Guide to the H. Brett Melendy Oral History Collection

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Guide to the H. Brett Melendy Oral History Collection

Collection number: MSS-2010-10-06

SAN José STATE UNIVERSITY

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Descriptive Summary

Title: H. Brett Melendy Oral History Collection
Dates: 1965-1991
Collection number: MSS-2010-10-06
Collector: San José State University
Creator: Melendy, H. Brett (1924-2008)
Collection Size: 7 boxes, 8.33 linear feet
Repository: San José State University, Library.
San José, California 95192-0028

Abstract: The H. Brett Melendy Oral History Collection documents the experiences of various university administrators and faculty through oral history interviews. The interviewees include SJSU Presidents Jack Bunzel, Robert D. Clark, Gail Fullerton, and John T. Wahlquist, as well as other university administrators and faculty members such as Dwight Bentel, Hobart Burns, William G. Sweeny, O.C. Williams, Mildred Winters, and others. The collection consists of audio tapes and transcriptions, correspondence, typed and handwritten notes, and related files on specific departments and programs. The H. Brett Melendy Oral History Collection (1965-1991) is arranged into three series: Series I, Oral History Audio Tapes and Transcriptions, 1982-1991; Series II, San José State University Presidents Oral Histories, 1983-1991; and Series III, Correspondence and Research Materials, 1965-1984.

Physical location: For current information on the location of these materials, please consult the Library's online catalog.
Languages: Languages represented in the collection: English
Access
The collection is open for research.
Publication Rights
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Preferred Citation
H. Brett Melendy Oral History Collection, MSS-2010-10-06, San José State University Library Special Collections & Archives.

Processing Information

Biographical History
Born in Eureka, California, H. Brett Melendy (1924-2008) spent most of his life in California and Hawaii. He received his Master of Arts in Education in 1948 and his Doctorate in History in 1952 from Stanford University. During this time, he also taught high school in Fresno, California. Melendy began his academic career as a history professor at San José State College in 1955. He served in several positions including: Academic Council Faculty Chair; Associate Academic Vice President; Dean of Undergraduate Studies; History Department Chair; History Professor; Interim Academic Vice President; and University Archivist. Melendy also spent some of his academic career as an administrator and history professor in the Hawaiian University system in the 1970s. Melendy's published works include Chinese and Japanese Americans (1984); Asians in America: Filipinos, Koreans, and East Indians (1977); and The Governors of California: Peter H. Burnett to Edmund G. Brown (1965), as well as numerous scholarly articles.

In 1983 Melendy was appointed as the University Archivist from 1983-1987 on a half-time basis, while also maintaining half-time responsibilities as the Director of the Engineering Institute in the Engineering Department. In this role, Melendy organized and conducted oral history interviews of select San José State University administrators and faculty. In 1987 the University Archivist position was eliminated. From 1987 to 1994, Melendy continued to work in the History and Engineering Departments, and in 1993 he was awarded Professor Emeritus status.

Bibliography

Related Material


San José State University Faculty Papers of H. Brett Melendy, MSS-2009-05-01, San José State University Library Special Collections & Archives.

Scope and Content of Collection
The H. Brett Melendy Oral History Collection documents the experiences of various university administrators and faculty through oral history interviews. The interviewees include SJSU Presidents Jack Bunzel, Robert D. Clark, Gail Fullerton, and John T. Wahlquist, as well other university administrators and faculty members such as Dwight Bentel, Hobart Burns, William G. Sweeney, O.C. Williams, Mildred Winters, and others. The collection consists of audio tapes and transcriptions, correspondence, typed and handwritten notes, and related files on specific departments and programs.

Arrangement

Indexing Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

Melendy, H. Brett (1924-2008)
San José State University -- University Archivist -- History
San José State Teachers College -- History
San José State College -- History

Physical Description: 4 Boxes

Series Scope and Content Summary

The material in this series documents the history of San José State University through oral history interviews conducted by the University Archivist, H. Brett Melendy, History Professor Charles Burdick, and others. The interviews document thirty-five years of university governance, which reflect many of the controversies between the university administration, faculty, students, and staff. For example, the interview with Burton Brazil describes the conflicts between the Economic Department faculty, President John Bunzel, and the Academic Senate. Other interviews include several personal accounts concerning the faculty strike and student protests in the 1960's, including the Dow Chemical protest at SJSU that resulted in police firing tear gas at rioting students.

