Descriptive Summary

Creator Information
Pahnke, Walter, 1931-1971

Title
William Richards Collection of Walter Pahnke papers

Collection Identifier
MSP 68

Date Span
1952-1972, predominant 1964-1971

Abstract
William Richards Collection of Walter Pahnke papers (1952-1972; 0.2 cubic feet) contains materials that document the life and work of Walter Pahnke. Article reprints, a list of his publications, a photograph of Pahnke, a summary of his doctoral thesis, his curriculum vitae from 1970, an account of his first LSD experience, a poem by his wife, personal manuscripts, and his obituary are included in the collection.

Extent
0.2 cubic feet (1 box)

Finding Aid Author
Kristin Leaman, 2011

Languages
English

Repository
Virginia Kelly Karnes Archives and Special Collections Research Center, Purdue University Libraries

Administrative Information

Location Information: ASC

Access Restrictions: Collection is open for research.

Acquisition Information: April 17, 2009; William Richards; Donation

Accession Number: 20090417

Preferred Citation: MSP 68, William Richards Collection of Walter Pahnke papers, Archives and Special Collections, Purdue University Libraries

Copyright Notice: Copyright restrictions may apply. Consult a reference archivist for details.

Subjects and Genres
Persons
Pahnke, Walter

Organizations
Maryland Psychiatric Research Center
Spring Grove State Hospital (Catonsville, Md.)

Topics
LSD (Drug)--Therapeutic use

Form and Genre Types
Black-and-white photograph
Correspondence
Curriculum vitae
Manuscript for publication
Manuscripts (handwriting)
Obituary
Poems
Program (document)
Reprints
Test report

Occupations
Psychiatry
Psychology
Psychopharmacology
Minister
Biography of Walter Pahnke

Walter Pahnke (1931-1971) earned his Artium Baccalaureus (magna cum laude) from Carleton College in 1952, his MD from Harvard Medical School in 1956, his BD (cum laude) from Harvard Divinity School in 1960, and his PhD from Harvard Graduate School of Arts and Sciences in 1964. He completed training in LSD therapy and research with Hanscarl Leuner at the University of Göttingen and completed his psychiatric residency at the Massachusetts Mental Health Care Center. Pahnke’s main research interests were psychopharmacology (especially psychedelic drugs in regard to psychotherapeutic usefulness, sociological abuse, and religious implications), psychiatric and ethical issues in the care of the dying patient, and psychology of religion. He held many esteemed positions in the field of psychiatry and served as the Director of Clinical Sciences at the Maryland Psychiatric Research Center and an Assistant Professor of Psychiatry at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine before his untimely death in 1971. Pahnke wrote many articles concerning the therapeutic use of LSD including his 1969 article “The Psychedelic Mystical Experience in the Human Encounter with Death.” He was a Phi Beta Kappa member, a Kent Fellow, and an Ingersoll Lecturer at Harvard University. Pahnke passed away at the age of forty in a scuba diving accident in the Atlantic off the coast of Maine on July 10, 1971 leaving behind his wife and three children. Pahnke was “admired by his friends for his boundless energy and enthusiasm and for the diversity of his interests.”

Source:

“William Richards Collection of Walter Pahnke papers.” Purdue University Special Collections and Archives.
Collection Description

Scope

William Richards Collection of Walter Pahnke papers (1952-1972; .2 cubic feet) contains materials that document the life and works of Walter Pahnke. Article reprints, a listing of his publications, a photograph of Pahnke, a summary of his doctoral thesis, his CV from 1970, an account of his first LSD experience, a poem by his wife, personal manuscripts, and his obituary are all included in the collection.

Descriptive Rules


Processing Information

The photograph of Walter Pahnke has been housed in a mylar sleeve, and all of the papers have been housed in an acid-free folder.
DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE COLLECTION

William Richards Collection of Walter Pahnke papers, 1952-1972

Folder


   “Drugs and Mysticism” by Walter Pahnke, 1966

   “The Psychedelic Mystical Experience in the Human Encounter with Death” by Walter N. Pahnke, 1969


   “The Use of Psychedelic Drugs in Parapsychological Research” by Walter N. Pahnke, 1971

   Walter Pahnke’s obituary in Parapsychology Review, 1971

2. Curriculum vitae, 1970


   Hand written letter by Walter Pahnke to himself in the year 2000, 1950

   Walter Pahnke’s typed account of his first LSD experience, 1964

   Walter Pahnke’s typed account of a disturbing dream he had, 1971


4. Miscellaneous items, circa 1955 - 1964

   Photograph of Walter Pahnke, circa 1955

   “Death of a Child” A poem written by Eva Sontum Phanke, Walter’s wife, 1964
5. Walter Pahnke’s funeral, 1971

Typed letter from William Richards, Robert Soskin, Stanislav Grof, and Charles Savage to friends concerning the death of Walter Pahnke and his memorial service, 1971

Obituary of Dr. Walter N. Pahnke, 1971

Obituary of Dr. Walter N. Pahnke in the *Parapsychology Review*, 1971

Walter Pahnke’s memorial service program, 1971

Prayer written by Howard Thurman, 1971

“In Memory of Walter Pahnke” poem written by William Richards, 1972