

Yale University Library  
Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library

# Guide to the Nina Wilcox Putnam Papers

YCAL MSS 428



by Michael L. Forstrom

2010

P. O. Box 208330  
New Haven, CT 06520-8330  
(203) 432-2977  
beinecke.library@yale.edu  
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library  
P. O. Box 208330  
New Haven, CT 06520-8330  
(203) 432-2977  
beinecke.library@yale.edu  
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

**CALL NUMBER:** YCAL MSS 428

**CREATOR:** Putnam, Nina Wilcox, 1888-1962

**TITLE:** Nina Wilcox Putnam papers

**DATES:** 1929-1962

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 3.76 linear feet (9 boxes) + 2 broadside folders

**LANGUAGE:** Chiefly in English; some material in Spanish.

**SUMMARY:** The Nina Wilcox Putnam papers contain writings, correspondence, and other materials documenting the life and work of feminist and author Nina Wilcox Putnam. Writings consists chiefly of drafts of short stories and essays dating from the 1930s onward. There are drafts of a few novels, possibly unpublished, and a number of treatments, but the collection does not include material relating to Putnam's longer published works, or her children's book *Sunny Bunny* (1917), dating from the first two decades of her literary career. Correspondence consists of a small number letters with editors, publishers, and others dating from the early 1950s. The largest file exists for *The Reader's Digest*, but there are also letters from Gilbert Roland, Frank Scully, and Gloria Swanson. In addition, there are carbons of several outgoing letters dating from 1953 relating to an article by Putnam on Guatemala. Other materials include lists of works by Putnam documenting titles by genre and publisher.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.putnamnw>

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## Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.putnamnw>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to [beinecke.images@yale.edu](mailto:beinecke.images@yale.edu).

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b.      box

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Source unknown.

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### Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

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### Conditions Governing Use

The Nina Wilcox Putnam Papers is the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

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### Preferred Citation

Nina Wilcox Putnam Papers. Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

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### Processing Information

Preliminary processing was done to the Nina Wilcox Putnam papers at an unknown date. During reprocessing of the collection in 2010, the arrangement of writings and correspondence was largely preserved in Series I and II, and other materials were consolidated in Series III.

Formerly classed as Za Putnam.

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## Nina Wilcox Putnam (1888-1962)

Nina Wilcox Putnam, author, was born in New Haven, Connecticut, the daughter of Marrion Wilcox, a professor of English at Yale, and Eleanor Patricia Sanchez. Putnam was educated at home and published her first piece, a short story, in 1907. She married Robert Faulkner Putnam of the publishing family in 1907; Robert J. Sanderson, a businessman, in 1919; Arthur James Ogle, a Florida real estate agent, in 1931; and Christian Eliot in 1933. Putnam published over twenty books, including novels, children's books, and non-fiction works, and a great many short stories and articles. Summary information is available in the standard biographical resources.

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## Scope and Contents

The Nina Wilcox Putnam papers contain writings, correspondence, and personal papers documenting the life and work of feminist and author Nina Wilcox Putnam. Writings consist chiefly of drafts of short stories and essays dating from the 1930s onward. There are drafts of a few novels, possibly unpublished, and a number of treatments, but the collection does not include material relating to Putnam's longer published works, or her children's book *Sunny Bunny* (1917), dating from the first two decades of her literary career. Correspondence consists of a small number letters to and from editors, publishers, and others dating from the early 1950s. The largest file exists for *The Reader's Digest*, but there are also letters from Gilbert Roland, Frank Scully, and Gloria Swanson. In addition, there are carbons of several outgoing letters dating from 1953 relating to an article by Putnam on Guatemala. Other materials include lists of works by Putnam documenting titles by genre and publisher.

## **Arrangement**

Organized into three series: I. Writings, 1929-1959. II. Correspondence, 1940-1962. Personal Papers, 1953-1954.

## Collection Contents

### Series I: Writings, 1929-1959

3.34 linear feet (8 boxes)

Arranged alphabetically by title (in quotes) or supplied heading (in brackets).

Series I, Writings, consists chiefly of drafts of short stories and essays dating from the 1930s onward. There are drafts of a few novels, possibly unpublished, and a number of treatments, but the series does not include material relating to Putnam's longer published works, or her children's book *Sunny Bunny* (1917), dating from the first two decades of her literary career. Most drafts are typed and many are corrected. In addition to the genre, only the presence of multiple drafts and other physical formats (e.g. "holograph") are noted in folder headings below.

