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for Special Collections
The University of Toledo

Finding Aid

➤ **Carlton E. Spitzer Papers, 1957-2013** ◀

MSS-230

Size: 2 linear feet

Provenance: Gift of Carlton E. Spitzer of Easton, Maryland

Access: Open

Collection Summary: This collection contains the correspondence, personal and biographical material, publications, play files, photographs, and radio interview of Carlton E. Spitzer, who later developed interest in disability issues.

Subject: [Disability History](#)

Related Collections: Hugh Gregory Gallagher Papers, MSS-185

Processing Note:

Copyright: Copyright for the plays *Born to be Free* and *Inside Uncle Rosy's White House* rests with The Hugh Gregory Gallagher Motivational Theatre, Inc. The literary rights to all other portions of this collection are assumed to rest with the person(s) responsible for the production of the particular items within the collection, or with their heirs or assigns. Researchers bear full legal responsibility for the acquisition to publish from any part of said collection per *Title 17, United States Code*. The **Ward M. Canaday Center for Special Collections** may reserve the right to intervene as intermediary at its own discretion.

Completed by: Brandi Sharlow, December 2009; updated by Kimberly Brownlee, June 2010; updated by Ashley Bouknight, July 2010; updated by Zachary R. Dehm, March 2011; updated by Mariah Startzman, November 2011; revised and updated by Tamara Jones, August 2012 and May 2013; last updated: November 2014

Biographical Sketch

Carlton Edward Spitzer was born in Buffalo, New York on February 11, 1925 to Rudolph and Margaret Carney Spitzer. He was the third of four sons. Rudolph emigrated to the USA from Austria-Hungary with his parents, sister and brother in January, 1905. Margaret Carney was born and raised in Lewiston, N.Y.

Carlton grew up in Kenmore, N.Y. on the Niagara Frontier, and attended Kenmore schools. But he was an indifferent student, a day dreamer who wrote stories, loved art and sports, and had a passion for flying airplanes. He delivered the Buffalo Evening News to 140 customers, worked at a soda fountain, and spent as much time as possible at a small grass field in Tonawanda where brothers Dick and Jim Benson operated a flying school. Carlton earned additional flying time fueling and washing planes. He soloed in a Piper Cub J-3 on March 24, 1942, after eight hours of instruction, one month after his seventeenth birthday.

He served three years in the U.S. Army during World War II as a medical technician, assigned to a German prisoner of war at Camp McLean in the Texas Panhandle the first year. His views on war were shaped by caring for young men his own age who returned from combat with missing limbs and emotional trauma.

After he was honorably discharged in March of 1946, he completed training for his commercial pilot's license and went to work for American Airlines in New York, but in sales. Experienced multi-engine pilots returning from the war took what flying jobs were available.

He attended evening classes at the Institute for Human Relations at Saint Peter's College in Jersey City, New Jersey, and took a position in marketing with the Bendix Aviation Corporation at Teterboro Airport.

In 1952 Bendix transferred him to its division at Utica, New York. He completed Technical Writers School before being promoted to division public relations manager. He worked evenings writing obituaries for the Utica Daily Press, a Gannett newspaper. Later he wrote feature articles for the *Utica Sunday Observer Dispatch*.

He opened his own public relations office in Utica in 1956, serving the Utica Divisions of Bendix Aviation and Chicago Pneumatic Tool Company. Other clients included the Oneida County Chamber of Commerce, the Utica Memorial Auditorium, Saint Luke's-Memorial Hospital Center, and Gould Paper Company. Services included press relations, publications, labor negotiations, and counseling. He managed the mayoral campaign of Republican candidate Frank Dulan, and wrote speeches for Republican Congressional candidate Alexander Pirnie, Esq. Both men won. Spitzer served briefly as Dulan's administrative assistant before moving to Michigan to become Director of Public Relations for Wyandotte Chemicals Corporation, twelve miles downriver from Detroit.

