



Fritz, Sara: Papers, 1981-1983

Finding Aid Type

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Record Type

Textual

Biography

Sara Fritz (1944-2013) was an award winning, Washington based journalist who covered Congress and the White House for three decades. From 1978-1983 she worked for *US News & World Report*.

Sara Jane Fritz was born Dec. 16, 1944, in Pittsburgh and raised in Gibsonia, an unincorporated part of Richland Township in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. She graduated from Richland High School in 1962. She then attended Denison University in Granville, Ohio, graduating in 1966 with a degree in English.

In 1966 she began her career at the *Pittsburgh Press*, as a \$115 per week copy editor.

In 1969 she was hired at United Press International (UPI) in Pittsburgh to be a night editor.

In 1971 she was promoted to UPI bureau chief in Harrisburg, PA., later moving to the Washington DC bureau to be their national labor reporter and first woman weekend news editor.

In 1978 she started at *US News & World Report* as White House correspondent, covering the campaign, transition and early years of the Reagan administration, through 1983.

From 1984-1997 Sara worked for the Washington bureau of the *Los Angeles Times*, writing about such major issues as the Reagan administration Iran-Contra scandal and the Clinton administration Whitewater real estate investigation.

During this time she earned a reputation for congressional finance reporting, and was one of the first journalists to use computer-assisted research to explore Federal Election Commission records on campaign spending. The resulting reporting exposed extravagant spending and was published as *Gold-Plated Politics: Running for Congress in the 1990s*. Her reporting also resulted in the creation of the manual, *Handbook of Campaign Spending*.

In 1997 she was made managing editor of *Congressional Quarterly's CQ Weekly Report*.

In 1999 she was hired by the *St. Petersburg Times* to be their Washington DC bureau chief, a post she held until 2004.

Sara Fritz won numerous awards for her work. In 1989 she was awarded the Everett McKinley Dirksen Award for the best reporting on Congress for her series "What's Wrong with Congress?" which examined the low regard Americans (as well as congressional members) had for the institution. In 1997 she was part of a team of *Los Angeles Times* reporters to share the Polk Award and Goldsmith Prize from Harvard University for investigative reporting, for "Money from Asia," a series about questionable campaign contributions by Asian donors to the Democratic Party in the 1996 election cycle.

In 2003, Ms. Fritz shared the deeply personal tragedy of her 12 year old son Daniel's suicide, on October 27, 2000. In an article in the St. Petersburg Times, she wrote about the family's struggle with Daniel's depression, which had been misdiagnosed as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, as well as childhood suicide and childhood depression in more general terms. "My husband, Jim Kidney, and I have chosen to share our story of Daniel's life and death as a cautionary tale for parents of all children, whether they appear to be troubled or not," she wrote. "Many child and teen suicides could be prevented, experts say, if parents and professionals were more attentive and better informed about what causes kids to take their lives." She and her husband created a website, depressedchild.org, to share information with other parents about the symptoms and treatment of depression in young people.

Ms. Fritz, a past president of the White House Correspondents' Association and the Fund for Investigative Journalism, left daily journalism in the mid-2000s. She held executive jobs with nonprofit organizations, including the Faith & Politics Institute in Washington, and was briefly publisher of the monthly newspaper *Youth Today*. She had recently completed a manuscript for a book about the legacy of school segregation in Prince Edward County, Va.

Fritz developed a lung infection after successful hip surgery and was hospitalized for more than month. She was removed from life support at George Washington University Hospital after her family and doctors agreed she would not recover from the debilitating infection. She died on October 16

Scope and Content Note

This collection consists of printouts of notes from interviews, background briefings and story drafts compiled by Sara and fellow reporters from *US News & World Report*.

The collection consists of a single series of subject folders arranged alphabetically by folder title.

The bulk of the materials consist of story drafts for *US News & World Report* and transcript/summaries from Reagan administration spokespersons and officials. The

collection includes not only the work of Ms. Fritz, but her colleagues at the magazine. While the vast majority of the interviews were “on the record,” some of the interviewees asked for anonymity or for comments to be “off the record.” Out of deference for the common professional practice of not disclosing sources, we have withdrawn the “off the record” comments of all living persons. In rare instances we have withdrawn the comments of a person – still living – who requested anonymity at the time of the interview.

