



## **Park Jerauld White Papers (S0461)**

**Collection Number:** S0461

**Collection Title:** Park Jerauld White Papers

**Dates:** 1911-1982

**Creator:** White, Park Jerauld, 1891-1987

**Abstract:** The Park Jerauld White Papers contain correspondence, articles, poems, and reports documenting Dr. Park Jerauld White, a pediatric physician, poet, and civic reformer. An early advocate of integration to improve public health, Dr. White opened one of St. Louis' first integrated pediatric practices in 1924 and championed efforts to stop lead paint poisoning and nuclear bomb tests.

**Collection Size:** 1 cubic foot  
(64 folders)

**Language:** Collection materials are in English.

**Repository:** The State Historical Society of Missouri

**Restrictions on Access:** Collection is open for research. This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-St. Louis](#). If you would like more information, please contact us at [stlouis@shsmo.org](mailto:stlouis@shsmo.org). Collections may be viewed at any research center.

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**Preferred Citation:** [Specific item; box number; folder number] *Park Jerauld White Papers* (S0461); The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-St. Louis [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-St. Louis].

**Notes:** Please note that this collection has been minimally processed and has not been heavily indexed.

**Donor Information:** The papers were donated to the WHMC by Park J. White on April 25, 1985 (Accession No. SA2691).

**Processed by:** Processed by WHMC Staff, 1985. Finding aid revised by Rachael Heriford, February 2024.

### **Biographical Note:**

Park Jerauld White was born on December 31 1891, in Green Ridge, Staten Island, to Sophia Banker White and Park Jerauld White. From 1909 to 1913, White received his Bachelor of the Arts degree from Harvard College. After attending Harvard, White obtained his medical degree from Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons in 1917. Shortly after graduating from Columbia University, Dr. White enlisted in the United States Army as a 1st Lieutenant in the medical corps serving until 1920. Shortly after, Dr. White relocated to St. Louis, Missouri, and interned at St. Louis Children's Hospital. During this time, Dr. White also undertook part-time research on influenza bacteriology at Washington University's School of Medicine. This research inspired Dr. White's lifelong interest in public health issues that provided the basis for his efforts to integrate healthcare in St. Louis.

In 1924, Dr. White opened a private integrated pediatric practice, one of the earliest such practices in St. Louis, that he maintained until his retirement in 1965. In addition to his practice, Dr. White worked as an extern in various clinics, wards, and laboratories across St. Louis. From 1921 to 1962, Dr White worked as an Assistant Visiting Pediatrician at St. Louis Children's Hospital. Dr. White also served as the Director of Pediatrics at Homer G. Philips Hospital from 1945 to 1966 and was awarded emeritus in 1968. Later in life, Dr. White served as president of the St. Louis Pediatric Society and the Missouri state chairman of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

In addition to providing pediatric care to St. Louis, Dr. White was heavily involved in providing equal access and improved healthcare to African Americans. During the 1920s, Dr. White helped form the St. Louis Conference on Race Relations, an association of legal and medical professionals that attempted to get community groups to appoint African Americans to leadership and board of director positions within those organizations.

In 1925, Dr. White published "Segregation and the Health of Negroes," an essay that argued for the elimination of racial segregation and improvement of education and employment opportunities for African Americans as a means to improving public health. Dr. White based the essay in part on a study he conducted in 1922, which showed a rate of African American infant mortality as double that of white infants. Throughout the 1940s, Dr. White urged the elimination of patient segregation at St. Louis Children's Hospital and the passage of a 1949 resolution by the Missouri Medical Association to open its membership to African American physicians. In 1962, the Urban League of St. Louis awarded Dr. White a citation for his leadership in opening the St. Louis Medical Society to African American doctors.

Besides advocating for the end of segregation in medical care in St. Louis, Dr. White remained active in other aspects of social reform to improve public health. During the 1940s, Dr. White was instrumental in getting the St. Louis City government to regulate the affordable lead-acid battery casings that emitted toxic fumes when burned for fuel by impoverished families throughout the city.

Dr. White was also a founding member of the Greater St. Louis Committee for Nuclear Information in 1956, a group that worked to ban nuclear weapons tests by measuring the absorption of the tests' radioactive fallout in baby teeth (see collection S0069). In 1957, Dr. White published an article in *Today's Health* on lead paint poisoning among impoverished children that helped publicize the problem nationally. Dr. White also served as a member of the Leukemia Guild, the Civil Liberties Union of St. Louis, and the mayor's Milk Investigating Committee.

Dr. White also served as a lecturer at the Washington University School of Medicine starting in 1921. From 1921 to 1946, he taught the Medical Ethics and Professional Conduct course, which emphasized the impact of poverty and race on health, and pioneered discussions on birth control and comparative health. In 1925, Dr. White was awarded an Instructorship in Clinical Pediatrics at the Washington University Medical School, which he held until 1958. Subsequently, Dr. White served as an Assistant Professor of Clinical Pediatrics from 1958 to 1962. He became a Professor Emeritus in the same department in 1962.

Because of the flexibility of pre-med studies at Harvard, Dr. White also enrolled in a broad amount of literature and language classes. He wrote poems based on scientific, medical, and social themes. In 1972, the St. Louis Children's Hospital published a book of Dr. White's poetry work, *Verse and Verse: Litling Along Paths Medical and Otherwise*. In addition to poems, Dr. White published several medical journal articles and essays throughout his career and retirement in publications such as the *New England Journal of Medicine*, the *Journal of Pediatrics*, and *Today's Health*. Dr. Park Jerauld White died in St. Louis, Missouri, on August 6, 1987.

### **Arrangement:**

The collection has been arranged into the following four series with two sub series:

Articles, Books, Correspondence, and Personal Papers

Homer G. Phillips Hospital Activities Reports

Homer G. Philips Resident Recommendations

Poems

1934-1976

1976-1981

### **Scope and Content Note:**

#### **Articles, Books, Correspondence, and Personal Papers**

The Articles, Books, Correspondence, and Papers series contains Dr. White's writing on medical ethics and integration and articles by former St. Louis Children's Hospital directors Williams McKim Marriott and Oliver Wendell Holmes. The correspondence included in this series contains topics such as abortion legislation, the publication of Dr. White's poetry and articles, and medical ethics. Finally, the series consists of two books: *A Goodly Heritage, St. Louis Children's Hospital Centennial History, 1878-1979* by Marion Hunt, and Dr. White's 1972 poetry book, *Verse and Verse: Litling Along Paths Medical and Otherwise*. The materials in this series have been arranged chronologically and contain materials from 1911 to 1972.

## Homer G. Philips Hospital Activities Reports

This series contains annual reports of the pediatrics division of the Homer G. Philips Hospital from 1955 to 1962. The reports include statistical information on white and non-white newborns, stillbirth and infant deaths, overcrowding at the hospital, and the need for social services at the hospital. The reports are arranged chronologically.

## Homer G. Philips Resident Recommendations

This series contains letters of recommendation for former Homer G. Philips interns written by Dr. White to medical colleges and hospitals for positions and fellowships. The materials have been arranged alphabetically by the former residents' last names and contain materials from 1958 to 1975.

## Poems

This series contains poems by Dr. White from 1934 to 1981 discussing medical, scientific, and social topics. The materials are arranged into two subseries, 1934 to 1976 and 1976 to 1981.

The 1934 to 1976 subseries contains poems by Dr. White from 1934 to 1976. The materials are arranged alphabetically by the title of the poem.

The 1976 to 1981 subseries contains poems from 1976 to 1981. The materials are arranged alphabetically by the title of the poem.

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