Sylvester papers SFCP.MSS.006

Finding aid prepared by Chris Gordon and Eric Rosen
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The Sylvester papers include work done by Sylvester both in the realm of child psychology and without, primarily dedicated to patient files from fifteen years of child therapy practice and manuscripts both written by and collected by Sylvester. Smaller sections of child psychology include notes, case discussions, business finances, and work with the Child Analysis Committee. Also collected are records from Sylvester's work with the Mt. Zion nursery school, California State Personnel Board, Marin Health Services and teaching material from her time as an educator. Personal items included correspondence, both personal and professional, biographical material, therapy toys used in practice and and small collection of photos, slides and negatives.

Language of materials: All materials in English.

creator: Sylvester, Emmy

Conditions governing access
For use by researchers and students of psychoanalysis subject to archive rules and regulations.

Conditions governing use
Subject to copyright restrictions.

Preferred citation
'The San Francisco Center for Psychoanalysis Archives' Record Unit/Accession # and/or Collection Title.

Biographical note
Emmy Sylvester was born in Vienna on August 4th, 1910. Her father worked as a civil engineer for the Austrian government as a bridge builder who died during her early adult years. She attended the University of Vienna and received her Ph.D. in psychology in 1932. As a psychologist she worked with Charlotte Buhler on, among other things, an early study of infant sleep patterns. She continued to study medicine, receiving her medical degree in 1937 before interning at the Children's Hospital in Vienna in 1937.

Sylvester left Vienna for the United States in 1938 shortly before the annexation of Austria by Nazi Germany. Traveling to Chicago, she served another internship at Michael Reese hospital in 1938 followed by a residency there in 1938 and 1939. She continued her analytic training begun in Vienna at the Chicago institute. She was also associated with the Orthogenic School and worked for some time with Bettelheim on a number of projects. She remained with the Michael Reese Hospital during the 40's on the staff and as a teacher before moving to San Francisco in 1951.

Becoming a training analyst shortly after arriving in the Bay Area, she served on the teaching staff at Mt. Zion and Letterman Hospitals where she practiced with friends and colleagues Emmanuel Windholz and Norman Reider and was a Clinical Professor at Stanford Medical School. Moving to Mill Valley in the 60's, she continued her psychological work with children as evidenced by her nearly two hundred patient files over fifteen years of child psychotherapy.

Though married twice she never had children. Retiring in 1990, Emmy Sylvester died on August 9th, 1994 just five days after her 85th birthday, after a four year long battle with Alzheimer's disease.

Arrangement note
The collection has been arranged in the following series: Child Psychology, Non-child psychology work, Manuscripts, Correspondence, Patient files, biographical material, and Miscellaneous. Photographs, negatives and slides and therapy toys are housed separately from the main collection.

Scope and contents note
The Sylvester papers include work done by Sylvester both in the realm of child psychology and without, primarily dedicated to patient files from fifteen years of child therapy practice and manuscripts both written by and collected by Sylvester. Smaller sections of child psychology include notes, case discussions, business finances, and work with the Child Analysis Committee. Also collected are records from Sylvester's work with the Mt. Zion nursery school, California State Personnel Board, Marin Health Services and teaching material from her time as an educator. Personal items included correspondence, both personal and professional, biographical material, therapy toys used in practice and and small collection of photos, slides and negatives.

The materials in the collection span the years 1924-1995 and feature work done by Sylvester and contemporaries. The vast majority of the collection is dedicated to nearly two hundred patient files from her work as a child psychoanalyst. Material is
arranged by date where dates exist with patient files organized alphabetically by patients last initial and manuscripts collected by Sylvester arranged alphabetically by author's last name. Collections of brochures from treatments centers and psychoanalysis schools, reprints and handwritten note are undated and arranged only at the series level. Correspondence with Dr. Egan is in German and has been filed separately from English correspondence. Dated material primarily spans the dates 1960-1984.

Photos, negatives and slides and therapy toys are housed separately from the main collection.

**Subjects and Indexing Terms**

Child analysis  
Children -- Research  
Correspondence  
Photographs  
Psychoanalysis -- Case studies  
Psychoanalysis--Study and teaching  
Reprints  
Toys

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**Child Psychology 1940-1982**

Language of Material: English  
Physical Description: 8.0 Folder

Box 1, Folder 1-5  
**Notes 1960-1975**

Language of Material: English  
Physical Description: 5.0 Folder

Box 2, Folder 1  
**Case Discussions 1940-1942**

Language of Material: English  
Physical Description: 1.0 Folder

Box 2, Folder 2  
**Child analysis committee 1948-1950**

Language of Material: English  
Physical Description: 1.0 Folder

Box 2, Folder 3  
**Business finances 1967-1982**

Language of Material: English  
Physical Description: 1.0 Folder

**Non-child psychology work 1944-1973**

Language of Material: English  
Physical Description: 4.0 Folder

Box 2, Folder 4  
**Nursery school grant proposal Undates**

Language of Material: English  
Physical Description: 1.0 Folder

Box 2, Folder 5  
**Mt. Zion nursery school 1966-1973**

Language of Material: English  
Physical Description: 1.0 Folder
Box 2, Folder 6  California State personel board 1944-1951
  Language of Material: English
  Physical Description: 1.0 Folder

