

C Weltmer Institute of Suggestive Therapeutics, Nevada, Missouri, Records, c. 1900-1932  
4044 .1 linear feet

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## INTRODUCTION

The records of the Weltmer Institute of Suggestive Therapeutics consist of promotional materials including pamphlets, brochures, letters, advertisements, journals, and catalogs. The institute was established by Sidney A. Weltmer in 1897 and remained in operation until 1933. Suggestive Therapy, also known as the Weltmer Method of Healing, was defined as a “system of suggestive treatment aiming to bring the body and mind into harmony” without the use of drugs or surgery.

## DONOR INFORMATION

The Weltmer Institute of Suggestive Therapeutics Records were donated to the State Historical Society of Missouri by an unknown donor (Accession No. 5848). An addition to the collection was made by Martha Brodersen on 24 September 2009 (Accession No. 6211).

## INSTITUTIONAL SKETCH

Sidney A. Weltmer was born on July 7, 1858 in Wooster, Ohio. In 1866, he and his family moved to a farm in Morgan County, Missouri. At the age of 19, Weltmer, a Baptist minister, was told he suffered from consumption. He turned to the Bible and found solace in the stories of prayer, faith and suggestion. While teaching school, he began to further research human nature and how the power of healing could be applied to others.

On October 8, 1879, Weltmer married Mary Genoa Stone and they had five children. In 1894, he quit teaching and began serving the sick and afflicted for free. On February 19, 1897, he established the American School of Magnetic Healing in Nevada, Missouri. Weltmer had a great deal of success in curing “people who were considered hopeless invalids” without drugs or surgery.

On April 5, 1897, Weltmer began teaching classes on the Weltmer Method of Healing. In 1900, physicians from Missouri and other states labeled Weltmer a “professional quack” and began to question and condemn Weltmer’s teachings and methods. The physicians wanted the practice of magnetic healing declared an illegal business and to prohibit anyone practicing it from using the postal system for advertisement purposes. Weltmer took the matter to court in order to clear his name. On November 17, 1902, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that magnetic healing was “in no conflict with the laws of Congress”. In 1904, Weltmer’s three sons began managing the Weltmer School and Sanitarium, leaving Weltmer to focus on his work. On March 15, 1905, the institution was reorganized under the name Weltmer Institute of Suggestive Therapeutics Company. The Weltmer Method of Healing became widely known as Suggestive Therapeutics, which was defined as a “system of suggestive treatment aiming to bring the body and mind into harmony.” One of the main fundamentals was that the mind controls and heals the body through the thoughts it forms.

The Weltmer Institute of Suggestive Therapeutics consisted of a school and sanitarium. The school consisted of a four year program that included courses in the art of healing and the Philosophy of Health, Suggestive Therapeutics, Anatomy, Physiology, and Pathology and

resulted in the degree of a Doctor of Suggestive Therapeutics (D.S.T.). The school also had a correspondence course.

Sidney A. Weltmer died in Nevada, Missouri in 1930. The Weltmer Institute of Suggestive Therapeutics remained in operation until 1933.

#### SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The records of the Weltmer Institute of Suggestive Therapeutics consist of pamphlets, brochures, letters, advertisements, a diploma, and catalogs pertaining to the Institute and the school. Of special interest are the many testimonials from patients who were cured by the Weltmer Method that are used throughout the promotional materials. The Weltmer Institute drew many people to Nevada, Missouri, and there are interesting descriptions of the town included in many of the brochures and the school catalogs. The records are arranged by type of material and chronologically therein.

The Weltmer Institute of Suggestive Therapeutics published several journals and the collection includes the following: *Weltmerism*, April 1901; *Weltmer's Magazine of Suggestive Therapeutics*, November 1907; *Magnetic Journal*, January 1903; *Weltmer Journal*, c. 1906.

#### FOLDER LIST

- f. 1 Promotional letters, 1908-c. 1915
- f. 2 Promotional brochures, c. 1905-c. 1915
- f. 3 Advertisements, c. 1900-c. 1914, n.d.
- f. 4 Weltmer School and Sanitarium Annual Catalog, 1914-1915
- f. 5 Weltmer Journals, 1901-1907
- f. 6 *New Thought Companion*, 1914 January
- f. 7 Diploma, 1932

#### INDEX TERMS

Subject	Folders	Image
Alternative medicine	1-6	
Magnetic healing	5	
Medicine--Missouri, 1900s	1-6	
Medicine--Missouri, 1910s	1-6 1-6	
Missouri, Nevada	1-5	
Missouri, Nevada--Radio Springs Park	2	
Missouri, Nevada--Radio Springs Park	4	y
Packer, A. Graynella (1889- )	7	
Radio Springs Park, Nevada, Missouri	2	
Radio Springs Park, Nevada, Missouri	4	y
Suggestive therapeutics	1-6	
Weltmer Institute of Suggestive Therapeutics, Nevada, Missouri	1, 3, 7	y
Weltmer Institute of Suggestive Therapeutics, Nevada, Missouri	1-5	

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Folders</b>	<b>Image</b>
Weltmer, Ernest C. (1880-1963)	3	y
Weltmer, Ernest C. (1880-1963)	2, 3, 5	
Weltmer, John E. (1862-1943)	2, 3, 5	
Weltmer, John E. (1862-1943)	3, 5	y
Weltmer, Sidney A. (1858-1930)	1-6	
Weltmer, Sidney A. (1858-1930)	1, 3, 5	y
Weltmer, Silas W. (1882-1956)	5	y
Weltmer, Silas W. (1882-1956)	5	
Weltmer, Tracy C. (1886-1963)	3	