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Albert Lasker papers 6906282

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English

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Rare Book and Manuscript Library

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Summary Information

Repository:	Rare Book and Manuscript Library
Creator:	Lasker, Albert Davis, 1880-1952
Title:	Albert Lasker papers
ID:	6906282
ID:	MS#1460
Date [inclusive]:	1928-1952
Date [bulk]:	1946-1952
Physical Description:	4.62 linear feet 11 document boxes
Language of the Material:	English .
Abstract:	Albert Lasker (1880-1952) is best known as an advertising executive and philanthropist. His papers contain personal and business correspondence, as well as material related to Lasker's activities and interests, particularly with regard to medicine and public health issues.

Preferred Citation

Identification of specific item; Date (if known); Albert Lasker papers; Box and Folder; Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University Library.

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Biographical / Historical

Albert Davis Lasker was born in Freiberg, Germany, on May 1, 1880, but was raised in Galveston, Texas. He was the third child of Morris Lasker, an investor and banker, and Nettie Davis Lasker.

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Biographical / Historical

Lasker was initially interested in journalism, and worked as a newspaper reporter during his teens. His father disapproved of this career, and in 1898 secured a position for him at Lord and Thomas, an advertising firm in Chicago. Lasker rose quickly at Lord and Thomas, becoming a partner in 1903, and sole owner within the next decade. He ultimately sold the firm to his partners and retired from active business at the end of 1942. Considered a pioneer in modern advertising, the firm's clients included Kotex, Lucky Strike, Pepsodent, Kleenex, Palmolive, Studebaker, Sunkist, RCA, and Frigidaire.

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Biographical / Historical

Lasker's interests were not limited to the world of advertising. From 1916-1925, he was part owner of the Chicago Cubs. Indeed, the Lasker plan for the reorganization of baseball after the 1919 "Black Sox" scandal paved the way for the election of the sport's first commissioner in 1920. He also supported the University of Chicago. He donated his private golf course to the university, and also gave one million dollars to establish the Lasker Foundation for Medical Research in 1928. He served as a trustee of the university from 1937-1942.

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Biographical / Historical

In addition to sports and education, Lasker also had an interest in politics that spanned some 34 years. Although he was a Republican, he served in both Republican and Democratic administrations. In 1917, he served as a special assistant to the Secretary of Agriculture under President Woodrow Wilson. He served as an Assistant to the Chairman of the National Republican Committee from 1918-1920, and worked on the campaign and election of President Warren Harding. He then served as the Chair of the United States Shipping Board from 1920-1923. Later, he was a floor leader for the Illinois delegation to the Republican National Convention in 1940.

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Biographical / Historical

Concerned with Jewish affairs on both a local and national level in the early 1940s, Lasker was the director of the Jewish Charities of Chicago and a member of the executive board of the American Jewish Committee. In memory of his father, who had an interest in agriculture for Jews, Lasker and other family members purchased farming land in Pennsylvania that allowed for the training of poor Jewish immigrants in agriculture. He also donated to Hadassah and other organizations. In 1950, he and his wife made a trip to Israel, which he described as the highlight of his life.

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Biographical / Historical

A renowned philanthropist, Lasker founded the Albert and Mary Lasker Foundation with his wife in 1942, dedicated to the support of biomedical research for curing disease and improving human life. The foundation presents annual awards recognizing those who have made major advances in the understanding, diagnosis, treatment, cure, and prevention of human disease. The awards are considered to be among the most prestigious in medical science. In 1944, Lasker was the primary force behind a fundraising drive to increase the money spent on cancer research in the United States. He was also interested in federal involvement in medical issues, and was involved in efforts to create national health insurance and a national fund for medical education during the Truman administration.

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Biographical / Historical

Lasker died of cancer on May 30, 1952, in New York City.

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Scope and Content

Albert Lasker is best known as an advertising executive and philanthropist. His papers consist primarily of correspondence and subject files from the last five years of his life. During these years, he experienced bouts of ill health that forced him to restrict his activities for extended periods. His papers do document his interests and philanthropic work in medicine, particularly as related to cancer and proposals for national health insurance and a national medical education fund. There is also some material related to the Lasker Foundation for Medical Research at the University of Chicago.

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Scope and Content

The collection includes a small amount of personal material, including appointment books, biographical information, clippings, contribution information, and mailing lists.

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Scope and Content

There is necessarily overlap between Albert Lasker's papers and the more extensive papers of his wife, Mary Lasker, whom he married in 1940. Additional information on the couple's philanthropic work is filed with her papers.

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Arrangement

This collection is arranged in two series.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Revision Description

File created. xml document instance created by Carrie Hintz EAD was imported spring 2019 as part of the ArchivesSpace Phase II migration. 2009-03-05 2009-04-17 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.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Source of acquisition--Lasker, Mary. Method of acquisition--Gift; Date of acquisition--1995.

