

Yale University Library  
Yale Divinity Library

# Guide to the William H. Genné Papers

RG 79



Compiled by James E. Monsma and Martha Lund Smalley

1988

409 Prospect Street  
New Haven, CT 06511  
(203) 432-5301

[divinity.library@yale.edu](mailto:divinity.library@yale.edu)

<http://web.library.yale.edu/divinity/special-collections>

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## Table of Contents

Collection Overview .....	3
Requesting Instructions .....	3
Administrative Information .....	3
Conditions Governing Access .....	3
Preferred Citation .....	4
Biographical / Historical .....	4
Scope and Contents .....	4
Arrangement .....	5
Collection Contents .....	6
Series I: Correspondence, 1950-1981 .....	6
Series II: Writings, 1930-1989, undated .....	8
Series III: Collected Material, 1925-1984, undated .....	9
Conferences, 1925-1984 .....	9
Organizations, 1934-1984 .....	12
Subjects, 1930s-1980s .....	13
Series IV: Biographical Documentation, 1917-1980 .....	15
Series V: Audio-Visual Material, 1926-1982, undated .....	17
Selected Search Terms .....	18

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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Yale Divinity Library  
409 Prospect Street  
New Haven, CT 06511  
(203) 432-5301  
divinity.library@yale.edu  
<http://web.library.yale.edu/divinity/special-collections>

**CALL NUMBER:** RG 79

**CREATOR:** Genné, William H., 1910-1997

**TITLE:** William H. Genné Papers

**DATES:** 1917-1989

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 16 linear feet (37 boxes)

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** The papers document Genné's religious work among college and university students. Material relating to Genné's workshops and published articles describe contemporary attitudes about marriage, family life and sexuality during the 1950s-1970s, and detail his work and influence in these fields. William Henry Genné (1910-1997) was educated at Bucknell and Yale Universities and was ordained a Baptist minister in 1934. Genné was active in student religious work in various colleges and universities in the U.S. during the period 1936-1951. From 1944 to 1947, he served as the Pacific Northwest Secretary, College and University Division, National Council of the YMCA. Genné went on from this early focus of his career to become an expert in the fields of marriage, sexuality and family ministries.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/divinity.079>

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## Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use on site, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/divinity.079>.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b.      box  
f.      folder

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## Administrative Information

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### Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

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## Preferred Citation

William H. Genné Papers (RG 79), Special Collections, Yale Divinity School Library.

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## Biographical / Historical

Date	Event
1910 June 8	○ William Henry Genné born in Philadelphia, PA
1931	○ A.B., Bucknell University
1934	○ B.D., Yale Divinity School; ordained at First Baptist Church, Waterbury CT
1936	○ M.A., Yale University
1936-1940	○ Director of Student Religious Activities - Michigan State College
1937 March 28	○ Married to Elizabeth Steel. Children: Nancy, 1941; William, 1943; Margaret, 1950; Susan, 1953.
1940-1944	○ Chaplain and Instructor in Sociology - Alfred University, Alfred, NY
1944-1947	○ Pacific Northwest Regional Secretary - College and University Division, National Council of YMCA
1947-1951	○ Chaplain - Pacific University
1951-1957	○ Teacher/Counsellor - The Clara Elizabeth Fund for Maternal and Family Health, Flint, Michigan
1957-1976	○ Director - Sexuality, Marriage and Family Ministries, National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.
1976	○ Coordinator of Educational Services, Montclair Counseling Center ○ Program Coordinator, Geneva Point Center
1997 January 28	○ Died

For additional biographical information, lists of organizational affiliations, conferences attended, and works published, see Series IV, Box 30.

