

**Transforming Psychiatry One Patient at a Time:
The Story of William C. Menninger**

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**Senior Division
Group Website**

**Website Words: 1200
Website Media Minutes: 0 minutes
Process Paper Words: 450**

Process Paper

How did we choose our topic?

We became interested in our topic, William C. Menninger, because we live in the Topeka area, and wanted to know more about our hometown history. We have grown up hearing about the Menninger Clinic as we pass it on the highway, but never knew what lay within. William C. Menninger, a founder of the Menninger Clinic, broke barriers by studying the effects of war on the human psyche, making psychiatry understandable for the layman, and advancing mental healthcare. The clinic has been closed in Topeka since 2000, meaning we never saw it functioning. The mystery behind the bell tower and what happened at the famous Menninger clinic and Sanitarium intrigued us to choose the topic.

How did we conduct our research?

Our research began by understanding the general idea of who the Menningers were and their contributions to medicine. Once we found our background knowledge we went to Washburn University to use their library and online databases to find the essential sources needed to further understand the impact of William C. Menninger in the field of psychiatry. We found JSTOR to be helpful in finding other sources. Additionally, we spent many hours at the Kansas Archives at the Kansas Museum of History, searching through their materials. We added nearly thirty primary sources directly from the original clinic. Along with as several articles that were published during the prime groundbreaking years of success. Furthermore, we utilized the sources found on Kansas Memory to enhance our digital finding.

Why did we choose our category and how did we create our project?

We created a website for this year's History Day project. Using a website is easy to use for partners with busy schedules, as we can collaborate and work effectively without always having to meet. We divided the work as even as we could, each of us finding separate sources, as well as going together to get sources from the Kansas Archives. We gathered all of our resources first, then created several categories that the research would fall under. When starting to create a website, the categories became different pages, where we could easily move research to. This allowed us to not overlap information, but still cover all the topics within the project.

How does our topic relate to the theme?

William C. Menninger is a prime example of this year's topic, "Breaking Barriers in History". Menninger was a part of one of the most successful clinics and sanatoriums in the nation. Not only did the clinic make outstanding discoveries and new methods of treatment, they trained 7% of the world's psychiatrists. William C. Menninger himself broke many barriers in the field of psychiatry. He studied veterans and post-traumatic stress disorder and mental illness caused by war when he served as the surgeon general in the army in World War II.