Ownership and Custodial History

Bequest of Mary Lasker, 1995.

Processing Information

Papers processed cnc 7/--/2008.

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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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Related Materials

Selected Related Material-- at Columbia

[Reminiscences of Albert Davis Lasker](#), Oral History Research Office

Selected Related Material-- at Columbia

[Mary Lasker Papers, 1940-1993](#) Rare Book & Manuscript Library

Selected Related Material-- at Columbia

[Reminiscences of Mary Lasker : oral history, 1965](#) Oral History Research Office

Selected Related Material-- at Columbia

[Reminiscences of Mary Lasker : oral history, 1982](#) Oral History Research Office

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Controlled Access Headings

- National health insurance -- Law and legislation -- United States
- Philanthropists -- United States
- Lasker, Albert Davis, 1880-1952
- Lasker, Mary
- Committee for the Nation's Health

- National Fund for Medical Education (U.S.)
- University of Chicago. Lasker Foundation for Medical Research

Collection Inventory

Series I: Correspondence, 1928-1952

Scope and Contents

Lasker's correspondence files include personal and business correspondence on both unique and routine matters. The files include correspondence handled by both Lasker and his secretary. Notable correspondents include Claude Pepper, David Sarnoff, and Major Alexander P. de Seversky.

Title/Description	Instances	
A--General, 1947-1952	box 1	folder 1
B--General, 1947-1951	box 1	folder 2 to 3
C--General, 1947-1951 <u>Physical Description:</u> (2 Folders)	box 1	folder 4 to 5
Cale, Ruth, 1946-1951	box 1	folder 6
D--General, 1947-1952	box 1	folder 7
E--General, 1947-1952	box 2	folder 1
European File, 1949, 1951, 1949, 1951 <u>Physical Description:</u> (2 Folders)	box 2	folder 2 to 3
Scope and Contents		
(Correspondence received by the Laskers while on vacation)		
Ewing, Oscar R., 1950	box 2	folder 4
F--General, 1950-1952 <u>Physical Description:</u> (2 Folders)	box 2	folder 5 to 6
G--General, 1950-1951	box 2	folder 7
Gimbel, Bernard, 1950	box 2	folder 8
Golden, John, 1950-1952	box 2	folder 9
Scope and Contents		
(includes John Gunther)		
H--General		
1950-1951	box 2	folder 10

1949-1951	box 3	folder 1
Harvard, 1948	box 3	folder 2
Health Insurance, 1947	box 3	folder 3
Scope and Contents		
(Re: National Health Insurance bills)		
I--General, 1949-1950	box 3	folder 4
J--General, 1949-1951	box 3	folder 5
K--General, 1949-1951	box 3	folder 6
L--General, 1949-1951	box 3	folder 7
Lasker Foundation for Medical Research--University of Chicago,, 1928	box 3	folder 8 to 9
<u>Physical Description:</u> (2 Folders)		
Lord & Thomas, 1950	box 3	folder 10
M--General, 1947-1951	box 4	folder 1 to 4
<u>Physical Description:</u> (4 Folders)		
Madison File, 1951	box 4	folder 5
Scope and Contents		
(Correspondence with the University of Wisconsin regarding an honorary degree for Mary Lasker)		
Mahler, Ernst, 1950-1951	box 4	folder 6
Mc General, 1949-1950	box 4	folder 7
Meyer, Andre, 1949-1950	box 4	folder 8
Murray, Senator James E., 1950-1951	box 4	folder 9
N--General, 1949-1951	box 5	folder 1 to 2
O--General, 1949-1951	box 5	folder 3
Oughterson, Dr. A.W., 1946	box 5	folder 4
P General, 1950-1951	box 5	folder 5
Patterson, Chat, 1950	box 5	folder 6
Pepper, Senator Claude, 1950-1951	box 5	folder 7
Q--General, 1948-1952	box 5	folder 8
Scope and Contents		
(Joint Queensview Housing Enterprise)		
R General, 1949-1952		

<u>Physical Description</u> : (2 Folders)	box 5	folder 9 to 10
Rosensohn & Family, Etta Lasker (Mrs. Samuel), 1951-1952	box 5	folder 11
Scope and Contents		
(Lasker's sister)		
S--General, 1949-1952	box 6	folder 1 to 2
<u>Physical Description</u> : (2 Folders)		
Sarnoff, David, 1950-1951	box 6	folder 3 to 4
<u>Physical Description</u> : (2 Folders)		
Selz, A.K., 1950-1952	box 6	folder 5
Seversky, Major Alexander P. de, 1947-1951	box 6	folder 6 to 7
Simon & Schuster, 1950-1951	box 6	folder 8
Spies, Dr. Tom, 1950-1951	box 6	folder 9
T--General, 1947-1951	box 6	folder 10
U--General, 1949	box 6	folder 11
V--General, 1949-1952	box 6	folder 12
W--General, 1948-1952	box 7	folder 1 to 2
<u>Physical Description</u> : (2 Folders)		
X-Y--General, 1950-1952	box 7	folder 3
Z--General, 1949	box 7	folder 4

