

# A Guide to the The Herbert J. Grossman, M.D. Collection, 1959-1982

Archives & Special Collections  
College of Staten Island Library, CUNY  
2800 Victory Blvd., 1L-216  
Staten Island, NY 10314

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Finding Aid by James Kaser

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## Overview of the Collection

**Collection No. :** WSSM-1

**Title:** Herbert J. Grossman, M.D. Collection

**Creator:** Herbert J. Grossman, M.D.

**Dates:** 1959-1982

**Extent:** 1 Linear Foot

**Abstract:** The Grossman Collection relates to two main topics: Grossman's testimony in the Willowbrook State School legal case (Parisi, et.al., vs. New York State) and his chairmanship of the American Association on Mental Deficiency's Terminology and Classification Committee. The Willowbrook related materials primarily consist of litigation records; however, there are also materials Grossman probably received on one of his visits to the school, as well as material he collected after his participation in the legal case had ended. The material related to

the visit consists of a wide range of directional publications distributed to staff in the school's academic department and are of interest for revealing the duties of teaching staff, kinds of activities in which staff involved students, and institutional expectations of students. The remainder of the Grossman Collection is primarily composed of drafts of the AAMD's *Classification in Mental Retardation*.

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## **Administrative Information**

### **Preferred Citation**

The Herbert J. Grossman, M.D. Collection, Archives & Special Collections, Department of the Library, College of Staten Island, CUNY, Staten Island, New York.

### **Acquisition**

Dr. Grossman donated these materials to the College of Staten Island during 2000-2001.

### **Processing Information**

Collection processed by James Kaser.

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## **Restrictions**

### **Access**

Access to this record group is unrestricted.

### **Copyright Notice**

The researcher assumes full responsibility for compliance with laws of copyright. Requests for permission to publish material from this collection should be discussed with the Coordinator of Archives & Special Collections.

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## Scope & Content Note

The Grossman Collection relates to two main topics: Grossman's testimony in the Willowbrook State School legal case (Parisi, et.al., vs. New York) and his chairmanship of the American Association on Mental Deficiency's Terminology and Classification Committee. The Willowbrook related materials primarily consist of litigation records. In addition to the decisions in the case and the consent decree, these include Grossman's testimony and that of Frederic Grunberg, Ph.D., another expert defense witness. Grunberg was the Deputy Commissioner of the New York State Department of Mental Hygiene in charge of Mental Retardation and Children's Services. Although other litigation records in this collection may be readily available elsewhere the Grossman and Grunberg affidavits are probably not readily available.

In addition to the litigation records, the Willowbrook component of the collection includes materials Grossman probably received on one of his visits to the school, as well as material he collected after his participation in the legal case had ended. The material related to the visit consists of a wide range of directional publications distributed to staff in the school's academic department and are of interest for revealing the duties of teaching staff, kinds of activities in which staff involved students, and institutional expectations of students.

Two items date from 1976, some time after Grossman's testimony. Of these, the most directly related to Willowbrook is an essay by Grunberg ("Program Analysis in a 'Right to Treatment' Litigation." ) that characterizes the nature of expert testimony in the Willowbrook case. The other item is a report by Philip R. Ziring, M.D. that communicates an assessment of medical services at Willowbrook and recommends improvements. Again these documents may not be available to researchers elsewhere.

The remainder of the Grossman Collection is primarily composed of drafts of the AAMD's *Classification in Mental Retardation*. Scant correspondence, few notes, and no meeting minutes make it somewhat difficult to understand the issues with which the committee dealt and identify points of disagreement. However, a close comparison of the various drafts may help in understanding these matters.

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## Arrangement

Herbert J. Grossman, M.D. Collection is divided into two series and several subseries:

### WILLOWBROOK STATE SCHOOL LEGAL CASE

- Correspondence
- Materials Related to Expert Testimony
- Willowbrook State School Related Materials

### TERMINOLOGY AND CLASSIFICATION COMMITTEE, AMERICAN ASSOCIATION ON MENTAL DEFICIENCY

- Correspondence
  - Drafts
  - Resource Materials
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## Index Terms

*This collection is indexed under the following terms.*

### Subject Names

Grossman, Herbert J., 1923-

### Subject Topics

Mental Deficiency -- Classification  
Mental Retardation -- Classification  
Willowbrook State School  
Willowbrook State School -- Trials, Litigation, etc.

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**Series Descriptions & Container Listing** (The following box/folder inventory is in the form of a table. If you are visually impaired and using a pdf reader you may need assistance and should contact the Archives at 718-982-4128)

<b>Series 1: Willowbrook State School Legal Case, 1959-1976. (Bulk: 1972-1974). .4 Linear Feet.</b>											

