnati.

Subjects

Isolationism--United States.
Journalism--United States.
Minorities in journalism--United States.
Students--Political activity--United States.
World War, 1939-1945--Refugees.
World War, 1939-1945--United States.
World War, 1939-1945.

Places

New York (N.Y.)--Politics and government--20th century.
New York (State)--Politics and government--20th century.
United States--Politics and government--20th century.

Titles

Cincinnati bearcat.
New York post.
Private wire.
Spivack report.

Occupations

Journalists.

Acquisition Information

The papers of Robert G. Spivack, journalist, were given to the Library of Congress by his daughter, Miranda Spivack, in 2007.

Processing History

The papers of Robert G. Spivack were processed by Joseph K. Brooks with the assistance of Maria Farmer, Jewel McPherson, and Chanté Flowers in 2012.

Copyright Status

Copyright in the unpublished writings of Robert G. Spivack in these papers and in other collections of papers in the custody of the Library of Congress has been dedicated to the public.

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Robert G. Spivack 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, Robert G. Spivack Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

Date	Event
1915, Apr. 15	Born, Dayton, Ohio
1936	Graduated, University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio
1937-1938	Secretary, International Student Service of the United States
1939	Editor, <i>SOS</i> , a publication of Student Defenders of Democracy
1940	Married Adrienne Rauchwerger
1940-1941	Publications director, Fight for Freedom Committee and Fight for Freedom, Inc.
1941-1952	Reporter and Albany correspondent, <i>New York Post</i>
1959	Edited with Eric Sevareid <i>Candidates 1960</i> . New York: Basic Books.
1952-1961	Washington, D. C., correspondent, <i>New York Post</i>
1956-1969	Wrote syndicated column Watch on the Potomac
1966-1970	Published newsletter <i>Spivack Report</i>
1970, June 25	Died, Riverside, Conn.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Robert Gerald Spivack (1915-1970) span the years 1931-1970, with the bulk of the material dating between 1936 and 1970. Spivack was a reporter who covered news, politics, and organized crime in New York for the *New York Post* in the 1940s and 1950s, and who later covered national politics in Washington, D. C. In the 1950s and 1960s he was a syndicated columnist and newsletter publisher on national politics. The papers consist of five series: [General Correspondence](#), [Speeches and Writings](#), [Subject File](#), [Miscellany](#), and [Oversize](#).

The [General Correspondence](#) consists of letters and memoranda exchanged between Spivack and friends, colleagues, literary agents, public figures, and readers of his articles, columns, and newsletters. Included are memoranda to and from editors and colleagues at the *New York Post*, Paul Sann and James A. Wechsler among others, and with the owner of the *Post*, Dorothy Schiff. Other correspondents include Herbert Agar, Wilbur E. Bade, Ulric Bell, George T. Bye, Elliott E. Cohen, Louis G. Cowan, Fern Marja Eckman, Lloyd D. Hagan, Joseph P. Lash, Reuben A. Lazarus, Newbold Morris, Herbert Nagourney, Shaemus O'Sheel, Oliver Pilat, Eleanor Roosevelt, Arthur J. Rosenthal, John Herman Henry Sengstacke, Eric Sevareid, Abraham M. Sirkin, Martin Sommers, Mark Starr, and Rex Stout.

The [Speeches and Writings](#) include articles, book projects, columns, interviews, memoranda for the record, newsletters, and newspapers, written or edited by Spivack or by others. The series includes a comprehensive file of Spivack's articles for the *New York Post* between 1941 and 1961, the entire span of his career with the paper. Subjects included New York Governor Thomas E. Dewey and unsuccessful mayoral candidates Jonah J. Goldstein and Newbold Morris. One of Spivack's themes was the nexus of New York politics and organized crime, notably during the administration of Mayor William O'Dwyer. When Spivack was the *Post's* Washington correspondent from 1952 to 1961, he covered the Dwight D. Eisenhower administration and figures from that era such as Senators Owen Brewster, Irvin McNeil Ives, Lyndon B. Johnson, and Joseph McCarthy.

[Speeches and Writings](#) include Spivack's book projects relating to Thomas E. Dewey, underworld figure Frank Costello, Lyndon B. Johnson's administration, and Congressman Franklin D. Roosevelt (1914-1988).

