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Guide to the

**Archie Smith, Jr. papers**

1962 - 2013 [bulk 1978 - 2002]

Sc MG 874

Processed by Robby Koehler, 2013. This finding aid was prepared as part of an archival processing project arranged through support of New York University's Department of English, in collaboration with the Schomburg Center.

## Summary

**Creator:** Smith, Archie, 1939-

**Title:** Archie Smith, Jr. papers

**Date:** 1962 - 2013 [bulk 1978 - 2002]

**Size:** 2 linear feet (2 record cartons)

**Source:** Gift of Archie Smith Jr., 2013.

**Abstract:** Archie Smith, Jr. was the James and Clarice Foster Professor of Pastoral Psychology and Counseling at PSR and the Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, California until 2011. The Archie Smith Jr. Papers document Smith's career as a pastor, scholar, and counselor and reflect his interest in placing individual and family experiences within the context of larger social, cultural, and spiritual systems.

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**Preferred citation:** [Item], Archie Smith, Jr. papers, Sc MG 874, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, The New York Public Library

**Language of the Material:** English

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## Creator History

Archie Smith, Jr. was born on August 4, 1939, and lived most of his childhood in a mixed-race

neighborhood in Seattle. He received Master's degrees in Divinity (1964) and Sacred Theology (1966), an MSW (Social Welfare, 1973), and a Ph.D. (1973) all from Brandeis University. Smith became the first tenured track African-American faculty at the Pacific School of Religion (PSR) in 1975. He was the James and Clarice Foster Professor of Pastoral Psychology and Counseling at PSR and the Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, California, until 2011. In 1964, Smith was ordained as a minister and worked in New York City. In 1966, he was appointed Minister-to-the-Community at the historic First Baptist Church in Worcester, Massachusetts. This social gospel-oriented ministry enabled him to make connections between poverty conditions, individual experiences, and the workings of the larger society. Concerns with personal, inter-personal and systemic causes of poverty, oppression, and discrimination led Smith to study at Brandeis University. His Ph.D. dissertation was an analysis of drug use on College Campuses in a New England city during the early 1970s. Over the course of the 1970s and 1980s, his work and sabbaticals in London combined intercultural and interfaith issues with mental health practices and different family structures. He explored and developed methods for teaching and practicing therapy with a variety of families that took into account the interreligious and systemic difficulties they faced. Smith's first book, *The Relational Self: Ethics and Therapy from a Black Church Perspective* (1982), made important connections between ethics, social psychology, social science, and theology. He argued that care of persons and care of environments are interrelated. Therefore, churches were challenged to help change structures of discrimination and oppression in order to help individuals. Smith also addressed the Jonestown mass murders and suicides of 1978 in his writing. Smith's second book, *Navigating the Deep River: Spirituality in African American Families* (1997). The book established a systemic, cross-cultural, and historical approach to understanding African-American families in society. His third book, *Tending the Flock: Congregations and Family Ministry* (1998) was co-edited with K. Brynoll Lyon. The book was a series of case studies of different kinds of congregations—Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish; liberal and conservative—with family ministries in different parts of the United States. His fourth book, written with colleague Ursula Riedel-Pfafflin, was *Siblings by Choice: Race, Gender, Violence* (2004). This book explored case studies and pastoral care challenges across international and intercultural borders. Smith resigned from the PSR faculty in 2011 due to longstanding concerns about racial discrimination and failing academic standards within the institution. His teaching, religious leadership, and mental health practice continue to this day.

## Scope and Content Note

The Archie Smith Jr. Papers document Smith's career as a pastor, scholar, and counselor and reflect his interest in placing individual and family experiences within the context of larger social, cultural, and spiritual systems. The collection contains correspondence, unpublished and published papers, sermons, and other materials.