Materials related to Grossman's appearance as an expert witness for the defense in Parisi vs. New York State.									
<b>Series 1 - Subseries A: Correspondence, 1974.</b>									
Consists of three letters. Two letters are from Stanley Slawinski, Ph.D., Chief of Service, Willowbrook. In one letter Slawinski summarizes Grossman's reactions to Willowbrook and asks to prepare to talk about some of them in the upcoming trial. A form letter from Aletha Crowder, Ph.D., Research Psychologist at Rockland State Hospital invites Grossman to participate in a research project involving Willowbrook and Rockland.									
	<b>Box#</b>	<b>Folder#</b>	<b>Title</b>						
	1	1	Slawinski to Grossman, November 4, 1974 and November 14, 1974						
	1	2	Automated Goal Oriented Records for the Mentally Retarded Study, December 11, 1974						
<b>Series 1 - Subseries B: Materials Related to Expert Testimony, 1972-1975, 1981</b>									
Included here are the litigation records, including the affidavits of Grunberg and Grossman, as well as the "Post Hearing Memorandum", 2/15/1973; "Decision," 4/10/1973; "Consent Judgment," 4/30/1975; and "Memorandum to Modify," [1981].									
	<b>Box#</b>	<b>Folder#</b>	<b>Title</b>						
	1	3	Affidavit, Frederic Grunberg, July 14, 1972						
	1	4	Affidavit, Herbert J. Grossman, M.D., January 30, 1973						
	1	5	Post-Hearing Memorandum, February 15, 1973						
	1	6	Decision, April 10, 1973						

	1	7	Affidavit, Herbert J. Grossman, M.D., September 25, 1974						
	1	8	Consent Judgement, April 30, 1975						
	1	9	Memorandum to Modify, [1981]						
	<b>Series 1 - Subseries C: Willowbrook State School Related Materials, 1959-1964, 1976.</b>								
	Some of the materials that are, perhaps, of greatest interest in the collection are contained in this subseries. The items were probably given to Grossman as part of a site visit to the Willowbrook State School and include curriculum guides, materials lists, and staff directives for education department members dating between 1959 and 1964. Also present are two reports. The first, by Grunberg, analyzes "right to treatment" litigation and the Willowbrook case in particular; the second by Philip R. Ziring, M.D. is a report on medical services at Willowbrook (7/1976).								
	<b>Box#</b>	<b>Folder#</b>	<b>Title</b>						
	1	10	Academic Department Materials, January 8, 1960; February 20, 1964						
	1	11	A Curriculum Guide for Educable Mentally Retarded Children, 1959						
	1	12	A Curriculum Guide for Trainable Mentally Retarded Children, 1959						
	1	13	Film Strip List, January 1961						
	1	14	Guides for Successful Teaching, [1961?]						
	1	15	Lesson Plans, 1961-1962						
	1	16	School Activities List, November 28, 1961						

	1	17	Frederic Grunberg, M.D. "Program Analysis in a 'Right to Treatment' Litigation," [1976?]							
	1	18	Philip R. Ziring, M.D. "Report on Medical Services at Willowbrook Developmental Center," July 1976							
<b>Series 2 - Subseries B: Terminology and Classification Committee, American Association on Mental Deficiency, 1866, 1978-1982. .6 Linear Feet.</b>										
Materials related to Grossman's chairmanship of the AAMD's Terminology and Classification Committee. The committee's work led to the publication of <i>Mental Deficiency Classification in Mental Retardation</i> .										
<b>Series 2 - Subseries B: Correspondence, 1978-1980.</b>										
Six letters related to the work of the committee from 1978 and 1980, several of which deal with a controversy over the concept of mental retardation as a disease. Also included are letters on more perfunctory matters, including a letter relating to a glossary of terms.										
	<b>Box#</b>	<b>Folder#</b>	<b>Title</b>							
	1	19	Correspondence, 1978, 1980							
<b>Series 2 - Subseries B: Drafts, 1978-1982.</b>										
These drafts show the evolution of Mental Deficiency Classification in Mental Retardation.										
	<b>Box#</b>	<b>Folder#</b>	<b>Title</b>							
	1	20	Draft--Classification in Mental Retardation. Intro-III, 1978-79							
	2	1	Draft--Classification in Mental Retardation. IV-Misc, 1978-79							

	2	2	Draft--Classification in Mental Retardation, July 20, 1978 with notes, 1979
	2	3	Draft--Classification in Mental Retardation, January 1979
	2	4	Draft--Classification in Mental Retardation, June 18, 1979
	2	5	Draft--Classification in Mental Retardation, June 1979
	2	6	Draft--Classification in Mental Retardation--Evaluation of Services, August 1979
	2	7	Draft--Classification in Mental Retardation--Definitions, October 1979
	2	8	Draft--Classification in Mental Retardation. I-V, 1980-1982
	2	9	Draft--Classification in Mental Retardation, VI-X, 1980-1982
	2	10	Draft--Classification in Mental Retardation--Deleted Material, 1980-82
	2	11	Draft--Classification in Mental Retardation--Notes, January 1980
	2	12	Draft--Classification in Mental Retardation--Notes, March 1982
	2	13	Draft--Classification in Mental Retardation--Front Matter and Introduction, August 9, 1982
	2	14	Glossary, 1982
	<b>Series 2 - Subseries C: Resource Materials, 1866, n.d.</b>		
	Included here are a photocopy of an early analysis of what would today be termed developmental disability (Down. "The Observations on the Ethnic Classification of Idiots," 1866) and an unsigned essay discussing the variations in the way state departments of education classify mental retardation.		



	<b>Box#</b>	<b>Folder#</b>	<b>Title</b>							
	2	15	Down. "Observations on an Ethnic Classification of Idiots," 1866							
	2	16	"Relationship of State Education Criteria and Demographic Variables to Prevalence of Mental Retardation in Public Education," n.d.							