Father Charles E. Coughlin Collection

NMAH.AC.1389
Franklin A. Robinson, Jr.
Table of Contents

Collection Overview .................................................................................................................. 1
Administrative Information ........................................................................................................ 1
Arrangement ................................................................................................................................. 2
Scope and Contents ..................................................................................................................... 2
Biographical / Historical ............................................................................................................ 2
Names and Subjects ...................................................................................................................... 3
Container Listing .......................................................................................................................... 4
  Series 1: Coughlin, Charles E., Writings and Speeches, 1930-1972, undated........ 4
  Series 2: Photographs and Ephemera, 1927-1979, undated ........................................ 6
  Series 3: Periodicals and Publications, 1919-2012 .............................................................. 7
  Series 4: Reference Materials, 1933-2015, undated ............................................................. 12
Collection Overview

Repository: Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title: Father Charles E. Coughlin Collection
Identifier: NMAH.AC.1389
Date: 1919-2015, undated
Extent: 9 Cubic feet (27 boxes, 1 map-folder)
Creator: Coughlin, Charles E. (Charles Edward), 1891-1979
Language: English.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The collection was purchased by the National Museum of American History from Todd Moriarty. Moriarty had acquired the collection from an individual who amassed the materials with plans to write a book on Coughlin.

Separated Materials

Objects related to Father Charles E. Coughlin are held in the Division of Cultural and Community Life.

Processing Information

Processed by Franklin A. Robinson, Jr., archives specialist, 2018; assisted by Austin Arminio, intern.

Preferred Citation

Charles E. Coughlin Collection, Archives Center, National Museum of American History.

Restrictions

Collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

Reproduction restricted due to copyright or trademark. Other intellectual property rights may apply. Archives Center cost-recovery and use fees may apply when requesting reproductions.
Biographical / Historical

Charles Edward Coughlin was born on October 25, 1891 in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada to Thomas J. and Amelia Mahoney Coughlin. He was educated in Canada and attended St. Michael's College, Toronto. After graduation he prepared for Holy Orders within the Basilian Fathers at St. Basil's Seminary. He was ordained to the Roman Catholic priesthood in 1916. Coughlin left the Basilian order after 1923 and moved to Detroit, Michigan.

Coughlin was accepted into the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Detroit in 1923. He was eventually assigned to the Shrine of the Little Flower in Royal Oak, Michigan, a suburb of Detroit. His reputation for formidable preaching led to the growth of his congregation, and in 1926 Coughlin began broadcasting after a Klu Klux Klan cross burning on the lawn of the church.

He eventually expanded the topics of his broadcast to the political arena. It was with this programmatic change that Coughlin became one of the most controversial figures in the first half of the twentieth century. Described as the "Radio Priest," "The Fighting Priest," and the "Angel of the Airways," Coughlin broadcast weekly from a radio studio in Royal Oak from 1926-1940. Taking a strident and nationalistic tone, he lambasted immigrants, bankers, Communists and other groups. Breaching the line between religion and politics he also lectured and sermonized on government policy. While initially favoring the presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt, he eventually became one of the president's harshest critics.

In 1936 he began publishing Social Justice a weekly paper. Coughlin's broadcasts were so successful that between 1931-1936 a new Shrine of the Little Flower was built. The zig-zag Art Deco style of the Shrine became a tourist destination for Coughlin's fans. His increasingly harsh rhetoric coincided with the outbreak of World War II. While stating he was not antisemitic, he professed support for some of the governmental policies of Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini in part because they were a check on Communist Russia. The Vatican and many Roman Catholic American bishops disagreed and wanted Coughlin to leave the airwaves. Eventually he was forced off the air and publication of Social Justice was halted.

Coughlin remained parish priest at the Shrine of the Little Flower until his retirement in 1966. He spent his retirement publishing and giving the occasional interview. Coughlin died on October 27, 1979. He is buried in the Holy Sepulchre Cemetery in Southfield, Michigan.