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## Scope and Contents

Following his graduation from Yale in 1936, Genné was active in student religious work. His files from this period, including those on the World Conference of Christian Youth in Amsterdam (1939) and the World Student Christian Federation Camp of 1939, complement other holdings of the Yale Divinity School Library in the area of religious work among college and university students. Genné went on from this early focus of his career to become an expert in the fields of marriage, sexuality and family ministries. In conjunction with his wife, Elizabeth Steel Genné, Genné conducted many workshops and wrote numerous articles for popular journals which described and influenced contemporary attitudes about marriage, sexuality and the family. His files document the issues and trends which dominated these fields, particularly during the 1950s through 1970s. The lists of conferences and organizations and subjects represented in Series III, Collected Material, indicate the scope of Genné's work.

The Correspondence of Series I deals primarily with arrangements for publications, conferences, workshops, and employment. In many cases, letters are filed under the name of an organization rather than

an individual. Correspondence with R.H. Edwin Espy deals with the 1979 reunion of the 1939 Amsterdam World Conference of Christian Youth.

The Writings in Series II are those of William and Betty Genné. Genné frequently contributed articles to denominational magazines, other popular religious journals such as *Christian Home*, and to *The Link*, a periodical for soldiers published by the General Commission on Chaplains and Armed Forces Personnel. He also had articles on marriage, family life, and sexuality published in secular journals such as *True Story* and *Redbook*. The sermons and addresses in Series II stem primarily from Genné's years as a college chaplain at Pacific University and Alfred University.

The Collected Material of Series III documents the conferences, organizations, and topics that were the focal points for Genné's career. The chronologically arranged conferences range from international gatherings to Sunday school workshops. The May 1977 workshop at Trinity United Methodist Church entitled "New Life for Me and My Family" is a typical example of the Gennés' workshops on family and marriage enrichment. Of particular interest in the material arranged by organization are the files documenting the National Council of Churches' Family Ministries department. Important publications of the National Council of Churches include a study guide on abortion, collected denominational statements on sexuality, and resource guides on sexuality and sex education. The collected material arranged by subject comes from a broad range of sources such as magazine articles, government pamphlets and denominational publications. Documented most extensively are the topics of marriage/family enrichment and sexuality/sex education.

The Biographical Documentation of Series IV is biographical in a broadly defined sense. Files from different periods in Genné's life include material ranging from student papers to correspondence with the Selective Service System, reports to his employers, resumes, and documentation of television appearances. Three folders of articles about Genné provide concise information about his life and work.

The Audio-visual Material in Series V includes largely unidentified photographs related to Genné's activities as well as tapes, films and visual teaching aids used in presentations on marriage enrichment and sexuality.

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## Arrangement

- I. Correspondence
- II. Writings
- III. Collected Material
- IV. Biographical Documentation
- V. Audio-visual Material

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## Collection Contents

### Series I: Correspondence, 1950-1981

The correspondence is arranged alphabetically by the name of the sender or recipient other than Genné. In most cases, letters are filed according to an organizational rather than a personal name. Full names are listed only for substantive files.

b. 1, f. 1	Ac - Ah	
b. 1, f. 2	American Association of Retired Persons	1972-1975
b. 1, f. 3	American Baptist Convention	1964-1976
b. 1, f. 4	Am - As	
b. 1, f. 5	Association Press	1953-1957, undated
b. 1, f. 6	Australian Council of Christian Education	1967
b. 1, f. 7	B	
b. 1, f. 8	Ca- Ch	
b. 1, f. 9	Clara Elizabeth Fund for Maternal Health	1950-1963, undated
b. 1, f. 10	Cl - Cu	
b. 1, f. 11	D	
b. 1, f. 12	Ei - En	
b. 1, f. 13	Espy, R.H. Edwin	1957-1979
b. 1, f. 14	Es - Ev	
b. 1, f. 15	F	
b. 1, f. 16	G - H	
b. 2, f. 17	I	
b. 2, f. 18	J	
b. 2, f. 19	K - L	
b. 2, f. 20	M	
b. 2, f. 21	Nar - Nat	
b. 2, f. 22	Ne - No	
b. 2, f. 23	O	
b. 2, f. 24	Pa - Po	

b. 2, f. 25	Pr - Pu	
b. 2, f. 26	R	
b. 2, f. 27	Sa - Si	
b. 2, f. 28	Sn - Sw	
b. 2, f. 29	Te - Th	
b. 2, f. 30	Today Show	1967
b. 2, f. 31	Tr - Tu	
b. 3, f. 32	U	
b. 3, f. 33	V	
b. 3, f. 34	Wa - WK	
b. 3, f. 35	World Council of Churches	1970-1981
b. 3, f. 36	Wo - Wy	
b. 3, f. 37	Y	
b. 3, f. 38	Miscellaneous	

