

Guide to the Barbara Swain Papers, approximately 1926-1965

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Collection Summary

Repository:	Archives and Special Collections Library, Vassar College Libraries
Creator:	Swain, Barbara, 1898-
Title:	Barbara Swain Papers
Dates:	approximately 1926-1965
Quantity:	1.0 cubic feet (5 boxes)
Abstract:	Class materials, presumably from Swain's teaching career at Vassar College.

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Biographical Note

Barbara Swain was the daughter of George Fillmore and Katherine (Wheeler) Swain. She born in Boston, MA in 1898 and studied at the Winsor School in Boston from 1911 to 1916. In 1920, she graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Vassar College with an A.B. degree. At Vassar, she was the News Editor of the *Miscellany News*. From 1920-1922, she taught English and History at Francis Parker School in Chicago. She earned an A.M. degree in 1924 and Ph.D. in 1932 in Comparative Literature from Columbia University, where she was a research assistant from 1925 to 1926 in the English department. She also studied education at Harvard University and French literature and history at the Sorbonne. Awarded a Vassar Faculty Fellowship for 1958-1959, she attended courses at Columbia and carried on intensive private study of Old, Middle, and Theoretical-Modern English.

In 1926, Barbara Swain became an instructor of English at Vassar College. She was

promoted to Assistant Professor in 1931, and Associate Professor in 1937. In 1944, she was awarded the position of full professor. During her Vassar career, she taught a wide range of English language history courses as well as literature subjects from Shakespeare to Contemporary Poetry. One of Swain's major publications was *Fools and Folly during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (Columbia University Press, 1932).

Swain was also active in the local community. She was on the Board of Trustees of the Adriance Memorial Library in Poughkeepsie for 22 years. In addition, she was an active supporter of the Hudson Valley Philharmonic and the Bardavon 1869 Opera House, where she provided the funds for the renovation of the the Bardavon balcony as a memorial to her father.

Barbara Swain died 8 October 1984, in Bryn Mawr, PA

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Scope and Content Note

Class materials, presumably from Swain's teaching career at Vassar College.

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Subject Headings

Subjects:

- Literature--Study and teaching
- English Language--Study and teaching

Organizations:

- Vassar College--Faculty

VCL Categories

- Education
- Vassar College

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Encoding Information

Encoded by Jessica Kemm, September 2009.

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Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

Processing Information

Original processing date unknown.

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Container List

Folders 1.1 - 1.5	Wallace Steow
Folders 1.6 - 1.7	Words: Dictionary Stuff
Folder 2.1	Words: Dictionary Stuff
Folder 2.2	Sentence Analyses: Samples 14th Century - 20th Century
Folder 2.3	English 105
Folder 2.4	Poems
Folders 2.5 - 2.6	Grammar and sentence analysis
Folders 2.7 - 2.8	Basic theory of teaching: Word work
Folder 3.1	Ideas about literature: General/specific pieces
Folders 3.2 - 3.3	Sounds in English
Folder 3.4	Sample Course Plans
Folder 3.5	Poem comparison
Folder 4.1	Chronologies, public events
Folders 4.2 - 4.3	Short prose
Folder 4.4 - 4.5	O.E. and M.E. vocabs and passages
Folder 5.1	Notebook: Class notes 1964
Folder 5.2	Summers 1964-1965
Folder 5.3	B.M. Language and Linguistics, 20, 30, 79, 85
Folder 5.4	B.M. Language and Linguistics, 97-99, A-234
Folders 5.5 - 5.7	Assorted bibliographic

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▼ Details

Abstract

Class materials, presumably from Swain's teaching career at Vassar College.

Finding Aid Date

Dates: approximately 1926-1965