Spivack's columns documented in the papers include *In the Town's Backrooms*, which covered politics on the New York and national levels, and his syndicated product *Watch on the Potomac* treating national politics from 1956 to 1970. The series includes examples of the University of Cincinnati newspaper that Spivack edited as a student, *Cincinnati Bearcat*, and of his newsletters on national politics, *Private Wire* and *Spivack Report*.

The [Subject File](#) includes files relating to Spivack's late 1960s initiative, Reporters' News Syndicate, a program designed to give minority candidates practical training in journalism, and to Spivack's activism beginning in the 1930s with student and other groups advocating for war refugees and occupied peoples, against American isolationism, and in favor of United States participation in World War II. Spivack was editor of *SOS*, the newspaper of the Student Defenders of Democracy, and there are several examples of the newspaper in that organization's file. During 1937-1938 he served as secretary of the International Student Service and from 1940 to 1941 as publications director of Fight for Freedom. There is material on these and other interventionist organizations in two oversize scrapbooks relating to the World War II era.

Arrangement of the Papers

The collection is arranged in five series:

- [General Correspondence, 1936-1970](#)
- [Speeches and Writings, 1935-1970](#)
- [Subject File, 1931-1970](#)
- [Miscellany, 1936-1970](#)
- [Oversize, 1941-1947](#)

Description of Series

Container

Series

BOX 1-6

General Correspondence, 1936-1970

Correspondence with friends, editors, newspaper owners, colleagues, public figures, and readers of his articles, columns, and newsletters.

Arranged chronologically.

BOX 6-37

Speeches and Writings, 1935-1970

Articles, columns, book projects, newsletters, newspapers, memoranda for the record, interviews, reporters' notes, political skits, satiric songs, speeches and miscellaneous material.

Arranged into writings and speeches by Spivack and writing and speeches by others, and thereunder alphabetically by type of material.

BOX 37-46

Subject File, 1931-1970

Topical files and organizational records.

Arranged alphabetically by subject or organization.

BOX 47-48

Miscellany, 1936-1970

Biographical material, press releases, printed matter, and miscellaneous material.

Arranged alphabetically by type of material.

BOX OV 1-OV 2

Oversize, 1941-1947

Two scrapbooks and a poster.

Arranged and described according to the series, container, and file from which the material was removed.

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1-6	General Correspondence, 1936-1970 Correspondence with friends, editors, newspaper owners, colleagues, public figures, and readers of his articles, columns, and newsletters. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 1	1936-1949 (7 folders)
BOX 2	1950-1956 (7 folders)
BOX 3	1957-1961 (7 folders) 1962 Jan.-Mar.
BOX 4	Apr.-Dec. (2 folders) 1963-1966 (4 folders)
BOX 5	1967-1969 (7 folders)
BOX 6	1970, undated (5 folders)
BOX 6-37	Speeches and Writings, 1935-1970 Articles, columns, book projects, newsletters, newspapers, memoranda for the record, interviews, reporters' notes, political skits, satiric songs, speeches and miscellaneous material. Arranged into writings and speeches by Spivack and writing and speeches by others, and thereunder alphabetically by type of material.
BOX 6	By Spivack Articles <i>Haddassah Newsletter</i> , 1954 Hale, Jeanne, literary agent, undated <i>Literary Digest</i> , 1936 Miscellaneous 1938-1950, 1963-1970 (2 folders)
BOX 7	Undated <i>The Nation</i> , 1941-1960 <i>New Republic</i> , 1943-1953 <i>New York Knickerbocker</i> , 1968 Clippings Drafts

Speeches and Writings, 1935-1970

Container

Contents

	<i>New York Post</i>
	Clippings
	1941-1944
	(4 folders)
	1945
	Jan.- May
BOX 8	May-Dec.
	1945-1948
	(7 folders)
	1949
	Jan.-July
BOX 9	Aug.-Nov.
	1949-1952
	(7 folders)
BOX 10	1953
	(2 folders)
	1954
	(4 folders)
BOX 11	(3 folders)
	1955
	(2 folders)
BOX 12	1956-1957
	(6 folders)
BOX 13	1958-1960
	(8 folders)
BOX 14	1961, undated
	(7 folders)
BOX 15	Drafts
	Alphabetical file by title
	“A” miscellaneous, undated
	“The Big Steal,” 1955
	(6 folders)
	“B-C” miscellaneous, undated
BOX 16	“Fiorello at the Mike,” undated
	“G-N” miscellaneous, undated
	“The Oil Empire,” 1957
	(8 folders)
BOX 17	(3 folders)
	Chronological file, 1940-1965, undated
	(5 folders)
BOX 18	Topical file
	Cancer, 1959
	Democratic Party, 1960
	Dewey, Thomas E., undated
	Lend Lease, 1942-1943
	Liberals, undated

