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MS-154: Eileen Spinelli Papers

Jenna E. Fleming
Gettysburg College

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MS-154: Eileen Spinelli Papers

Description
The collection consists mainly of materials used by Spinelli in the writing and publication processes of her books. Handwritten, typed, and word processed drafts from various stages of the books’ development are included. E-mail and written correspondence between Spinelli, publishers, and editors is also part of the collection. Several of the books were turned down by multiple publishing houses before being sold, and some manuscripts were never accepted at all. The electronic communication between the author and her editors provides insight into the complicated and lengthy process of revising childrens’ books for printing, as well as the task of choosing and collaborating with an illustrator.

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Keywords
Jerry Spinelli, children's author, book manuscripts

Disciplines
Children's and Young Adult Literature | English Language and Literature

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Guide to the Eileen Spinelli Papers

Gettysburg College, Musselman Library
Special Collections & College Archives

Processed by Jenna Fleming
October 2013
**MS-154: Papers of Eileen Spinelli**  
(3 boxes, approximately 3 cubic feet)

Inclusive Dates: 1987—2012  
Bulk Dates: 2000—2012

*Processed by: Jenna Fleming*  
*October 2013*

**Provenance**  
The papers were donated to Musselman Library by Eileen Spinelli in 2012. Her donation followed one made by her husband, author Jerry Spinelli, winner of the 1991 Newberry Award and graduate of Gettysburg College, class of 1963.

**Biography**  
Eileen Spinelli was born Eileen Mesi in 1942. She was raised in Upper Darby, Pennsylvania, and was inspired to become an author following her first visit to the local public library at the age of six. She worked as a creative writing teacher and a secretary prior to the publication of her first book, *Somebody Loves You, Mr. Hatch*, in 1991. Since then, Spinelli has written over sixty books for children, as well as poems and stories published in *Highlights for Children* and other magazines. Her books *Somebody Loves You, Mr. Hatch* and *Hero Cat* were recognized by the Christopher Awards in 1992 and 2007, respectively, for their “affirmation of the highest values of the human spirit.” Spinelli was presented with the Bank Street College of Education’s Best Children’s Book of the Year Award, the Philadelphia Children’s Reading Round Table Book of the Month Award, and 2010 National Green Earth Book Award for *Miss Fox’s Class Goes Green*, among other honors. She is also a member of the Society of Children’s Book Writers and Illustrators. She is married to Newberry Award-winning author Jerry Spinelli, Gettysburg College Class of 1963. The couple has six children and twenty-one grandchildren. Spinelli currently lives in West Chester, Pennsylvania, where she continues to write stories and poetry for children.

**Scope and Content Notes**  
The collection consists mainly of materials used by Spinelli in the writing and publication processes of her books. Handwritten, typed, and word processed drafts from various stages of the books’ development are included. E-mail and written correspondence between Spinelli, publishers, and editors is also part of the collection. Several of the books were turned down by multiple publishing houses before being sold, and some manuscripts were never accepted at all. The electronic communication between the author and her editors provides insight into the complicated and lengthy process of revising childrens’ books for printing, as well as the task of choosing and collaborating with an illustrator.

In some cases, Spinelli’s research for her books, mostly in the form of articles printed from the internet, is included in the files. This is largely applicable to those books that are based in historical or factual information. Copies of published reviews, along with occasional notes from Spinelli’s publishers, are also part of the collection. A few files contain samples of cover art or illustrations, proofs of printed versions, information on book awards, or newspaper and
magazine articles announcing publications. The collection also contains a small selection of Spinelli’s personal papers, comprising of interviews and fan mail.

**Series Description**
This collection is divided into three Series. **Series 1:** Manuscripts: drafts, correspondence, reviews, research, and other publication information; **Series 2:** Personal Papers: author biography, interviews, and fan mail; **Series 3:** Proofs: oversized publication proofs.

**Box 1**
**Series 1: Manuscripts**
1-1 Advent Song: Drafts and Correspondence
1-2 Baby Animals: Draft
1-3 *Baby Loves You So Much* (published 2007): Drafts
1-4 *Baby Loves You So Much* (published 2007): Correspondence
1-5 *The Best Story* (published 2008): Drafts
1-6 *The Best Story* (published 2008): Correspondence and Cover Art
1-7 *A Big Boy Now* (published 2012): Drafts and Correspondence
1-8 *Buzz* (published 2010): Drafts
1-9 *Buzz* (published 2010): Correspondence
1-10 *Callie Cat, Ice Skater* (published 2007): Drafts
1-11 *Callie Cat, Ice Skater* (published 2007): Correspondence, Reviews, and Research
1-12 *Cold Snap* (published 2012): Drafts and Correspondence
1-13 *Coming Through the Blizzard* (published 2009): Drafts
1-14 *Coming Through the Blizzard* (published 2009): Correspondence and Reviews
1-15 *Do You Have a Cat?* (published 2010): Drafts
1-16 *Do You Have a Cat?* (published 2010): Correspondence, Reviews, and Research
1-17 *Do You Have a Dog?* (published 2011): Drafts
1-18 *Do You Have a Dog?* (published 2011: Correspondence and Research
1-19 *Do You Have a Hat?* (published 2004): Drafts
1-20 *Do You Have a Hat?* (published 2004): Correspondence
1-21 Emily Dickinson and Me: Drafts and Correspondence
1-22 *Farm Animals* (published 1992): Draft
1-23 *Heat Wave* (published 2007): Drafts, Correspondence, and Reviews
1-24 Her Sister’s Wedding: Draft and Correspondence
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<td><em>Lizzie Logan, Second Banana</em> (published 2000): Drafts, Correspondence, and Reviews</td>
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**Box 2**

**Series 1: Manuscripts (continued)**

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1-63  *Together at Christmas* (published 2012): Drafts, Correspondence, and Proof
1-64  *Where I Live* (published 2007): Drafts
1-65  *Where I Live* (published 2007): Correspondence and Illustrations
1-66  You Be Sue: Drafts

**Series 2: Personal Papers**
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**Box 3**

**Series 3: Proofs**
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3-2  *The Best Story* (published 2008): Final
3-3  *Heat Wave* (published 2007)
3-4  *Jonah’s Whale* (published 2012)