A Finding Aid to the
Fritz Bamberger Papers

Manuscript Collection No. 78
Collection Summary

Title: Fritz Bamberger Papers
Dates: 1947-1966
Collection Number: MS-78
Repository: The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives
Creator: Bamberger, Fritz, 1902-1984
Extent: 0.8 linear feet (2 Hollinger boxes)
Language of the Material: English

Administrative Information

Biographical Sketch
Fritz Bamberger was born in Frankfurt-am-Main, Germany on January 7, 1902. In 1923, he was awarded his Ph.D. in intellectual thought from the University of Berlin. Bamberger worked as a research professor at the Hochschule für die Wissenscraft des Judentums in 1926. From 1934 to 1938, Bamberger served as the director of the Berlin Jewish Teacher's Institute, the Berlin Jewish Lehrhaus as well as the director of the Board of Education for Jews in Berlin. From 1929 to 1932 he collaborated with Leo Strauss on the publication of Moses Mendelssohn’s philosophical works in the Jubilaumsausgabe.

Bamberger came to the United States in 1939, teaching Jewish Philosophy at the Chicago College of Jewish Studies and at the University of Chicago until 1942. In 1942, he joined the editorial board of Esquire, an influential men’s magazine, as the director of editorial research. In 1948, Bamberger became the editorial director of the magazine. From 1952-1956, Bamberger was the editor-in-chief of Coronet, before becoming the executive director of Esquire, Inc., until 1961. Bamberger returned to academia in 1961 as the Assistant to the President of the New York campus of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion and as a Professor of Intellectual History, where he remained until his death in 1984.

Bamberger served as the vice-president of the Leo Baeck Institute and was a member of the executive committee of the Frank L. Weil Institute for Studies in Religion and Humanities. He also served as the vice-chairman of the North American Branch of the World Union for Progressive Judaism. He contributed to many German, French, and American periodicals.

Bamberger was author of the following: Die Einstehung des Wertproblems in der Philosophie des 19 Jahrhunderts, (1924); Die Geistige Gestalt Moses Mendelssohns (1929); Das System des Maimonides (1935); Das neunte Schuljahr (1937); Zunz's Conception of History (1941); Leo Baeck: the Man and the Idea (1958); Julius Gutman-Professor of Judaism (1961).

Bamberger also edited the following works: Die Lehren des Judentums, 3 vols. (1928-1930); Moses Mendelssohns Gesammelte Schriften, 3 vols. (1929-1932); Herders Blaetter der Vorzeit (1936); Books are the Best Things (1962).

Bamberger married Kate Schwabe in 1933. They had two children, Michael and Gabrielle (Gay). Following his wife's death, Bamberger married Maria E. Nussbaum in 1966. Fritz Bamberger died on September 21, 1984 in New York.

Scope and Content
The Fritz Bamberger Papers were bequeathed by the Klau Library at the New York campus of HUC-JIR to the American Jewish Archives in 1979. The collection encompasses Bamberger's correspondence, catalogues, and press releases relating to University Publishers, Inc., as well as the creation of the Society of Jewish Bibliophiles. Bamberger founded the Society of Jewish Bibliophiles in 1961 as a testimony to what he perceived to be the Jewish commitment to learning and knowledge. Unique to Fritz Bamberger’s papers are his research notes and correspondence on his survey of the growing needs of rabbis, which he conducted from 1947-1966. Researchers interested in examining the transitions and paradoxes of rabbinic life in post-World War II America should examine these surveys, which can be found in 2/1 through 2/3.

Terms of Access
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Preferred Citation
Footnotes and bibliographic references should refer to the Fritz Bamberger Papers and the American Jewish Archives. A suggestion for at least the first citation is as follows:

[Description], [Date], Box #, Folder #. MS-78. Fritz Bamberger Papers. American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Provenance
Received from Klau Library, New York, N.Y., 1979.

Processing Information
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Index Terms

Subjects
Jewish literature / Publishers and publishing / Rabbis

Personal Names

Corporate Names
American Council for Judaism / Hebrew Union College Press / Society of Jewish Bibliophiles

Series A. Research and Correspondence, 1947-1966

Box and Folder Listing

Box 1. Folder 2. Society of Jewish Bibliophiles. "Books are the Best Things.", 1962-1963
Box 1. Folder 5. Society of Jewish Bibliophiles. Dienstag, Jacob I., 1965
Box 1. Folder 23. Society of Jewish Bibliophiles. Miscellaneous, undated

Box 2. Folder 1. Survey of the Needs of Rabbis [reports, correspondence], 1947-1956
Box 2. Folder 2. Survey of the Needs of Rabbis [reports, correspondence], 1961-1962
Box 2. Folder 3. Survey of the Needs of Rabbis [reports, correspondence], 1963-1965