

**Guide to the Esther Mohr  
Raushenbush (1898-1980) Papers  
RG 2.1.6**

**Finding aid prepared by Lea Osborne**

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Sarah Lawrence College Archives

May 2004

Sarah Lawrence College Archives

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository</b>	Sarah Lawrence College Archives
<b>Creator</b>	Raushenbush, Esther
<b>Title</b>	Esther Mohr Raushenbush (1898-1980) Papers
<b>Date [inclusive]</b>	undated, 1935-1980
<b>Extent</b>	2.25 linear feet 2 record cartons, 1 half document box.
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Text [Carton]</b>	1
<b>Text [Carton]</b>	2
<b>Text [Half-box]</b>	3

## Biographical note

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Esther Mohr Raushenbush, an integral part of Sarah Lawrence for over fifteen years, served the College in many capacities as a Literature professor, Dean of the College, President of the College, and the Founder and Director of the Center for Continuing Education. Her presidency ran from 1965 to 1969, four years that were characterized by unrest across communities and campuses, including Sarah Lawrence. While Raushenbush strongly believed in women's ability to learn, to carve out academic niches for themselves, she was faced with a changing campus, one very different from the time she entered to the time she left.

Esther Raushenbush began her academic career at the University of Washington, earning an A.B. in 1921 and an M.A. in 1922, both in literature. She spent a year at Radcliffe and then a fellowship year in England. Upon her return, Raushenbush taught at Wellesley College and Barnard, and supervised the Master's Essays in 18th century literature at Columbia.

In 1935 she was invited to join the faculty at Sarah Lawrence as a teacher of literature and to help design the new program for freshman, the parent of the present Freshman Studies. Having by that time eight years of often-frustrating experiences teaching traditional Freshman English courses, along with other English courses, and convinced that something better could be created for freshman, she saw in this new approach a possible answer to the frustrations. She continued to teach literature at Sarah Lawrence for eleven years.

Raushenbush became Dean in 1946 and kept that position until 1957. While Dean, she helped develop the graduate studies program and the programs for training teachers. She directed the College's summer sessions during and after the war, when it conducted an accelerated program. For seven years she served as Director for Sarah Lawrence of the Summer Seminar in Higher Education for college teachers, conducted jointly by Sarah Lawrence and New York University.

She resumed teaching after her time as Dean and in 1962 founded the Center for Continuing Education. As director, she ran this unique program that allowed women to return to college later in their lives in order to finish their undergraduate degree. To this day the center continues to attract older students interested in continuing their schooling.

On July 1, 1965, Esther Raushenbush was named President of the College. While President, she maintained her commitment to the development of the philosophy and practices of Sarah Lawrence. Commenting on the relation between the academic work of the student and his or her life experience, Raushenbush stated:

“Learning is not synonymous with the acquisition of knowledge or with mental discipline; it is a process of growth toward intellectual and emotional maturity. An education which increases the ability of the student to use his intellectual and emotional capacities in the optimum way is a good education. An education that does not do this is a failure no matter how much information the student may have acquired.”

In January 1969, Raushenbush's administrative policies were tested as a group of white students took over Westlands in protest of a tuition hike. For ten days the protestors occupied the building which

houses the President's office as well as other administrative offices. Concomitantly, the Black Student's Association set forth a series of demands requesting structural change in the College, specifically the hiring and retention of more black faculty and a stronger emphasis on the Black Experience (in the form of class offerings, lectures, art exhibits, etc). The actions taken by the students and the responses by the administration can be found in the Presidential Papers and in the Political Action folders in the Student Life boxes.

Upon her retirement from the Presidency, Raushenbush worked as a consultant to the John Hay Whitney Foundation which supports educational and economic development programs for minorities. Raushenbush participated in general policy making, advised and monitored special projects for the Foundation. In 1972, she published a study sponsored by the Foundation entitled Opportunity Fellows Fulbright and Visiting Professors. She consulted for the foundation until 1979 when she returned to the college to review the program at the Center for Continuing Education. Although she was not at full strength, she spent many days on campus and concluded her work by making recommendations for the future that were then implemented, resulting in a renewed energy for the Center.

Raushenbush was an avid proponent of education and was often asked to lecture and write articles on the subject. Her publications include Occasional Papers on Education, a collection of her speeches written during her Presidency, The Student and His Studies, and The Student in Higher Education. The bound copies of these books may be found with the Faculty Publications.

