

University of Toronto Archives

Finding Aid

Metta Spencer Personal Records

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Biographical Note

Sociologist Metta Spencer came to the University of Toronto, Erindale Campus in 1971 after completing her Ph.D. from University of California, Berkeley under the supervision of renown sociologist Seymour Martin Lipset. Her early career saw the publication and several editions of her textbook Foundations of Modern Sociology, described by its publisher Prentice Hall as "the most significant introductory sociology texts published in the 1970s and 1980s". By the early 1980s, with the rise of the disarmament movement, Spencer's professional research and writings came to reflect her active involvement in the peace movement. It is, in fact, for her dedication to the study, research and teaching of peace, as well as her active participation in the movement, that Metta Spencer is distinguished among her peers. She has published over 100 articles in both refereed and non-refereed journals, and has given equally as many talks on such themes as peace activism, the peace movement, non-violence, negotiation, nuclear disarmament, nationalism and separatism. In late 1980s, she further integrated her peace activities into her role as a teacher by developing and coordinating the Peace and Conflict Studies Program at Erindale College.

Prof. Spencer has been active in various national and international peace advocacy groups. To list a few, she has held various positions in the Canadian Pugwash Group and was among the 2000 members of Pugwash to win the Nobel Peace Prize in 1995. She served as board member of the Canadian Citizen's Assembly for the Helsinki Process and was a founding participant and chair of the structure committee of its international body, the Helsinki Citizen's Assembly (1990-). She was also founding President and Director of the Canadian Disarmament Service, has held various executive positions in Science for Peace and has been editor of Peace Magazine since 1985. She has acted in a consultative capacity to the Canadian government in matters relating to peace and disarmament. For example she was a member of the Consultative Group to the Ministry of External Affairs (1985-1991), was a consultant to the Canadian Commission to UNESCO(1988), Special Advisor to the Canadian Mission to United Nations (May-June 1988) and at various times through her career has been invited to brief various government ministers including the Minister of Defence and the Minister of Foreign/External Affairs.

She has many honours to her name including the Governor General's Confederation Medal (1992), the Global Citizen Award from United Nation (1995) and recently the Jus Prize in Human Rights (2001). Dr. Spencer who retired in 1997 from the Department of Sociology, University of Toronto at Mississauga is Professor Emeritus and still teaches one course in the Peace and Conflict Studies Program. She remains active in the Canadian peace movement and continues to edit Peace Magazine.

Scope and Content

1959-2001 3.25 m textual ; graphic ; sound recordings

Records in this accession document some of Dr. Spencer's peace activities including her participation in the Canadian Pugwash Group, the Helsinki Citizen's Assembly and Science for Peace as well as her attendance at some conferences and meetings. However, many of her activities, especially relating to the 1980s disarmament movement and her consultative roles are not evident in these records. Also this accession only provides a sampling of her talks and publications. There is however complete drafts and notes for her textbook as well as early versions for works still in progress. Finally, Dr. Spencer's notes and papers as a student of sociology at University of California Berkeley are also preserved in this accession.

Below is a list of series:

Series I	Personal and Biographical
Series II	Correspondence
Series III	Peace Activities
Series IV	Conferences and Meetings
Series V	Peace Magazine
Series VI	Manuscripts and Publications
Series VII	Addresses and Speeches
Series VIII	University of Toronto Administration
Series IX	Teaching
Series X	Student Notes and Papers
Series XI	Gwynne Dyer Tapes

These records will be of interest to anyone researching the Canadian and international peace movements and themes such as disarmament, peace advocacy, Canadian international affairs and the role of non-governmental organizations. It also may be of interest to those researching the teaching of these topics within the discipline of sociology. Finally, Prof. Spencer's student notes offer a glimpse of what was being taught at Berkeley in the mid 1960s (then the top department of sociology in the U.S.) . They would be of interest to anyone studying that institution and the history of sociology as an academic discipline.

Access: Open

Series Descriptions

Series I Personal and Biographical

1963-1996 0.03 m textual

This small series contains personal items relating to Spencer including awards, documents, promotions file, diplomas, personal notes and memorabilia.

See Box /015 (06)-(13)

Series II Correspondence

1980-1998 0.13 m textual

This series contains a mixture of personal and professional correspondence with friends, colleagues, government departments, publishers and non-governmental organizations relating to all aspects of Metta Spencer's career. The correspondence, in the form of letters, faxes and e-mail, document her network of friendships especially throughout the international peace community as well with other North American sociologists.