Scope and Contents

This reference collection was assembled to assist in writing a biography of the Reverend Mr. Charles E. Coughlin. The collection contains books, booklets, published sermons, published lectures, pamphlets and other printed materials. Of these, 57 were written by Coughlin. The remainder of the materials relate to him directly or have chapters or passages relating to him. Additionally, there are periodicals, including newspaper and magazine articles, and a full set of Coughlin's weekly publication, Social Justice, 1936-1942; other periodicals such as William Dudley Pelley's weekly Liberation Journal, 1938-1948; copies of Henry Ford's Dearborn Independent; original photographs, including images of Coughlin and of his church; letters; copies of the FBI's files on Coughlin; and (non-original) recordings of his broadcasts.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged in four series.
Series 1: Coughlin, Charles E., Writings and Speeches, 1930-1972, undated

Series 2: Photographs and Ephemera, 1927-1979, undated

Series 3: Periodicals and Publications, 1919-2012

Series 4: Reference Materials, 1933-2015, undated

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:
- Anti-communist movements -- United States
- Catholic Church
- Catholicism
- Priests
- Radio broadcasting
- Radio in politics
- Radio in religion
- Religion and politics

Types of Materials:
- Articles -- 20th century
- Audio cassettes -- 20th century
- Books -- 20th century
- Lectures -- 20th century
- Letters (correspondence) -- 20th century.
- Pamphlets -- 20th century
- Periodicals -- 20th century
- Photographs -- Black-and-white photoprints -- 20th century
- Sermons
- Speeches -- 20th century

Names:
- Ford, Henry, 1863-1947
- Pelley, William Dudley, 1890-1965

Preferred Titles:
- Dearborn Independent
- Liberation Journal
- Social Justice
Container Listing

Series 1: Coughlin, Charles E., Writings and Speeches, 1930-1972, undated
This series contains writings authored by the Reverend Mr. Charles E. Coughlin. The series includes published sermons, writings, and radio talks. Many of them were published by The Radio League of the Little Flower, the publishing arm of the Shrine of the Little Flower Basilica, Coughlin's home parish. Some of them were later autographed by Coughlin. The series is arranged chronologically.

<p>| Box 1, Folder 1 | Published writings, 1930 |
| Box 1, Folder 13 | Correspondence, 1930-1964, undated |
| Box 10, Folder 3 | Correspondence, 1936 |
| Box 16, Folder 1 | Correspondence, 1937 |
| Box 2, Folder 1 | <em>By the Sweat of Thy Brow</em>, 1930-1931 |
| Box 1, Folder 2 | Published writings, 1931 |
| Box 7 | <em>Father Coughlin's Radio Sermons Complete</em>, 1931 |
| Box 3, Folder 1 | <em>Father Coughlin's Radio Discourses</em>, 1931-1932 |
| Box 7 | <em>Father Coughlin's Radio Discourses</em>, 1931-1932 |
| Box 1, Folder 3 | Published writings, 1932 |
| Box 2, Folder 2 | <em>Eight Discourses on the Gold Standard</em>, 1932-1933 |
| Box 1, Folder 4 | Published writings, 1933 |
| Box 2, Folder 3 | <em>Driving Out the Money Changers</em>, 1933 |
| Box 2, Folder 4 | <em>The New Deal in Money</em>, 1933 |
| Box 1, Folder 5 | Published writings, 1934 |
| Box 2, Folder 5 | <em>Labor, Capital, and Justice</em>, 1934 |
| Box 1, Folder 6 | Published writings, 1935 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 2, Folder 6</th>
<th>A Series of Lectures on Social Justice, 1935</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 7</td>
<td>Published writings, 1936</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 2, Folder 7</td>
<td>Money!, 1936</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 8</td>
<td>Published writings, 1937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 2, Folder 8</td>
<td>Money!, 1937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 9</td>
<td>Published writings, 1938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 3, Folder 2</td>
<td>Sixteen Radio Lectures, 1938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 2, Folder 9</td>
<td>Am I An Anti-Semite?, 1938-1939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 2, Folder 10</td>
<td>Why Leave On Our Own?, 1939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 11</td>
<td>Published writings, 1940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 3, Folder 3</td>
<td>Helmet and Sword, parts 1-4, 1968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 3, Folder 4</td>
<td>Bishop versus Pope, 1969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 7</td>
<td>Bishop versus Pope, 1969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 3, Folder 5</td>
<td>Who is Dead . . . God or Democracy?, 1970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 3, Folder 6</td>
<td>Antichrist, 1972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 3, Folder 7</td>
<td>Emmanuel-God With Us, undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 12</td>
<td>Published writings, undated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Series 2: Photographs and Ephemera, 1927-1979, undated