Box 2, Folder 7  Marin Health Services 1966-1967
  Physical Description: 1.0 Folder

Manuscripts 1936-1987
  Language of Material: English
  Physical Description: 35.0 Folder

Box 2, Folder 8, Box 3, Folder 1-4, Box 4, Folder 1-5  Manuscripts written by Sylvester Undated
  Language of Material: English
  Physical Description: 10.0 Folder

Box 5, Folder 1  Manuscripts collected by Sylvester A-DEL undated
  Language of Material: English
  Physical Description: 1.0 Folder

Box 5, Folder 2  Manuscripts collected by Sylvester DEV-GIL undated
  Language of Material: English
  Physical Description: 1.0 Folder

Box 5, Folder 3  Manuscripts collected by Sylvester GLE-HOL undated
  Language of Material: English
  Physical Description: 1.0 Folder

Box 5, Folder 4  Manuscripts collected by Sylvester HOR-KIL undated
  Language of Material: English
  Physical Description: 1.0 Folder

Box 6, Folder 1  Manuscripts collected by Sylvester KIL undated
  Language of Material: English
  Physical Description: 1.0 Folder

Box 6, Folder 2  Manuscripts collected by Sylvester KIL-KOR undated
  Physical Description: 1.0 Folder

Box 6, Folder 3  Manuscripts collected by Sylvester KOR-O undated
  Language of Material: English
  Physical Description: 1.0 Folder

Box 6, Folder 4  Manuscripts collected by Sylvester- Papers from the Meninger Clinic 1936-1937
  Language of Material: English
  Physical Description: 1.0 Folder

Box 7, Folder 1  Manuscripts collected by Sylvester PEL-WAL undated
  Language of Material: English
  Physical Description: 1.0 Folder

Box 7, Folder 2  Manuscripts collected by Sylvester WAN-WEI undated
  Language of Material: English
  Physical Description: 1.0 Folder
Manuscripts collected by Sylvester WEI-Z undated
Physical Description: 1.0 Folder

Manuscripts collected by Sylvester- Unknown author undated
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 1.0 Folder

Teaching, seminar and course material 1946-1958 1946-1958
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 1.0 Folder

Teaching, seminar and course material 1959-1962 1959-1962
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 1.0 Folder

Physical Description: 1.0 Folder

Teaching, seminar and course material 1968-1987 1968-1987
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 1.0 Folder

Teaching, seminar and course material undated undated
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 2.0 Folder

School and treatment brochures 1965-1984
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 2.0 Folder

Reprints 1967-1974
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 1.0 Folder

Correspondence 1924-1990
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 7.0 Folder

Correspondence 1924-1967 1924-1967
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 1.0 Folder

Correspondence 1967-1974 1967-1974
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 1.0 Folder

Correspondence 1974-1989 1974-1984
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 1.0 Folder
**Correspondence 1924-1990**

- **Box 11, Folder 4**
  - **Correspondence undated undated**
  - Language of Material: English
  - Physical Description: 1.0 Folder

- **Box 11, Folder 5, Box 12, Folder 1**
  - **Correspondence- Postcards 1955-1990**
  - Language of Material: English
  - Physical Description: 1.0 Folder

- **Box 12, Folder 2**
  - **Correspondence with Dr. Egan in German 1970-1975**
  - Language of Material: English
  - Physical Description: 1.0 Folder

**Patient Files 1964-1984**

- Language of Material: English
- Physical Description: 189.0 Folder

- **Box 12, Folder 3-28, Box 13, Folder 1-34, Box 14, Folder 1-55, Box 15, Folder 1-29**
  - **Patient files 1964-1984**
  - Language of Material: English
  - Physical Description: 143.0 Folder

- **Box 17, Folder 1-21, Box 15, Folder 30-36, Box 16, Folder 1-18**
  - **Patient files with drawings 1964-1984**
  - Language of Material: English
  - Physical Description: 46.0 Folder

- **Box 17, Folder 22**
  - **Biographical material 1943-1995**
  - Language of Material: English
  - Physical Description: 1.0 Folder

- **Box 17, Folder 23**
  - **Miscellaneous**
  - Physical Description: 1.0 Folder

- **Box 18, Folder 2, Box 18, Folder 1**
  - **Manuscripts in German**
    - Language of Material: German
    - Physical Description: 2.0 Folder
Photographs, negatives and slides

Physical Description: 1.0 Folder

Therapy toys