

Ruth Bleier papers

Ms. Coll. 616

Finding aid prepared by Clémence Scouten.

Last updated on July 01, 2020.

University of Pennsylvania, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts

2015 May 12

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Summary Information

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Repository | University of Pennsylvania: Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts |
| Creator | Bleier, Ruth, 1923- |
| Title | Ruth Bleier papers |
| Call number | Ms. Coll. 616 |
| Date [bulk] | 1950-1987 |
| Date [inclusive] | 1945-1987 |
| Extent | 1.2 linear feet (3 boxes) |
| Language | English |
| Abstract | Ruth Bleier (1923–1988) was a neurophysiologist and also one of the first feminist scholars to explore how gender biases have shaped biology. This collection, including personal and professional letters; newspaper clippings; newsletters; professional writings; and reference materials, documents Bleier's academic and activist activities. |

Cite as:

Ruth Bleier papers, 1945-1987 (bulk: 1950-1987), Ms. Coll. 616, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania

Biography/History

Ruth Bleier (1923–1988) was a neurophysiologist and also one of the first feminist scholars to explore how gender biases have shaped biology. Bleier was born in New Kensington, Pennsylvania in 1923. She received her B.A. in 1945 from Goucher College, and subsequently received her M.D. from Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania in 1949. She interned at the Sinai Hospital in Baltimore and then practiced general medicine in inner-city Baltimore for ten years. She married Leon Eisenberg, and together they raised 2 children and ran a medical clinic for the impoverished population of Baltimore. Bleier advocated for civil rights with the Maryland Committee for Peace in the early 1950s; this work led to a subpoena from the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAAC). She was placed on the HUAAC blacklist which resulted in losing her legal ability to practice medicine. She then went to Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in 1957 to study neuroanatomy, completing her post-doctoral fellowship in 1961. Bleier gave up her medical practice in order to teach psychiatry and physiology. She then joined the University of Wisconsin-Madison department of Neurophysiology in 1967; at the same time Bleier was also working with Weisman Center of Mental Retardation and the Wisconsin Regional Primate Center.

By the 1970s, Bleier was devoted to the application of feminist analyses and viewpoint to the practices and theories of science. She also began to focus on improving women's access and station in higher education. Her books regarding biology and feminism, *Science and Gender: A Critique of Biology and Its Theories on Women* (1984) and *Feminist Approaches to Science* (1986), have become prominent readings for women's studies to explore the biological differences of sexes and the origins of gender differences.

Bleier was a founding member of the Association of Faculty Women at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and also helped establish the Woman's Studies Program in 1975, serving as chair from 1982 to 1986.

Biographical information from National Library of Medicine.

Scope and Contents

The papers of Ruth Bleier, including personal and professional letters; newspaper clippings; newsletters; professional writings; and reference materials, document Bleier's academic and activist activities. The materials are arranged in 6 series: Personal Correspondence, 1953-1988; Professional Correspondence, 1972-1986; Academic Writings, 1979-1986; Peace Activism, 1950-1955 (divided into subseries for FBI File, 1974-1979; House Un-American Activities Committee Investigation, 1951-1984; Maryland Committee for Peace, 1950-1951; Maryland Peace Council, 1952-1955; and Other Organizations, 1951); Women's Rights Activism, 1971-1987 (divided into subseries for Association of Faculty Women/University Community Women, 1974-1979; Association of Women in Science, 1972-1975; Joan Roberts Tenure Denial Case, 1972-1974; and Feminism in Science, Medicine, and Academia Issues and

Background, 1971-1987); and Biographical Materials, 1945-1988.

Administrative Information

University of Pennsylvania, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts

2015 May 12

Finding aid prepared by Clémence Scouten.

Access Restrictions

This collection is open for research use.

Use Restrictions

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Source of Acquisition

Acquired by Walter J. Lear from Kathy Eisenberg (Bleier's daughter), 2005. Gift of Walter J. Lear, 2006.

Controlled Access Headings

CORPORATE NAME(S)

- Association for Women in Science.
- Maryland Committee for Peace.
- University of Wisconsin--Madison.