This series contains photographs and ephemera such as postcards associated with Father Coughlin and the Shrine of the Little Flower, Royal Oak, Michigan. Photographs are candids, newspaper photographs, official photographs, and studio portraits.

Box 27  Photographs and postcards, 1927-1966, undated
Box 1, Folder 7  Photographs and certificate
Box 1, Folder 8  Photographs
Box 1, Folder 9  Photographs and ephemera
Box 10, Folder 4  Photographs, oversize, 1935-1979, undated
Box 16, Folder 13  National Shrine of the Little Flower (Royal Oak, Michigan), undated

Return to Table of Contents
Series 3: Periodicals and Publications, 1919-2012

This series contains publications (periodicals, pamphlets, and books) written about Father Charles E. Coughlin or on subjects related to him or his broadcasts. It also contains publications on The Shrine of the Little Flower, social issues, and the Social Justice newspaper. This series is arranged alphabetically by title.

Box 10, Folder 7   A Collection of Reports on Bolshevism in Russia, 1919
Box 4, Folder 15   The American Mercury, 1939
Box 6, Folder 5   An Answer to Father Coughlin’s Critics, Father Coughlin's Friends, book, 1940
Box 3, Folder 9   An Answer to Father Coughlin’s Critics, Father Coughlin's Friends, book, 1940
Box 5, Folder 8   The Anti-Semitism of Father Coughlin and the End of His Radio Career, Schornick, Andrew, 1996
Box 4, Folder 7   The Atlantic, 1935
Box 5, Folder 4   Black Mail, Hoke, Henry, 1944
Box 8   The Catholic Church in Detroit, 1701-1888, Pare, George, book, 1951
Box 5, Folder 10   The Catholic Communicators, Noonan, D.P., 1990
Box 5, Folder 6   The Challenge of Hate, Lerner A.P. and Poster, Herbert, 1946
Box 6, Folder 11   Charles Coughlin, Russell, Jesse and Cohn, Ronald, 2012
Box 4, Folder 12   Current America, 1936
Box 4, Folder 13   Current History, 1936
Box 16, Folder 4   The Daily Tribune (Royal Oak, Michigan), 1935
Box 17   The Dearborn Independent, bound, (Dearborn, Michigan), 1923
Box 26  
*The Dearborn Independent*, bound, (Dearborn, Michigan), 1926-04-24-1926-10-16

Box 16, Folder 3  
*Der Sturmer*, 1938-1939

Box 16, Folder 5  
*Detroit Free Press* (Detroit, Michigan), 1979-1989

Box 16, Folder 6  
*Detroit Times* (Detroit, Michigan), 1934-1937

Box 7  
*Facts and Fascism*, Seldes, George, book, 1943

Box 9  

Box 9  

Box 5, Folder 9  
*Father Coughlin Fascist Demagogue*, Hansen, Joseph, undated

Box 9  
*Father Coughlin, His "Facts" and Arguments*, 1939  
1 Book

Box 9  
*Father Coughlin, His "Facts" and Arguments*, 1939

Box 5, Folder 3  
*Father Coughlin Promise or Menace*, Jager, Henry, 1935

Box 8  
*Father Coughlin, The Radio Priest, of the Shrine of the Little Flower*, Mugglebee, Ruth, book, 1933

