



Smithsonian Institution Archives

Oral history interviews with
James C. Bradley, 1974-1978

Finding aid prepared by Smithsonian Institution Archives

Smithsonian Institution Archives
Washington, D.C.
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Collection Overview

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| Repository: | Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C., osiaref@si.edu |
| Title: | Oral history interviews with James C. Bradley |
| Identifier: | Record Unit 9515 |
| Date: | 1974-1978 |
| Extent: | 26 audiotapes (reference copies). |
| Creator:: | Bradley, James C. 1910-1984 interviewee |
| Language: | Language of Materials: English |

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 9515, Bradley, James C. 1910-1984 interviewee, Oral history interviews with James C. Bradley

Historical Note

James C. Bradley (1910-1984) was a Smithsonian administrator responsible for planning and development of programs and facilities. After receiving a B.S. in civil engineering from the Catholic University of America in 1931, he served as an engineering administrator for the District of Columbia Government from 1935 to 1945. He worked as a budget and legislative analyst in the Bureau of the Budget from 1945 to 1950. Bradley then joined the Department of the Interior as principal assistant to the Under Secretary from 1950 to 1953, and as engineering and administrative assistant to the Assistant Secretary of the Interior from 1953 to 1959.

In 1959, Bradley came to the Smithsonian as Assistant to the Secretary and in 1960 he was appointed Assistant Secretary. Bradley was responsible for administrative, fiscal, and legislative planning for the Institution. His special responsibilities included securing legislation authorizing a National Portrait Gallery (NPG); securing authorizations and appropriations to renovate the Fine Arts and Portrait Galleries; securing appropriations for the wings of the Natural History Building; securing appropriations for a National Air and Space Museum (NASM); establishing administrative procedures for the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory (SAO); securing legislation and appropriations for the capital improvement program for the National Zoological Park (NZN); securing authorizing legislation and appropriations for the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden (HMSG); preparing Congressional testimony; negotiating the Hillwood bequest; establishing the Office of Audits; and securing a site, authorization, and appropriations for a Museum Support Center.

Bradley received a Smithsonian Achievement Award in 1963 and the Smithsonian Exceptional Service Award in 1966. When the Board of Regents created the title of Under Secretary in 1970, Bradley assumed that position. After his retirement in 1972, he continued to serve the Institution as Consultant to the

Secretary for Management and Planning and was an honorary Research Associate of the Institution until his death.

Introduction

The Smithsonian Institution Archives began its Oral History Program in 1973. The purpose of the program is to supplement the written documentation of the Archives' record and manuscript collections with an Oral History Collection, focusing on the history of the Institution, research by its scholars, and contributions of its staff. Program staff conduct interviews with current and retired Smithsonian staff and others who have made significant contributions to the Institution. There are also interviews conducted by researchers or students on topics related to the history of the Smithsonian or the holdings of the Smithsonian Institution Archives.

James C. Bradley was interviewed for the Oral History Collection because of his central role in the Smithsonian administration for over twenty years.

Descriptive Entry

Bradley was interviewed by Miriam S. Freilicher and Pamela M. Henson in nineteen sessions from 1974 to 1978. The interviews cover Bradley's career at the Smithsonian, especially his administrative, fiscal, and legislative responsibilities for programs and capital improvements.

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Types of Materials:

- Audiotapes
- Interviews
- Oral history
- Transcripts

Names:

- Bradley, James C., 1910-1984
- Carmichael, Leonard, 1898-1973
- Fine Arts and Portrait Galleries.
- Freilicher, Miriam S. interviewer
- Henson, Pamela M. interviewer
- Hillwood Museum (Washington, D.C.)
- Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden
- National Air and Space Museum (U.S.)
- National Portrait Gallery (Smithsonian Institution)
- National Zoological Park (U.S.)
- Ripley, S. Dillon (Sidney Dillon), 1913-2001
- Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory
- Smithsonian Institution. Assistant Secretary

Smithsonian Institution. Museum Support Center
Smithsonian Institution. Office of the Secretary. Assistant to the Secretary
Smithsonian Institution. Office of the Secretary. Consultant for Management and Planning
Smithsonian Institution. Office of the Under Secretary

Container Listing

Box 1

Transcripts of Interviews

- | | |
|------------|--------------------------------|
| Box 1 of 1 | Interview 1: 9 April 1974 |
| Box 1 of 1 | Interview 2: 17 April 1974 |
| Box 1 of 1 | Interview 3: 27 November 1974 |
| Box 1 of 1 | Interview 4: 11 March 1974 |
| Box 1 of 1 | Interview 5: 26 March 1975 |
| Box 1 of 1 | Interview 6: 1 April, 1975 |
| Box 1 of 1 | Interview 7: 9 April 1975 |
| Box 1 of 1 | Interview 8: 16 April 1975 |
| Box 1 of 1 | Interview 9: 30 May 1975 |
| Box 1 of 1 | Interview 10: 4 June 1975 |
| Box 1 of 1 | Interview 11: 27 June 1975 |
| Box 1 of 1 | Interview 12: 10 March 1976 |
| Box 1 of 1 | Interview 13: 6 April 1976 |
| Box 1 of 1 | Interview 14: 4 May 1976 |
| Box 1 of 1 | Interview 15: 5 August 1976 |
| Box 1 of 1 | Interview 16: 30 November 1976 |
| Box 1 of 1 | Interview 17: 3 February 1977 |
| Box 1 of 1 | Interview 18: 12 May 1977 |
| Box 1 of 1 | Interview 19: 7 November 1978 |

Recordings of Interviews

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|------------|--------------------------|
| Box 1 of 1 | Session 1: 9 April 1974 |
| Box 1 of 1 | Session 2: 17 April 1974 |

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|------------|------------------------------|
| Box 1 of 1 | Session 3: 27 November 1974 |
| Box 1 of 1 | Session 4: 11 March 1975 |
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