

May Benzenberg Mayer Papers
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2022

Contact information: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/mss.contact>

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm2022086484>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms022019>

Prepared by Manuscript Division staff

Finding aid encoded by Manuscript Division staff, 2022

Collection Summary

Title: May Benzenberg Mayer Papers

Inclusive Dates: 1926-1983

Bulk Dates: 1926-1952

ID No.: MSS86484

Creator: Mayer, May Benzenberg, 1880-1952

Extent: 60 items

Extent: 5 containers plus 1 oversize

Extent: 2.2 linear feet

Extent: 58 digital files (0.58 GB)

Language: Collection material in English

Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm2022086484>

Summary: Philosopher, amateur psychiatrist, and founder of the School of Applied Philosophy, also known as the Path of Joining of Devotion and Gnosis (POJODAG) House. Lectures and teachings manuscript, teaching posters, pamphlets, and other writings in both physical and digital formats documenting Mayer's teaching at the School of Applied Philosophy, New York, N.Y., and its influence by Jungian psychoanalysis and the theosophy movement.

Acquisition Information

The papers of May Benzenberg Mayer were given to the Library of Congress by Carol Denick in 2022.

Processing History

The papers of May Benzenberg Mayer were arranged and described by Sara Ludewig in 2022.

Digital files were received as part of the May Benzenberg Mayer Papers on a variety of storage media, each of which was assigned a unique digital ID number. Use the digital ID number to request access copies of the files associated with each media. A description of the standard processes taken on all born digital records can be found in the Processing History

Note: Born Digital Collection Material at <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.digital>.

Copyright Status

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of May Benzenberg Mayer is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions

The papers of May Benzenberg Mayer are open to research. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use. Access to digital content is available onsite only in the Manuscript Reading Room and requires advanced notice. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting.

Technical Requirements

Digital files were created by the donor in a Mac operating system, version unknown. The content is primarily text and image files in .jpg and .pdf formats.

Digitized Content

All items in the collection were digitized by the donor and can be requested using the digital ID numbers in the Container List.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container or digital ID number, May Benzenberg Mayer Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

May Benzenberg Mayer was born in 1880 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She claimed to have studied psychiatry under Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung in the 1910s. In 1924, she founded the School of Applied Philosophy in New York where she taught until 1952. Her writings and teachings incorporated elements of theosophy, psychoanalysis, world religion, and philosophy. She died in 1952.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of May Benzenberg Mayer (1880-1952) span the years 1926-1983, with the bulk of the material dating from 1926 to 1952. The collection documents Mayer's teachings, lectures, and writings as an instructor and founder of the School of Applied Philosophy, also known as the Path of Joining of Devotion and Gnosis (POJODAG) House.

The collection primarily documents Mayer's esoteric philosophic teachings throughout her twenty-eight years at the School of Applied Philosophy. Her papers showcase the unique combination of world religion, philosophy, theosophy, and psychiatry she used to create her own "wisdom-lore" teachings. The collection was compiled by two of Mayer's students, Gertrude Borchard (1891-1981) and Alice Borchard Greene (1893-1972), and shows their commitment to Mayer's ideas and the work of the School of Applied Philosophy. The collection includes a manuscript of Mayer's teachings compiled from lecture notes and audio recordings by Borchard and Greene. Also included are copies of *Living* magazine that comprises Mayer's writings as well as news and course schedules from the School of Applied Philosophy and essays by Mayer's students. Other writings by Mayer are included as pamphlets published both before and after her death. In addition, hand-painted posters visually illustrate her teachings on philosophy, religion, truth, and enlightenment.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged alphabetically by type of material.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

People

Borchard, Gertrude, 1891-1981.

Greene, Alice Borchard, 1893-1972.

Mayer, May Benzenberg, 1880-1952.

Organizations

School of Applied Philosophy (New York, N.Y.)

Subjects

Enlightenment--Study and teaching.

Enlightenment.
Philosophy--Study and teaching.
Philosophy.
Psychiatry--Study and teaching.
Psychiatry.
Religion--Study and teaching.
Religion.
Theosophy--Study and teaching.
Theosophy.
Truth--Study and teaching.
Truth.

Places

New York (N.Y.)--Intellectual life--20th century.
United States--Intellectual life--20th century.

Titles

Living (Magazine)

Occupations

Educators.
Philosophers.
Psychiatrists.

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1	Lectures and teachings manuscript, 1926-1952 (6 folders)
BOX 2	Lectures and teachings manuscript, 1926-1952 (6 folders)
BOX 3	Lectures and teachings manuscript, 1926-1952 (6 folders)
BOX 4	Lectures and teachings manuscript, 1926-1952 (5 folders)
BOX 5	Lectures and teachings manuscript, 1926-1952 (2 folders)
DF	Lectures and teachings manuscript, digital files, 1926-1952 Digital ID: mss86484_252_004
BOX 5	<i>Living</i> (magazine), 1936-1938 (2 folders)
DF	<i>Living</i> (magazine), digital files, 1936-1938 Digital ID: mss86484_252_005
BOX 5	Pamphlets and other writings, 1930-1947, 1980-1983, undated (2 folders)
DF	Pamphlets and other writings, digital files, 1930-1947, 1980-1983, undated Digital ID: mss86484_252_003
BOX OV 1	Posters, circa 1930-circa 1952 (6 folders)
DF	Posters, digital files, circa 1930-circa 1952 Digital ID: mss86484_252_002