In 1962, the president of Wyandotte Chemicals, Robert Semple, was spokesman for the chemical industry on President John Kennedy's Trade Expansion Act. He sent Spitzer to Washington to draft his testimony, drawing on files at the Manufacturing Chemists Association. Spitzer met Dan H. Fenn, Jr., the president's chief recruiter for his "New Frontier" and was invited to join the administration.

In 1963, Spitzer moved to the nation's capital as counselor to Francis Keppel, U.S. Commissioner of Education in the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. He helped Keppel staff a public information office and drafted Keppel's speeches. Through Keppel he met John W. Gardner, who directed the 1965 White House Conference on Education.

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President Lyndon Johnson nominated Gardner to become Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW). Gardner asked Spitzer to become Director of the Office of Public Information. Spitzer's three years with Gardner reshaped his life. He was deeply engaged in the desegregation of schools and hospitals, start-up of Medicare, and opened the first Freedom of Information Office in the Federal Government. Spitzer decentralized responsibility for public information in HEW's agencies, which included the Social Security Administration, National Institutes of Health, Food and Drug Administration, and Office of Education. He also established the position of public information officer in the nine regional offices to make the department less inbred and more responsive to the diverse needs of people across the nation.

When Gardner resigned as HEW Secretary in February of 1968 to head the National Urban Coalition, Spitzer left government to open his own public affairs counseling firm. The Coalition, and then Borden, Inc., became his first clients.

He was elected corporate vice president for public affairs and an officer of Borden, Inc. in 1970. He also served as president of the Borden Foundation, Inc. He was responsible for public affairs policy and program throughout the United States and in Europe where Borden had formed partnerships with companies in France, Germany and Spain. Borden had operated a chemical company in England for many years.

Spitzer's corporate social responsibility program at Borden was widely acclaimed and the subject of Alden Lank's doctoral thesis at Harvard. Spitzer was instrumental in forming the National Minority Purchasing Council in 1971, which later became the National Minority Supplier Development Council (NMSDC). Through that organization, purchases of goods and services from minority-owned firms vastly increased. The organization flourishes to this day, headquartered in New York City. Augustine R. Marusi, the president and chairman of Borden, Inc., served as chairman of the Council for five years in the 1970s.

Spitzer opened the first Washington office for Borden, Inc. and guided the move of its administrative headquarters from New York City to Columbus, Ohio and stayed on through construction of the Borden Building.

When that work was completed, he returned to Washington to renew his public affairs counseling practice, retaining Borden and the NMSDC as clients. Other clients included the National Council on Foundations, Aetna Life & Casualty, Alexander Grant & Company, Corn Products Company, Roosevelt Warm Springs Institute, the Deafness Research Foundation, and the Commission on Private Philanthropy and Public Needs. He was also public affairs counsel to five White House Conferences.

Spitzer gradually lost hearing at the age of thirty-three, and had stapedectomy surgery in his right ear in 1961. He wrote an article on the new surgery for the Saturday Evening Post. He served on the boards of the Detroit Hearing Center and the American Hearing Society.

Spitzer has been writing articles on persons with disabilities for more than forty-five years, and plays that celebrate the power of the human spirit for more than fifteen years.

In 1990, he founded Opportunity Skyway to encourage minority and disadvantaged children to pursue careers in aviation. To stimulate role playing, he wrote three monologues on minority and women aviation pioneers. Those three vignettes, under the title of "Flying High," are now part of the repertory of the Hugh Gregory Gallagher Motivational Theatre, Inc. which Spitzer founded in 2008 in memory of his friend who died in 2004. Gallagher was an award-winning writer, historian, and renowned disability advocate who drafted the Architectural Barriers Act, championed the Americans with Disabilities Act, was instrumental in placing a statue of Franklin

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Roosevelt in a wheelchair at the FDR Memorial in Washington, and won the Henry Betts prize for lifetime contributions to persons with disabilities in 1995.

