The Finding Aid for the Bruce Herschensohn Papers 0006

Finding aid prepared by Jamie Henricks
The processing of this collection and the creation of this finding aid was funded by the generous support of the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. Pepperdine University. Special Collections and University Archives. 24255 Pacific Coast Highway Malibu, CA, 90263-4786 (310) 506-4434 specialcollections@pepperdine.edu August 2012
Title: Bruce Herschensohn papers
Identifier/Call Number: 0006
Contributing Institution: Pepperdine University. Special Collections and University Archives.
Physical Description: 58.45 linear feet
Date (inclusive): 1949-2010
Abstract: Bruce Herschensohn is a prolific writer and filmmaker involved in domestic and foreign politics, known for his documentaries and political commentaries. The collection includes items collected and created by him as an independent filmmaker, a Director at the United States Information Agency (USIA), a member of staff at the White House for Presidents Nixon and Reagan, and a political commentator for the KABC television and radio stations. Materials include correspondence, photographs, notes, films, audio recordings, and other items. Collection materials currently date from 1949 to 1986 (including books through 2010).
Location note: Pepperdine University. Special Collections and University Archives.
Language of Materials: Materials are in English.
Creator: Herschensohn, Bruce, 1932-
Conditions Governing Access
Advance notice required for access.
Conditions Governing Use
Permission to publish, quote, or reproduce must be secured from the repository and the copyright holder. The recordings of KABC commentaries are for reference only; permission to reproduce any part of them must be obtained from KABC-TV.
Preferred Citation
[Series/Item# or item name], Bruce Herschensohn papers, Collection no. 0006, Special Collections and University Archives, University Libraries, Pepperdine University.
Immediate Source of Acquisition note
The collection was given to Pepperdine University in multiple gifts beginning in November 2008 by Bruce Herschensohn. Not all series have been acquired yet.
Biographical/Historical note
Bruce Herschensohn (full name Stanley Bruce Herschensohn) was born September 10, 1932 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to Herbert Lawrence Herschensohn and Ida Esther (Erlichman) Herschensohn. His family moved to California in 1940. His early jobs included work as a box-boy at Ralphs Grocery and as a messenger at RKO Radio Pictures. After serving in the U.S. Air Force as a medic from 1951 to 1952, he returned to RKO to work in the art department, and also started his own motion picture company in 1955.
His next job took him to San Diego for 1955 to 1956 to work for Convair, an American aircraft, rocket, and spacecraft manufacturer. He often wrote, directed, edited, and scored his own creations, such as his first film, Beverly Hills Woman (including lip-synched opera music). Herschensohn was very interested in space and rockets – his first successful rocket film, Supersonic Wedge, was created by his personal firm. Other space films followed, including Friendship 7, about John Glenn’s famous first space flight to orbit the Earth and including footage of cities around the world that Glenn passed over. From 1968 to 1972, he was appointed to the United States Information Agency (USIA) as the Director of Motion Pictures and Television. Herschensohn created multiple feature-length documentaries for the USIA before and during his time as Director, including John F. Kennedy: Years of Lightning, Day of Drums. Herschensohn was picked as a member of the board of trustees for the American Film Institute in 1967. During his tenure as Director, the USIA received numerous awards for film and television productions, including an Oscar for Best Documentary, Short Subject in 1970 from the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences for the film Czechoslovakia 1968, about the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. He was part of the United States Delegation to the 16th International Film Festival (1968) in Karlovy Vary, in what is now the Czech Republic, and part of the delegation sent to the 1969 Moscow Film Festival.
In 1969, Herschensohn was selected as one of the Ten Outstanding Young Men in the Federal Government. He received the second highest civilian award, the Distinguished Service Medal, the day he left the USIA in March, 1972. He resigned following an interview, during which he criticized Senator William Fulbright’s views on propaganda as "very simplistic, very naive, and stupid." He was chosen as a consultant to the 1972 Republican National Convention and subsequently served as a Staff Assistant (1972-1973) and Deputy Special Assistant to the President of the United States (for President Richard Nixon, 1973-1974).
Herschenson did freelance film work between 1974 and 1978. From 1978 to 1992, he was a political commentator on KABC television and radio stations, giving morning radio commentaries and frequently debating with Senator John Tunney.
Herschensohn's father taped many of the commentaries between 1978 and 1983; these items have been digitized. He left his job at the White House when President Nixon resigned, but he was appointed a member of the Reagan Transition Team in 1980. In 1986, he tried running in the California primary election for the Republican nomination to the U.S. Senate, but was defeated. He tried again in 1992 and was voted the California Republican nominee to the U.S. Senate, but he was narrowly defeated in the general election by Barbara Boxer.

