

[Archives & Special Collections, Columbia University Health Sciences Library](#)

[Clarence E. Pearson Papers on the President's Committee on Health Education](#)

PEARSON, CLARENCE E.

**Papers on the President's Committee on Health Education,
1969-1978 (bulk 1971-1973)**

1.75 cubic feet (6 boxes and 2 film reels)

M-0147

HISTORICAL NOTE: On February 18, 1971, President Nixon addressed Congress delineating the need for a National Health Strategy. In an attempt to curtail the escalating cost of health care, which was consuming a larger and larger portion of the federal government's total investments and becoming prohibitively expensive to ordinary citizens, Nixon called for a shift in the way in which federal health monies were spent and the way in which medical care operated in general. Rather than focusing on treatments in response to illness, Nixon proposed that an emphasis be placed on preventive care and on health education. The President suggested that this shift would help to stabilize health care costs, be a more efficient use of the government's investment, and ultimately result in a healthier citizenry.

Nixon's address laid the framework for his appointment of the President's Committee on Health Education in September 1971. The Committee was comprised of members of the insurance industry, professors, medical association leaders, and businessmen. Charged with evaluating current health education programs, defining the nation's need for such programs, and formulating recommendations based on their research, the Committee's role was primarily investigative and advisory. The Chairman was R. Heath Larry of U.S. Steel; the Walter J. McNerney, President of the Blue Cross Association of Chicago, was Vice-Chairman. Victor Weingarten served as Director, while Clarence E. Pearson was Associate Director. The Committee was headquartered in New York.

The Committee engaged in a number of information gathering activities in order to survey health education programs operating in both federal agencies and in the private sector. To this end, it formed several subcommittees that focused specifically on government, professional societies and associations, education, and business. The activities of the Committee and subcommittees centered on holding regional public hearings, devising a questionnaire, soliciting responses from numerous medical school programs, and meeting with various federal agencies. All of these fact-finding activities led to the publication of the Committee's Final Report to the President in 1973, which recommended the establishment of a federal Bureau of Health Education and a private National Center for Health Education to centralize health education activities, promote health education coordination nationwide, and continue to survey the field and expand on the work of the Committee.

ORGANIZATION: Organized in five series: I. Background and Organizational; II. Meetings; III. Reports; IV. General; V. Film.

SCOPE AND CONTENT: The Clarence Pearson papers on the President's Committee on Health Education (PCHE) date from 1969 to 1978, with the bulk dating from the life of the

Committee, 1971-1973. Included are meeting agenda and minutes, correspondence, memoranda, reports, membership lists, newspaper and magazine clippings, budgets, brochures and pamphlets, photographs and film.

Although gaps in the materials relating to the PCHE exist, especially in the documentation of the Committee's regional meetings and subcommittee activities, this collection clearly demonstrates the extent of the Committee's work and the state of health education in the United States in the early 1970s.

Although these papers came from Pearson, they do not appear to have been his papers originally; rather it is clear from internal evidence that they were those of Charles A. Siegfried, Vice Chairman of the Board of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. who served as Vice Chairman of the Committee. Pearson was Associate Director of the PCHE and may have acquired the papers from Siegfried at the conclusion of the Committee's work. He would later become first Chief Executive Officer of the National Center for Health Education, 1975-1976.

The papers are organized in five series:

SERIES 1: BACKGROUND AND ORGANIZATIONAL, 1971-1972 (.74 CU. FT.)

Documenting the organizational structure and administrative activities of the Committee, this series attests to the general daily operations as well as the scope of the Committee's work in evaluating current health programs in the United States through the work of its various subcommittees. Included in the records are membership lists, correspondence, memoranda, minutes, reports, agendas, proposals, handouts, newspaper clippings, articles, and photographs. Arranged alphabetically.

Among the documents in this series are two photographs of the Committee members and President Nixon gathered at the Cabinet Room of the White House on September 14, 1971. This date reflects the meeting at which the President's Committee on Health Education was officially formed and received its mandate from the President.