Gallagher lost the use of his legs to polio in 1952 at the age of nineteen, and used a wheelchair for the rest of his life. He suffered depression in his 40s. Spitzer's play on Gallagher's life, *My Black Bird Has Flown Away*, emphasizes the inextricable link between severe physical trauma and emotional wellness. Broadway actor Jeremy Lawrence premiered the play at the University of Toledo on November 8, 2008 in conjunction with the Ward M. Canaday Center's exhibition, "From Institutions to Independence: A History of People with Disabilities in Northwest Ohio."

Spitzer has written hundreds of eclectic articles for diverse publications over many years, and more than 600 "Keeping Pace" columns for the *Star Democrat* and *Sunday Star* on Maryland's Eastern Shore since 1998.

He has authored three books: *The Voice of Government* (John Wiley, 1969), *Raising the Bottom Line* (Longman, 1982), and *Celebrating Life's Roots* (to raise funds for the Mental Health Association, 2004).

He was Washington editor for the *Public Relations Journal* in the late 1960s and a feature writer for *Business & Society Review* and *Public Affairs Review*. He was a mentor at the Washington Journalism Center and chairman of the National Public Relations Council of Health and Welfare Services. He was also a member of the Advisory Board for the Institute for Educational Services, and the Denison University Research Foundation. He was an elected board member of the Public Affairs Council. In Washington he was a member of the National Press Club and International Club.

Spitzer married Joan Patricia Smith of New York City on July 15, 1948. They have seven children, fourteen grandchildren, and fourteen great grandchildren. He died on May 4, 2013.

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Scope and Content Note

The Carlton E. Spitzer Papers are arranged in five series: Correspondence, Personal and Biographical Material, Publications, Play Files, and Photographs.

Series I, Correspondence, is arranged chronologically. It includes photocopies and some originals of professional and personal incoming and outgoing correspondence. Of particular note are letters from journalist Bill Moyers when he was assistant to the president, Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey, Ohio Governor John J. Gilligan, President Bill Clinton, and President Jimmy Carter.

Series II, Personal and Biographical Material, consists of items written about Spitzer and his career. Included are awards and certificates, as well as a compact disk of a 2008 radio interview with Spitzer on KZSC in Santa Cruz, California.

Series III, Publications, is the largest series, and includes materials from his early career to present day. Newspaper articles are arranged chronologically, and other publications are arranged alphabetically by title. Included are articles written for various newspapers, including many opinion columns for *The Star Democrat* of Easton, Maryland. Of note is an article entitled "An End to Silence" that was published in the *Saturday Evening Post* in August 1962. Also included are reviews of Spitzer's books written by others.

Series IV, Play Files, include manuscripts and published copies of Spitzer's plays. Also included are posters and other publicity materials for the plays. Pamphlets and other information related to the Hugh Gregory Gallagher Motivational Theatre are also included in the collection.

Series V, Photographs, depicts Spitzer at various conventions and conducting interviews. Also included are family photographs. Of note are photographs of Presidents Lyndon Johnson and Bill Clinton.

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Folder List

Box	Folder	Item
		S1. CORRESPONDENCE
1	1	1960s
1	2	1970s
1	3	1980s
1	4	1990s
1	5	2000s
2	1	2010s
		S2. PERSONAL/ BIOGRAPHICAL MATERIAL
1	6	Articles about Spitzer's Career- 1959-1988
1	7	Articles about Spitzer's Career- Dates Unknown
1	8	Awards and Certificates- 1957, 1961, 1963, 1967, 1968, 1981, 2006, 2008
1	9	Radio Interview with Spitzer, Santa Cruz- Oct. 25, 2008
3	6	Obituary, 2013
		S3. PUBLICATIONS
3	1	Articles by others – 2010s
3	2	Articles – Date Unknown
3	3	Blog Posts - 2011
2	2	Book: Celebrating Life's Roots- Published 2004
1	10	Business and Society Review- Spring 1978, Winter 1984, Spring 1984
1	11	Conference Papers- October 1962- August 1996
1	12	Cynamid Magazine- Fall 1965
2	3	HEW conference program: Spitzer as speaker- Oct. 8-9, 1969
2	4	HEW Speech by Spitzer: Utica, NY- February 7, 1966
2	5	Lecture Series- May 31, 1983
1	13	National Journal article and videotapes re: Opportunity Skyway- May 5, 1992 & Sept. 3, 1993
1	14	Newspaper Articles- August 1960
1	15	Newspaper Articles- November 1962
1	16	Newspaper Articles- November 1973
1	17	Newspaper Articles- October 1985
1	18	Newspaper Articles- March 1994, undated
1	19	Newspaper Articles- June and September 1997
1	20	Newspaper Articles- January, April, September 1998
1	21	Newspaper Articles- June, August, November, December 1999
1	22	Newspaper Articles- July-August, November-December 2000
1	23	Newspaper Articles- 2001
1	24	Newspaper Articles- 2002