A world traveler, Herschensohn taught "The U.S. Image Abroad" at the University of Maryland, occupied the Nixon Chair at Whittier College teaching "U.S. Foreign and Domestic Policies," and worked with Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn (a Russian writer who helped raise global awareness of the gulag system) in Zurich, Switzerland and Cavendish, Vermont. Solzhenitsyn agreed to work with Herschensohn (apparently impressed by Herschensohn’s comments about Senator Fulbright), and they worked on The Tanks Know the Truth together. He was Chairman of the University Board of Pepperdine in Malibu, California, where he also received an Honorary Doctor of Law degree. From 1993 to 2001 he was Distinguished Fellow at the Claremont Institute and, in 1996, a Fellow at the John F. Kennedy Institute of Politics at Harvard University. He taught at Pepperdine University's School of Public Policy from 1998 to 2001, and is currently a Senior Fellow at Pepperdine. Herschensohn is also an Associate Fellow of the Nixon Foundation and serves on the Board of Directors of the Center for Individual Freedom.

In addition to writing, producing, editing, and scoring many of his own films, Herschensohn has written a fair number of books and publications, which include, but are not limited to:

- The Gods of Antenna (1976)
- Hong Kong at the Handover (1999) (editor)
- Across the Taiwan Strait: Democracy: The Bridge Between Mainland China and Taiwan (2002) (editor)
- Taiwan: The Threatened Democracy (2006)
- Above Empyrean: A Novel of the Final Days of the War on Islamic Terrorism (2008)

Information for Herschensohn’s biography was taken from materials in the collection, conversations with Susan Naulty, newspaper articles, and the Pepperdine University School of Public Policy website (http://publicpolicy.pepperdine.edu/academics/faculty/default.htm?faculty=stanley_b_herschensohn).

Scope and Content

The collection currently contains materials from Bruce Herschenson's personal and professional life between 1949 and 1986, and books through 2010. Materials will continue to be deposited until the collection is complete.

The collection includes items collected and created by Bruce Herschensohn during his decades as a filmmaker, politician, writer, speaker, and composer; and in his personal and professional life while working for the USIA, as the Director of Motion Pictures and Television, for the White House in Assistant positions, and as a political commentator for KABC. Materials include correspondence, photographs, programs, invitations, film reels, DVDs, manuscripts and other items related to the development of his films, musical compositions, drawings, newspaper clippings, and audio tapes.

Arrangement

Materials are arranged in the following groups:

- Early Years Independent Filmmaker, 1953-1967
- Independent Filmmaker -- Missile/Space Films
- United States Information Agency (USIA) Films
- Director of Motion Pictures and Television, USIA
- The White House Years
- Special Files, Author
- Correspondence
- Article/Speech Files (including related correspondence)
- Projects
- Books
- Audiovisual Materials

Separated Materials
Some films are held in off-site film storage. For a list of these titles, please email specialcollections@pepperdine.edu.

**Related Archival Materials**

Bruce Herschensohn Collection in the Pepperdine Digital Collections
(http://pepperdine.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/landingpage/collection/p15093coll1).

**Processing Information note**

The collection has been processed by Susan Naulty in stages, and sent to the University Archives when complete. Not all series have been sent to the University Archives, which explains current gaps in the series numbering. The finding aid was written by Jamie Henricks in August, 2012.

**Subjects and Indexing Terms**

American Film Institute.
Friendship 7 (Spacecraft).
Fulbright, J. William (James William), 1905-1995
General Dynamics Corporation. Convair Division.
Herschensohn, Bruce, 1932-
KABC (Radio station : Los Angeles, Calif.).
KABC-TV (Television station : Hollywood, Los Angeles, Calif.).
Kennedy, John F. (John Fitzgerald), 1917-1963
Solzhenitsyn, Aleksandr Isaevich, 1918-2008
Tunney, John V. (John Varick), 1934-
United States Information Agency.
Articles
Clippings
Compact discs
Correspondence
Film composers
Motion picture authorship
Photographs
Political campaigns--California--History--20th century
Press releases
Radio commentaries
United States--Foreign relations
United States--Politics and government