FORM/GENRE(S)

- Clippings (information artifacts)
- Correspondence
- Publications (documents)
- Writings (documents)

OCCUPATION(S)

- Activists

PERSONAL NAME(S)

- Lear, Walter J. (Walter Jay), 1923-2010

SUBJECT(S)

- Anti-communist movements--United States--History
- Civil rights--United States
- Discrimination
- Feminism and education
- Science
- Science--Social aspects
- Sex discrimination
- Women scientists
- Women's rights

General note

Forms part of: U. S. Health Activism History Collection

Collection Inventory

I. PERSONAL CORRESPONDENCE, 1953-1988.

| | Box | Folder |
|---|-----|--------|
| <i>The Baltimore Sun</i> , 1960-1965. | 1 | 1 |
| Bart, Pauline, 1973. | 1 | 2 |
| Beck, Evelyn Torton, 1982-1987. | 1 | 3 |
| Berman, Jeanie, undated. | 1 | 4 |
| Bleier, Sadie, 1975-1987. | 1 | 5 |
| Brownstein, Marilyn L., 1986. | 1 | 6 |
| Caplan, Paula J., 1987. | 1 | 7 |
| Carlin, Elizabeth (?), 1986. | 1 | 8 |
| Cowden, Cindy, 1984. | 1 | 9 |
| d'Acci, Julie, undated. | 1 | 10 |
| Derovevn, Diane (?), undated. | 1 | 11 |
| Dufner, Mary E., 1985. | 1 | 12 |
| Eisenstein, Zillah R., 1986. | 1 | 13 |
| Eisenstein, Zillah R., recommendations and application materials, | 1 | 14-15 |

1981-1986.

| | | |
|----------------------------------|---|----|
| Faust, Dorothy, undated. | 1 | 16 |
| Friedman, Susan Stanford, 1987. | 1 | 17 |
| Gelman, Rena, 1975-1976. | 1 | 18 |
| Haraway, Donna Jeanne, 1981. | 1 | 19 |
| Hyde, Janet Shibley, 1987. | 1 | 20 |
| Kaiser, Nancy A., undated. | 1 | 21 |
| Kaplan, Milly, 1977-1985. | 1 | 22 |
| Kefton, Shelley (?), 1975-1976. | 1 | 23 |
| Koven, Joan, undated. | 1 | 24 |
| Krause, Herbert, 1953. | 1 | 25 |
| Kravetz, Diane, 1975-1976. | 1 | 26 |
| Land, Ann, undated. | 1 | 27 |
| Larcler, Daniele, 1975-1976. | 1 | 28 |
| Leavitt, Judith Walzer, undated. | 1 | 29 |
| Lerner, Gerda, 1987. | 1 | 30 |
| Long, Diana E., undated. | 1 | 31 |
| McKay, Julie, 1987. | 1 | 32 |
| Marks, Elaine, 1985-1987. | 1 | 33 |

| | | |
|--|---|-------|
| Namenwirth, Marion, 1984-1987. | 1 | 34 |
| Osler, Margaret J., 1978-1986. | 1 | 35 |
| Ozello, Yvonne A., 1976-1978. | 1 | 36 |
| Phillippon, Françoise, 1978-1987, undated. | 1 | 37-38 |
| Roberts, M. Polk, 1982. | 1 | 39 |
| Rosser, Sue Vilhaver, 1984. | 1 | 40 |
| Rouse, Catherine (?), undated. | 1 | 41 |
| Segeberg, Marsha A., 1987. | 1 | 42 |
| Spector, Janet, 1967-1987. | 1 | 43 |
| Williams, Washington G., undated. | 1 | 44 |
| Correspondence, miscellaneous, 1981-1987. | 1 | 45 |

II. PROFESSIONAL CORRESPONDENCE, 1972-1986.

| | Box | Folder |
|-------------------------------------|-----|--------|
| A-Ha, 1979-1986. | 2 | 46 |
| Hu-M, 1975-1985. | 2 | 47 |
| N-S, 1972-1982. | 2 | 48 |
| University of Amsterdam, 1985-1986. | 2 | 49 |

