Murray Kempton papers 5550183

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Description is written in: English.

Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Butler Library, 6th Floor
Columbia University, Mail Code 1127
535 W. 114th St.
New York, NY 10027
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Summary Information

Repository:	Rare Book and Manuscript Library
Creator:	Kempton, Murray, 1917-1997
Title:	Murray Kempton papers
ID:	5550183
ID:	MS#1644
Date [inclusive]:	1940-1997
Date [bulk]:	1954-1997
Physical Description:	12 linear feet 4 record containers 14 document boxes 1 flat box
Language of the Material:	English .
Abstract:	Murray Kempton was a renowned American journalist. He was born in Baltimore, Maryland in 1917 and died at the age of 79 in 1997. Kempton worked in the field for over 45 years for a variety of publications including: the *New York Post,* the *New York Review of Books,* the *World Telegram* and *World Sun,* and finally with *Newsday*. He was awarded numerous prizes including the Pulitzer. The collection consists largely of Kempton's columns clipped from newspapers and magazines. There is a selection of correspondence from the mid to late 1950s. Finally, there is a small amount of general files, which includes numerous drafts, notes and notebooks, and reviews of his books.

Preferred Citation

Identification of specific item; Date (if known); Murray Kempton Papers; Box and Folder; Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University Library.

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Biographical Note

James Murray Kempton was born in Baltimore, Maryland in 1917. He became an influential American journalist, working for over 45 years in the field. Kempton wrote for the *New York Post,* the *New York Review of Books,* the *World Telegram* and *World Sun,* and finally with *Newsday*. He was a radio commentator for CBS as well. Kempton was a prolific writer, producing often times four columns a week, totaling more than 10,000 over the course of his career. Additionally, he was the author of three books. Kempton was known as a liberal, but had many friends of differing political views, including William F. Buckley Jr. and Richard Nixon. Kempton was married twice, with three sons and one daughter. He lived his later life with New York Review of Books founding co-editor Barbara Epstein. Producing columns through to the end, Kempton died at the age of 79 in 1997.

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Summary

The Murray Kempton Papers consist largely of clippings of Kempton's magazine and newspaper columns. These span the course of his career and come from myriad sources covering a range of topics related to politics, art and music, and sports. The collection contains a small selection of correspondence, primarily from 1954-1958. Included here are letters to Kempton from such dignitaries as William F. Buckley Jr., Martin Luther King Jr., and Richard Nixon. The Murray Kempton Papers also contain a random assortment of drafts, manuscripts, and notebooks.

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Arrangement

Material is arranged into three series.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Revision Description

xml document instance created by Adrien Hilton EAD was imported spring 2019 as part of the ArchivesSpace Phase II migration. 2013-01-26 2019-05-20

Restrictions on Access

This collection is located off-site. You will need to request this material at least three business days in advance to use the collection in the Rare Book and Manuscript Library reading room.

Restrictions on Access

This collection has no restrictions.

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Immediate Source of Acquisition

2001.2002.36: Source of acquisition--Estate of Murray Kempton/Barbara Epstein. Method of acquisition--Gift; Date of acquisition--2002.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

2001.2002.41: Source of acquisition--Estate of Murray Kempton/Barbara Epstein. Method of acquisition--Gift; Date of acquisition--2002.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

2004.2005.M024: Source of acquisition--Estate of Murray Kempton/Barbara Epstein. Method of acquisition--Gift; Date of acquisition--2005.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

2006.2007.M23: Source of acquisition--Estate of Murray Kempton/Barbara Epstein. Method of acquisition--Gift; Date of acquisition--2006.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

2012.2013.M056: Source of acquisition--Estate of Murray Kempton/Barbara Epstein. Method of acquisition--Gift; Date of acquisition--2012.

Ownership and Custodial History

The Murray Kempton Papers were the gift of the Murray Kempton Estate and Barbara Epstein and came to the Rare Book and Manuscript Library in various installments from 1996-2006.

Processing Information

Papers processed Adrien Hilton January 2013.

Accruals

Materials may have been added to the collection since this finding aid was prepared. Contact rbml@columbia.edu for more information.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Journalism
- New York (N.Y.)
- Clippings (Information Artifacts)
- Newspaper Columns
- Kempton, Murray, 1917-1997

Collection Inventory

Series I: Newspaper and Magazine Columns, 1943-1997

Scope and Contents

Series I consists of Murray Kempton's newspaper and magazine columns. These span the whole of his career, ranging in date from 1943-1997. Numerous publications are represented, including: the *New Republic*, the *New York Post*, and *Newsday*. Kempton wrote over 10,000 columns in his career. It is difficult to say how many of those are represented in this series, however, it is an extensive sampling showcasing the breadth of Kempton's subject matter as well as his unique style.

