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Herman E. Wornom papers11991923

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Description is written in: English.

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary

3041 Broadway

New York, NY 10027

Telephone: (212) 851-5606

burke@library.columbia.edu

URL: <https://library.columbia.edu/locations/burke.html>

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Summary Information

Repository:	Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary
Creator:	Wornom, Herman E.
Title:	Herman E. Wornom papers
ID:	11991923
Date [inclusive]:	1923 -- 1939
Physical Description:	1.5 linear feet 1.5 linear feet; 4 boxes
Language of the Material:	English .
Abstract:	Herman E. Wornom (1902-1992) was a UTS and Columbia University Alumnus (1923-4 and again 1935), religious educator and professor, author, and General Secretary of the Religious Education Association from 1952-1970. The collection contains material related to Wornom's studies including transcripts, syllabi, reading lists, class notes, assignments, and term papers, as well as handwritten notes taken by Wornom at meetings of the Toward a Better World Society.

Preferred Citation

Item description, UTS1: Herman E. Wornom Papers, 1923-1939, box #, folder #, The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University in the City of New York.

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Biographical / Historical

Herman E. Wornom was born on June 30, 1902, in Dare, Virginia. He earned a Bachelor's degree from Randolph-Macon College in 1923, and an M.A. degree from Columbia University in 1924. During this time at Columbia, Wornom first met and studied under George Albert Coe, a major figure in early twentieth-century religious education and one of the founders of the Religious Education Association (REA), which Wornom would later lead. Following graduation from Columbia, Wornom became Minister of Education at three churches: Worcester Central Church in Massachusetts, the Congregational Church in Glen Ridge, New Jersey, and the Chevy

Chase Presbyterian Church outside of Washington, D.C. In the late 1930s, Wornom returned to New York City to pursue further graduate study at Union Theological Seminary and Teachers College, Columbia University. While there, Wornom studied under some of Union's best-known faculty, including Paul Tillich and E.W. Lyman, and forged further relationships with people who would become important figures in the REA, including his mentor, friend, and predecessor as REA General Secretary, Harrison Elliot. Wornom was ordained in 1940. In the years between his arrival at Union and his appointment at General Secretary of the REA in 1952, Wornom served as a religious educator in a variety of positions throughout the United States: at Union Theological Seminary as an assistant director of field work, at Springfield College in Massachusetts as supervisor of field work, and finally as assistant professor of religious education and director of field work at Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, California. After the sudden passing of Harrison Elliot, Wornom succeeded his friend as General Secretary of the REA in 1952. Wornom's tenure as General Secretary is generally seen as transformative for the organization. During his early tenure, Wornom oversaw several major developments in the REA, most notably the movement of the organization's headquarters from Chicago to New York City and the expansion of the REA from a traditionally-Protestant organization to one that Wornom himself called "truly multifaith in membership", including Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish members. Throughout the 1950s and 60s, Wornom prioritized development and expansion of the REA, focusing on securing increased financial resources for the organization and establishing conferences and roundtable events throughout the United States—conferences that eventually surpassed 1,500 attendees. Supported by a series of grants from the Lilly Foundation, Wornom launched a massive program for promoting research into religious and character education. The program, which included a panel of researchers tasked with surveying previous work and developing new avenues of inquiry, a 12-day workshop at Cornell University, and the creation of the REA's own dedicated research division, culminated in the 1971 publication of the pioneering handbook *Research on Religious Development*. After retiring from the REA in 1970, Wornom remained active in religious education endeavors. He served as visiting professor at Andover Newton Theological School in Newton, Massachusetts, and worked in Mexico, Iran, and India, including working as a visiting professor at Sri Venkateswari University. Herman E. Wornom passed away on May 7, 1992, preceded in death by his wife, Mary Virginia.

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Scope and Contents

This collection contains material related to Wornom's studies at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University, and Teacher's College, including transcripts, syllabi, reading lists, class notes, assignments, and term papers. These documents are drawn from both Wornom's M.A. coursework, taken in 1923 and 1924, and his later graduate work, from 1935-39, during which time he studied under major Union figures such as Reinhold Niebuhr, Paul Tillich, and E.W. Lyman. Also included is a letter from Wornom to E.W. Lyman, and handwritten notes taken by Wornom at meetings of the Toward a Better World Society.

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Arrangement

This collection is organized in one series arranged by institution and then chronologically.

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Administrative Information

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Revision Description

PDF converted to EAD and description updated by Leah Edelman. 2021-07-12

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Access

The following boxes are located offsite: Box 1-4. Please note that requests for use of boxes held in offsite storage must be made three business days in advance.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

The exact provenance of this collection is unknown.

Custodial History

The Herman E. Wornom Papers were among a large group of unprocessed materials that were organized in 2018 with the support of the Henry Luce Foundation and the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation.

Processing Information

Metal clips and staples were removed from materials and folded items were flattened. Materials were placed in new acid-free folders and boxes. Files wrapped in brown paper were transferred to folders. The finding aid was created by Kevin Windhauser and Rebecca Nieto in 2018 with the support of the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation, and edited by Leah Edelman in 2021.

Conditions Governing Use

Some material in this collection may be protected by copyright and other rights. Information concerning copyright, fair use, and reproduction requests can be consulted at Columbia's Copyright Advisory Office.

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Related Materials

Related Materials

UTS1: Harrison Sacket Elliot papers, The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University in the City of New York.

Related Materials

Religious Education Association (RG 74), Special Collections, Yale Divinity School Library.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Wornom, Herman E. -- : Archives

Burke Library record group:

Union Theological Seminary Archives: UTS 1, papers of faculty and students

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Collection Inventory

Herman E. Wornom papers, 1923 -- 1939

Physical Description: 1.5 linear feet 1.25 linear feet; 4 boxes

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Title/Description	Instances	
UTS: Practical Theology 42- Fosdick, 1934	box 1	folder 1
UTS: Christian Ethics II- Niebuhr, 1935 -- 1936	box 1	folder 2-8
UTS: Philosophy of Religion 11-12- Lyman, 1935 -- 1936	box 1	folder 9-11
UTS: Philosophy of Religion 11-12- Lyman, 1935 -- 1936	box 2	folder 1
UTS: Philosophy of Religion 19-20- Niebuhr, 1936 -- 1937	box 2	folder 2
UTS: Christian Ethics 43- Ward, 1936 -- 1937	box 2	folder 3
UTS: New Testament I- Geoff, 1936 -- 1937	box 2	folder 4
UTS: Religious Education 343F- Elliot, 1936 -- 1937	box 2	folder 5
UTS: Religious Education 63- Elliot, 1936 -- 1937	box 2	folder 6

UTS: Advanced Problems in Systematic Theology- Tillich, 1938 -- 1939	box 2	folder 7-8
Columbia: History S113, 1923	box 2	folder 9
Columbia: Education S422, 1923	box 2	folder 10
Columbia: Philosophy 135- Montague, 1934 -- 1935	box 3	folder 1
Columbia: Sociology 162, 1937	box 3	folder 2
Columbia: Philosophy 161, 1938 -- 1939	box 3	folder 3
General Notes and Documents from classes at Union, Columbia, and Teacher's College, 1935 -- 1937	box 3	folder 4
Toward a Better World Society, General Documents, 1923	box 3	folder 5
UTS: Christian Ethics 11-12- Niebuhr, 1935 -- 1936	box 4	folder 1
General Notes and Documents from classes at Union, Columbia, and Teacher's College, circa 1923 -- 1939	box 4	folder 2

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