Of special note is the folder entitled "Advisory Committee for the National Health Education Foundation," which was the ad hoc group that developed into the President's Committee on Health Education. These records lay the organizational foundation for the later committee.

SERIES 2: MEETINGS, 1971-1972 (.35 CU. FT.)

Distinct from the administrative meetings held by the Committee for the Committee, which can be found in the Background and Organizational series, this series records the regional and national meetings conducted by the Committee that provided a forum for health professionals to speak of the state of health education. In addition to the work of various information gathering subcommittees, these meetings provided the Committee with a general survey of the health education field on which they built their recommendation to the President. Included in these records are schedules, agendas, witness lists, papers presented, correspondence, brochures, and articles. Arranged chronologically by meeting date.

The regional meeting materials are extremely incomplete, with the Pittsburgh, PA meeting being the only one of the regional assemblies that is fully documented.

Please also see the subcommittee folders of the Background and Organization series for additional materials that evidence the Committee's information gathering procedures, the Reports series for a summary report of the testimony given at the regional meetings, and the film titled *What You Don't Know Can Kill You*, for footage of testimony given at the regional hearings.

SERIES 3: REPORTS, 1971-1973(.67 CU. FT.)

Includes position papers commissioned by the Committee and various preliminary reports written by the Committee that culminated in the Committee's Final "The Report of the President's Committee on Health Education." The Final Report materials include drafts, correspondence and opinions regarding the Final Report from Committee members, Supplementary Statements and Dissents, and the Final Report itself. Arranged by position papers, preliminary reports, Final report materials and drafts, and the Final Report.

Of note is the folder entitled "Final Report Correspondence and Opinions" which illustrates the issues that various Committee members grappled with during the course of crafting what would be the Committee's final recommendations. Some of the same issues, including opposition to the recommendation for the formation of a National Center for Health Education and the funding of such a center, can also be found in the formal Supplementary Statements and Dissents materials.

SERIES 4: GENERAL, 1969-1978(.48 CU. FT.)

Includes material that is unrelated or only peripherally related to the workings of the Committee. In part, this series reflects Clarence Pearson's affiliations to organizations other than the PCHE. Formats included are brochures, articles, reports, correspondence, facsimiles, budgets, memoranda, and notes. Arranged alphabetically.

Folders in this series that relate peripherally to the work of the Committee are "External Inquiry Correspondence," "Health Publications and Reports," "Meeting on the President's Committee on Health Education Report—Implications for Western PA," "National Center for Health Education," and "Nixon Materials." The remaining documents in the series do not appear to relate to the Committee's work.

SERIES 5: FILM

Consists of two 16mm films on 12 1/4" reels produced for the PCHE. *What You Don't Know Can Kill You* is a film of the testimony given at various regional hearings held by the Committee. The second film is footage of a PCHE press conference, date unknown.

ACCESS: Unrestricted.

PROVENANCE: Donated by Milbank Library, Teachers College, to Archives & Special Collections, Columbia University Health Sciences Library, February 2009 (acc. #2009.02.27).

Donated to Special Collections, Milbank Library, Teachers College, by Clarence Pearson, Associate Director of the Committee, on February 10, 1992. At Teachers College the papers were Manuscript Group 108.

NOTES: The collection was processed and the finding aid prepared by Elizabeth Pregill in May 2002. It was revised upon the arrival of the papers at the Health Sciences Library by Stephen Novak in March 2009.

SUBJECTS

Pearson, Clarence E.
Siegfried, Charles A.
President's Committee on Health Education.
Health education – United States.
Health education – Study and teaching.
Health promotion – United States.
President's Committee on Health Education.
Motion pictures.

Box and Folder List

Box Fo.