**Arrangement:** Organized into three series: (1) Personal papers; (2) Professional papers; and (3) Pastoral papers.

## Key Terms

### Subjects

African American clergy  
African American families -- Pastoral counseling of  
African American scholars  
African Americans -- Education  
African Americans -- Pastoral counseling of

African Americans -- Religion  
Black author  
Pastoral theology -- Biblical teaching  
Priests, Black -- United States

**Genre/Physical Characteristic**

Correspondence  
Sermons

**Names**

Smith, Archie, 1939-

## Container List

### Personal papers 1966 - 1975

- b. 1 f. 1 Correspondence
- b. 1 f. 2 Family and friends

### Professional papers 1964 - 2012

This series documents his career as a scholar from the early 1960s to the first decade of the 21st century. Many of the letters in the correspondence sub-series deal with the planning of events at PSR and other institutions, and Smith's employment negotiations and offers. Smith's personal reflections on the course of his career, his employment options, and some of his professional experiences are documented in the faculty reports, journals, and reflections that were either written as part of his duties at PSR or as professional reference.

Notable items in the Unpublished Talks, Unpublished Writing, and Published Writing subseries include papers on homosexuality, abuse, and drugs and their impact on the black family and church; manuscript annotations and emendations to lecture notes; unpublished talks of the Jonestown mass murders/suicides and religious cults in general; and an early draft of a chapter of his first book, *The Relational Self*. Smith's experiences as a researcher are documented in a folder devoted to a study he led at the Pacific School of Religion in the late 1970s that examined student's religious and spiritual beliefs. The teaching sub-series consists of syllabi, evaluations, and materials relating to Smith's resignation from PSR in 2011.

### Correspondence

- b. 1 f. 3-4 1980 - 1990
- b. 1 f. 5 1991 - 2009

### Unpublished lectures and talks

- b. 1 f. 6 1976 - 1980
- b. 1 f. 7 1981 - 1985
- b. 1 f. 8-9 1986 - 1990
- b. 1 f. 10 1991 - 2000
- b. 1 f. 11 2001 - 2012

### Unpublished writing

- b. 1 f. 12 Ordination paper 1964
- b. 1 f. 13 Union Theological Seminary paper
- b. 1 f. 14 Dissertation 1973
- b. 1 f. 15 "Tidings of Comfort and Joy"
- b. 1 f. 16 Brandeis University course paper
- b. 1 f. 17 1972 - 1980
- b. 1 f. 18 1981 - 1990
- b. 1 f. 19 1990 - 2000
- b. 1 f. 20 Pacific School of Religion (PSR) study and report on spirituality 1976
- b. 1 f. 21 Institute for Ecumenical and Cultural Research

### Journals and reports

- b. 2 f. 1 1979 - 1990
- b. 2 f. 2 1991 - 2012
- b. 2 f. 3 Conference programs

Professional papers (cont.)

Published writing

b. 2 f. 4 1969 - 1999

b. 2 f. 5 1999 - 2012

Teaching

b. 2 f. 6-7 Syllabi 1979 - 2011

b. 2 f. 8 Student evaluations

b. 2 f. 9 Resignation from PSR

Pastoral papers 1967 - 2012

Throughout his career, Smith delivered sermons for ordinations, commencements, and other events, and was also often called on to compose and deliver public prayers. Filed in this series are these prayers and sermons based upon lectionary texts and international and contemporary events. Sermons delivered at the First Baptist Church, Worcester, Massachusetts, during the late 1960s, demonstrate his early attempts to address racism and poverty as systemic issues. Also represented in the series are materials relating to workshops Smith gave in London to Muslim and secular trained therapists. They relate to spirituality in mental health practice. Also among the pastoral papers is the theological significance of the pastoral prayer, especially on different liturgical seasons of the year. In 2011, members of the academic community and a local Black church came together to honor Smith, which is documented in one folder.

Sermons

b. 2 f. 10 1967 - 1980

b. 2 f. 11 1981 - 1990

b. 2 f. 12 2000 - 2012

Prayers

b. 2 f. 13-14 Pastoral

b. 2 f. 15 Occasional

b. 2 f. 16 Prayer workshop

b. 2 f. 17 Jonestown

b. 2 f. 18 Appreciation service