Speeches and Writings, 1935-1970

Container

Contents

	Miscellaneous, 1957-1958 (2 folders)
	Book reviews, 1942-1943, 1959
	Books
	<i>Candidates 1960</i> , edited with Eric Sevareid, 1959 (3 folders)
BOX 19	“Corruption” (unpublished), 1955-1956 (3 folders)
	“Dictionary of American Terminology” (unpublished), 1947-1950, 1958-1960 (4 folders)
BOX 20	“He'd Rather Be President” about Thomas E. Dewey (unpublished), circa 1950 (3 folders)
	“The Johnson Revolution” (unpublished), 1964 (4 folders)
	“The Life and Times of Frank Costello” (unpublished), 1946-1952 (1 folder)
BOX 21	(4 folders)
	McCarthy, Joseph, and Robert Kennedy, 1963, 1970
	<i>Our Sovereign States</i> , edited by Robert S. Allen, 1949 (3 folders)
BOX 22	(2 folders)
	Roosevelt, Franklin D. (1914-1988), undated
	<i>Social and Civic Agencies in Greater Cleveland</i> , National Youth Agency, circa 1938
	Columns
	Closeup, 1956-1957
	Footnotes to Headline, 1941-1942
	In the Town's Backrooms
	Drafts and notes, undated (2 folders)
	Newspaper clippings, 1951-1956 (4 folders)
	Miscellaneous
	Drafts, 1941-1969, undated (2 folders)
	Newspaper clippings 1948, 1960-1968
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	Report from Washington
	Watch on the Potomac
	Drafts
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Speeches and Writings, 1935-1970

Container

Contents

	1964
	(2 folders)
BOX 25	(5 folders)
	1965
	(5 folders)
BOX 26	(1 folder)
	Set no. 2
	1955-1965
	(9 folders)
	1966
	(4 folders)
BOX 27	(3 folders)
	1967
	(5 folders)
	1968
	(3 folders)
BOX 28	(2 folders)
	1969-1970, undated
	(5 folders)
	Set no. 3, undated
	(4 folders)
	Newspaper clippings
	1956
	Jan.-May
BOX 29	June-Dec.
	(3 folders)
	1957-1959
	(14 folders)
BOX 30	1960-1961
	(19 folders)
BOX 31	1962-1969
	(24 folders)
BOX 32	Undated
	Promotional and administrative material, 1955-1968, undated
	(2 folders)
	Interviews conducted by Spivack, 1941-1953, 1966-1969, undated
	(2 folders)
	Letters to the editor, undated
	Memoir writings, undated
	Memoranda for the record, 1946-1961
	(2 folders)
	Newsletters and newspapers
	<i>Cincinnati Bearcat</i> , University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio, 1935
	<i>Contemporary Affairs</i> , publication of the Contemporary Affairs Society
	Chronological file
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Speeches and Writings, 1935-1970

Container

Contents

	<i>Private Wire</i> , 1958-1959
	<i>SOS</i> , 1941 <i>See Container 46, Student Defenders of Democracy</i>
	<i>Spivack Report</i>
	Chronological file, 1966-1970 (3 folders)
	Promotional material, 1968
	Notes, undated (2 folders)
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	Radio commentary with Richard Pack, Combat News Service, transcript, circa 1939
	Reporter's notebooks, undated (2 folders)
BOX 35	Speeches and speaking engagements, 1951-1964 (2 folders)
	By others
	Articles
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	Miscellaneous, 1944-1970, undated (6 folders)
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	Miscellaneous, 1943-1967 (4 folders)
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	<i>New York Times</i>
	1940
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	Columns, 1945, 1954-1962, 1969
	Newsletters
	Miscellaneous, 1958-1969
	<i>Pulliam Albany Letter</i> ; 1945-1948
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	Political skits and song parodies, undated (2 folders)
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BOX 37-46	Subject File, 1931-1970
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	Black Panther Party, 1967-1970
	Brewster, Owen and Henry Grunewald, 1952-1953