Esther Raushenbush passed away on July 21st, 1980 at age eighty-two from a heart attack. Before she died, however, she was able to see the Sarah Lawrence library renamed in her honor, a fitting memorial for a woman who loved the College and the progressive pedagogy it imparted to its students.

## Series Description

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The Esther Raushenbush Papers are arranged in three series:

Series I. General Papers, Series II. Administrative Papers, and Series III. Published Works

**Series I. General Papers** consist of biographical information, material from Raushenbush's literature courses, and copies of her many lectures and speeches. Note: The lectures are listed chronologically; however, included is one folder listing the titles of the lectures organized by subject as well as an unbound copy of Raushenbush's collection, Occasional Papers on Education. The bound copy is located in the President's Books Collection.

**Series II. Administrative Papers** consist of material related to the inauguration of Esther Raushenbush, General Papers (invitations, contractual information, activities of the President, Center for Continuing Education, American Council on Education, Princeton-Sarah Lawrence proposal, gifts to the President, 1969 Westlands Sit-in, retirement material), Reports (President's Report, to faculty, to committees, financial reports), Correspondence listed alphabetically by subject heading, including correspondence with former Presidents Charles DeCarlo, Paul Ward, Harrison Tweed, Harold Taylor, and Constance

Warren, Media (articles referring to Sarah Lawrence College and Esther Raushenbush and press releases, all listed chronologically).

**Series III. Published Works** consist of articles written by Esther Raushenbush, organized chronologically, and four bound books entitled: *The Student and His Studies* (1964), *The Student in Higher Education* (1968), *Opportunity Fellows Fulbright and Visiting Professors* (1972), *Occasional Papers on Education* (1979).

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## Administrative Information

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### Publication Information

Sarah Lawrence College Archives May 2004

### Revision Description

Finding aid updated September 2004 by Abby Lester. Finding Aid entered in Archivists' Toolkit by Connor Miller '15. May 2013

### Processing Information note

Processed May 2004 by Lea Osborne. Finding aid updated September 2004 by Abby Lester.

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## Controlled Access Headings

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### Corporate Name(s)

- Sarah Lawrence College. Accreditation.
- Sarah Lawrence College. Administration.
- Sarah Lawrence College. Alumni and alumnae.
- Sarah Lawrence College. Concerned Students of Color.
- Sarah Lawrence College. Physical Education and Athletics.
- Sarah Lawrence College. Presidents.

### Genre(s)

- Clippings (information artifacts)
- Correspondence
- Speeches

### **Personal Name(s)**

- Doerschuk, Anna Beatrice, 1880-1974
- King, Martin Luther, Jr., 1929-1968
- Tweed, Harrison, 1885-1969
- Walters, Barbara, 1929-

### **Subject(s)**

- Sarah Lawrence College

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### **General note**

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OCLC#61390076

Series I. General Papers

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**Collection Inventory**

<b>Series I. General Papers</b>	
	<b>Carton</b>
Biographical Information undated, 1935, 1952-1969	1
Titles of Lectures (organized by subject) 1947-1969	1
Lectures undated	1
Lectures 1943-1949	1
Lectures 1950-1954	1
Lectures 1955-1958	1
Lectures 1959-1962	1
Lectures 1963-1964	1
Lectures 1965	1
Lectures 1966	1



## Series II. Administrative Papers

Lectures - Paper and correspondence concerning the American Council on Education 49th Annual Meeting 1966	1
Lectures 1967	1
Lectures 1968	1
Lectures 1969, 1980	1
Lectures - Occasional Papers on Education (unbound copy), pages 1-136 1979	1
Lectures - Occasional Papers on Education (unbound copy), pages 137-277 1979	1
Lectures - Occasional Papers on Education (unbound copy), pages 278-end 1979	1
Literature Courses 1936, 1960-1961	1
Obituary Related 1980-1985	1
Unknown Author - "Erewhon College" undated	1
<b>Series II. Administrative Papers</b>	
	<b>Carton</b>
Inauguration - Alumnae Magazine 1965	1
Inauguration - Biographies of Speakers 1965	1

Series II. Administrative Papers

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Inauguration - Correspondence 1965	1
Inauguration - Finances 1965	1
Inauguration - Inaugural Dinner (Committee) 1965	1
Inauguration - Inaugural Dinner (Hotel Pierre) 1965	1
Inauguration - Invitation Finances 1965	1
Inauguration - Invitation Lists 1965	1
Inauguration - Invitations 1965	1
Inaugurations - Plans 1965	1
Inauguration - Press Material 1965	1
Inauguration - Programs 1965	1
Inauguration - Speeches 1965	1
General - Activities of the President 1949, 1958-1961, 1963-1968	1
General - American Council on Education 1966-1974	1
General - Audio Visual Equipment 1965-1968	1