**Series II: Writings, 1930-1989, undated**

Material in this series is arranged by format and chronologically within most formats.

b. 4, f. 39	Books and pamphlets by Genné	1956-1979, 1989, undated
b. 4, f. 40	Books and pamphlets by Genné and others	1956-1981
b. 5, f. 41	Articles by Genné	1930-1981
b. 6, f. 42	Articles by Genné	undated
b. 6, f. 43	Book Reviews by Genné	1961-1980, undated
b. 6, f. 44	Reviews and Advertisements of <i>Husbands and Pregnancy</i>	1956-1958, undated
b. 6, f. 45	Bibliography of Genné's articles	1963-1974
b. 6, f. 46-51	Sermons and Addresses	1939-1944
b. 7, f. 52-53	Sermons and Addresses	1941-1971, undated
b. 7, f. 54-55	Notes	1934-1976, undated
b. 7, f. 56-62	Manuscripts: A - L	
b. 8, f. 63-70	Manuscripts: M - Y, untitled	



**Series III: Collected Material, 1925-1984, undated**

The material in this series is divided into three categories:

1. Conferences - arranged chronologically
2. Organizations - arranged alphabetically
3. Subjects - arranged alphabetically

	Conferences	1925-1984
b. 9, f. 71	Baptist Young People's Union of America	1925 July
b. 9, f. 72	International Convention of Religious Education	1930 June
b. 9, f. 73	World Sunday School Convention	1932 July
b. 9, f. 74	Christian Youth Conference	1936 June
b. 9, f. 75	World Conference of Christian Youth	1939 July- August
b. 10, f. 76	World's Student Christian Federation (WSCF) Camp	1939 August
b. 10, f. 77	National Conference on Family Life	1948 May
b. 10, f. 78	Pastoral Conference on Family Life Education	1956 August
b. 10, f. 79	Family Life Workshop Camp	1957 August
b. 10, f. 80	Employed Women and the Church	1958 March
b. 10, f. 81	YMCA and YWCA	1958 December - 1959 January
b. 10, f. 82-83	American Institute of Family Relations	1959
b. 10, f. 84	North American Conference on Church and Family	1961 April-May
b. 10, f. 85	World Conference of Young Adults	1961 July
b. 10, f. 86	Psychiatry, Religion and Sexual Ideals	1962 May
b. 10, f. 87	The Case for Chastity	1962 June
b. 10, f. 88	Symposium on U.S. Population and Parenthood	1963 October
b. 10, f. 89	Canadian Conference on the Family	1964 June
b. 10, f. 90	Riverside Church Series on Sex and Christian Responsibility	1966 January
b. 10, f. 91	Fifth National Conference on Family Life of the Methodist Church	1966 October
b. 11, f. 92	Ecumenical Assembly of Church Women	1967 July
b. 11, f. 93	Marriage and Pre-Marriage Workshop for Clergy	1967 October
b. 11, f. 94	Flint, Michigan YWCA and Community Schools	1967 November
b. 11, f. 95	Perspectives on Sexuality, Sex Education and Mental Health	1968 October