SERIES I: BACKGROUND AND ORGANIZATIONAL

- | | | |
|----------|-------|---|
| 1 | 1-2 | Advisory Committee for the National Health Education Foundation, 1971 |
| | 3 | Editorial Committee, 1972 |
| | 4 | Executive Committee, 1972 |
| | 5 | Financial Materials, 1971-1972 |
| | 6-7 | Memoranda, 1971-1973 |
| | 8 | Minutes, 1971-1972 |
| | 9 | Misc. Committee correspondence, 1971-1973 |
| | 10-11 | Misc. organizational materials, 1971-1972 |
| | 12 | Photographs, 1971 |
| | 13 | Press Releases, 1971 |
| | 14 | Publications and Productions |
| | 15 | News Clippings and Articles, 1971-1972 |
| | 16 | Questionnaire Materials, 1971-1972 |
| | 17 | Questionnaire Materials – Completed Questionnaires, 1971 |
| 2 | 1 | Regional Meetings – General, n.d. |
| | 2 | Subcommittee on Business, Labor, and Blues, 1971-1972 |
| | 3 | Subcommittee on Education, 1972 |
| | 4 | Subcommittee on Education – Reports, 1972 |
| | 5 | Subcommittee on Government, 1971-1972 |
| | 6 | Subcommittee on Government – Department of Health,
Education, and Welfare, 1972 |
| | 7 | Subcommittee on Mass Media, 1971 |
| | 8 | Subcommittee on Professional Societies and Associations, 1971 |
| | 9 | Subcommittee on Professional Societies and Associations –
Medical School Responses, 1972 |
| | 10 | Subcommittee on Professional Societies and Associations –
Misc. Responses, 1971-1972 |
| | 11 | Subcommittee to Develop Questionnaire, 1971 |

SERIES II: MEETINGS

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|----------|-----|--|
| | 12 | Meeting of Directors of Neighborhood Health Centers,
December 6-7, 1971 |
| | 13 | Regional Meeting – Boston, MA, January 6, 1972 |
| | 14 | Regional Meeting – Pittsburgh, PA, January 10, 1972 |
| 3 | 1-2 | Regional Meeting – Pittsburgh, PA, January 10, 1972 |
| | 3 | Regional Meeting – St. Louis, MO, January 12, 1972 |
| | 4 | Regional Meeting – Denver, CO, January 17, 1972 |

Box Fo.

- 5 Regional Meeting – San Francisco, CA, January 19, 1972
- 6 Regional Meeting – Los Angeles, CA, January 20, 1972
- 7 Regional Meeting – Houston, TX, February 2, 1972
- 8 Nation Health Council Forum, March 20-21, 1972

SERIES III: REPORTS

- 9-11 Position Papers, 1971-1972
 - 12 “An Analysis of Testimony and Reports Given to the President’s Committee on Health Education,” 1972
- 4**
- 1 “Consumer Health Education: A Guide for a National Education Forum,” 1972
 - 2 Miscellaneous Preliminary Reports, n.d.
 - 3 Final Report Mailing List, n.d.
 - 4-5 Final Report Correspondence and Opinions, 1972
 - 6-7 Final Report Outline, 1972
 - 8 Final Report – 1st Draft, 1972
 - 9 Final Report – 3rd Draft, 1972
 - 10 Final Report – 4th Draft, 1972
 - 11 Final Report – Unnumbered Drafts
 - 12 Final Report – Supplementary Statements and Dissents

SERIES IV: GENERAL

- 5**
- 1 Final Report, 1973
 - 2 External Inquiry Correspondence, 1971-1972
 - 3-6 Health Publications and Reports, 1967-1972, 1975, n. d.
 - 7 International Health Resource Council, 1978
 - 8 Marine Biology Laboratory, n.d.
 - 9 Meeting on the President’s Committee on Health Education Report – Implications for Western PA, 1973
 - 10 Met Life Materials, 1971-1972
 - 11 Misc., 1969-1972
- 6**
- 1-2 National Center for Health Education, 1972-1976
 - 3 Nixon Materials
 - 4 Unattributed Drafts of Reports, n.d.

SERIES V: FILM

Shelved separately:

What You Don’t Know Can Kill You, date unknown (1 reel)

President’s Committee on Health Education: press conference, date unknown (1 reel)