## Series II. Administrative Papers

General - Contractual Information 1959-1964	1
General - Faculty Group Restructuring 1968-1969	2
General - Financial Notes 1960s	2
General - Human Genetics Program 1968	2
General - Invitations undated, 1965-1972	2
General - Literature, Languages, and Writing 1966-1968	2
General - Physical Education (Patty Smyth) 1965-1968	2
General - Princeton-Sarah Lawrence Proposal 1967	2
General - Retirement from Presidency 1969	2
General - Social Science Faculty 1966-1968	2
General - Surveys for External Organizations 1965-1969	2
General - Westlands Sit-In 1969	2
Reports - Committees undated, 1952-1968	2
Reports - Faculty 1953-1968	2

## Series II. Administrative Papers

Reports - Financial undated, 1967-1968	2
Reports - Kerr Study 1969	2
Reports - President's Reports 1949, 1953, 1957, 1966-1968	2
Reports - (The) Sarah Lawrence Study by Michael Brown 1966	2
Correspondence - Academic Freedom 1964-1968	2
Correspondence - Alumnae 1951, 1963, 1965-1969	2
Correspondence - American Council on Education 1966	2
Correspondence - Artwork on Campus 1965-1967	2
Correspondence - Chicago Institute for Early Childhood Education 1965-1969	2
Correspondence - Children's Art Center (at SLC) 1966-1967	2
Correspondence - Christmas Cards 1965	2
Correspondence - College-Wide Memos 1964-1969	2
Correspondence - Columbia University Protest 1968-1969	2
<b>RESTRICTED</b>	

## Series II. Administrative Papers

Restricted indefinitely. See Archivist for further information.	
Correspondence - Committe on the Second Regional Plan 1965-1969	2
Correspondence - Cooperative College Center 1968-1972	2
Correspondence - Doerschuk, Beatrice 1935-1945	2
Correspondence - Educational Proposals undated, 1966-1969	2
Correspondence - Faculty 1957-1958, 1965-1967	2
Correspondence - Financial 1967-1969	2
Correspondence - Fundraising Receptions 1967-1969	2
Correspondence - General 1958-1969, 1976	2
Correspondence - Government Officials 1965-1969	2
Correspondence - Hobler, Anne (Assistant to the President) 1965-1969	2
Correspondence - Intercollegiate Conference on Undergraduate Mores (Danforth) 1965	2
Correspondence - King, Martin Luther Jr. 1965	2
Correspondence - Memos to Faculty/Staff 1950-1969	2

## Series II. Administrative Papers

Correspondence - Memos to Students 1966-1969	2
Correspondence - Music 1965, 1967-1969	2
Correspondence - Neighbors 1963, 1967-1969	2
Correspondence - Peace Corps 1965-1967	2
Correspondence - President's 70th Birthday Party 1968	2
Correspondence - Size of the College 1967	2
Correspondence - Time Magazine Article Controversy (Carl E. Schorske) 1966	2
Correspondence - Trustees 1958-1959, 1965-1968	2
Correspondence - Tweed, Harrison 1966	2
Correspondence - Walters, Barbara 1952	2
Correspondence - Westchester County/Sarah Lawrence Art-Cultural Center (proposed) 1965	2
Media - Articles undated	2
Media - Articles 1949	2

**Series II. Administrative Papers**

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Media - Articles 1950	2
Media - Articles 1952	2
Media - Articles 1953	2
Media - Articles 1954	2
Media - Articles 1955	2
Media - Articles 1956	2
Media - Articles 1957	2
Media - Articles 1958	2
Media - Articles 1959	2
Media - Articles 1960	2
Media - Articles 1961	2
Media - Articles 1962	2
Media - Articles 1963	2
Media - Articles 1964	2

**Series III. Published Works**

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Media - Articles 1965 2

Media - Articles 1966 2

Media - Articles 1967 2

Media - Articles 1968 2

Media - Articles 1970 2

Media - Articles 1980 2

Media - Press Releases undated, 1950-1970 2

**Series III. Published Works**

**Carton**

Articles undated 2

Articles 1936-1969 2

**Series I. General Papers (oversized)**

**Half-box**

Gifts - Artist's Book Made by Norberto Chiesa, Art Faculty 1969 3