

Guide to the Polly Hoben Greenberg Papers RG 9.10.11

Finding aid prepared by Stephanie Coleman

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Sarah Lawrence College Archives

12/20/2016

Sarah Lawrence College Archives

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Summary Information

Repository	Sarah Lawrence College Archives
Creator	Greenberg, Polly
Title	Polly Hoben Greenberg Papers
Date [inclusive]	1950-1969
Extent	1.0 linear feet 1 record carton
Language	English

Biographical/Historical note

Polly Hoben Greenberg was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin on April 21, 1932 to Lindsay Hoben, Editor-in-Chief of the Milwaukee Journal, and Margaret Pollitzer Hoben, a progressive educator from New York. With her mother's career and passion for social justice and education, Greenberg dedicated her life's work to progressive early childhood education. Her career as a child development specialist started when she was a student at Sarah Lawrence College. From 1950 to 1954, Greenberg focused her studies on developmental psychology and early education, spending much of her free time babysitting, working in the campus nursery, and volunteering at summer camps for children. In a letter from Greenberg to her family in Milwaukee at the beginning of her freshman year she speaks to the realization of knowing the work she wanted to do:

"I will never change my mind from wanting to work with disturbed, displaced, and "delinquent" children, I know. It took me a long time to find the exact field in the relm [sic] of working with children that gave me the most satisfaction, but now that I have found it (this fall) I will stick with it! I will write articles, novels, books, and stories about the problem, I will do work myself, and I will dedicate my whole life to it."

Greenberg kept this promise throughout the rest of her life and went on to have a prolific and active career in child development advocacy. After graduating in 1954, Greenberg worked in the Department of Education under the John F. Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson and Jimmy Carter administrations beginning in 1956. In this capacity she played an integral role in founding the Head Start Program in Mississippi—a Federal education program that aims to prepare children for school from birth to the age of five whose families are below the federal poverty level—under President Lyndon Johnson as part of his "War on Poverty" initiative. Greenberg wrote about her experience of that time in her book "The Devil Wears Slippery Shoes," which recounts the inception of the grant funded capstone project from June 1965 to June 1967.

In addition to her contributions to federal education initiatives, Greenberg was also a teacher and author. For 18 years she taught evening courses for children and families at the University of Maryland and wrote several children's books and books on parenting, including "Oh, Lord, I Wish I was a Buzzard" (1969) and "How to Convert the Kids from What They Eat to What They Oughta" (1976). She also co-authored a seven volume handbook entitled "Bridge-to-reading: Curriculum for Pre-school, Kindergarten, and First Grade".

Polly Hoben Greenberg died of heart complications on December 27, 2014.

Scope and Contents note

The papers of Polly Hoben Greenberg '54 document her years as a student at Sarah Lawrence College from 1950 to 1954. They detail her studies and extracurricular activities, which emphasize a keen interest in psychology and child development, as well as her personal life during that time. The Greenberg Papers are arranged in a single series and organized alphabetically into four subject areas: Academics, Non-academic, Personal, and Writings. Items in each subject area are arranged chronologically. The Academics materials primarily consist of class notes in spiral notebooks, class assignments, and written papers, including several conference papers, for each course taken over the course of her four years as a student. Non-academic materials focus on her activities outside the classroom, including her work with children at summer camps and clippings of her writings for the Student Newspaper, at the time known as "The Campus". Personal materials in the collection provide insight on her relationships with family members and friends, in particular her brother, Alan Hoben. Writings contain short fictional works and unpublished children's stories written while a student at Sarah Lawrence as well as an early draft of "People Aren't Potatoes", which later was used in a handbook she co-wrote entitled "Bridge-to-reading: curriculum for pre-school, kindergarten, and first grade" published in 1973.

Of particular note in these papers are the materials relating to the time she spent volunteering at the Wiltwyck School for Delinquent Boys during the summer after her freshman year. Items relating to the Wiltwyck School are included with the Non-academic materials.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Sarah Lawrence College Archives 12/20/2016

Conditions Governing Access note

This collection is open for research.

Immediate Source of Acquisition note

These papers were donated by Polly Greenberg's daughter, Miggie Greenberg, MD in 2014.

Processing Information note

Processed December 2016, by Stephanie Coleman.

Related Materials

See also

Lois Barclay Murphy Papers.

Controlled Access Headings

Corporate Name(s)

- Wiltwyck School for Boys (Esopus, N.Y.).

Genre(s)

- Clippings (information artifacts)
- Correspondence

Subject(s)

- Child development
- Child psychology
- Student newspapers and periodicals.

Collection Inventory

	Carton
<p>Academics - First Year - Notebooks 1950-1951</p> <p>Scope and Contents note</p> <p>Missing notebook from Introductory Psychology course</p>	1
<p>Academics - First Year - Writing Assignments and Papers 1950-1951</p>	1
<p>Academics - Sophomore - Notebooks 1951-1952</p> <p>Separated Materials note</p> <p>Notebooks for Soviet Union course</p>	1
<p>Academics - Sophomore - Notebooks 1951-1952</p> <p>Scope and Contents note</p> <p>Notebooks for Biology, Psychology of Personality, and Cultural Anthropology.</p>	1
<p>Academics - Junior 1952-1953</p> <p>Scope and Contents note</p> <p>Includes Age of Enlightenment, Introduction to Social Philosophy, and Music course notes and papers.</p>	1

Academics - Junior 1952-1953 1

Scope and Contents note

Includes Educational Psychology course notes and papers.

Academics - Senior - Romanticism and 19th Century Literature 1953-1954 1

Academics - Senior - Modern American Literature and Psychological Theory and Problems of Social Learning 1953-1954 1

Academics - Course Schedules and Evaluations 1950-1954 1

Academics - Practice Teaching 1953-1954 1

Academics - Memorabilia undated, 1949-1951, 1954 1

Scope and Contents note

College Handbook, Course Catalog, Commencement Program, and room assignment form

Non-academic - Plays 1950-1954 1

Non-academic - Student Newspaper Articles - 1950-51 undated, 1950-1954 1

Non-academic - Summer Camps 1953 1

Non-academic - Wiltwyck School June - August 1951 1

Non-academic - National Association for Psychoanalysis January - March 1952

1

Scope and Contents note

Employed as secretary for the National Psychological Association for Psychoanalysis.

Personal - Clippings undated, 1951, 1953-1954

1

Personal - Correspondence undated 1950-1954

1

Scope and Contents note

Includes correspondence between Allan Hoben (brother) and Daniel Greenberg (husband).

Personal - Diary 1946-1953

1

Personal - Photographs 1950-1951

1

Personal - Marriage Souvenirs 1953

1

Personal - Memorabilia undated, 1950, 1952-1954

1

Writings - "The Education of Peter Pssst or The Cat Who Went to College" 1950-1951

1

Writings - "People Aren't Potatoes" 1952, 1968, 1970, 1973

1

Scope and Contents note

Includes Greenberg's correspondence with publishing companies.