See Box /001

Series III Peace Activities

1984-2000 0.33 m textual

This series documents the breadth of Spencer's work as a peace activist, a role that most certainly defines her life. Her involvement ranges from government working groups, Canadian non-governmental organizations, international peace and disarmament groups as well as intimate contact and relationships with eastern dissidents and peace activist. While records in this series include correspondence, newsletters, reports, discussion papers, minutes of meetings, agendas, conference programs etc... they are not complete for any one organization. The records, do however, offer researchers a snapshot of the peace and non-violence network through the labours of one activist. They cover mainly the late 1980s and 1990s - a period in world history that saw the easing of the nuclear arms race, perestroika, the end of the cold war, the establishment of democracies in the former Soviet Bloc and the war in Yugoslavia.

Series Descriptions

Series III Peace Activities (cont'd)

The key groups in which Spencer was most actively involved and that are documented in this series are:

Helsinki Citizen Association: This group, established in 1990, aimed to bring together western peace, anti-nuclear and environmental activists with former soviet dissidents in order to influence the direction of the new democracies being established in eastern Europe. Spencer attended several meetings and as Chair of the structure committee (1992-1994) prepared a structure document (a type of constitution) for the HCA. She attended both the preparatory meeting in June 1990 and the founding meeting in October 1990. Records document both the background to the HCA, the structure document that Spencer prepared and the several meetings she attended throughout the early 1990s.

Canadian Pugwash Group: First known as the Pugwash Movement this group was established at a meeting of individual scientists in 1957 in Pugwash Nova Scotia to discuss the nuclear arms race. Since then it has spread to over 30 countries of which Canada is one. A member since 1985, Spencer has served as secretary 1988-90 and was on its Executive Committee, 1991-93 and on its Board of Directors since 1993. Records document these responsibilities and include agenda, minutes, financial statements, notes and correspondence.

Science for Peace: This University of Toronto affiliated group is a Canadian organization that brings together academics of all disciplines, students and lay people who are concerned with world peace, justice and a sustainable environment. Spencer has been active in Science For Peace (SfP) since 1983 serving on many executive positions. Of particular note in these papers, was her role in organizing the SfP sponsored conference Lessons of Yugoslavia: An International Conference in Memory of Alison and George Ignatieff. Papers from this conference formed the basis of the book Separatism, edited by Spencer.

For Helsinki Citizen Association see Box /002

For Canadian Pugwash Group see Box /003 (01) - (06)

For Science for Peace see Box /003 (07)-(13)

For other groups see Box /004 (01)-(09)

Series Descriptions

Series IV Conferences and Meetings

1983-2000 .19 m textual

Correspondence, notes, agenda, papers, itineraries document Spencer's attendance at conferences and meetings relating to her peace activities. These events were usually sponsored by government or non-governmental organizations. In the early 1990s, she made several trips to Russia and Eastern Europe to attend various organized conferences. She often combined these trips with research which mainly centred around papers she was writing at the time and her research on the Soviet dissident network. Notes relating to the specific trips have also been included in this series.

Some of the events that are documented include: the UNESCO conference in Dubrovnic in 1983; the Conference on the Foundation of the European University for Peace Studies in 1988 for which Spencer wrote the first curriculum; the Convention for European Nuclear Disarmament, 1990; Moscow Peace Conference 1997; NATO Nuclear Weapons Round Table, 2000.

See Box 004 (10) - (15) for trip notes

See Box 005 for Conference files

Series V Peace Magazine

1985 - 2000 0.6 m. graphic ; textual

This series documents Spencer's work as editor of Peace Magazine, a responsibility she has had since 1985. Included is correspondence, grant applications, financial statements, as well as agenda and minutes for meetings of the Board of Directors. Correspondence files often have submissions attached or discuss possible articles for publication. There are also an alphabetical photo file documenting people and events in the peace movement and used in the publication.

For Textual See Box / 006

For Photographs See Boxes /001P - /003P

Series Descriptions

Series VI Manuscripts and Publications

1970 - 2000 0.55 m. textual

This series contains mainly manuscripts and typescripts to both unpublished and published books. Included is the manuscripts, typescripts, notes, reviews and correspondence relating to Spencer's sociology textbook Foundations of Modern Sociology. First published in 1976, this widely used textbook underwent four American editions and seven Canadian editions. Other early works include her contribution to Adolescent Prejudice which she co-authored (Harper and Row, 1975) as well as her unpublished work Shrinks, Gurus and Trainers: Making Sense of the Consciousness Culture. There is also notes, correspondence and a typescript of her most recently edited publication Lessons of Yugoslavia. Various typescripts document early versions of works in progress such as Soviet Agriculture and Bears and Doves. This latter work has evolved from the hundreds of interviews Spencer has conducted with western peace activists (Doves) and soviet dissidents (Bears). It studies the relationship between the two groups prior to and after the fall of the Soviet Union. This work is still in progress.

