

The University of Toledo Archives  
Manuscript Collection

Finding Aid

➤Gardner Williams Papers, 1912 to 1917◀  
UM 52

**Size:** 4 linear feet

**Provenance:** Doris Bennett Williams (Mrs. Gardener Williams) August 22nd, 1984

**Access:** Open

**Related Collections:**

**Processing Note:**

**Condition:** Good

**Copyright:** The literary rights to 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.

**Location:** R 16/ S B

**Completed by:** Deborah L. Kling, April 10th, 1991

**Gardner Williams  
Papers, 1912-1917**

**Biographical/Historical Sketch**

Dr. Gardner Williams was born in New York City on April 25<sup>th</sup>, 1895. He was educated in the public schools and graduated from Horace Mann High School, NY, in 1912. After receiving a bachelor's degree with honors from Columbia University in 1916, he entered World War I as a piolet in the Aviation Section of the Signal Corps. He received his flying instruction at San Antonio Texas and served as a Reserved Second Lieutenant until his resignation in 1919. In 1929, Harvard awarded him a Master's of Arts degree and he spent the following summer touring Europe. Later, in 1929, he received a Ph.D. from the University of Michigan.

Williams' first teaching job came in 1925 when he became an instructor of orientation and economics courses at Middlebury College in Vermont. From 1928-1929, he was an instructor of philosophy at the University of Michigan. Later, while teaching at the University of Wisconsin, he met Doris Louise Bennett, an instructor in French and Italian, whom he married in 1928.

In 1934, Dr. Williams became an associate professor at the University of Toledo. During his time at UT, he served on various humanities, curriculum, and promotions committees. Also, he was named chairman of the Philosophy department in 1951. His professional affiliations included serving as president of the University Teacher's Federation in 1951 and had continued involvement in the American Association of University Professors, the Michigan Academy of Science, the Metaphysical Society of America, the Ohio Philosophical Association, and the American Philosophical Association. Also, he served as the Advisor of the Ohio Philosophical section wherein he was responsible for reporting the philosophical activities of all Ohio philosophers. He maintained correspondence with several fellow philosophers and collected articles from some of his colleagues in History and English departments at other schools.

Throughout his career, Williams was recognized by several honoraries. The American Association for the Advancement of Science, Phi Beta Kappa, Phi Alpha Theta, Phi Kappa Phi, and the Mark Twain Society.

In addition, Williams was a member of the American Humanist Association and was involved with the Toledo Humanist Society, serving as president and writing articles for several national humanist journals. As a humanist, he was concerned with the separation of church and state, especially in education. He collected articles and wrote letters concerning public-funded busses for parochial schools. In October, 1940, Williams delivered a paper, "The Nature of Ultimate Moral Authority", to a small group of philosophers and professors. One member of the group, a priest, reported William's assertion- that man, not God, is the true ultimate source of moral authority- to *The Catholic Chronical*; the chronical, claiming in a front page article that Williams "Whitewashes Sin, Blacks Out God", demanded that he be dismissed. The university retained Williams, but the incident is symptomatic of the rift between the universities and the Catholic Church, pre-Vatican II. During the 1960 presidential race he wrote, "Kennedy, November 1960?" about the implications of a Catholic President.

Dr. Williams' interests also extended to the Unitarian church and he delivered several sermons to the Unitarian churches in Toledo and Ann Arbor and also wrote for UNITY magazine. He was a member of the Board of Directors of the First Unitarian Church of

**Gardner Williams  
Papers, 1912-1917**

Toledo and as chairman of the Education Committee of the Midwestern division of the church.

In June 1965, after 34 years at UT, Williams retired and became a professor emeritus. His was the longest tenure among the retiring professors at that time. Also, that year, Williams was the first to be honored by the Alumni Association, which began an emeritus fund to honor retired faculty members by gathering funds and purchasing books of their choice in their name for the library. After his retirement, he continued to lecture and to do some writing. Dr. Gardner Williams died on June 28<sup>th</sup>, 1972. The next year, his wife donated his personal collection of books on philosophy and religion to the library, adding to the Williams Collection that was begun by the Philosophy Department. Also added to the collection were several autographed books which were donated by his colleagues.

**Gardner Williams  
Papers, 1912-1917**

**Scope and Content Note**

The collection is arranged in two series. Series I contains materials from Williams's personal life and interests. Included are articles of interest by other authors; papers, articles, and correspondence from *The Catholic Chronicle* in 1940; correspondence with colleagues and institutions; articles and bulletins from humanist, philosophical, and Unitarian organizations; and personal information. The personal information contains items from Williams' education, military service, career procedures, photographs and even plans for a sailboat which he designed in 1938.