Many drafts in the series have the name and address of Putnam's literary agents, Jacques Chambrun and others, on the front cover or first page.

Publication dates have been preserved as bracketed circa dates.

b.1	"\$20,000 a Week," story	undated
b.1	"Act of God," story	1932 June 21
b.1	"After We Married," essay	undated
b.1	"An American Schoolmaster in Mexico," essay, drafts, holograph and typescript	[circa 1955]
b.1	"Answer to an Unmailed Letter," story, drafts	undated
b.1	"Bargain Counter Husbands," drafts 2 Folders	[circa 1945]
b.1	"A Beauty Parlour for Saints," essay, drafts, holograph and typescript Includes letter from Putnam, dated 1956, to the editor of <i>The Reader's Digest</i>	[1956?]
b.1	"Cabin 13," novel 2 Folders	undated
b.1	"Champagne," story, holograph	undated
b.1	"Christmas Gift," story, synopsis	undated
b.1	"Christophine Discovers America," synopsis	[circa 1935]
b.1	"The Corpse Talks Back," screenplay	undated
b.1	"Dance of the Conquerors," treatment, drafts, holograph and typescript	undated
b.2	"Dangerous Woman," story and proposed adaptation 2 Folders	[circa 1944]
b.2	"Darwin Was Right," story	undated
b.2	"Did I Tell You About My Vacation?" holograph	undated
b.2	"Divorce Is No Solution," essay	[circa 1948]
b.2	"Don't Knock It," story	undated

b. 2	"The Duck That Laid the Golden Egg," story, drafts	[circa 1936]
b. 2	[The Efficacy of Prayer], synopsis	undated
b. 2	[Ella-Mae], synopsis	undated
b. 2	[Exodus to Mexico?], drafts, holograph and typescript	1951, undated
b. 2	"The Fighting Parson," synopsis	undated
b. 2	"Flowers for a Lady," story, synopsis and drafts	undated
b. 2	"Fog-Bound," story, synopsis	undated
b. 2	"For Girls Only," essay	[circa 1944 December]
b. 2	"Forbidden Island," novel, drafts, holograph and typescript <i>3 Folders</i>	undated
b. 2	"Foreign Lands Near Home," essay	undated
b. 3	"Gentlemen for Sale," play Includes reader report, dated March 19, 1936, by L.L.	undated
b. 3	"Give Us This Day," script (2 copies)	undated
b. 3	"Gladys, Photographer's Model," novel	undated
b. 3	"The Goldfish Are Fine," story	[circa 1935]
b. 3	"Good American," story	[circa 1938]
b. 3	"The Good Cloth of Guatamala," scenario and drafts, holograph and typescript	undated
b. 3	"Have a Pleasant Trip!" proposal for radio or television program Includes correspondence	1949-1950, undated
b. 3	"He Makes the Angels Sing," essay	undated
b. 3	"Headliner," story	undated
b. 3	"Her Excellency the Governor," story	undated
b. 3	"Hi, Neighbor!" drafts <i>2 Folders</i>	undated
b. 3	"Hope of Two Heavens," story <i>2 Folders</i>	undated
b. 3	"How Smart Is the Smart Set?" essay	undated
b. 3	"I Am Not Lonely Now," essay	undated
b. 3	[I Had a Cataract Removed?], essay, drafts, holograph and typescript	[circa 1955]
b. 3	"I Went Fishing With Grover Cleveland," story, drafts, holograph and typescript	[circa 1956]
b. 3	"I Wish I Had the Money I've Spent on Liquor," essay	[circa 1942]