Title/Description	Instances
1943	box 1
1949	box 1
1950	box 1
1951	box 1
1952	box 1
1953 Physical Description: 2 folders	box 1
1954 Physical Description: 2 folders	box 1
1955 Physical Description: 2 folders	box 1
1956 Physical Description: 2 folders	box 1
1957	box 1
1958 Physical Description: 2 folders	box 1
1959 Physical Description: 2 folders	box 1
1960 Physical Description: 2 folders	box 1
1961 Physical Description: 2 folders	box 1
1962	box 1
1963	box 1

Physical Description: 2 folders	
1964 Physical Description: 5 folders	box 1
1965 Physical Description: 9 folders	box 1
1966 Physical Description: 6 folders	box 1
1967 Physical Description: 5 folders	box 2
1968 Physical Description: 3 folders	box 2
1969 Physical Description: 3 folders	box 2
1970 Physical Description: 2 folders	box 2
1971 Physical Description: 2 folders	box 2
1972	box 2
1973	box 2
1974 Physical Description: 2 folders	box 2
1976	box 2
1977 Physical Description: 3 folders	box 2
1978 Physical Description: 4 folders	box 2
1979 Physical Description: 4 folders	box 2
1980 Physical Description: 5 folders	box 2
1981 Physical Description: 3 folders	box 2
1981	box 3

Physical Description: 2 folders	
1982 Physical Description: 5 folders	box 3
1983 Physical Description: 4 folders	box 3
1984 Physical Description: 6 folders	box 3
1985 Physical Description: 6 folders	box 3
1986 Physical Description: 5 folders	box 3
1987 Physical Description: 3 folders	box 3
1987 Physical Description: 4 folders	box 4
1988 Physical Description: 5 folders	box 4
1989 Physical Description: 3 folders	box 4
1989 Physical Description: 4 folders	box 5
1990 Physical Description: 7 folders	box 5
1991 Physical Description: 6 folders	box 6
1992 Physical Description: 2 folders	box 6
1992 Physical Description: 4 folders	box 7
1993 Physical Description: 2 folders	box 7
1994 Physical Description: 5 folders	box 7
1995	box 8

Physical Description: 2 folders	
1996 Physical Description: 3 folders	box 8
1997	box 8
undated Physical Description: 5 folders	box 8
Various Dates, 1965-1992 Physical Description: 2 folders	box 9
Various Dates, 1990-1997	box 19
The 1960s, 1966-1968	box 9
Artists, 1986-1987	box 9
Arts, 1965-1990	box 9
Bush, George, 1983-1991	box 9
Civil Rights/1960s, 1957-1991	box 9
Civil Rights, 1965-1969	box 9
Clinton, Bill, 1992	box 9
Courts and Lawyers, 1964-1991	box 9
Government Operations, 1966-1991	box 9
Heroes, 1965-1988 Physical Description: 2 folders	box 9
Kennedy Family, 1980	box 9
Honest Business, 1966-1990	box 9
Labor, 1966-1991, undated, 1966-1991, undated Physical Description: 3 folders	box 9
Johnson, Lyndon Baines/Humphrey, Hubert, 1966-1968	box 9
Mafia, 1966-1992	box 9
Media, 1982-1986	box 10
Music, 1978-1981	box 10
New York Mayoral Politics, City Politics, 1965-1991	box 10
New York State Politics, 1966-1990	box 10
New York Stories, 1966-1991	box 10
Nixon, Richard, 1964-1981	box 10

Physical Description: 2 folders	
Politicians, 1964-1991	box 10
Pope John Paul II, 1979-1981	box 10
Pope/Religion, 1981-1985	box 10
Powers and Principalities, 1967-1990	box 10
Reagan, Ronald, 1976-1985	box 10
Rebels, 1966-1983, undated, 1966-1983, undated Physical Description: 2 folders	box 10
Russia/USSR, 1981-1985	box 10
Satan, 1981-1991	box 10
Sports, 1965-1992	box 10
Unfairness, 1964-1992 Physical Description: 4 folders	box 10
Washington DC, 1982-1987	box 10
Westmoreland, General William, 1984	box 10
Williams, Wayne, 1982-1985 Physical Description: 2 folders	box 10

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Series II: Correspondence, 1953-1997

Scope and Contents

Series II contains a sampling of Kempton's correspondence. There were alphabetical correspondence files in the collection ranging in date from 1953-1958. Included in these files are letters from William F. Buckley Jr., Howard Fast, Langston Hughes, Martin Luther King Jr., and Richard Nixon. The correspondence often expresses great praise as well as criticism of Kempton's work. This series also contains condolence letters to Kempton and his wife following the tragic death of their son and daughter-in-law. There are also a number of personal cards, for birthdays, holidays, and illness.

