



Clotworthy, William C.: Papers, 1954-2002

Finding Aid Type

Donated Collections

Disclaimer

This collection consists of personal papers donated to the Reagan Presidential Library. It is available in whole for research use. In accordance with the Deed of Gift, some items may be withdrawn from folders. Material is withdrawn most frequently due to national security classified material, personal privacy, protection of the president, etc.

Record Type

Textual

Biography

Biography

William C. Clotworthy is a former advertising producer and NBC network censor.

Clotworthy joined advertising agency BBDO (Batten, Barton, Durstine & Osborn) in 1950 in their New York office. His work at the agency was mostly with television or radio shows produced by BBDO clients. He began working as a client representative with radio shows on tour, including a radio show called *The American Way*, featuring the big band of Horae Heidt. In 1952, when Heidt worked in California during a six-month road show, Clotworthy was asked to stay and work

in the BBDO Hollywood office.

In California, Clotworthy's responsibilities greatly expanded and included client representation for several television shows, including *This is Your Life* with Groucho Marx, *The Jack Benny Show* and the George Burns and Gracie Allen comedy show.

After leaving BBDO in the late 1970s, his next position was as the NBC Director of Broadcast Standards - the main censor for the network (1979-1991). He was the primary censor for the new comedy program, *Saturday Night Live*.

In 1954, Clotworthy became client representative to a new program for BBDO client, General Electric. *G.E. Theater* was a new half-hour anthology drama with new scripts and stars each week tied together by a single host, actor Ronald Reagan. Clotworthy's duties included commercial integration, representing client interests for the show, and writing the "lead-in" and "lead-out" for Reagan. He and Reagan were the two "constants" for the show and over the six year run of the show, they began a long friendship.

Clotworthy actually wrote two scripts for *G.E. Theater*, an autobiographical story about therapeutic abortions and a story about high school athletics entitled *Shadow of a Hero*. Reagan appeared as the coach featured in this episode.

Clotworthy has given several oral histories about his time in Hollywood, including the Library. His interview with the Television Academy Foundation can be found [here](#).

Scope and Content Note

The William Clotworthy collection consists of correspondence between Clotworthy and the Reagans; a listing of *GE Theater* broadcasts that includes the writers, directors, and lead actors of each show; photographs of the broadcast "Shadow of a Hero" in which Reagan appeared; phonograph albums; and an oral history interview with William Clotworthy conducted at the Reagan Library on August 24, 2004.

Last Modified Date

2024-05-16

Box 1

Status	Title
OPEN	Letters - Clotworthy to Ronald Reagan
OPEN	Letters from Ronald Reagan to Clotworthy
OPEN	Letter - Nancy Reagan
OPEN	Correspondence (1)(2)
OPEN	The General Electric Theater - Program Talent Guide - 1954-1962
OPEN	"Shadow of a Hero" - G.E. Theater Photographs
OPEN	"The Disordered Memories of a Movie Actor" by Lawrence Williams

Box 2 - Audio/Visual Material (Stored in Audio/Visual for preservation)

Status	Title
OPEN	Phonograph album "Themes from GE Theater"
OPEN	Phonograph album "No Man Can Tame Me"
OPEN	Oral History Interview of William Clotworthy, 08/24/2004