## Conferences (continued)

b. 11, f. 96	"Discuss-In" on Sexuality	1968 November
b. 11, f. 97	Religious Education Association	1971 February
b. 11, f. 98	Pascack Ecumenical School Workshop on Marriage Potential	1971 February-March
b. 11, f. 99	SIECUS Conference on Sex, Love and Intimacy - Whose Life Styles?	1971 November
b. 11, f. 100	First Congregational Church, Verona, New Jersey: Series on Sexuality and Values	1972 April-May
b. 11, f. 101	American Baptist Christian Education Conference	1972 July
b. 11, f. 102	American Baptist Family Life Lab	1972 July
b. 11, f. 103	American Baptist Men and American Baptist Women	1972 July
b. 11, f. 104	Chatham United Methodist Church - Christian Families in Today's World	1972 September
b. 11, f. 105	Montreat Personhood Conference	1973 July
b. 11, f. 106	Cave Spring United Methodist Church - What Makes a Family Christian?	1973 July
b. 11, f. 107	Presbyterian Meeting House, Alexandria, VA: Lenten Series	1974 March
b. 11, f. 108	Conference on Human Issues in Management	1974 July
b. 11, f. 109	First Presbyterian Church, Greenwood, SC: To Love is to Grow	1974 September
b. 11, f. 110	Bucknell University: Human Sexuality Colloquy	1974 October
b. 11, f. 111	Rochester Family Life Institute	1974 September
b. 11, f. 112	Changing Family Styles: The Church's Response	1975 April
b. 12, f. 113	Union Village United Methodist Church	1975 May-June
b. 12, f. 114	Montclair State College: Sexual Problems	1975 June
b. 12, f. 115	Ministers' Wives Conference	1975 June
b. 12, f. 116	Christian Family Movement	1975 July
b. 12, f. 117	Western Washington State College: Workshop on Sexuality and Human Relationships	1975 July
b. 12, f. 118	Texas Council of Churches General Assembly	1975 August
b. 12, f. 119	National Presbyterian Mariners	1975
b. 12, f. 120	Ridgewood United Methodist Church: Making the Most of the Middle Years	1976 January
b. 12, f. 121	New Jersey Medical School Seminar in Human Sexuality	1976 April
b. 12, f. 122	Hitchcock Presbyterian Marriage Enrichment	1976 April-June
b. 12, f. 123	Southern Methodist University: Images for the Future	1977 February
b. 12, f. 124	Greece Baptist Church: Family Emphasis Weekend	1977 April

## Conferences (continued)

b. 12, f. 125	Connecticut Conference of U.C.C.: Spring Planting	1977 April
b. 12, f. 126	Trinity United Methodist Church: New Life for Me and My Family	1977 May
b. 12, f. 127	Maplewood: Parenting Workshop	1977 May
b. 12, f. 128	YMCA of the Rockies: Family	1977 July
b. 12, f. 129	Wellspring Center: Clergy Marriage Consultation	1977 September
b. 12, f. 130	Adventure House: Sex Education	1977 September-October
b. 12, f. 131	North Shore Unitarian Society: Marriage Encounter Weekend	1977 October
b. 12, f. 132	Warwick Conference Center: Marriage Enrichment Weekend	1978 February
b. 13, f. 133	New Jersey Nursing Students Annual Convention	1978 February
b. 13, f. 134	Episcopal Church of Saint James	1978 March
b. 13, f. 135	"Roots and Wings": Celebrating Stability and Change in Families	1978 April
b. 13, f. 136	United Methodist Women: Human Sexuality	1978 April
b. 13, f. 137	Cleveland Heights Christian Church: Family Enrichment Seminar	1978 May
b. 13, f. 138	Human Sexuality Education	1978 May
b. 13, f. 139	Naramata Centre Growth Points	1978 July
b. 13, f. 140	Family Ministry	1978 February-September
b. 13, f. 141	Heidelberg College: Clergy for Heidelberg Day	1978 October
b. 13, f. 142	Grossingers: Ministers' and Mates' Retreat	1979 January
b. 13, f. 143	New Brunswick Presbyterian Church: Helping Build Families Today	1979 March
b. 13, f. 144	Fort Wayne Community Churches: Seminars	1979 April
b. 13, f. 145	Church Women United in New York State: Annual Meeting	1979 April-May
b. 13, f. 146	Rochester Community Church: Communications Seminar	1979 May
b. 13, f. 147	Montclair State College: Sex Education Conference	1979 June
b. 13, f. 148	World Conference of Christian Youth	1979 October
b. 13, f. 149	Madison Methodist Church: Christian Families in Today's World	1979 October
b. 13, f. 150	Lawrence Road Presbyterian Church: To Love is to Grow	1980 February
b. 14, f. 151	John Knox Presbyterian Church: Relativity Celebration	1980 February
b. 14, f. 152	Bound Brook Presbyterian Church: Building Christian Families	1980 November
b. 14, f. 153	Community Church of Mountain Lakes: Christian Life Styles in a Contemporary World	1980 November