The list of people interviewed is extensive, and includes:

Rick Ahearn

Richard Allen

Debbie Augsbach

Howard Baker (*deceased*)

James Baker

Terrell Bell (*deceased*)

Joanna Bistany (*deceased*)

Robert Bonitati (*deceased*)

Barry Bosworth

James Boyle

James Brady (*deceased*)

William Brock

Richard Burt

Claude Cheysson (*deceased*)

William Clark (*deceased*)

Kenneth Dam

Richard Darman (*deceased*)

Mike Deaver (*deceased*)

Ken Duberstein

William Dyes (*deceased*)

Lawrence Eagleburger (*deceased*)

Thomas Enders (*deceased*)

Frank Fahrenkopf

Fred Fielding

Dean Fischer (*deceased*)

Max Friedersdorf

Craig Fuller

David Gergen

Alexander Haig (*deceased*)

Clifford Hardin (*deceased*)

Ed Hewett (*deceased*)

Frank Hodsell (*deceased*)

John Holdridge (*deceased*)

Robert Hormats

Fred Ikle (*deceased*)

Pendleton James

Les Janka

James Jenkins (*deceased*)

Geoffrey Kemp

George Keyworth (*deceased*)

Dan Kingsley

William Knaus

Drew Lewis (*deceased*)

Richard Lugar

Robert "Bud" McFarlane

John McKeel (*deceased*)

Maureen McMann

Peter McPherson

Ed Meese

Ursula Meese

Jim Michael

Kenneth Moffett

Powell Moore

Tony Motley

Henry Nau

Jim Naughton

Lyn Nofziger (*deceased*)

Robert Nipp (*deceased*)

Lionel Olmer

Verne Orr (*deceased*)

Richard Perle

Richard Pipes

David Prospero

Ronald Reagan (*deceased*)

Don Regan (*deceased*)

Thomas Reed

George Reedy (*deceased*)

Roger Robinson

John Rogers

Ed Rollins

Pete Rousel

David Runkle

Glenn Schleede (*deceased*)

George Shultz

Gaston Sigur (*deceased*)

Bob Sims (*deceased*)

Helmut Sonnenfeldt (*deceased*)

Larry Speakes (*deceased*)

John Steinbruner (*deceased*)

Walter Stoessel (*deceased*)

Richard Stone

Sheila Tate

Howard Teicher

Robert Thompson

Stansfield Turner (*deceased*)

Margaret Tutwiler

Guy Vander Jagt (*deceased*)

Nicholas Veliotis

Lee Verstandig

Helene Von Damm

William Webster

Murray Weidenbaum (*deceased*)

Mark Weinberg

Caspar Weinberger (*deceased*)

Faith Whittlesey

Rich Williamson (*deceased*)

Richard Wirthlin (*deceased*)

Jim Wooten

Jim Wright (*deceased*)

Jack Zimmerman

COLLECTION CONTAINER LIST

Last Modified Date

2024-05-16

Box 1

Status	Title
OPEN / DIGITIZED	[Appointment Books - 1981]
OPEN / DIGITIZED	[Appointment Books - 1982]
OPEN / DIGITIZED	[Format information for US News & World Report]
OPEN / DIGITIZED	[RR Speech cards - originals, 06/23/1981]
OPEN / DIGITIZED	Shooting Pool Report
OPEN / DIGITIZED	White House Notes - 11/1980 13 pp
OPEN / DIGITIZED	White House Notes - 12/1980 [Orr, Meese]
OPEN / DIGITIZED	White House Notes - 01/01/1981 - 01/20/1981 [Meese, Kingsley, Hodsell, J. Baker, Brady, Naughton]
OPEN / DIGITIZED	White House Notes - 01/21/1981 - 01/31/1981 [Brady, Dyes, Weidenbaum, Meese, McKeel]
OPEN / DIGITIZED	White House Notes - 02/01/1981 - 02/17/1981 [Holdridge, Nofziger, Wirthlin, Nipp, P. James]
OPEN / DIGITIZED	White House Notes - 02/18/1981 - 02/28/1981 [Gergen, Schleede]
OPEN / DIGITIZED	White House Notes - 03/01/1981 - 03/31/1981 [J. Baker, Meese, Nofziger, Gergen, Bonitati]
OPEN	White House Notes - 04/01/1981 - 04/08/1981 [Nofziger, Gergen, Meese, Friedersdorf, Stoessel, Zimmerman, Knaus, McMann, Augsbach, Ahearn, Wooten, Wirthlin, Speakes, J. Baker, Deaver]
OPEN / DIGITIZED	White House Notes - 04/09/1981 - 04/30/1981 [Webster, Gergen, Fuller, Friedersdorf, Allen, Bell]
OPEN / DIGITIZED	White House Notes - 05/01/1981 - 05/31/1981 [Allen, Friedersdorf, Bonitati, Gergen, Nofziger, Weidenbaum, Fuller]
OPEN / DIGITIZED	White House Notes - 06/01/1981 - 06/15/1981 [J. Baker, Speakes, Allen, Meese, Nofziger]