Title/Description	Instances
A1954-1958 Physical Description: 2 folders	box 11
B1955-1958 Physical Description: 2 folders	box 11
C, 1954-1957, undated, 1954-1957, undated Physical Description: 2 folders	box 11
D1955-1958	box 11

Physical Description: 2 folders	
E-F, 1954-1958 Physical Description: 2 folders	box 11
G1954-1958 Physical Description: 2 folders	box 11
H-J, 1953-1958 Physical Description: 2 folders	box 11
K-L, 1953-1958 Physical Description: 2 folders	box 11
M1953-1958 Physical Description: 2 folders	box 11
N-O, 1955-1958 Physical Description: 2 folders	box 11
P-Q, 1954-1958 Physical Description: 2 folders	box 11
R1954-1957 Physical Description: 2 folders	box 12
S1954-1957 Physical Description: 2 folders	box 12
T-V, 1955-1958 Physical Description: 2 folders	box 12
W1954-1958 Physical Description: 2 folders	box 12
X-Z, 1954	box 12
1960s	box 12
1970s	box 12
1980s	box 12
1990s Physical Description: 4 folders	box 12
undated	box 12
Birthday Cards, undated	box 13
Cards, 1990s Physical Description: 2 folders	box 13
Condolence Letters for Death of Beverly Kempton, 1995	box 13

Condolence Letters for Death of James Kempton, 1971 Physical Description: 3 folders	box 13
Epstein, Barbara, undated	box 13
Epstein, Helen, 1994, undated	box 13
Get Well Cards, 1997, undated Physical Description: 2 folders	box 13
Invitations, 1997, undated	box 13

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Series III: General Files, 1940-1997

Scope and Contents

Series III represents a somewhat random selection of Kempton's files. There are drafts, manuscripts, notebooks, and reviews for Kempton's books. A letter Kempton wrote expressing his conscientious objection to involvement in WWII as well as his honorable discharge form can be found in this series. Also included here are some personal materials related to Murray Kempton's marriages and his will and funeral arrangements.

Title/Description	Instances
America Comes of Middle Age--Reviews, 1963-1964	box 13
70th Birthday, 1987 Physical Description: 2 folders	box 13
75th Birthday, 1992	box 14
Ambler, Virginia--Estate, 1983-1985	box 14
American Academy and Institute of Art and Letters--Awards, 1978	box 14
American Society of Newspaper Editors--Award, 1984-1985	box 14
Appointment Book, 1986	box 14
APSA Annual Meeting--Carey McWilliams Award, 1984	box 14
Articles About, 1956-1998, undated, 1956-1998, undated Physical Description: 4 folders	box 14
Autobiography (?)--Draft, 1994, 1997 Physical Description: 2 folders	box 14
Awards and Recognitions, 1976-1995	box 14
Awards and Recognitions, 1973-1975	box 19
Biographical Material, undated	box 14

The Briar Patch: The People of the State of New York v. Lumumba Shakur et al.	
Correspondence, 1973-1974, 1996	box 14
Reviews and Clippings, 1973-1974	box 14
Dorsey, Thomas A./Gospel Music, undated	box 14
Drafts, 1940, undated Physical Description: 4 folders	box 14
Drawings of, 1987-1996, undated	box 19
Esquire--Article on Robert Oppenheimer--Draft and Correspondence,, 1982	box 14
Expenses, 1981-1995 Physical Description: 7 folders	box 14
Firing Line Newsletter, 1984-1994	box 14
Honorable Discharge Form, 1945	box 14
Funeral Arrangements and Correspondence about Will, 1989-1997	box 14
Kempton, Beverly--Wedding Service Book, undated	box 14
Kempton, Christopher, 1960 1996, 1960, 1996	box 14
Kempton, Christopher--Trust, 1992-1996	box 14
Kempton, Mina--Divorce Papers, 1962	box 14
Lasky, Victor--Trial, 1954	box 14
Lists, undated	box 14
Looking Glass Library, 1959-1960	box 14
Los Angeles Times Syndicate, 1985	box 14
Manuscript--Draft, undated Physical Description: 9 folders	box 14
Manuscript--Draft, undated Physical Description: 2 folders	box 15
National Book Awards, 1974	box 15
Newsday and Murkempt Enterprises, Inc.--Agreement, 1982	box 15
Notebooks, undated Physical Description: 8 folders	box 15
Notebooks, undated	box 16

Physical Description: 5 folders	
Notes, undated Physical Description: 4 folders	box 16
Obituaries and Retrospectives, 1997	box 16
Obituaries and Retrospectives, 1997	box 19
Pamphlets Written by, 1970, undated	box 16
Part of Our Time	
1955-1958	box 16
Correspondence, 1955	box 16
Reviews, 1955-1956	box 16
Reviews, 1955	box 17
Photographs, 1992, undated Physical Description: 2 folders	box 17
Photographs, undated	box 19
Police Department Press Pass (in frame), 1993	box 19
Pulitzer Prize	
Clippings, 1985	box 17
Correspondence/Congratulations, 1985 Physical Description: 2 folders	box 17
Randolph Family Notes, 1951	box 17
Rebellions, Perversities and Main Events--Reviews, 1993-1994	box 17
Spectrum Radio Broadcasts, 1971-1974 Physical Description: 2 folders	box 17
Spectrum Radio Broadcasts, 1971-1978 Physical Description: 2 folders	box 18
Speeches, 1962-1988 Physical Description: 2 folders	box 18
Wilmington Evening Post--Scrapbook of Clippings,, 1946	box 18

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