



Bakshian, Aram Jr.: Files, 1982-1983

Finding Aid Type

White House Staff and Office File Collections

Subtitle/Office

Office of Speechwriting

Disclaimer

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Copyright

Some of the archival materials in this collection may be subject to copyright or other intellectual property restrictions. Users of these materials are advised to determine the copyright status of any document from which they wish to publish.

Record Type

Textual

Biography

Biography

Aram Bakshian (1944-2022) was a native of Washington, DC. In addition to his political positions, he has been a free-lance writer, art critic, magazine editor,

Harvard University lecturer, and corporate consultant.

His political experience prior to the Reagan Administration included work as an aide to Congressman William Brock (1966-70), a special assistant to the chairman, Senator Bob Dole, of the Republican National Committee (1971), a speechwriter and aide for Presidents Nixon and Ford (1972-75), and a consultant to Treasury Secretary William Simon (1976-77). Prior to joining the Reagan Administration, Bakshian was working on the lecture circuit and was a Senior Fellow at the John F. Kennedy School of Government.

In the Reagan White House, Bakshian served in the Office of Public Liaison from March to November 1981, then was Director of the White House Office of Speechwriting until September 1983. In 1987, President Reagan nominated him to a term on the National Council on the Humanities. The term ended in 1992, and that same year, he began in his position as Editor-in-Chief of the periodic journal *American Speaker*. He retired from the magazine in 2009. From 2014 to 2021, Bakshian was a contributing editor of the journal *The National Interest*.

Bakshian died on September 14, 2022 of pancreatic cancer.

Scope and Content Note

In addition to this small collection, other Reagan Presidential record collections (e.g., Office of Speechwriting: [Speech Drafts](#)) contain scattered material pertaining to Bakshian's work in this office.

This collection contains two series: SERIES I: Speech Edits, 1982-1983; and SERIES II: Presidential Medals.

Series List

SERIES I: SPEECH EDITS

This series consists of internal White House routing of Presidential speeches and statements written by outside entities or staff other than speechwriters. The material is photocopies of the comments and edits on this material made by Mr. Bakshian. It is in chronological order.

SERIES II: PRESIDENTIAL MEDALS

This series appears to have started while Mr. Bakshian was a staff member in the Office of Public Liaison. He was tasked with responding to recommendations for the Presidential Medal of Freedom, particularly if it was someone notable in the arts or humanities. He carried this material and function with him when he went to the Speechwriting Office. He continued to respond to these recommendations and maintained a file of names with background information for reference use in composing the awards speech if the individual received a medal. In addition, this series contains a series of edits and speeches for the February 1983 Presidential Medal of Freedom winners, and internal memos and notes regarding the presentation of the Medals. It also contains a small amount of background research and speeches regarding the awards of the Presidential Citizens Medal.

Last Modified Date

2024-06-25

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Box 1

Status	Title
OPEN	Miscellaneous Edited Speeches, 1982
OPEN	Edited Miscellaneous Material February 1983 (1)-(3)
OPEN	Edited Miscellaneous Material March 1983
OPEN	Edited Miscellaneous Material April 1983-May 1983
OPEN	Edited Miscellaneous Material July 1983-December 1983 (1)(2)
OPEN	[President's Meeting with Speechwriters, 03/11/1983]

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Box 1, cont.

Status	Title
OPEN	A (1)(2)
OPEN	B
OPEN	C

Box 2

Status	Title
OPEN	D (1)-(5)
OPEN	F (1)-(3)
OPEN	G (1)-(3)
OPEN	H

Box 3

Status	Title
OPEN	J (1)(2)
OPEN	K (1)-(3)
OPEN	L (1)-(3)
OPEN	M (1)(2)
OPEN	N
OPEN	P
OPEN	R

Box 4

Status	Title
OPEN	S (1)-(3)

Status	Title
OPEN	V (1)(2)
OPEN	W (1)-(3)
OPEN	XYZ
OPEN	Medal of Freedom: AB Memos February 1981-February 1983 (1)(2)
OPEN	Medal of Freedom: Miscellaneous Inquiries

Box 5

Status	Title
OPEN	Award Ceremony: 10/09/1981 Biographies, etc.
OPEN	Award Ceremony: Philip C. Habib 09/07/1982
OPEN	Award Ceremony: Kate Smith 10/26/1982, Raleigh, NC
OPEN	Presidential Medal of Freedom Ceremony: 02/23/1983 (1)(2)
OPEN	Citation: Presidential Medal of Freedom to Simon Ramo (02/23/1983)
OPEN	Citation: Presidential Medal of Freedom to George Balanchine (02/23/1983) (1)(2)
OPEN	Citation: Presidential Medal of Freedom to Paul "Bear" Bryant (Posthumously) (02/23/1983)
OPEN	Citation: Presidential Medal of Freedom to James Burnham (02/23/1983)
OPEN	Citation: Presidential Medal of Freedom to Dr. James Cheek (02/23/1983)
OPEN	Citation: Presidential Medal of Freedom to Richard Buckminster Fuller (02/23/1983)
OPEN	Citation: Presidential Medal of Freedom to Rev. William F. Graham (02/23/1983)
OPEN	Citation: Presidential Medal of Freedom to Eric Hoffer (02/23/1983)
OPEN	Citation: Presidential Medal of Freedom to Senator Jacob Javits (02/23/1983)

Status	Title
OPEN	Citation: Presidential Medal of Freedom to Claire Boothe Luce (02/23/1983)
OPEN	Citation: Presidential Medal of Freedom to Dr. Dumas Malone (02/23/1983)
OPEN	Citation: Presidential Medal of Freedom to Mabel Mercer (02/23/1983)
OPEN	Presidential Citizens Medal Recommendations (1)-(3)
OPEN / DIGITIZED	Presentation of Presidential Citizens Medal to Raymond Weeks, 11/11/1982 (1)
OPEN	Presentation of Presidential Citizens Medal to Raymond Weeks, 11/11/1982 (2)
OPEN	Presentation of Presidential Citizens Medal to Samuel C. Jackson (Posthumously)(Harper presenter) 11/19/1982