Status	Title
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>White House Notes - 06/16/1981 - 06/30/1981 [Vander Jagt, Speakes, Gergen]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>White House Notes - 07/01/1981 - 07/17/1981 [Gergen, Nofziger, Roussel, Friedersdorf, Speakes, Hormats]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>White House Notes - 07/18/1981 - 07/31/1981 [Clark, Fielding, Nau, Regan, Fuller, Lugar, J. Baker]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>White House Notes - 08/01/1981 - 08/31/1981 [Meese, Gergen, Speakes, Bonatati, Moffett, Wirthlin, Williamson]</u>

Box 2

Status	Title
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>White House Notes - 09/01/1981 - 09/14/1981 [J. Baker, Fuller, Nofziger, Von Damm, Prosperi, Weinberg, Meese, Gergen, Deaver, Friedersdorf]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>White House Notes - 09/15/1981 - 09/30/1981 [Speakes, Gergen, Tate, Haig, Allen, Bonitati, Nau]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>White House Notes - 10/01/1981 - 10/15/1981 [C. Weinberger, Gergen, Deaver, Speakes, Meese]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>White House Notes - 10/16/1981 - 10/31/1981 [Meese, Gergen, Wirthlin, Nofziger, J. Baker, Allen]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>White House Notes - 11/01/1981 - 11/15/1981 [Speakes, P. James, Gergen, Fuller, Meese, Williamson, Moore]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>White House Notes - 11/16/1981 - 11/30/1981 [Williamson, Lewis, Meese, Gergen, Fuller, Jenkins, Speakes]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>White House Notes - 12/01/1981 - 12/31/1981 [Allen, Gergen, Speakes, J. Baker, Turner, Fuller, Meese, Weidenbaum, Williamson]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>White House Notes - 01/01/1982 - 01/14/1982 [Eagleburger, Von Damm, P. James, Meese, Gergen, Speakes, J. Baker]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>White House Notes - January 1982 [Meese, Speakes, Gergen, Rogers, Jenkins, H. Baker, Wright]</u>

Status	Title
OPEN	White House Notes - February 1982 [J. Baker, Rollins, Speakes, Gergen, Meese, Boyle, Fielding, Bonitati, Duberstein, McFarlane, Enders, Brock, McPherson, Deaver] (1)
OPEN	White House Notes - February 1982 [J. Baker, Rollins, Speakes, Gergen, Meese, Boyle, Fielding, Bonitati, Duberstein, McFarlane, Enders, Brock, McPherson, Deaver] (2)
OPEN / DIGITIZED	White House Notes - March 1982 (1) [Gergen, Meese, Darman, J. Baker, Fuller, U. Meese, Deaver, Speakes, Clark, Reed]
OPEN / DIGITIZED	White House Notes - March 1982 (2) [Gergen, Meese, Darman, J. Baker, Fuller, U. Meese, Deaver, Speakes, Clark, Reed]
OPEN / DIGITIZED	White House Notes - April 1982 [Speakes, Gergen, Meese, Rollins, Williamson, J. Baker]
OPEN	White House Notes - May1982 (1) [J. Baker, H. Baker, Speakes, Gergen, Williamson, Fuller, Darman, Meese, Duberstein, McFarlane, Fielding, Regan, Steinbruner, Sonnenfeldt, Hewitt, Bosworth]
OPEN	White House Notes - May1982 (2) [J. Baker, H. Baker, Speakes, Gergen, Williamson, Fuller, Darman, Meese, Duberstein, McFarlane, Fielding, Regan, Steinbruner, Sonnenfeldt, Hewitt, Bosworth]
OPEN / DIGITIZED	White House Notes - June 1982 (1) [Cheysson, Meese, Hormats, R. Burt, Gergen, J. Baker, Deaver, Haig, Fuller, Bonitati, Darman, Sims, R. Robinson]
OPEN / DIGITIZED	White House Notes - June 1982 (2) [Cheysson, Meese, Hormats, R. Burt, Gergen, J. Baker, Deaver, Haig, Fuller, Bonitati, Darman, Sims, R. Robinson]

