

California State University, Fullerton  
Oral History Program

RICHARD NIXON ORAL HISTORY PROJECT  
1913 -

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California State University, Fullerton

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INTRODUCTION

The records of the Richard Nixon Oral History Project described in this inventory cover the life span and family history of Richard Nixon, but focus mainly on the decades of his pre-political years, 1913-1946, and his presidency, 1968-1972. Subsequent additions to the collection include coverage of the Watergate scandal and continue sporadically through to the present. The amount of material in this collection totals 12 boxes.

Much of the collection was initially created under the directorship of Dr. Harry Jeffrey in accordance with the Richard Nixon Oral History Program. This program, active in the late sixties and early seventies and briefly funded by Cal State Fullerton during this time, produced approximately 200 oral history tapes and transcripts pertaining to Nixon's pre-political years. The processing of these materials was supported by grants, donations, and student and volunteer assistance. Anne Baca succeeded Jeffrey in the mid-seventies as director of the enterprise. The Young Nixon: An Oral Inquiry, a book published in 1978 by Renee Schulte, then director of the Nixon project, further contributed to the acquisition of materials for this record group. In 1989, a donation of six boxes of clippings, pamphlets, cartoons and books was made by Dr. George Peters of the Public Relations Research and Consulting firm of Peters & Peters. Finally, contemporary magazine articles and newspaper clippings have recently been and continue to be added to this collection by the current director of the Oral History Program, Dr. Arthur Hansen.

The records are open for research without restrictions under the conditions of the Oral History Program's access policy. Records may be copied for use in individual scholarly or personal research. Researchers are responsible for obtaining copyright permission to use material not produced by Oral History Program personnel.

The suggested citation to these records is "California State University, Fullerton, Oral History Program. Richard M. Nixon Project."

## HISTORY

The Richard N. Nixon Oral History Project originated from a concept by former CSUF President, William B. Langsdorf and then Vice President, L. Donald Shields. The original idea was to start a Nixon Presidential Library at CSUF after Nixon's 1968 election as President.

When Professor Harry Jeffrey joined the CSUF faculty in 1969, he utilized his past experience as director of Columbia University's Robert A. Taft Oral History Project to design and direct the Nixon Project for the CSUF Oral History Program. Working closely with the program's then director, Professor Gary L. Shumway, and the chairman of the CSUF Department of History, Professor B. Carmon Hardy, Jeffrey organized two oral history classes centered on Nixon's early life. During the academic years 1969 - 1972, the seventeen to twenty students enrolled in these classes prepared for and completed taped interviews with relatives, friends and associates of the former president. Approximately two hundred people were interviewed, comprising two hundred and twenty-five taped hours.

The process of converting the transcriptions of tapes into individual bound volumes began in 1974 under the supervision of the project's new director, Annette Baca. When Baca left CSUF some eighteen months later, Renee K. Schulte took over as director.

Professor Arthur A. Hansen became director of the CSUF Oral History Program in 1975. In 1978, *The Young Nixon: An Oral History*, edited by Renee K. Schulte, was published. It includes a representative sample of the Richard M. Nixon Oral History Project interviews.

The Richard M. Nixon Oral History Project explores Nixon's pre-political years, pre-1946. It has three areas of concentration. First, it chronologically covers Nixon's life in Yorba Linda, his education in Fullerton and Whittier and his career as an attorney in La Habra. Second, it thematically treats Nixon the athlete, Nixon the thespian, and Nixon the Quaker. Finally, a third section focuses on the life of his wife, Pat Ryan Nixon. The core collection of documents relates to these themes. Through donations over the years, however, the collection has expanded to include Nixon's political years as well.

The Nixon Project has, and will continue to be used by scholars writing biographies and studies on Richard and Pat Nixon.

The history of the Richard M. Nixon Oral History Project was written by consulting *The Young Nixon: An Oral History*, edited by Renee K. Schulte, CSUF Oral History Program, 1978, especially Foreword by Arthur A. Hansen, Director CSUF Oral History Program, p.xiii ff.; and *OHProfile*, Oral History Program CSUF, Vol.1, No.1, Summer 1977, p.3.

California State University, Fullerton Archives  
RICHARD NIXON ORAL HISTORY PROJECT  
Scope and Content Note

The Richard M. Nixon Project originated as a collection supporting the Oral History Program's interviews of Nixon's pre-political years, pre-1946. The three areas of concentration explored in the interviews are as follows:

- 1 - Chronological. Nixon's early life in Yorba Linda, his high school and college careers, and his early professional career as an attorney.
- 2 - Thematic. Nixon the athlete, the thespian and the Quaker.
- 3 - Pat Nixon's early life, including her courtship by the former president.

Since the record group was generated from material created by the Oral History Project, the core collection of documents relates to these themes. Through donations over the years, however, the collection has expanded to include Nixon's political years as well. As a result, the contents of the record group have been evolving towards a more encompassing scope than originally intended.

