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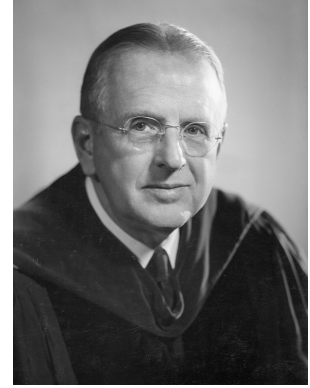
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W88-0092. Peale, Norman Vincent (1898-1993).
Papers, 1940-1970. 1.00 linear ft.



Abstract

B.A. degree from Ohio Wesleyan, 1920; Bachelor of Sacred Theology (1924) and Master of Arts in Social Ethics degree from Boston University. Installed as an RCA minister by the Classis of New York, 1932. Senior minister at the historic Marble Collegiate Church in Manhattan, 1932-1984. Served as president of the General Synod of the RCA. Through his work in media, he became known as the “Minister to Millions.” Of his 46 books, he is known most for the highly influential *The Power of Positive Thinking*, published in 1952 with sales of over 20 million copies. His radio talk show, “The Art of Living,” continued for 54 years. He started the most widely published religious magazine, *Guideposts*, in 1945. The collection consists of writings about Peale in articles, clippings, and publications, along with the writings by Peale, including articles, booklets, radio addresses, a handbook, and sermons.

Accession No: W88-0092
Provenance: Western Theological Seminary
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Processed by: Michael Douma, June 2001

Biography

Norman Vincent Peale received his B.A. degree from Ohio Wesleyan, 1920; Bachelor of Sacred Theology (1924) and Master of Arts in Social Ethics degree from Boston University. Installed as an RCA minister by the Classis of New York, 1932. He served as the senior minister at the historic Marble Collegiate Church in Manhattan from 1932-1984. He also served as president of the General Synod of the Reformed Church in America (RCA).

Peale was internationally renowned and famous for his message of positive thinking. He believed that a simple faith could overpower any obstacle in life. Though he preached to thousands at his own church, he reached many more through the media; he was known as the “Minister to Millions.” Of his 46 books, the highly influential *The Power of Positive Thinking* (published in 1952 with sales of over 20 million copies) is the best-known and secured his fame. His 1930s radio talk show, “The Art of Living,” continued for 54 years. Peale started the most widely published religious magazine, *Guideposts*, in 1945.

Peale encountered strong opposition from those who thought his teachings were too simple, too “soft.” Others thought that he preached an unholy mixture of psychology and religion that infected modern Protestantism with new-age liberalism and wavering doctrines. Those who knew him considered him to be more personable and friendly than intellectual – traits, some suspected, that led him to errors in theology. Still, Peale’s popularity rivaled that of Billy Graham, and his character was a model for the ministry of Robert Schuller.

Scope and Content

This collection consists of writings about Norman Vincent Peale in articles, clippings, and publications, along with the writings by Peale, including articles, booklets, radio addresses, a handbook, sermons, and a speech manuscript. Biographical information on Peale may be found in the Joint Archives of Holland biographical files.

Container List

Box 1

Articles, 1941-1970
Booklets, 1951-1954
"Christian Manpower can Save America," 1945
Clippings, 1952-1963
Publications, 1947-1962
Radio Addresses, 1936-1945
RCA Capital Funds Campaign, 1965-1969
Selected Sermons, 1944
Self-Improvement Handbook, 1950

Box 2

Sermons

1940-1950 (3 folders)
1960-1969
1970

Speech

"I Believe in the Church," the closing address in the series of lectures sponsored by the Young Men's Christian Association and the Ministerial Association of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, February 20, 1940.