Personal Names
Ashe, Mary Rutledge
Baird, Forrest
Bentel, Dwight
Bowman, Mary O
Brazil, Burton R
Brown, James
Burns, Hobert W
Carmick, Admiral Edward
Cockrell, Loren
Carr, Marie
Cumry, Alice A
Dumke, Glenn S
Dusel, William J
Gunderson, Norman O.
Guttormsen, Glen
Harcleroad, Fred
Hubbard
Hyde, Barney
Jacobsen, Albert
Jenkins
Leonard, Tom
Lopez, Daniel
Maruyama, Rose
McPherson
Mcreath, Benny
Melendy, Brett
Mc Callum, Alexander
Palmer
Pitman, Paul
Rendahl, Milton
Sinclar, George M
Sweeny, William G
Thomas, Violet
Thornton, James W
Titchenal
Vandergon, Lucy
Vasoncelos & Titchenal
Vessel, Matt
Walquist, Grace
Walker
Wheeler, Gerald
Williams, Otho Clinton
Winters, Mildred
Wright, Milburn
Wool, Whitaker

Arrangement

This series is organized alphabetically by surname and chronologically by date range.

Transcriptions A-D 1982-1988

Box 1

Transcriptions E-Z 1982-1988

Box 2

Audio Tapes 1982-1991

Boxes 3-4

Series II: San José State University Presidents Oral Histories 1983-1991

Physical Description: 2 Boxes

Series Scope and Content Summary

The materials in this series consist of audio tapes and oral history transcriptions of the San José State University Presidents who served from 1956-1991. The interviews represented here document the experiences of SJSU presidents John T. Wahlquist (1952-1964), Robert D. Clark (1964-1969), John Bunzel (1970-1978), and Gail Fullerton (1978-1991). University Archivist, H. Brett Melendy conducted the interviews of President Bunzel and President Clark, Sandra MacMahon interviewed President Gail Fullerton in 1991, and History Professor Charles Burdick conducted the Wahlquist interview. The Bunzel and Clark interviews are particularly significant in describing the civil rights and anti-war protests that took place on campus between 1964-1969 at San José State University and at San Francisco State University (SFSU).

John Wahlquist's interview includes his interactions with SJSU President MacQuarrie, whom Wahlquist succeeded. Other subjects include Wahlquist's experiences with the newly formed faculty council, a precursor to the academic senate, and the development of SJSU from a teacher's college to a full university. Other topics represented include the development of new departments in nursing, occupational therapy, industrial arts, and engineering.

Clark's interview describes his interactions with part-time sociology teacher Harry Edwards, student athletes Tommie Smith and John Carlos, along with other black and Hispanic student organizations. The interview provides Clark's perspective on the problem of race discrimination on campus, the larger problem of local housing discrimination for black and Hispanic students, anti-war demonstrations, and Mexican American student protests. Clark was one of the few college presidents of the era to address civil rights issues through direct negotiation with student groups, despite criticism from Governor Ronald Reagan and other state officials.

John Bunzel's interview describes his experiences at SFSU during the faculty strike and student protests in the 1960s. Included is the political fallout from an article promoting academic freedom in the newly formed Afro-American Studies courses. Students vandalized Bunzel's property, left a bomb outside his office door, and disrupted his classroom. Bunzel also describes his experiences with faculty and students while serving in the capacity as the President of SJSU, and he describes at length his controversial decision to remove the power of self-governance from the Economics Department.

Gail Fullerton was the first woman to serve as the President of San José State University. Fullerton's interview describes her struggle to improve a bad public image of the University as portrayed by the news and media. Other subjects include the growth of the SJSU campus and athletics at SJSU, such as promotion of female competitive team sports and the concept of the student-athlete that Fullerton wanted to promote.

Personal Names
Wahlquist, John T
Clark, Robert D
Bunzel, John
Fullerton, Gail

Arrangement
This series is organized chronologically by the term of office of the individual.
Series III: Research Materials 1965-1984

Physical Description: 1 Box

Series Scope and Content Summary
This series represents the oral history and research files collected by H. Brett Melendy during the course of his tenure as University Archivist. Several different SJSU departments or events are documented including the San José State College Centennial, the history of the Home Economics Department, SJSU Athletics, the Philosophy Department, and the Tutorials Program (1965-1968), an experimental Humanities Department program directed at freshman students.

Subjects
City Hall
Emeritus Faculty Association
Faculty Retirements Mailing
Faculty Wives Club
Genealogy Inquiries
Greenwood Encyclopedia Project
Home Economics Department (Laah Whiting)
Johnson article on SJSU
Journalism Department
Misc. Publications on SJSU
Occupational Therapy
Ombudsman
Oral History Project Candidates
Philosophy Department
Research for SJSU
School of Engineering
School of Humanities and Arts
School of Social Sciences
Survey of the Status of Women at SJSU
SJSU 1929-1934 Graduates by degree
SJSC Centennial History
SJSU College Union History
Tutorials Program
Willow Glen Community History
Arrangement
This series is arranged chronologically by date range.