Series II contains documents written by Williams. It includes over 50 unpublished articles, the texts of 10 speeches, 23 unpublished manuscripts, manuscripts of two books and excerpts from four others, spanning the years 1918-1970. The articles come from a wide variety of religious, philosophical, and historical journals. Also included are the notes of Carol Skistimas, a student, who took detailed notes for several classes at William's request (1961-1963), as well as notes from History 11.

Researchers may want to note that University Archives also has cassette tapes of four of William's lectures on humanism which are catalogued as AV 43.

**Gardner Williams  
Papers, 1912-1917**

**Folder List**

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Item Description</b>
		<b>Series I</b>
		<b>Articles- Others</b>
1	1	Barnes, Hazel E. 1955-1960
1	2	Ducasse, C.J. 1950-1954
1	3	Earls, Patricia March 18 <sup>th</sup> 1971
1	4	Elderkin, George 1959-1960
1	5	Huxley, J.S. (speech intro. By G.W.) 10/16/1954
1	6	LaFleur, Laurence J. 1940-1958
1	7	Miscellaneous Articles 1942-1961
1	8	Scholten, Martin 1952-1960
1	9	Smith, Willard A. (also obit.) 1950-1961
		<b>Catholic Controversy</b>
1	10	Catholic Chronicle Controversy 1940
1	11	FBI Controversy 1957
1	12	The Princeton Controversy (Ftr. Halton) 1957
1	13	"The Roman Catholic Controversy, on the Campus of Princeton U. Parts I-IV" 1955-1958
1	14	Religion and Education- Misc. Articles 1951-1961
		<b>Correspondence</b>
1	15	Beacon Press 1947-1949
1	16	Denison University 1953
1	17	Elderkin, Prof. George W. 1957
1	18	Fink, George A. (w/ articles) June 10, 1961
1	19	LaFleur, Laurence (at Akron) 1949-1960
1	20	-misc. and undated
1	21	-correspondence prepared for publication 1951-1953
1	22	Meyer, Prof. Joseph (w/ articles) 1961
1	23	Meadville Theological School 1940
1	24	Michigan Academy of Science, Arts, and Letters 1954-1957
1	25	Misc. Correspondence 1924-1971
1	26	Nakhnikian, George 1953
1	27	O'Toole, James 1938-1940
1	28	Wilson, Edwin H. (American Hum. Assn.) 1947-1953
1	29	Wood, A.V. Jul-Aug 1931
		<b>Humanist Activities</b>
1	30	American Humanist Association- Misc. 1942-1965
*3	27	Humanist Articles (other authors)
1	31	Humanist Groups- Misc. 1952-1967
1	32	Humanist Groups- Toledo 1951-1971
1	33	Humanist Press; <i>The Humanist</i> (correspondence) 1936-1948
1	34	Humanist Publicity 1952-1967
		<b>Personal Information/Papers</b>