Subject File, 1931-1970

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Contents

	Cartoons and cartoonists, undated
	Chaachou, Khadouri, 1961
	DC Nine Defense Committee, 1969
	Dewey, Thomas E., 1941-1951
	Education, 1947, 1960-1967
	Energy
	Miscellany, 1948-1965
	(3 folders)
	Niagara power controversy, newspaper articles by Spivack, 1955
BOX 38	Printed matter, 1953-1955
	(2 folders)
	Eisenhower, Dwight D., administration, 1952-1965
	Hagerty, James C., 1948, 1958
	Miscellany, 1952-1965
	Farley, James A., 1967
	Foundations and community organizations, undated
	Goldstein, Jonah J., 1935-1945
	Jews and Israel, 1950-1969
	Johnson, Lyndon B., administration
	Dominican Republic crisis
	1955-1965
	(2 folders)
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	Miscellany, 1947-1970, undated
	(3 folders)
	Printed matter, 1957-1965
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	Lundberg, Ferdinand, 1968
	McCarthy, Joseph
	Congressional printed matter, 1954
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	(2 folders)
BOX 40	Undated
	Medicine, 1945, 1955
	Morris, Newbold, 1945-1952
	New York, N.Y., politics, government, and civic life, 1940-1969
	Nixon, Richard M., 1957-1964
	O'Dwyer, William
	Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, 1941-1951
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Subject File, 1931-1970

Container

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	New York State Crime Committee, 1951
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	Democratic Party, 1948-1960
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	Professional organizations, 1941-1957
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	Announcements and news releases, circa 1969
	Correspondence, 1964-1970
	(2 folders)
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	Miscellany, 1949, 1968-1969
	New York Urban Coalition, 1969
	Participants
	Bell, Joan E., 1969
	Haggans, Lionel, 1958, 1969
BOX 43	Mahone, Othello, 1969
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	(2 folders)
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	United Nations headquarters building, site committee, undated
	United States Commission on Civil Rights, 1965
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Subject File, 1931-1970

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BOX 45	Miscellany 1962-1967 (2 folders) 1968-1970, undated (3 folders) White backlash and other ethnic issues, 1967-1968, undated (3 folders) Wiretapping, 1949 World War II Activism for United States intervention Bissell, George, III, 1934, 1951 Congressional hearings, 1931-1941 Fight for Freedom, Inc., 1940-1941, undated <i>See also Oversize</i> (2 folders)
BOX 46	Free French, 1936-1943 Miscellany, 1936-1946 (2 folders) Newspaper clippings, 1941-1949, undated (2 folders) Reference file, 1941-1943 Scrapbook, 1941-1942, 1947 <i>See Oversize</i> Spain, 1937-1941 Student organizations American Student Union, 1938 American Youth Congress, 1939-1942 International Student Service of the United States, 1939-1942, 1957, undated (2 folders) Student Defenders of Democracy, 1941 <i>What Are We Catholics Going to Do?</i> , "tabloid pamphlet, 1933 Miscellany, 1941-1943 <i>See also Oversize</i>
BOX 47-48	Miscellany, 1936-1970 Biographical material, press releases, printed matter, and miscellaneous material. Arranged alphabetically by type of material.
BOX 47	Book lists and promotional material relating to books, undated Biographical material and clippings mentioning Spivack, 1941-1970 (2 folders) Financial papers, 1946, 1960-1966 Lists and seating charts, 1943-1946, 1957, 1967 Neighborhoods and housing programs, 1947-1970 Press releases, 1950-1963 (3 folders) Printed matter <i>Business and the Ghetto</i> , Chilton Co., 1968

Miscellany, 1936-1970

Container

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	Civil rights, 1957-1958 (3 folders)
BOX 48	Congressional publications Hearings, Soviet espionage, 1956-1957 Miscellaneous, 1953-1956, 1963 Magazines and journals, 1956-1970 (2 folders) Miscellaneous, 1936, 1946, 1961-1969 (2 folders) <i>New Leader</i> , 1956-1960 Résumés, 1963-1965
BOX OV 1-OV 2	Oversize, 1941-1947 Two scrapbooks and a poster. Arranged and described according to the series, container, and file from which the material was removed.
BOX OV 1	Subject File World War II Activism for United States intervention Fight for Freedom, Inc. “Business with Hitler?,” poster, circa 1941 (Container 45)
BOX OV 2	Scrapbook, 1941-1942, 1947 (Container 46) Miscellany Scrapbook, 1943 (Container 46)