

Finding Aid to the Jessica Barshay Papers

(#2003-04)

Repository: Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society

Collection Title: Jessica Barshay papers

Collection Number: 2003-04

Physical Description: 4 linear feet (3 cartons)

Creator: Barshay, Jessica

Date (inclusive): 1957-1998, bulk 1980-1998

Language of Material: English

Abstract: Jessica Barshay (1940-1998) was a psychotherapist who lived with multiple disabilities, including asthma, Chronic Fatigue Immune Deficiency Syndrome (CFIDS), and Multiple Chemical Sensitivities (MCS). Barshay was a lesbian feminist and identified strongly with both Jewish and Buddhist faiths. The collection includes correspondence, journals, subject files, newsletters, medical records, and professional papers.

Preferred Citation:

[Identification of item], Jessica Barshay papers (2003-04), The Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society.

Conditions Governing Access:

Collection is open for research, with the exception of five folders containing medical records, Social Security Disability application materials, and medical correspondence. These have been restricted until the year 2048, fifty years after Barshay's 1998 death.

Publication Rights:

Copyright to material has been transferred to the GLBT Historical Society. All requests for reproductions and/or permission to publish or quote from material must be submitted in writing to the GLBT Historical Society Archivist.

Acquisition Information:

The collection was donated to the GLBT Historical Society by Judith Masur in 2003.

Processing Information:

Finding Aid created by Isaac Fellman in 2019, based partly on earlier catalog entries.

This finding aid uses terminology for LGBTQ people that was in current use at the time of its creation. Descriptive language for queer identities evolves quickly and some of these terms may now be dated or even offensive. Finding aids are themselves historical documents; they reflect the moment in which they were written and often reflect the terms that subjects used for themselves. Please contact the GLBT Historical Society Archivist with questions or comments.

Biographical/Organizational History Note: Jessica Barshay was a psychotherapist who lived with multiple disabilities, including asthma, Chronic Fatigue Immune Deficiency Syndrome (CFIDS), and Multiple Chemical Sensitivities (MCS). Barshay, a Jewish lesbian feminist, received her Master's in Social Work from UC Berkeley and practiced in the Bay Area until moving to Arizona with her partner, Judith Masur, in an attempt to find a less polluted climate and improve her quality of life. Barshay died by suicide in 1998.

Scope and Content: The collection includes correspondence, personal journals, publications, subject files, newsletters, medical records, and professional papers. A considerable amount of material relates to Barshay's Jewish and Buddhist spirituality, as well as fat activism. Carton 3 consists entirely of journals and newsletters for the community of people with CFIDS, MCS, and related illnesses.

Indexing Terms:

Sexual minorities with disabilities

Multiple chemical sensitivity

Chronic fatigue syndrome

Lesbians