b. 3	"If I Had a Million," essay	undated
b. 3	"If I Were Mrs. Mesta," essay	undated
b. 3	"In Your Brown Derby!" story	[circa 1935]
b. 3	"A Lady's Profession," treatment, drafts <i>2 Folders</i>	1930
b. 4	"Laughing Through," story (incomplete)	undated
b. 4	"Learn How to Give," essay, drafts, holograph and typescript	[circa 1953]
b. 4	"Lesson from a Tree," essay, drafts, holograph and typescript	undated
b. 4	"Let the Hurricane Blow," story, synopsis and drafts	[circa 1937]
b. 4	"Let Us Spray," essay, drafts	[circa 1947]
b. 4	"Letters from a Self-Made Mother to Her Son," story, drafts	undated
b. 4	"Life Sentence," story	undated
b. 4	"Love Cannot Die," story	1929 May
b. 4	"Madame Cavalry," story	undated
b. 4	"Make-Believe Marriage," story	undated
b. 4	"Man-Hungry," novel, synopsis, notes, and draft (incomplete) <i>2 Folders</i>	undated
b. 4	[Mexico City article], essay Includes photographs	undated
b. 4	"Miss Daredevil," story	undated
b. 5	"Miss Lieutenant," novel, holograph <i>2 Folders</i>	undated
b. 5	"Money from Home," story	undated
b. 5	"More Precious Than Rubies," synopsis (incomplete)	[circa 1951]
b. 5	"The Most Unforgettable Character I've Met: Postman's Holiday," [essay?], drafts, holograph and typescript	undated
b. 5	"My Friend Stanislaus," story, synopsis	[circa 1951]
b. 5	"My Search For God," essay, synopsis and draft, holograph	[circa 1949]
b. 5	"My Spirit Has a Home Town," essay, synopsis	[circa 1952]
b. 5	"Never Underestimate a Cat," story	undated
b. 5	"New Noah's Ark," poem	undated
b. 5	"Night Work," play	undated



b. 5	"The One-Man Church," story, drafts, holograph and typescript	undated
b. 5	"Out All Night," story	undated
b. 5	"Outline"	undated
b. 5	"Painted Doll," story	undated
b. 5	"Pen Points: An Account of an Interlude," essay	undated
b. 5	[Poems], drafts, holograph and typescript Also stored in: Oversize, broadside cabinets, container 10	1955-1959, undated
b. 5	"Pressed Duck," story, synopsis and draft	[circa 1949]
b. 5	"The Price of Applause," story, synopsis	undated
b. 5	"The Puppet-Maker of Puebla," screenplay <i>2 Folders</i>	undated
b. 6	"The Puppet-Maker of Puebla," screenplay <i>2 Folders</i>	undated
b. 6	"Radio Love Song," novel	undated
b. 6	"Rainbow Chase," story, drafts <i>2 Folders</i>	undated
b. 6	"The Referee Dogs," story	undated
b. 6	"Reply Paid," story, synopsis	[circa 1930]
b. 6	"The Rich Have No Money," novel, synopsis and draft	undated
b. 6	"Romance, Incorporated: The Story of the Palace Hotel," essay	undated
b. 7	"Salt of the Earth," treatment, drafts, holograph and typescript	undated
b. 7	"Sawdust Will Tell," story	undated
b. 7	"The Scandal of the Season," story	undated
b. 7	"Second Chance," story, synopsis and draft	[circa 1939]
b. 7	"Second-hand Book," story, drafts, holograph and typescript Includes letter, dated October 23, 1957, from <i>The Reader's Digest</i>	1957
b. 7	"Secret Weapon," story, drafts, holograph and typescript	undated
b. 7	"The Serious Business Side of Marriage," essay	undated
b. 7	"Seventh Man," story, synopsis	[circa 1949]
b. 7	"The Seventh Sense," essay, drafts	undated
b. 7	"The Shirt: Drama in Everyday Life," essay, drafts, holograph and typescript	[circa 1953]
b. 7	"Slack Enough," story	undated

b. 7	"The Snob," story	undated
b. 7	"So You're Going to Build a House!" essay, synopsis	undated
b. 7	"Soft Jobs for Soft Heads," essay, holograph	undated
b. 7	"Some Plain Truths About Santa Claus," essay	undated
b. 7	"Song of Paris," synopsis for musical script	1931
b. 7	"Surprise Party," story, synopsis and draft, holograph	undated
b. 7	"Sweet Lightning," story	undated
b. 7	"Taking the Slack from the Seat of Learning," essay	undated
b. 7	"Technical Virgin," story	undated
b. 7	"Teddy Said 'Bully For You!'," story, drafts Includes letter from Putnam, dated 7 December, 1956, to <i>The Reader's Digest</i>	1956, undated
b. 7	"The Temple of Venus Dream," story, drafts	undated
b. 7	"Ten Million Teen-Age Girls Can't Be Wrong," essay	undated
b. 7	"That Wonderful Old Car," story	undated
b. 7	"This Was a Greater Glory," story	undated
b. 8	"Those Innocent in Love," novel <i>2 Folders</i>	undated
b. 8	"To Catch a Dream," story, drafts	[circa 1954]
b. 8	"Too Fat for Love," essay	undated
b. 8	"Too Many Cooks," essay, holograph	undated
b. 8	"The Umbrella Man," story	undated
b. 8	"The Vanishing Rich," essay	undated
b. 8	"War-Crazy Clothes," essay	undated
b. 8	"The Warrior Cats," essay Includes letter from Putnam, dated 21 May, 1953, to Michele Braidy	1946, 1953
b. 8	"Water, Water, Everywhere, Especially in America!" essay	undated
b. 8	"A Wedding in Venice," story, drafts	undated
b. 8	"What Can a Girl of Sixty Do?" essay	[circa 1950]
b. 8	"Wheat," script	1932 August 27
b. 8	"Where Do I Go from Home?" essay	undated
b. 8	"Who Put the Limp in Olympics?" essay	undated