Box 3

Status

Title

OPEN	White House Notes - July 1982 (1) [Gergen, Speakes, Simes, Meese, Fischer, Williamsons, Veliotes, McFarlane, Clark, J. Baker, Olmer, R. Robinson, Pipes] (1)
OPEN	White House Notes - July 1982 (1) [Gergen, Speakes, Simes, Meese, Fischer, Williamsons, Veliotes, McFarlane, Clark, J. Baker, Olmer, R. Robinson, Pipes] (2)
OPEN	White House Notes - August 1982 [Duberstein, Shultz, Speakes, Fuller, Sims, Teicher, Meese, J. Baker, Darman, Gergen, Williamson, Von Damm, Thompson] (1)
OPEN	White House Notes - August 1982 [Duberstein, Shultz, Speakes, Fuller, Sims, Teicher, Meese, J. Baker, Darman, Gergen, Williamson, Von Damm, Thompson] (2)
OPEN / DIGITIZED	White House Notes - September 1982 (1) [McFarlane, Kemp, Tutwiler, Meese, J. Baker, Speakes, Gergen, Deaver, Fuller, Eagleburger, Regan] (1)
OPEN / DIGITIZED	White House Notes - September 1982 (1) [McFarlane, Kemp, Tutwiler, Meese, J. Baker, Speakes, Gergen, Deaver, Fuller, Eagleburger, Regan] (2)
OPEN / DIGITIZED	White House Notes - October [Runkle, Vander Jagt, Williamson, Kemp, Gergen, Meese, Fuller, Sims, Veliotes, Reedy, Hardin] (1)
OPEN / DIGITIZED	White House Notes - October [Runkle, Vander Jagt, Williamson, Kemp, Gergen, Meese, Fuller, Sims, Veliotes, Reedy, Hardin] (2)
OPEN / DIGITIZED	White House Notes - November 1982 [Tate, Williamson, Speakes, Gergen, Bonitati, Fuller, Pipes, Teicher, Deaver, J. Baker]
OPEN / DIGITIZED	White House Notes - December 1982 [Fuller, Duberstein, Wirthlin, Enders, Meese, Gergen, Sims, Darman] (1)
OPEN / DIGITIZED	White House Notes - December 1982 [Fuller, Duberstein, Wirthlin, Enders, Meese, Gergen, Sims, Darman] (2)
OPEN / DIGITIZED	White House Notes - January 1983 [Meese, Gergen, Williamson, Tutwiler, McFarlane, Sims, Fuller, Duberstein, Veliotes]

OPEN / DIGITIZED	White House Notes - February 1983 [J. Baker, Dam, Gergen, Meese, Sims, Speakes, Williamson]
OPEN	White House Notes - March 1983 Sims, J. Baker, Bonitati, Gergen, Tutwiler, R. Reagan, Fielding, Meese, Clark, McFarlane, Ikle, Keyworth, Duberstein, Speakes, Whittlesey, J. Baker, R. Burt, Perle, Fuller] (1)
OPEN	White House Notes - March 1983 Sims, J. Baker, Bonitati, Gergen, Tutwiler, R. Reagan, Fielding, Meese, Clark, McFarlane, Ikle, Keyworth, Duberstein, Speakes, Whittlesey, J. Baker, R. Burt, Perle, Fuller] (2)
OPEN / DIGITIZED	White House Notes - April 1983 [Gergen, Meese, Kemp, McFarlane, Tutwiler, Williamson, Nau, H. Baker, Enders, Stone] (1)
OPEN / DIGITIZED	White House Notes - April 1983 [Gergen, Meese, Kemp, McFarlane, Tutwiler, Williamson, Nau, H. Baker, Enders, Stone] (2)
Box 4	
Status	Title
OPEN / DIGITIZED	White House Notes - May 1983 [Sims, Fuller, Gergen, Duberstein, J. Baker, Meese, McFarlane, Nau] (1)
OPEN / DIGITIZED	White House Notes - May 1983 [Sims, Fuller, Gergen, Duberstein, J. Baker, Meese, McFarlane, Nau] (2)
OPEN / DIGITIZED	White House Notes - June 1983 [Nau, R. Burt, Gergen, Deaver, Clark, Kemp, Sims, Bistany, J. Michael, Meese, McFarlane, Speakes] (1)
OPEN / DIGITIZED	White House Notes - June 1983 [Nau, R. Burt, Gergen, Deaver, Clark, Kemp, Sims, Bistany, J. Michael, Meese, McFarlane, Speakes] (2)
OPEN / DIGITIZED	White House Notes - July 1983 [Meese, J. Baker, Darman, Gergen, Motley, McPherson, Sims, Verstandig, Lewis, Duberstein]
OPEN	White House Notes - August 1983 [Gergen, Sims, Meese, Sonnenfeldt, Nofziger, Fahrenkopf, Lewis, Speakes, Deaver, Kemp, J. Baker, Darman, Tutwiler, Wirthlin, Sigur] (1)

Status	Title
OPEN	White House Notes - August 1983 [Gergen, Sims, Meese, Sonnenfeldt, Nofziger, Fahrenkopf, Lewis, Speakes, Deaver, Kemp, J. Baker, Darman, Tutwiler, Wirthlin, Sigur] (2)
OPEN / DIGITIZED	White House Notes - September 1983 [Gergen, Sims, Janka, Meese, Deaver, Tutwiler, Fuller, Duberstein]