Box 8  
*Father Coughlin of the Shrine of the Little Flower*, Mugglebee, Ruth, book, 1933

Box 9  
*Father Coughlin The Tumultuous Life of the Priest of the Little Flower*, Marcus, Sheldon, book, 1973

Box 8  

Box 8  

Box 6, Folder 3  
*The Fine Art of Propaganda, A Study of Father Coughlin's Speeches*, Lee, Alfred McClung and Lee, Elizabeth Briant, 1939

Box 9  
Box 11, Folder 1  

Box 16, Folder 7  
*Gentile News* (Oak Park, Illinois), 1946

Box 8  
*The Ghost of Royal Oak, A Christian’s Answer to Coughlinism*, Kernan, William C., book, 1940

Box 9  
*The Great Mistake*, Knox, John, 1930
1 Book

Box 5, Folder 2  
*Guns*, 1981

Box 9  

Box 4, Folder 14  
*How to Win Social Justice*, Bittelman, Alex, 1936

Box 6, Folder 10  
*Images of America, Royal Oak*, McDonald, Maureen and Schultz, John S., book, 2010

Box 5, Folder 5  
*It’s a Secret*, Hoke, Henry, 1946

Box 4, Folder 16  
*Liberation* (Asheville, North Carolina), 1939

Box 10, Folder 1  
*Liberation* (Asheville, North Carolina), 1938-1939

Box 4, Folder 4  
*Liberty*, 1934-1940

Box 11, Folder 2  
*Life* (New York, New York), 1955

Box 4, Folder 2  
*The Literary Digest*, 1932-1936

Box 11, Folder 3  
*Look* (Des Moines, Iowa), 1939-1940

Box 8  

Box 10, Folder 2  
*The National Jewish Daily*, 1939

Box 4, Folder 8  
*The New Republic*, 1935

Box 16, Folder 8  
*New York Daily* (New York, New York), 1940

Box 16, Folder 9  
Box 10, Folder 6  News clippings, 1934-2007, undated
Box 4, Folder 9  *News-Week*, 1935-1942

*Image(s)*

Box 6, Folder 9  *Parish Handbook, the Shrine of the Little Flower*, 1981
Box 3, Folder 8  *The Philosophies of Father Coughlin*, Riley, W.B., D.D., 1935

Box 9  *Radio Priest, Charles Coughlin the Father of Hate Radio*, Warren, Donald, book, 1996

Box 6, Folder 6  *Rev. Chas. E. Coughlin, Silver Jubilee*, 1916-1941, souvenir publication, 1941
Box 11, Folder 4  *Radio Guide*, 1936
Box 4, Folder 1  *Radiographs of the Little Flower*, 1928
Box 4, Folder 5  *Radioland*, 1934
Box 4, Folder 6  *Real America*, 1934-1935
Box 4, Folder 17  *The Real Father Coughlin*, Magil, A.B., 1939
Box 6, Folder 4  *The Rulers of Russia . . . .*, Fahey, Denis, book, 1940
Box 5, Folder 1  *Scribner's Commentator*, 1940
Box 12, Folder 1  *The Shrine Herald* (Royal Oak, Michigan), 1935-1936
Box 12, Folder 2  *The Shrine Herald* (Royal Oak, Michigan), 1937-1938
Box 12, Folder 3  *The Shrine Herald* (Royal Oak, Michigan), 1939
Box 12, Folder 4  *The Shrine Herald* (Royal Oak, Michigan), 1940
Box 13, Folder 1  *The Shrine Herald* (Royal Oak, Michigan), 1941
Box 13, Folder 2  *The Shrine Herald* (Royal Oak, Michigan), 1944
Box 13, Folder 3  *The Shrine Herald* (Royal Oak, Michigan), 1945-1947
Box 6, Folder 2  
*Shrine of the Little Flower*, autographed by Reverend Father Charles E. Coughlin, souvenir book, 1936

Box 6, Folder 1  
*Shrine of the Little Flower*, autographed by Father Hutting, souvenir book, 1936