**Gardner Williams  
Papers, 1912-1917**

1	35	Activities and Interests 1940-1966
1	36	Air Force Flying School 1918-1919
1	37	Biographical Information
1	38	Boat Plans Oct. 1938
1	39	Education 1912-1967
1	40	Employment 1925-1965
1	41	Governor's Fair Bus Bill 1965
1	42	Honoraries 1941-1970
1	43	Inauguration (as rep. of Harvard and Columbia) 1929-1939
1	44	Job Hunt 1933
1	45	Job Hunt 1935-1953
1	46	Life During WWII 1942-1948
1	47	Photographs 1918-1955
2	1	NW Ohio Philiso. Assn.- Correspondence 1938-1943
2	2	-Misc. 1938-1964
		<b>Unitarian Activities</b>
2	3	Unitarian Groups outside Toledo (misc.) 1947-1966
2	4	Unitarian Groups- Toledo 1951-1963
2	5	Unitarianism- Articles and Materials 1943-1961
		<b>UT Career</b>
2	6	Faculty Reports 1953-1961
2	7	History 11, Syllabus & Study Guide 9-34, Fall 1935
2	8	Professional affairs- Salaries, organizations, and Activities 1933-1964
2	9	Publications Lists
		<b>Series II</b>
		<b>Articles Published</b>
2	10	"Absolute Truth and the Shadow of Doubt" <i>Philosophy of Science</i> , Jul 1948
2	11	"Basic Concepts on the Theory of Probability" <i>Philosophical Review</i> , Jul 1938
2	12	Comment on "The Involvement of Liberals: Meanings of Responsibility" <i>Religious Humanism</i> , June 1966
2	13	"the Epic of Man's Cultural Progress" <i>The Toledo Humanist</i> , Sept 30 1956
2	14	"Ethics for Scientific Humanists" <i>Humanist World Digest</i> Nov 1956
2	15	"Feeling as a Basis of Duty" <i>Ethics</i> , Jul 1930
2	16	"Francis Ellignwood Abbot: Free Religionist- The Toledo Episode 1869-1873" <i>Northwest Ohio Quarterly</i> , Summer 1948
2	17	"Francis Ellignwood Abbot" <i>UNITY</i> 1952
2	18	"Free Will and Determinism" <i>Journal of Philosophy</i> , Dec. 18, 1940
2	19	"Freedom and Natural Causation" <i>The Humanist</i> , Nov 5 1966
2	20	"Freedom of Choice in the Pre-Determined Future" <i>Philosophy and Phenomenological Research</i> , Sept. 1951
2	21	Garnett, Williams, and Dubs: Comments and Replies 1949
2	22	"Government, Racketeering, and Religion" <i>Dynamic America</i> , Feb. 1940
2	23	"Hedonic Individual Relativism" <i>Journal of Philosophy</i> , Feb. 13, 1950
2	24	"Hedonism, Conflict, and Cruelty" <i>Journal of Philosophy</i> , Nov. 9, 1950
2	25	"The High Cost of Learning" <i>Challenge</i> , ca. 1930

**Gardner Williams  
Papers, 1912-1917**

- 2 26 "Human Freedom and the Laws of Nature: Comment" *Journal of Philosophy*, Jul 20, 1944
- 2 27 "Human Freedom and the Uniformity of Nature" *The Humanist*, winter 1948-1949
- 2 28 "Humanism as a creative force in Society" *Humanist Viewpoint Series*, Aug 1958
- 2 29 "Humanism or Naturalism" *Humanist Bulletin*, Apr 1940
- 2 28 Humanist Articles (G.W) Misc.
- 2 30 "Humanist Theism" *Journal of Liberal Religion*, Spring 1947
- 2 31 "Humanistic Theology" *UNITY*, Mar/Apr 1958
- 2 32 "Individual, Social, and Universal Ethics" *Journal of Philosophy*, Nov 18, 1948
- 2 33 "An Integrative Philosophy of Moral Values" *Balanced Living* Feb 1960 (Rev'd) Jul 1965
- 2 34 "Kennedy, November 1960?" *Mid-Lakes Humanist* Oct/Nov 1960
- 2 35 "Logical and Natural Compulsion in Free Will" *Journal of Philosophy*, Mar 29, 1945
- 2 36 "Love, Death, the Will-to-Power and Reason" *Mid-Lakes Humanist* Jun/Jul 1961
- 2 37 "Moral Insignificance of the Total of all Value" *Ethics*, April 1945
- 2 38 "The Natural Causation of Free Will" *Zygon*, Mar 1968
- 2 39 "The Natural Causation of Human Freedom" *Phil. And Phenomenological Research*, Jun 1959
- 2 40 "Natural Metaphysics and the Two Evolutions of Man" *Phil. And Phenomenological Research*, Dec 1953
- 2 41 "A Naturalistic View of Religion" *UNITY* May 6 1940
- 2 42 "Niebuhr Boiled Down for Liberals" *UNITY* Nov/Dec 1947
- 2 43 "Normative Naturalistic Ethics: Comment" *Journal of Philosophy*, May 25 1950
- 2 44 "On Our Lack of Certainty" *Philosophical Review*, Nov 1939
- 2 45 "Our Aims" *The Toledo Humanist*, May 1958
- 2 46 "Reinhold Niebuhr and Liberal Religion" *UNITY*, Jun 1946
- 2 47 "The Relativity of Right" *Humanist World Digest*, Feb, 1957
- 2 48 "Religion of George Santayana" *Journal of Liberal Religion*, Winter 1948
- 2 49 "Some Traditional Skeptical Principles" *Journal of Philosophy*, Oct 24 1940
- 2 50 "The Spiritual Predicament of Modern Man" *Mid-Lakes Humanist* Jun/Jul 1960; *Free Humanist* Aug, 1961
- 2 51 "Subjective Ethics and the Subconscious Value Judgments of the Average Citizen" *Phil. And Phenomenological Research*, Dec. 1964
- 2 52 "Subjective Nature of Ultimate Moral Authority" *Journal of Social Philosophy*, Apr 1941
- 2 53 "Subjectivism and the Ethical Ultimacy of the Individual" *Ethics*, Jul 1959
- 2 54 "Truth, Probability and Certainty: A Reply" *Philosophical Review* Nov 1942
- 2 55 *Unitarian Register* (Letter to the Editor) Dec 1957
- 2 56 "Universalistic Hedonism vs. Hedonic Individual Relativism" *Journal of Philosophy*