III. ACADEMIC WRITINGS, 1979-1986.

| | Box | Folder |
|---|-----|--------|
| Articles, papers, and talks, 1979-1986. | 2 | 50 |

IV. PEACE ACTIVISM, 1950-1984.

A. FBI FILE, 1974-1979.

| | Box | Folder |
|-----------------------------------|-----|--------|
| Correspondence, 1974-1979. | 2 | 51 |
| Investigation, contents, undated. | 2 | 52 |

B. HOUSE UN-AMERICAN ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE INVESTIGATION, 1951-1984.

| | Box | Folder |
|--|-----|--------|
| Correspondence, 1951-1984. | 2 | 53 |
| Reports, statements and transcripts, 1951. | 2 | 54 |
| News clippings, 1951-1953. | 2 | 55 |

C. MARYLAND COMMITTEE FOR PEACE, 1950-1951.

| | Box | Folder |
|-----------------------|-----|--------|
| Correspondence, 1950. | 2 | 56 |

| | | |
|------------------------------------|---|----|
| Correspondence, 1951. | 2 | 57 |
| Correspondence, undated. | 2 | 58 |
| Organizational materials, 1950. | 2 | 59 |
| Organizational materials, 1951. | 2 | 60 |
| Organizational materials, undated. | 2 | 61 |
| Organizational materials, undated. | 2 | 62 |
| News clippings, 1950. | 2 | 63 |
| News clippings, 1950-1951. | 2 | 64 |

D. MARYLAND PEACE COUNCIL, 1952-1955.

| | Box | Folder |
|--------------------------------------|-----|--------|
| Correspondence, 1952. | 2 | 65 |
| Correspondence, 1953. | 2 | 66 |
| Organizational materials, 1952-1953. | 3 | 67 |
| Organizational materials, 1953-1955. | 3 | 68 |
| News clippings, 1952-1955. | 3 | 69 |

V. OTHER ORGANIZATIONS, 1951.

| | Box | Folder |
|--|-----|--------|
| American Peace Crusade, Baltimore Council of the American Council on Human Rights, Baltimore County Committee for Peace, Baltimore Veterans for Peace, Emmanuel C. C. Church committee for Peace in Korea, Labor Forum for Peace, Veterans' Wives for Peace, Delegation to Washington on Case of Willie McGee, and World Peace Appeal, 1951. | 3 | 70 |

VI. WOMEN'S RIGHTS ACTIVISM, 1971-1987.

A. ASSOCIATION OF FACULTY WOMEN/UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY WOMEN, 1974-1979.

| | Box | Folder |
|-------------------------------|-----|--------|
| Correspondence, 1974-1977. | 3 | 71 |
| Printed materials, 1977-1979. | 3 | 72 |
| News clippings, 1974-1979. | 3 | 73 |

B. ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN IN SCIENCE, 1972-1975.

| | Box | Folder |
|--------------------------------------|-----|--------|
| Correspondence, 1972-1974. | 3 | 74 |
| Organizational materials, 1971-1975. | 3 | 75 |

C. JOAN ROBERTS TENURE DENIAL CASE, 1972-1974.

| | Box | Folder |
|----------------------------|-----|--------|
| Correspondence, 1972-1974. | 3 | 76 |
| News clippings, 1974. | 3 | 77 |

D. FEMINISM IN SCIENCE, MEDICINE, AND ACADEMIA ISSUES AND BACKGROUND, 1971-1987.

| | Box | Folder |
|----------------------------|-----|--------|
| Correspondence, 1972-1987. | 3 | 78 |
| Printed material. | 3 | 79 |
| News clippings, 1974-1987. | 3 | 80 |

VII. BIOGRAPHICAL MATIERALS, 1945-1988.

| | Box | Folder |
|---|-----|--------|
| "About the author" blurbs, commencement programs, newspaper clippings, and obituary, 1945-1988. | 3 | 81 |