

## CLOTWORTHY, WILLIAM C.: Papers, 1954-2002 – REAGAN LIBRARY COLLECTIONS

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### CLOTWORTHY, WILLIAM C.: Papers, 1954-2002

#### **Biographical Note**

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

Clotworthy joined advertising firm, 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 Horace 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.

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 Theatre. *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**

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.

#### CONTAINER LIST

##### Box 1

Letters - Clotworthy to Ronald Reagan

Letters from Ronald Reagan to Clotworthy

Letter - Nancy Reagan

Correspondence (1)(2)

The General Electric Theater - Program Talent Guide - 1954-1962

“Shadow of a Hero” - G.E. Theater Photographs

“The Disordered Memories of a Movie Actor” by Lawrence Williams

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

Phonograph album “Themes from GE Theater”

Phonograph album “No Man Can Tame Me”

Oral History Interview of William Clotworthy, 08/24/2004