**Gardner Williams  
Papers, 1912-1917**

- 2 57 "Universality and Individual Relativity in Morale" Given to Amsterdam Congress, Aug 1948  
2 58 "Universality and Individuality in Ethics" *Journal of Philosophy*, Jun 24 1943  
2 59 "Why I Remain a Unitarian" *UNITY*, Jul/Aug 1948  
2 60 "Wrath, Responsibility, and Progress in a Deterministic System" *Journal of Philosophy*, Aug 13 1942

**Books**

- 3 1 Book Reviews  
3 2 De Rerum Natura- Comprehensive Naturalistic Philosophy, Ms. 1966  
3 3 An Evolutionary Naturalistic Philosophy, Ms. 1966  
3 4 The Human Perspective 1930  
3 5 Notes- Misc.  
3 6 Religious Liberals Reply excerpt, 1947  
3 7 Scientific Naturalistic Humanism- Collection  
3 8 Towards global Society 1970

**Lectures- Skistimas' Notes**

- 3 9 Phil 201- Intro to Philosophy Fall 1961  
3 10 Phil 201- Free will Lecture  
3 11 Phil 203- Ethics and Value Theory Fall 1961  
3 12 Phil 207- Social Evolutionary Philosophy  
3 13 Phil 209- Logic Feb-Jun 1964  
3 14 Phil 366- Modern Catholic Philosophy Feb-Jun 1963  
3 15 Psychology 121 Summer 1962

**Manuscripts**

- 3 16 "The Casual Determinism of Free Will" 1954  
3 17 "The Coming Revival" ca. 1918-1919  
3 18 "Comments of Erich Fromm" Oct 1964  
3 19 "A Defense of Ethical Relativism" 11/20/1959  
3 20 "Deterministic Free Will, a Reply to Dr. Corliss Lamont: 1962  
3 21 "Egotistic vs. Universalistic Hedonism" 1953  
3 22 "the Essential Principles of Naturalistic Humanism"  
3 23 "God, the Supreme Being and the Good Life" 1968  
3 24 "Hedonic Individual Relativism, the Ultimate Principle of Duty" 1953  
3 25 "Humanism"  
3 26 "Humanism and Mr. Niebuhr" ca. 1947  
3 29 "A Humanistic Philosophy of History"  
3 30 "Humanistic Unitarianism"  
3 31 "The Individual and Society" 1968  
3 32 "An Integrative Philosophy of Moral Values" 1965  
3 33 "Natural Causation of Spiritual Freedom" Sept 1957  
3 34 "Natural Moral Law"  
3 35 "The Nature and Importance of Naturalistic Philosophy"  
3 36 "The Peaceful Coexistence of Communist Russia and the Democratic West" ca. 1950  
3 37 "Religion and the Cultural Evolution of Man"  
3 38 "Some Current Misunderstandings of Determinism" 1950



