

**S0205 Wheatley, James Parker (1906- )  
Papers, 1945-1982  
17 Volumes, 3 Folders**

This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri](http://The State Historical Society of Missouri). If you would like more information, please contact us at [shsresearch@umsystem.edu](mailto:shsresearch@umsystem.edu).

James Parker Wheatley donated his papers to the Western Historical Manuscript Collection at the University of Missouri-St. Louis on November 7, 1985.

James Parker Wheatley's doctoral work in education at Northwestern University was interrupted by the World War II draft. After the war, his service as a broadcaster on the Armed Forces Network led to his appointment as general manager to WGBH, an early educational broadcast facility in Boston. He left the station in the mid-1950s when WGBH moved into the production of commercial programming. Wheatley became the first public affairs director of St. Louis' KMOX-TV in 1958.

On KMOX, Wheatley hosted a discussion program, "Eye on St. Louis," a 15 minute segment on local civic issues and politics that followed the 10 PM evening news. Interviewees included such prominent local figures as Dr. Thomas A. Dooley and Father Zimmerman of Dismas House, as well as such national political leaders as John Kennedy, Richard Nixon and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Commercial considerations eventually led to the removal of "Eye On St. Louis" from KMOX's programming schedule.

Wheatley officially retired in April 1971 but KMOX asked him to remain as producer of "The People Speak," a talk-show broadcast at 2 AM. Because it was broadcast late at night, "The People Speak" attracted few nationally known guests. Consequently, Wheatley interviewed local experts on such issues as philosophy, medicine, and psychology. Parker Wheatley remained a staple of local late-night television until "The People Speak" left the air in 1985.

**SCOPE AND CONTENT**

The James Parker Wheatley Papers, 1945-1982, document the daily activities of a pioneer in educational television programming. The collection is divided into two series, arranged chronologically: (1) Diaries, 1945-1982; and (2) Correspondence, Memoranda and News Releases, 1962-1981. The first series comprises the largest part of the collection. It consists of diaries dating from 1945 reflecting Wheatley's appointments with potential interviewees for programs on WGBH and KMOX, and an undated telephone directory of his professional contacts. The papers provide evidence of Wheatley's successful attempts to expose television audiences to the work of local benevolent and political organizations and individuals, including Dr. Tom Dooley, the Dismas House, Gloria Pritchard and the League of Women Voters. The collection does not contain tapes or transcripts of these programs. The papers also include correspondence, news releases and memoranda primarily documenting the kinds of programs Wheatley produced for "The People Speak."

**FOLDER LIST  
BOX 1**

**SERIES 1 - DIARIES, 1945-1982, VOLUMES 1-16**

1. Diaries, 1945
2. Diaries, 1948
3. Diaries, 1951
4. Diaries, 1951
5. Diaries, 1951
6. Diaries, 1952
7. Diaries, 1952
8. Diaries, 1954

**BOX 2**

9. Diaries, 1955
10. Diaries, 1956
11. Diaries, 1957
12. Diaries, 1959
13. Diaries, 1964
14. Diaries, 1964
15. Diaries, 1973
16. Diaries, 1982
17. Telephone directory, n.d.

**BOX 3**

**SERIES 2 - CORRESPONDENCE, MEMORANDA, AND NEWS RELEASES, 1962-1981  
FOLDERS 1-3**

1. Correspondence, 1962-1981
2. Memoranda, 1976-1981
3. News Releases, 1976-1981

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Communications

"Eye on St. Louis"

KMOX-TV

Media

"The People Speak"

Television

Wheatley, James Parker