
Register of the Sováry, Lily Papers, 1980-83

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Note

History --History, California --GeneralBiological and Medical Sciences --Bioethics --General

Register of the Lily Sováry Papers 1980-83

Collection number: MSS 83-12

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Lily Sováry Papers

Date (inclusive): 1980-1983

Collection number: MSS 83-12

Creator: Sováry, Lily

Collection Size: 2 boxes

Repository: University of California, San Francisco. Library. Archives and Special Collections.
San Francisco, California 94143-0840

Abstract: This collection includes materials dealing with Lilly Sováry's life and medical/health problems (Cushing's and Addison's diseases)

Includes correspondence with physicians, art work, photocopied materials.

Physical location: For current information on the location of these materials, please consult the Library's online catalog.

Language: English.

Provenance

Received 5/83, 10/83, 1/84, 10/84.

Access

Collection is open for research.

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Preferred Citation

Lily Sováry Papers, MSS 83-12, Archives & Special Collections, UCSF Library & CKM

Biographical Data

Lilly Sováry was born in Hungary and later became a U.S. citizen. She was a victim of Cushing's Disease (hyperadrenocorticism secondary to excessive pituitary secretion of adrenocorticotrophic hormone, or ACTH), for which she was first treated at Stanford University Hospital in 1965-1966. In 1967 she was transferred to the Metabolic Research Center at the University of California San Francisco Medical Center. She rejected adrenalectomy, then the customary treatment, but underwent experimental pituitary irradiation treatments at Stanford (in a 1979 interview with Kristine Bertelsen of UCSF's Medical Anthropology Department, Sováry stated that there were two series of irradiation treatments -one in 1966, and a second in 1968). In 1971 she was again admitted to the Metabolic Research Center at UCSF for experimental hormone treatment, but she became very ill and this treatment was discontinued.

In order to participate fully in her treatments, she began her own research into her condition and the treatment options available to her. At the same time, in order to stave off the prognosis of mental decline considered inherent to the disease, she began compiling her unusual creative response to her medical experiences. The resulting materials are a blend of medical documentation, correspondence, collage, poetry, meditation and unclassifiable creative expression that provide a compelling picture of the human organism in the face of catastrophic illness. As her treatment progressed, the author reviewed progressive drafts of her work with clinical professionals at UCSF. In October of 1973 she presented a series of three lectures titled "Education and Psychology" at the Langley Porter Clinic under the auspices of the Committee on Art & Lectures. In 1980 her interviews with Drs. Carroll Brodsky and George Stone were videotaped and used for the course "Psychosocial Aspects of Medical Care."

By the mid-1970s she had been diagnosed with Addison's Disease (caused by hypofunction of the adrenal glands), and by the time this collection was accessioned in 1983, her medical records (excerpted throughout these papers) identified at least eighteen different disorders.

Ms. Sováry has characterized her work as "a presentation of the case history of an individual's struggle with an incurable disease and an unconventional look at the medical world," and has chosen to deposit this work with UCSF's manuscript collection as a "'non-academic' work for educational purposes."

Scope and Content of the Collection

This collection includes correspondence with physicians, art work, and photocopied materials dealing with Lilly Sováry's life and medical/health problems (Cushing's and Addison's diseases)

There is one folder of correspondence and information about this collection and thirteen folders containing Sováry's writings. The general subject divisions are Sováry's own.

Indexing Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

Addison's disease

Cushing's syndrome

Sováry, Lilly--Archives

Box 1	"The Medical Portfolio" and "The Notebook" - doctor/patient relationship; incurable diseases; irradiation treatments; linear accelerator.
Box 1	"The Apocalyptic Ride" - therapeutic literature
Box 1	"The Legacy of an Actualist" - educational psychology
Box 1	"The Interview" - psychosocial aspects of medical care, behavior
Box 2	"Solarium Angelicum" - a hymnal
Box 2	"Volume I & II 1968-1980. Studies on interpersonal communication & collaboration ... xcerpts ... language arts & linguistic contributions"
Box 2	"Volume III. Clinical resume: materia medica ... the Cushing's Syndrome ... A test case ... irradiation treatments"
Box 2	"Volume IV - VI. Discover the Pacific ... The emotional universe ... psychic space ... thanatological views ... cremation ... prose poetry ... laments ... beyond the frontiers of psychology"
Box 2	"Volume VII. Miscellaneous correspondence ... the ego ... an assignment study ... impressions of a medical student ... educational psychology"
Box 2	"Volume VIII. Miscellaneous addenda to the OMU papers. The nature of the chronically ill. Addenda"
Box 2	"Volume IX. The Open Mind University. A brief manifesto ... A declaration of interdependence"

Box 2

"Neurosemantics"

Box 2

"Three Fragments: 1. Insomnia 2. A voyage beyond the walls 3. Initiation"