Box 6, Folder 8  

Box 8  

Box 14  
*Social Justice* (Royal Oak, Michigan), 1936-03-1937-06

Box 18  
*Social Justice*, bound, (Royal Oak, Michigan), 1936-1942

Box 15  
*Social Justice* (Royal Oak, Michigan), 1937-07-1938-06

Box 19  
*Social Justice* (Royal Oak, Michigan), 1938-07-1939-05

Box 20  
*Social Justice* (Royal Oak, Michigan), 1939-05-1940-06

Box 16, Folder 10  
*Social Justice* (Royal Oak, Michigan), 1940, undated

Box 21  
*Social Justice* (Royal Oak, Michigan), 1940-01-1940-12

Box 22  
*Social Justice* (Royal Oak, Michigan), 1940-07-1941-07

Box 23  
*Social Justice* (Royal Oak, Michigan), 1941-07-1942-04

Box 4, Folder 3  
*Time*, 1933-1934

Box 16, Folder 11  
*Tolerance* (New York, New York), 1939

Box 4, Folder 10  
The Truth About Father Coughlin, Magil, A.B., 1935

Box 7  
*Under Cover*, Carlson, John Roy, book, 1943

Box 4, Folder 11  
Vital Speeches of the Day, 1935

Box 4, Folder 18  
What's Behind the ‘Christian Front’?, 1939

Box 5, Folder 7  
What is American Fascism, Cannon, Joseph P. and Hansen, Joseph, 1976

_Return to Table of Contents_
Series 4: Reference Materials, 1933-2015, undated

This series contains a variety of reference materials related to Father Coughlin, his radio broadcasts, and the Shrine of the Little Flower. It also contains a copy of Coughlin's FBI file and other legal materials related to Coughlin. The series contains commercially available cassette tapes of some of Coughlin's radio broadcasts. There is ordination and funeral memorabilia.

Box 10, Folder 5  Sheet music, 1933-1936
Box 16, Folder 12  "Chas E. Coughlin," portrait print, VanNess, Frank L., artist, 1934
Box 1, Folder 17  Editorial cartoons, 1942
Box 1, Folder 14  Social Security application, Coughlin, 1957
Box 1, Folder 15  Ordination, Golden Jubilee, Coughlin, 1966
Box 1, Folder 16  Funeral memorabilia, Coughlin, 1979
Box 1, Folder 18  Assorted pamphlets, 1942
Box 1, Folder 19  Assorted research materials, 1937-2015
Box 5, Folder 11  Shrine of the Little Flower (Royal Oak, Michigan), ephemera, 1934-1986, undated
Box 1, Folder 20  Ephemera, 1940-1950, undated
Box 1, Folder 21  General Jewish Council, correspondence, 1939
Box 1, Folder 22  National Union for Social Justice, 1935-1940, undated
Box 10, Folder 3  Death certificate (Coughlin, Charles Edward), 1979
Box 1, Folder 23  Broadside, undated
Box 1  "Fr. Charles Coughlin," sixteen commercially produced cassette tapes of selected broadcasts, undated
Box 5, Folder 12  Shrine of the Little Flower (Royal Oak, Michigan), souvenir postcard sets, undated
Box 5, Folder 13  Maps, 1951, undated
Box 7  *Old Time Radio, Father Coughlin*, various broadcasts, volumes 1-18
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 16, Folder 2</th>
<th>National Union for Social Justice, souvenir program (Olympia Arena, Detroit, Michigan), 1936-09-09</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box 24</td>
<td>&quot;Mooney Administration, Coughlin Case,&quot; copies of materials from the Archives of the Archdiocese of Detroit, 1933-1939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 25</td>
<td>Coughlin, Charles Edward, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) file (copy), 1936-1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Map-folder 1</td>
<td>&quot;The Fighting Priest,&quot; event poster, undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Map-folder 1</td>
<td>National Union for Social Justice, broadside, 1936</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box 1, Folder 24</td>
<td>Coughlin, Charles Edward, FOIPA 1116891 Parts 1 and 2, undated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>