## Conferences (continued)

b. 14, f. 154	World Assembly of Families	1980 November
b. 14, f. 155	National Consultation on the Filipino Family	1980 December
b. 14, f. 156	Building Ministries with Families	1981 March
b. 14, f. 157	Sunday School Teachers Training Conference	1981 March
b. 14, f. 158	Pacific Council of Churches: Family Life Seminar	1981 March-May
b. 14, f. 159	Family Education and Marriage Enrichment	1981 April
b. 14, f. 160	The Filipino Family in Transition	1981 May
b. 14, f. 161-163	Schools and Challenges of Family Education	1981 May
b. 15, f. 164	Conference on Intimacy and Commitment	1981 July
b. 15, f. 165	Presbytery of New Brunswick: Festival of Learning	1982 March
b. 15, f. 166	United Church Board for Homeland Ministries: Family Life Conference	1982 October
b. 15, f. 167	Rutgers University: Sexuality and Aging	1983 April
b. 15, f. 168	Schenectady YWCA: Human Sexuality: A Family Affair	1983 May
b. 15, f. 169	United Church of Christ: Family Life	1984
b. 15, f. 170-174	Miscellaneous	1939-1982, undated
	Organizations	1934-1984
b. 16, f. 175	American College of Obstetricians - Bulletins	1965, 1970
b. 16, f. 176	Association of Couples for Marriage Enrichment Center for Parish Development	1975-1976, undated
b. 16, f. 177	Association of Couples for Marriage Enrichment Center for Parish Development - Newsletter	1972-1975
b. 16, f. 178	Christian Youth Building a New World	1934, undated
b. 16, f. 179-181	Church Women United Family Life Advisory Committee	1965-1984, undated
b. 16, f. 183	Montclair Counseling Center	1977-1982, undated
b. 16, f. 184	National Academy for Families	1982
b. 16, f. 185	National Assembly of Student Christian Associations	1937-1938
	National Council of Churches	
b. 16, f. 186-191	Conferences	1961-1983, undated
b. 16, f. 192	Family Life Newsletter	1961-1980

## Organizations &gt; National Council of Churches (continued)

b. 17, f. 193	Membership Lists	1963-1966
b. 17, f. 194-210	Minutes, Reports, Communications	1951-1984, undated
b. 18, f. 211	News Releases	1971-1973
b. 18, f. 212	Organization and Operating Procedures	1960, 1965
b. 18, f. 213	Publications	1957-1982, undated
Sex Information and Education Council of the U.S.		
b. 18, f. 214	Conference	1971
b. 18, f. 215-217	Minutes and Communications	1973-1980, undated
b. 18, f. 218	Newsletter	1965-1971
b. 18, f. 219	Publications	1969-1979
b. 18, f. 220	United Church of Christ Family Life Priority Working Group	1981-1982, undated
Subjects		1930s-1980s
b. 19, f. 221	Abortion and Birth Control	1970s, undated
b. 19, f. 222	Aging	1970s-1980s
b. 19, f. 223	Death and Bereavement	1970s-1980s, undated
b. 19, f. 224	Divorce	1980s, undated
b. 19, f. 225	Family Finance	1970s-1980s, undated
b. 19, f. 226-228	Marriage/Family Enrichment	1930s-1950s
b. 20, f. 229-230	Marriage/Family Enrichment	1960s-1970s
b. 21, f. 231-233	Marriage/Family Enrichment	1970s-1980s, undated
b. 22, f. 234	Marriage/Family Enrichment	1960s-1980s, undated
b. 22, f. 235	Peace	1940s-1980s, undated
b. 22, f. 236-237	Religion in the Home	1940s-1950s
b. 23, f. 238-242	Religion in the Home	1950s-1980s, undated
b. 23, f. 243-244	Sexuality and Sex Education	1950s-1960s

