

Perry Mann Newspaper Opinion Articles A&M 4294

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ca. 1980-2018



Title Statement

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Unit Date

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Language

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Creator

Mann, Perry Earl, Jr.

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West Virginia and Regional History Center

Administrative Information

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Biographical / Historical

Perry Mann, a lawyer and the Charleston Gazette-Mail's long-time, occasional op-ed contributor, was born in 1921. He had barely graduated from high school when he volunteered for World War II within a week of Pearl Harbor. He called it "that terrible war — but a necessary one" and it gave him a glimpse of the greater world. Thanks to the GI Bill, he seized the chance to achieve the education he doubted he could accomplish.

Washington and Lee University reluctantly admitted him, and he excelled. He went on for a master's degree in education at the University of Virginia and taught school in Covington. When he publicly supported school integration in the 1950s, the school board fired him. He taught English at Hinton High School and Concord College. He returned to Washington and Lee for a law degree.

He said with a good wife he was proud to raise two fine children. Amy Mann serves in her father's footsteps as Summers County prosecutor and her brother Jeff Mann is an English professor at Virginia Tech and prize-winning poet and essayist. Both inherited a love of food and knowledge of how to grow and prepare it, a talent that was displayed again at the birthday party.

His hundreds of op-eds celebrate Nature as the consummate model, doubted God and railed against fundamentalism while expressing his love of Jesus and vast knowledge of scripture. He embraced new social tolerances of race and sexuality but otherwise resisted most of modernity. He upheld rural communities with their basis in manual labor and he despised city life. He voted with his feet and gardened into his 90s.

Two books offer good selections of his writing. "Mann & Nature" put together by Ann Farrell Bowers emphasizes his reminiscences and earthy lifestyle. "Secular Mann" assembled by Julian Martin conveys his punch with a wide range of reflections. A free thinker who does not believe in free will, Perry Mann has always looked beyond the easy answers to life's most persistent questions.

(This note is based on an article authored by Chris Chanlett that appeared in the Charleston Gazette on 3 April 2016.)

Scope and Contents

Typescript copies and clippings of opinion pieces authored by Perry Mann (1921-2016), a lawyer in Hinton, West Virginia. These pieces appeared in the Charleston Gazette-Mail. Box 1 includes an index listing his pieces chronologically with their titles for the period ca. 1992-2000; there is also biographical information.

Box 1; folder 1; Biographical information on Perry Mann; 2018

Box 1; folder 2; Article index of Perry Mann's newspaper columns; 1992-2000

Box 1; folder 3; Letters written by Perry Mann; 1986-2013, undated

Box 1; folder 4; Letters to Perry Mann; 1992-2013, undated

Box 1; folder 5; Articles written by other columnists; 1990-1999, undated

Box 1; folder 6; Miscellaneous (3 items); 1990-2002

Box 1; unfolded; Book, "Mann & Nature, A Collection of Essays" by Perry Mann; 2011

Box 1; unfolded; Book, "Secular Mann" by Perry Mann; 2015

Box 2; folders 1-12; Typescripts of articles by Perry Mann (arranged by date); ca. 1993-1999, undated

Box 3; folders 1-2; Typescripts of articles by Perry Mann (arranged by date); 1999-2003, undated

Box 4; folders 1-8; Typescripts and newspaper clippings (arranged by date); 1992-2001

Box 5; folders 1-16; Typescripts and newspaper clippings (arranged by date); 2002-2016, undated

Box 5; folder 17; Typescripts, photocopies of newspaper articles, and early correspondence; 1951-1960s, 2002, undated

Box 6; Complete newspaper pages containing opinion pieces by Perry Mann; ca. 2005-2015

Keywords

Authors, American -- West Virginia