**Gardner Williams  
Papers, 1912-1917**

- 3 39 "What is Humanism?" 1962  
3 40 "Words and Values, the Semiotics of Axiology" 1952  
**Sermons and Speeches**  
3 46 "Christian Love and the Good Life" Sermon to Unitarian Church in Toledo May, 1943  
3 41 Clippings about lectures  
3 42 "A criticism of the Ideas of Dualism, Skepticism, and Proof in Descartes"  
3 43 "Free Will" Lecture at Akron 1962  
3 44 "A Historical Interpretation of Unitarianism" Sermon 1958  
3 45 "Liberal Religion in Contemporary Society" or "Role of Unitarianism in Western Civilization" Speech in Sandusky  
3 47 Sermons and Services Misc.- Unitarian Church  
3 48 "Some Essential Principals of True/Basic Religion" Unitarian Church of Toledo, May 1963  
3 49 "Symposium on Humanistic Metaphysics" post 1951  
3 50 Talks in Akron 1958-1960  
3 51 "Two Evolutions" Speech in Cleveland, 1962  
4 1 Service at Unitarian church Toledo  
4 2 "Humanistic Theism" for Unitarian Church  
4 3 Lecture on Naturalism, delivered 1934 1935  
4 4 WTOL discussion 4/13/48  
4 5 "Nature and Importance of Naturalistic Phil."  
4 6 Naturalistic Metaphysics 5/4/51  
4 7 Speech to Detroit Unitarian Church 2/18/52  
4 8 Natural Process and Spiritual Value 4/11/52  
4 9 Human Freedom and the Inex. Laws. 4/11/52  
4 10 "The Logical/Spiritual validity of God" 4/11/52  
4 11 "Religion and the Cultural evolution of man" 1953  
4 12 "The Living Essence of Religion" 7/25/57  
4 13 Sermon, Dayton May 24, 1959  
4 14 The Nature and Importance of Humanism 12/16/59  
4 15 Funeral Service for Oscar Anderson, 8/3/60  
4 16 Unitarian Universalist Fellowship 9/10/1961  
4 17 Some Essential Principles of Religion 5/19/63  
4 18 Basic Religion 1963, 65, &67  
4 19 "The Church as a Social Institution" 3/8/1964  
4 20 "A Humanistic Study of History" 3/5/1965  
4 21 "Scientific-Humanistic Interpretation of Religion" 12/5/1965  
4 22 "Bigotry and Prejudice" 1/18/68  
4 23 "Is there a God?" 11/3/68  
4 24 Approximation Reincarnation of Egotistic Hedonism in the Interest Theory of Value 2/9/36  
4 25 Refutation of Moral Skepticism Feb, 1938  
4 26 Intelligence of Moral Living 5/20/1939  
4 27 Some Doubts About Logic, May 1940  
4 28 Desire and Duty 1941

**Gardner Williams  
Papers, 1912-1917**

4	29	Naturalism and Duty 6/5/1941
4	30	Ethical Relativism Jul 1941
4	31	Some Fine Pints in the Freewill Contr. 1948
4	32	Body and Spirit. A Naturalistic View Apr 1948
4	33	A Note on Gardner Williams 1949
4	34	A quest for Basic Religious Values 2/28/1949
4	35	The Three Freedoms and Three Determinisms Mar 1956
4	36	Freewill- w/ index of 13 Add. Principles 1962
4	37	Suicide- A Reply to Dr. Morris 5/21/64
4	38	How Much religion is Undermined by Science and Reason- A Humanistic View 1/27/67
4	39	Biological and Cultural Evolution of Man
4	40	A Criticism of the Ideas of Dualism, Skepticism, and proof in Descartes
4	41	"The Golden Strand" incomplete
4	42	The Morals of Taking Life and of Saving It
4	43	Probability and Certitude
4	44	"A Remonstrance to Walter Lippmann"
4	45	Some Mistaken Reasoning About Freewill
4	46	Some Slighted Truths...
4	47	The Summary of Scientific Theology
4	48	Three Philosophies of History
4	49	"What Shall we say of Death?"
4	50	Humanistic Moral Philosophy
4	51	The Interest Theory of Value
4	52	God vs. the Supreme Being
4	53	"All existing things..."
4	54	"A Supernatural Being..."
4	55	Notes
4	56	On Our Lack of Certainty as to the Truth of Analytical and A PRIORI Propositions
4	57	Some Traditional Skeptical Principles
4	58	Freewill and Determinism 12/1940
4	59	The Subjective Nature of moral Authority
4	60	Certainty, Probability and Truth 1935
4	61	Logical and Natural Compulsion in Freewill
4	62	Francis Ellingwood Abbot
4	63	Individualism, Social and Universal Ethics
4	64	Human Freedom and the Uniformity of Nature 1948
4	66	Normative Naturalistic Ethics 5/25/50
4	67	Hedonism, Conflict, and Cruelty 11/9/50
4	68	The Casual Determinism of Freewill 1954
4	69	Ethics for scientific Humanists 11/ 1956
4	70	Humanistic Theology 3/ 1958
4	71	"A Humanist Symposium on Metaphysics" 1/15/59
4	72	Subjective Ethics and the Subconscious Value Judgements of the Average Citizen 6/1958

**Gardner Williams**  
**Papers, 1912-1917**

4	73	An Integrative Phil of Moral Values 7/1966
4	74	God, the Supreme Being and the Good Life 1/23/1970
4	75	A Comp. Scientific. Naturalist Philosophy of Life
4	76-79	An Evolutionary Naturalistic Philosophy 1962-1967
4	80	Book Reviews
4	81	Letters to the Editor