Of the over 100 refereed and non-refereed articles, reviews and chapters in books only a few have survived and are found in at the end of this series. Most reflect her interest and work in peace especially in eastern Europe.

The overall arrangement of this series is outlined below.

For <u>Adolescent Prejudice</u>	see Box /007
<u>Foundations of Modern Sociology</u>	see Box /007
<u>Lessons of Yugoslavia</u>	see Box /007
For <u>Shrinks, Gurus and Trainers: Making Sense</u>	
<u>of the Consciousness Culture</u>	See Box /008
<u>Soviet Agriculture</u>	see Box /008 and/009
For <u>Bears and Doves</u>	see Box /009
For Articles(published, unpublished), reviews	
chapters in books, books edited	see Box /010 and /011 (01-(03)

Series Descriptions

Series VII Addresses and Speeches

1977-2001 0.10 m textual

This series contains addresses and speeches presented mainly at peace conferences, meetings and professional sociology associations. Most of them relate to the peace movement, advocacy and disarmament. There is also Spencer's speech on accepting the Jus Prize in Human Rights. Again these papers represent only a small fraction of addresses given throughout Spencer's career. Arrangement is chronological for specific titles with general speeches filed at the end.

See Box /011 (04)-(17).

Series VIII University of Toronto Administration

1987 - 1993 0.13 m textual

Although Prof. Spencer held many administrative positions within the Department of Sociology, including several terms as associate chair for Erindale, this series mainly documents her successful efforts to establish and co-ordinate an interdisciplinary Peace and Conflict Studies Programme at Erindale College. Included are the early proposals and background documentation, minutes of meeting, reports, course and program descriptions and correspondence.

See Box /012

Series IX Teaching

1968-1971, 1985-2000 0.36 textual

Course outlines, reading lists, lectures and support materials document the Sociology courses taught by Spencer in the latter half of her career. Includes: Introduction to Sociology (SOC 101), Peace and War (SOC 231), Political Sociology (SOC 324), Theories and Methods of Saving the World (SOC 410), Selected Topics and Methods (SOC 411), Non-Violence in Interpersonal Relationships (SOC 421), Pollution, Environment and Development (SOC 422), Negotiation and Non-Violence (SOC 431).

There are also some files relating to graduate students as well some early course lectures from the late 1960s and early 1970s when she lectured in several American colleges prior to her move to the University of Toronto. Arranged by course with related student files at the end.

See Box /013 - /015 (01)-(05).

Series Descriptions

Series X Student Notes and Papers

1959-1969 0.39 textual

Records in this series include Spencer's course notes, course papers, notes on Ph.D. oral examination and a copy of her Ph.D. thesis. All these document her undergraduate and graduate education at University of California, Berkeley at a time when Berkeley was not only the top sociology department in the United States but was also the focus of the student and faculty movements for free speech, civil rights as well as anti-Vietnam protests. Spencer took courses for example with sociologists Herbert Blumer, Wolfram Eberhard and Philip Selznick and Neil Smelser. Renown sociologist Seymour Martin Lipset was her thesis adviser. Other renown academics documented in Spencer's course notes include political scientist Peter Odegard, criminologist Jerome Skolnick, and philosopher John E. Searle.

See Box /016 - /018

Series XI Gwynne Dyer Tapes

1989-1990 72 cassettes textual ; sound recordings
1 file

This series consists of tapes given to Spencer by friend and journalist Gwynne Dyer to serve as a source for her research on the soviet dissident network and her work on Bears and Doves. They consist of taped interviews with soviet bureaucrats and politicians as well as taped events such as election meetings that Dyer did in September of 1989 and in January through March 1990. Their significance is that this was period of upheaval in the Soviet Union. In September of 1989 Hungary becomes independent, in Nov. 1989 the Berlin wall falls and in December 1989 the communists government of Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and Rumania fall marking the end of the Soviet Union. Spencer has made some brief notes on the tapes, some detailing the conversation between the interviewee and Dyer.

See /001S - /002S for cassettes

See /012(16) for notes