The collection has been divided into the following eight series: 1. Oral History Project records, including plans for a Nixon Library at Fullerton; 2. The Young Nixon, materials relevant to this publication and relating the Oral History project; 3. Periodicals - magazines, newspapers and clippings spanning a wide chronological period; 4. Speeches and debates - largely copies of the dissertation and theses, 5. Ephemera; 6. Photographs; 7. Genealogy and Family History; and 8. Research Materials.

The materials in this collection are in English. The physical condition varies, as noted in the recommendations in the series descriptions.

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Series Descriptions

- I. ORAL HISTORY PROJECT. 3 document boxes. Arranged by subject. These records include correspondence, interviews and the administrative records created by Fullerton's Nixon Oral History Project. Also included in this series are proposals for a Nixon Presidential Library at Fullerton, and studies of other existing Presidential Libraries.

Recommendations: Acid free folders should replace existing folders and be appropriately labelled in boxes 1-3.

- II. THE YOUNG NIXON - BOOK. 2 document boxes. Arranged by subject. Materials for The Young Nixon: An Oral Inquiry, ed. Renee Schulte, ca. 1978. Cal. State Univ. Fullerton, Oral History Program. This series contains information pertaining to the correspondence, financial, drafts and proof, mock-up created by the writing of this book.

Recommendations: Acid free folders should replace existing folders and be appropriately labelled in box 5.

- III. PERIODICALS. 3 storage boxes. Magazines arranged alphabetically by title; Newspaper clippings arranged alphabetically by city. Includes clippings and articles about Nixon's political and personal life, ranging in date from the 1940's to the present, but concentrating in the period of 1968-1972. Titles range from popular serials such as Time and Life to more esoteric publications like the Village Crier and the Buena Park News.

Recommendations: Acid free folders should replace existing folders and be appropriately labelled in box 7. Magazine articles, newspaper clippings and outdated microfilm paper are deteriorating rapidly and are seriously in need of conservation. Most of the items require recopying in entirety, and some of them need to have staples removed.

Since this material is not unique and can be easily accessed through other means, it is recommended that clippings from more popular publications be discarded.

- IV. SPEECHES AND DEBATES. 1 document box. Copies of Ph.D. dissertations and Master's thesis on Nixon-Kennedy debate and debating techniques, dated 1961-1965. Copies of speeches by Nixon and others from Vital Speeches of the Day, dated 1952, 1958.

Recommendations: This material is printed on outdated microfilm paper that is exceedingly difficult to read. The items are not unique and are only of peripheral value to the collection. Therefore, it is suggested that this series be removed from the Nixon record group.

V. **EPHEMERA.** 1/2 document box. Arranged by subject. This series contains programs, playbills, checks, postcards, etc. as well as some printed matter. Subseries include Pat Nixon, Young Nixon, and family records, political years, inaugural events, oral history project and library dedication ephemera.

VI. **PHOTOGRAPHS.** 1/2 document box. Arranged roughly chronologically. These photographs include high school yearbook shots, early family images and later political photos. All are unmarked. Some slides and negatives are also included.

Recommendations: Remove negatives. Identify and arrange by chronological order if possible.

VII. **GENEALOGY AND FAMILY HISTORY.** 1/4 document box. This series contains records and histories of the Nixon and Milhous families. Also, a photocopy of the Nixon family tree and records obtained from C. William Milhous of Laguna Hills are located in box number 8 (due to size.)

Recommendations: Refolder and possibly reorganize contents.

VIII. **RESEARCH MATERIALS.** 1 3/4 document boxes. Items in this series include a bibliography, book excerpts, court cases involving Nixon, note cards, local maps, and student papers from the Oral History Program class taught by Harry Jeffrey in the early 1970's.

Recommendations: Refolder contents. Recopy outdated microfilm material or re-evaluate its relevance to the collection.

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 RICHARD NIXON ORAL HISTORY PROJECT  
 Container List

<u>Series Number</u>	<u>Box Number</u>	<u>Folder Number</u>	<u>Contents</u>
I			ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
	1	1 - 24	Correspondence and Interviews
	2	1 - 9	Nixon Library Proposals
	3	1 - 14	Administrative
II			THE YOUNG NIXON - BOOK
	4	1 - 5	Proofs, Mock-ups, Interviews
	5	1 - 5	Paste up Book, Drafts; Financial, Correspondence
III			PERIODICALS
	6	1 - 44	Magazine Articles
	7	1 - 50	Magazine Articles and Newspaper Clippings
	8		Newspaper Clippings, Magazines; Version of Young Nixon Mock-up (from Series II); One Genealogical Chart (From Series VIII)
IV			SPEECHES AND DEBATES
	9	1 - 10	Ph.D. Dissertations, M.A. Thesis, Copies of Nixon and Other Speeches
V			EPHEMERA
	10	1 - 9	Ephemeral Material



VI

PHOTOGRAPHS

10

Photographs, Halftones, Slides,  
Negatives

VII

GENEALOGY AND FAMILY HISTORY

11

1

Family Histories (For Genealogy  
Chart, see Box 8)

VIII

RESEARCH MATERIALS

11

1 - 5

Student Papers

12

1 - 9

Bibliography, Book Excerpts, Court  
Cases, Note Cards