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1	25	Newspaper Articles- 2003
1	26	Newspaper Articles- 2004
1	27	Newspaper Articles- 2005
1	28	Newspaper Articles- 2006
1	29	Newspaper Articles- 2007
1	30	Newspaper Articles- 2008
1	31	Newspaper Articles- January- May 2009
1	32	Newspaper Articles- June- December 2009
1	33	Newspaper Articles- 2010
1	34	Newspaper Articles- 2011
3	4	Newspaper Articles- 2012
3	5	Newspaper Articles- 2013
1	35	Opportunity Skyway Newsletters- Summer 1993- Fall 1995
2	6	Poster Board for Spitzer Speech- Feb. 5, 1969
2	7	Program for Spitzer lecture series- 1968-69
2	8	Program for USITA seminar- Spitzer as speaker- Sept. 8-12, 1969
1	36	Public Affairs Review 1983
1	37	Public Relations Journal- January 1962- July 1971
1	38	Public Relations Journal- January 1977- March 1984
1	39	Public Relations Review- Spring 1983
1	40	Reporting Magazine- September 1964
2	9	Review of Spitzer's Book: Raising the Bottom Line- March 1982
2	10	Saints Peter and Paul Parish dedication book- November 20, 2005
2	11	Saturday Evening Post article by Spitzer, "An End to Silence," August 1962
2	12	Speech by Spitzer, Milwaukee, Wisconsin- April 12, 1982
2	13	Spitzer lecture- Feb. 5, 1969
1	41	Unknown Journals- dates unknown
2	14	Wyandotte Chief- Fall 1962- Winter 1963
		S4. PLAY FILES
2	15	Copyright Applications for plays written by Spitzer- December 2008
2	16	DVD containing 3 plays about aviators (scripts written by Spitzer)
2	17	Hugh Gregory Gallagher Motivational Theatre events
3	7	Online Newsletters from Hugh G. Gallagher Motivational Theatre Inc.- 2011
3	8	Online Newsletters from Hugh G. Gallagher Motivational Theatre Inc.- 2012
2	18	Packet- Motivational Theatre, 2009
3	9	Play: <i>Born to be Free</i>
3	10	Play: <i>Inside Uncle Rosy's White House</i>
2	19	Play: <i>Lepers without Lesions</i>
2	20	Play: <i>My Black Bird Has Flown Away</i>
2	21	Play: <i>My Spirit Lives On</i>
2	22	Play: <i>Please Don't Forget Me</i>

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2	23	Play Program- January 27, 2006
2	24	Poster for Spitzer Play: Three One Act Plays Honoring Aviation Pioneers- December 13, year unknown
2	25	Proclamation for Hugh Gregory Gallagher Day- Sept. 30, 2004
2	26	Program for 3rd Annual Hugh G. Gallagher Forum- Sept. 29, 2006
3	11	Publicity Materials from Douglass Returns – June 16-19, 2011 – Born to Be Free
		S5. PHOTOGRAPHS
2	27	HEW Photographs of Spitzer- 1966-1968, 1971
2	28	Photograph of Sigmund Spitzer (relative of Carlton Spitzer), undated
2	29	Photographs of Spitzer and Bill Clinton- Sept. 3, 1993
2	30	Photograph of Tuskegee Airman Charles “Chief” Anderson, 1992