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**Early Years 1949-[1955]**

Series 5: **Early Music Compositions 1949-[1955]**

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**Independent Filmmaker 1953-1965**

Series 6: **Beverly Hills Woman 1953-1956**

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Series 7: **The Passing of Marjorie Bean 1956-1957**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Series 8: God in a Strange Place 1957-1959</th>
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<tr>
<td>Series 9: Karma 1960-1961</td>
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<tr>
<td>Series 10: Bruce Herschensohn Motion Picture Productions (Miscellaneous) 1960-1965</td>
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<th>Series 11: The Supersonic Wedge, and smaller projects 1955-1956</th>
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<tr>
<td>Series 12: Tall Man Five-Five (The Sonic Boom Story) 1960</td>
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<td>Series 14: Friendship 7 1960-1962</td>
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**United States Information Agency (USIA) Films 1963-1967**

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<tr>
<th>Series 15: Bridges of the Barrios 1963</th>
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<td>Series 17: The President 1963-1965</td>
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<th>Series 19: USIA Report, Freedom Island and Across One Hundred Mountains (Man from a Missing Land) 1963-1965</th>
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<tr>
<td>Series 20: Eulogy to 5:02 1964-1965</td>
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<td>Series 21: The Day of the Oath 1965</td>
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Director of Motion Pictures and Television, USIA 1966-1972

Series 23: 1966-1967 -- Includes Appointment to the Position

Series 24: 1968 -- Includes Karlovy-Vary International Film Festival

Series 25: 1969 -- Includes Moscow International Film Festival

Series 26: 1970 -- Includes Fleming Award

Series 27: 1971-1972 -- Includes Resignation from Office

The White House Years 1970-1975

Series 28: Correspondence -- April-July, 1972

Series 29: Special File -- University of Maryland 1972


Series 31: Correspondence -- August-December, 1972

Series 32: White House and USIA Directories 1972-1974

Series 33: Correspondence -- January-June, 1973

Series 34: Correspondence -- July-December, 1973

Series 35: Correspondence -- January-June, 1974

Series 36: Correspondence -- July-September 15, 1974

Series 37: Special File -- Diary of President Nixon's Final Days in Office 1974-[1975]
Series 37: Special File -- Diary of President Nixon's Final Days in Office 1974-[1975]

Series 38: Special File -- John Ford Dinner and Correspondence with Ford Family 1970-1975

Series 39: Special File -- Shalom & Salaam (Richard Nixon's 1974 trip to the Middle East) 1974

Special Files, Author 1974-1976


Correspondence 1972-1977

Series 43: General Correspondence -- September 16, 1974-1977

Series 44: Charles Edison Memorial Youth Fund 1972-1977

Article/Speech File (including related correspondence) 1967-1986

Series 45: Article and Speech File 1967-1977


Series 46B: Special File -- KABC Radio Commentaries, 1980

Projects 1974-1983


Series 52: Screenplay for Alexander Solzhenitzyn's The Tanks Know the Truth 1975-1977

Series 54: Filmmaker -- The Shining City on a Hill 1977-1978

Books and Publications 1976-2010

Gods of Antenna / Bruce Herschensohn, 1976 and 2000. (2 copies)


The Report of the Claremont Conference on the Future of Hong Kong / Bruce Herschensohn, for the International Affairs Center at the Claremont Institute for the Study of Statesmanship and Political Philosophy, 1995. (Also includes a supplement; this is later updated in 1997.)

Hong Kong: From the British Crown Colony to the People's Republic of China / Bruce Herschensohn, for the International Affairs Center at the Claremont Institute for the Study of Statesmanship and Political Philosophy, 1997. (This is the updated version of the 1995 Report of the Claremont Conference on the Future of Hong Kong.)


Hong Kong at the Handover / Bruce Herschensohn, ed., 1999.

Across the Taiwan Straight -- Democracy: The Bridge Between Mainland China and Taiwan / Bruce Herschensohn, 2002.


Taiwan: The Threatened Democracy / Bruce Herschensohn, 2006. (2 copies: 1 in English and 1 in possibly Mandarin)

Above Empyrean: A Novel of the Final Days of the War on Islamic Terrorism / Bruce Herschensohn, 2008.


Audiovisual Materials

Physical Description: (10 boxes)

Scope and Content

Most audiovisual materials are located in off-site storage, but 10 boxes of audio reels and film reels from various productions are on-site in the University Archives. For a list of titles held on-site or off-site, please contact specialcollections@pepperdine.edu.