Guide to the Jessica Benjamin papers

John Hay Library Special Collections
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Collection overview

Title: Jessica Benjamin Papers
Creator: Benjamin, Jessica, 1946- Feminist Theory Archives (Brown University).
Extent: 3 linear feet (3 records center boxes)
Abstract: Jessica Benjamin is a psychoanalyst, author, and professor of psychoanalysis and psychotherapy at New York University. Her collection contains drafts, notes, and research from her books and articles about gender, feminism, and intersubjectivity.
Language of materials: English, German
Repository: John Hay Library Special Collections
Collection number: MS.2011.027

Scope & content

This collection documents the writings and activities of feminist psychoanalyst Jessica Benjamin from the early 1970s through the early 2000s. It consists primarily of drafts of articles and books that she authored and versions of her writings delivered at lectures and public talks. Also included are letters and other correspondence, photographs, conference brochures and flyers, photocopies of articles used for research or reference, and syllabi and readings from courses she has taught. Most of the material documents Benjamin's professional life as a teacher, writer and psychoanalyst. The collection is predominantly in English, but does include some material in German.

Series one, Writings, contains essays, articles, reviews, and manuscripts. It includes subseries dedicated to Benjamin's dissertation, written in 1977, and notes and drafts for her book Bonds of Love and the article "A Desire of One's Own." Series two, Professional Materials, contains documents pertaining or resulting from activities outside of her writing life. This includes teaching materials, correspondence, case studies from her therapeutic practice, and brochures and booklets from conferences. A relatively small third series
contains material of a more personal nature. Included here are photographs, letters, and newspapers and magazines that Benjamin saved.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged into the following series:


Biographical/Historical note

Jessica Benjamin, born on January 17, 1946, is an American feminist psychoanalyst, teacher, and writer. In addition to running a private psychotherapeutic practice in New York City, she is a faculty member at NYU's Postdoctoral Psychology Program in Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy.

After earning her bachelor's degree cum laude at the University of Wisconsin, Madison in 1967, Benjamin traveled to Germany to pursue graduate work. She earned her MA in 1971 at the University of Frankfurt in West Germany, studying Psychology, Sociology and Philosophy at the Institute for Social Research. Returning to the States, she taught as a visiting professor of Sociology at Hampshire College in Amherst, Massachusetts. When Benjamin earned her PhD in Sociology from NYU in 1978, she became a fellow in the New York Institute for the Humanities. During this time she organized a conference called "The Second Sex, Thirty Years Later." Between 1980 and 1983, she conducted research on the social context of mother-infant interactions at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in Bronx, NY, funded by a National Research Service Award from the National Institute of Mental Health.
A prolific writer, Benjamin has published articles and books on psychoanalysis and feminism, specifically analyzing the dynamics of human relationships. Her first book, published in 1988, *The Bonds of Love: Psychoanalysis, Feminism and the Problem of Domination*, offers a groundbreaking analysis of the power dynamics tied to masculinity and femininity. In her 1995 collection of essays *Like Objects, Love Objects*, Benjamin develops a psychoanalytic theory of intersubjectivity, which she elaborates further in her 1997 work *Shadow of the Other: Intersubjectivity and Gender in Psychoanalysis*.

**Access & use**

**Access to the collection:** There are no restrictions on access, except that the collection can only be seen by prior appointment. Some materials may be stored off-site and cannot be produced on the same day on which they are requested.

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**Preferred citation:** Jessica Benjamin Papers, MS.2011.027, John Hay Library Special Collections

**Contact information:**
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Brown University
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Administrative information

About the collection

Aquisition:

Accruals: This collection was received as a gift from Jessica Benjamin in May 2011. No further accruals are expected.

Processing information: This collection was processed by Astrid M. Drew.

About the finding aid

Author: Finding aid prepared by Brown University Library staff.

Encoding: This finding aid was produced using the Archivists' Toolkit 10 May 2012

Descriptive rules: Finding aid based on Describing Archives: A Content Standard (DACS)

Search terms

Names: Feminist Theory Archive (Brown University). Pembroke Center for Teaching and Research on Women.

Subjects: Feminism Feminist theory Psychoanalysis Psychologists.

Types of materials: Typescripts
## Inventory

**Series 1, Writings,**

*Subseries 1, Dissertation, 1977*
*Subseries 2, A Desire of One's Own,*
*Subseries 3, Bonds of Love,*
*Subseries 4, Articles and Essays,*
*Subseries 5, Talks and Lectures,*
*Subseries 6, Book Reviews,*

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