## Subjects (continued)

b. 24, f. 245	Sexuality and Sex Education	1970s
b. 25, f. 246-247	Sexuality and Sex Education	1980s, undated
b. 25, f. 248	Studies on the Family	1960s-1980s, undated
b. 25, f. 249	Substance Abuse	1980s, undated
b. 25, f. 250	Women's Issues	1950s
b. 26, f. 251-254	Women's Issues	1960s-1980s, undated
b. 26, f. 255	Youth Problems	1970s-1980s, undated
b. 27, f. 256-259	Miscellaneous	1930s-1960s
b. 28, f. 260-261	Miscellaneous	1970s-1980s
b. 29, f. 262	Miscellaneous	undated

**Series IV: Biographical Documentation, 1917-1980**

The material in this series is arranged in a generally chronological sequence with folder headings listed to indicate the nature of each file.

b. 30, f. 263	Inspirational Material collected by Genné	1917-1949, undated
b. 30, f. 264-265	Yale Divinity School	1934, 1936, undated
b. 30, f. 266	Ordination Statements	1934, 1936
b. 30, f. 267	Marriages Performed by Genné	1938-1949
b. 30, f. 268	Notes for Worship Services	undated
b. 30, f. 269	Selective Service	1940-1944, undated
b. 30, f. 270	Alfred University	1941-1944, undated
b. 30, f. 271-272	Pacific University	1947-1951, undated
b. 30, f. 273-274	Clara Elizabeth Fund for Maternal Health	1950-1958, undated
b. 30, f. 275	Family Camping	1954-1958, undated
b. 30, f. 276	National Council of Churches	1957
b. 30, f. 277	Southern California School of Theology	1959
b. 30, f. 278	Colgate Rochester Divinity School	1959-1963
b. 30, f. 279	Itineraries	1959-1975, undated
b. 30, f. 280-281	Resumés	1960, 1962
b. 30, f. 282	Kennedy Assassination	1963
b. 30, f. 283	Television Appearances	1963, undated
b. 30, f. 284	Drew University Theological School	1965
b. 30, f. 285	Adult School of Montclair	1965-1966, undated
b. 30, f. 286	Profile	1971
b. 30, f. 287	Statement to the Senate	1973
b. 30, f. 288-289	Resumés	1975, undated
b. 30, f. 290	National Council of Churches	1975-1976

b. 30, f. 291	Hite Questionnaire	1976
b. 31, f. 292-293	Miscellaneous	1929-1980, undated
b. 31, f. 294-296	Articles about Genné	1955-1980, undated
b. 32, f. 297	American College of Sexologists Certificate	1979



**Series V: Audio-Visual Material, 1926-1982, undated**

The material in this series is arranged by format and chronologically within each format.

b. 33, f. 298-301	Photographs	1926-1982, undated
b. OV1	Tapes	1957-1981, undated
b. OV1	Phonograph Records	1961-1969
b. OV2	Films	1961, undated
b. OV2	Filmstrips	1967, undated
b. OV3	Visual Teaching Aids	1967-1975
b. OV4	Records and Books - "The Marriage Enrichment Program"	1970

## **Selected Search Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

### **Subjects**

Clergy  
College students -- Religious life  
Families -- Religious life  
Marriage  
Sex  
Universities and colleges -- Religion  
Young Men's Christian Associations

### **Occupations**

Sexologists

### **Names**

Genné, Elizabeth Steel  
Genné, William H., 1910-1997

### **Corporate Bodies**

National Council of the Churches of Christ in  
the United States of America  
YMCA of the USA