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Series II: Subject Files, 1933-1952

Scope and Contents

This series contains subject files documenting Lasker's activities and interests. Most of these files are related to medicine, and include material on cancer, the Committee for the Nation's Health, the Lasker Foundation for Medical Research at the University of Chicago, the National Fund for Medical Education, Michael Reese Hospital, and legislation on national health insurance (1947-1950). The series also includes a small amount of personal material, including appointment books, biographical information, clippings, contribution information, and mailing lists.

Title/Description	Instances	
American Committee for a United Europe, 1949-1950	box 7	folder 5
American Jewish Committee, 1947-1951	box 7	folder 6

Appointments, 1947 January-1948 January, 1950 1951 April-1952 January, 1947, January, 1950, 1951 April-1952 January <u>Physical Description</u> : 3 folders	box 7	
Arthritis, 1948	box 7	folder 7
Atomic Information, 1946-1947 Scope and Contents (Includes correspondence with Albert Einstein)	folder 8	
Cancer		
Adams, John, 1946	box 8	folder 1
American Cancer Society, 1946-1947, 1949-1952, 1946-1947, 1949-1952 <u>Physical Description</u> : (3 Folders)	box 8	folder 2 to 4
Memo of Interview with Mr. Jacobi in Re: Cancer, 1946	box 8	folder 5
New York Cancer Committee, 1949-1952 <u>Physical Description</u> : (2 Folders)	box 8	folder 6 to 7
Committee for the Nation's Health Scope and Contents (includes correspondence with Chat Patterson)		
1949 January-June	box 8	folder 8
1949 July-December	box 9	folder 1
Contributions (Given), 1949	box 9	folder 2
Contributions (Foundation) Given, 1950	box 9	folder 3
Cortisone, 1950	box 9	folder 4
Friends of Democracy, 1947-1951 <u>Physical Description</u> : (4 Folders)	box 9	folder 5 to 8
Health Insurance		
Testimony on National Health Insurance Bills, 1947 July 11 <u>Physical Description</u> : (3 Folders)	box 9	folder 9 to 11
1949 January-June <u>Physical Description</u> : (2 Folders)	box 9	folder 12 to 13
1949 July-December	box 10	folder 1
Lasker, Albert D. Testimony on National Health Insurance Bills, 1947 July 11 & 1949, 1947 July 11, 1949	box 10	folder 2

1950	box 10	folder 3
National Health Bill (Speeches, Articles, Etc.), 1947-1948, Undated, 1947-1948, Undated	box 10	folder 4
Bills, 1949	box 10	folder 5
Jewish Affairs--Organizations, 1950	box 10	folder 6
Lasker, Albert D.		
Clippings, 1950-1952	box 10	folder 7
Personal, 1950	box 10	folder 8
Trustee, 1947-1950	box 10	folder 9
Lasker Foundation for Medical Research (University of Chicago), 1933-1937, 1949-1951, 1933-1937, 1949-1951	box 10	folder 10
Luckman, Charles, 1946-1950	box 10	folder 11
Mailing Lists, 1951-1952, Undated, 1951-1952, Undated	box 10	folder 12
Scope and Contents		
(Lists for Christmas cards, thank-you notes, etc.)		
The Marshall Plan, 1947-1948	box 10	folder 13
Medical Education, 1948-1950	box 10	folder 14
Medical Research--General, 1928-1952	box 11	folder 1
Michael Reese Hospital		
The Psychiatric and Psychosomatic Institute, 1945	box 11	folder 2
1945, 1949-1950, 1945, 1949-1950	box 11	folder 3
Motion Pictures, 1946-1952	box 11	folder 4
<i>The Nation</i> , 1949-1950	box 11	folder 5
National Broadcasting Company (NBC)--Niles Trammell/John Royal, 1950-1952	box 11	folder 6
National Committee on Housing, Inc., 1948-1949	box 11	folder 7
National Foundation for Medical Education, 1949-1952	box 11	folder 8 to 9
<u>Physical Description:</u> (2 Folders)		
New School of Social Research, 1948-1949	box 11	folder 10
Public Affairs Expense, 1949	box 11	folder 11
Theatrical Productions, 1949-1951	box 11	folder 12
Travel, 1951	box 11	folder 13

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