b. 8	"Who's to Blame in Guatemala?" essay	undated
b. 8	"Why I Believe in Love," essay, synopsis	[circa 1952]
b. 8	"Why Keep a Secret?" story	undated
b. 8	"Wild Animals Who Have Met Me," essay, drafts, holograph and typescript Includes letter from Putnam, dated January 18, 1954, to <i>Park East Magazine</i>	1954, undated
b. 8	"Women Are Fools to Drink," essay, holograph	undated
b. 8	"Work at Your Dreams," essay	undated
b. 8	"You Haven't Changed a Bit," story	undated

**Series II: Correspondence, 1932-1962***22 Folders*

Series II, Correspondence, consists of a small number letters to and from editors, publishers, and others dating from the early 1950s. The largest correspondence file exists for *The Reader's Digest*, but there are also letters from Gilbert Roland, Frank Scully, and Gloria Swanson. In addition, there are carbons of several outgoing letters dating from 1953 relating to Putnam's article "Who's to Blame in Guatemala".

Arranged alphabetically by correspondent.

b. 9	Aldrich, Amey	1955 April
b. 9	Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.	1953
b. 9	Cabot, John M. (John Moors)	1953 April
b. 9	Davenport, Wallace	1960 January 6
b. 9	Dulles, John Foster	1953 April 15
b. 9	Eisenhower, Milton Stover	1953 April
b. 9	<i>Harper's Magazine</i>	1953 June 13
b. 9	Hayes, Helen	1959, undated
b. 9	Hearst, William Randolph	1947 March 25
b. 9	J. P. Morgan & Co.	1955 April 7
b. 9	Kruif, Paul de	1950, 1952
b. 9	<i>Ladies Home Journal</i>	1958-1959, undated
b. 9	<i>Mexican Life</i>	1959 May 9
b. 9	<i>New Haven Register</i> Also stored in: Oversize, broadside cabinets, container 11	1962
b. 9	Odhams Press	1953 June 29
b. 9	<i>The Reader's Digest</i>	1951-1962, undated
b. 9	Roland, Gilbert	undated
b. 9	Scully, Frank	1958-1959
b. 9	Swanson, Gloria	1958 March 3
b. 9	Wiley, Hugh	1956 January 18
b. 9	Wilkie, Wendell L. (Wendell Lewis)	1940 November 4
b. 9	Others Includes photographs	1932-1962, undated

**Series III: Personal Papers, 1953-1954***4 Folders*

Series III, Personal Papers, contains lists of works by Putnam and manuscript notes. The lists document Putnam's work by genre and publisher.

Arranged alphabetically by material type.

b. 9	Lists of works by Nina Wilcox Putnam	1953-1954, undated
b. 9	Manuscript notes <i>2 Folders</i>	undated
b. 9	Unidentified draft (incomplete?)	undated

## **Oversize, 1955-1962**

*2 Folders*

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b. 10	Writings (In Series I)	1955-1958
b. 11	<i>New Haven Register</i> clipping (In Series II)	1962 January 19

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## **Selected Search Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

### **Subjects**

American literature -- 19th century  
American literature -- 20th Century  
Authors, American -- Archives

### **Occupations**

Authors

### **Names**

Putnam, Nina Wilcox, 1888-1962  
Roland, Gilbert, 1905-1994  
Scully, Frank, 1892-1964  
Swanson, Gloria, 1897-1983

### **Corporate Body**

Reader's Digest Association