



George Bush Presidential Library

1000 George Bush Drive West
College Station, TX 77845
phone: (979) 691-4041
fax: (979) 691-4030
<http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu>
library.bush@nara.gov

Inventory for FOIA Request 2003-1978-F

Records on Atheism/American Atheists, Inc.

Extent

7 folders, approximately 800 pages

Access

Collection is open to all researchers. Access to Bush Presidential records, Bush Vice Presidential Records, and Quayle Vice Presidential Records is governed by the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)(5 USC 552 as amended) and the Presidential Records Act (PRA)(44 USC 22) and therefore records may be restricted in whole or in part in accordance with legal exemptions.

Copyright

Documents in this collection that were prepared by officials of the United States government as part of their official duties are in the public domain. Researchers are advised to consult the copyright law of the United States (Title 17, USC) which governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material.

Provenance

Official records of George Bush's presidency are housed at the George Bush Presidential Library and administered by the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) under the provisions of the Presidential Records Act (PRA).

Processed By

Staff Archivists, April 2006. Previously restricted materials are added as they are released.

Related Collections

George Bush Presidential Library FOIA requests 2004-0995-F; 2006-1115-F; 2006-0479-F; 2006-0596-F

Scope and Content

The materials in FOIA 2003-1978-F are a selective, not necessarily all inclusive, body of documents responsive to the topic of the FOIA. Researchers should consult the archivist about related materials.

FOIA 2003-1978-F contains materials related to a remark allegedly made by Vice President George H. W. Bush to Robert I. Sherman, spokesman for American Atheists, Inc. in Chicago, Illinois during the 1988

presidential campaign. According to Mr. Sherman, when asked what he would do to secure the votes of atheists, Vice President Bush is said to have called the citizenship and patriotism of atheists into question. The materials related to the request consist of correspondence between American Atheists, Inc. (as well as individual atheists) and the Bush Administration for approximately 20 months (approximately from December 1988 to August 1991) during which time Mr. Sherman and members of American Atheists, Inc. demand an apology from the President. The White House Counsel's Office responses on behalf of the President assure them that the President respects the Constitutional rights of all Americans.

White House Office of Records Management (WHORM) Subject Category PR013-05 contains a letter from Jon G. Murray, President of American Atheists, Inc. and a copy of the June 1988 "American Atheist" magazine.

The White House Staff and Office Files contain correspondence, memoranda, and publications maintained by individual staff members and offices. The majority of the material consists of copies of outgoing correspondence from the White House Counsel's Office, specifically that of White House Counsel C. Boyden Gray and Associate White House Counsel Nelson Lund. However, there are also a few copies of the incoming letters that prompted the responses. Nearly the whole of the Counsel's Office Chron File consists of materials unrelated to the subject of the FOIA request, yet covers a myriad of subjects, including replies to requests for the President to endorse television programs, commercial products, inventions, etc.; memoranda related to nominees for federal office (including a large amount of material related to the nomination of the late Senator John Tower of Texas as Secretary of Defense); a great deal of material regarding government ethics/ formation of the President's Commission on Federal Ethics Law Reform; routine material regarding the updating of the White House Staff Manual; speaking invitations and requests for autographed photos of White House Counsel C. Boyden Gray; routine comments/ edits on speech drafts (regarding the Clean Air Act, for example); several letters responding to sitting federal judges regarding the drive to increase their pay; and routine guidance by Counsel's Office regarding acceptance of gifts, discounts, and contacts with independent government agencies. The Nelson Lund materials (one folder - 'Atheism') consist primarily of correspondence from members of the American Atheists, Inc. organization and their supporters in which they demand an apology for the derogatory statement towards atheists which President Bush allegedly made during the 1988 Presidential campaign. Several copies of the official responses (written by C. Boyden Gray and Nelson Lund) are included, as are several copies of atheist newsletters and magazine articles.

System of Arrangement

Records that are responsive to this FOIA request were found in two collection areas--Bush Presidential Records: WHORM Subject Files and Bush Presidential Records: White House Staff and Office Files. As policy, Staff and Office files are processed at the folder level, that is, individual documents are not selected and removed from a folder for processing. WHORM Subject files are processed at the document level. While this method maintains folder integrity, it frequently results in the incidental processing of documents that are not wholly responsive to the subject area.

The WHORM Subject file was compiled by the White House of Records Management and is a series of categories designated by a letter/number combination. A complete listing of the categories with detailed descriptions is provided in our research room and on our website at <http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/find/whorm/whorm.html>.

Please note that a single asterisk "*" indicates that the category is entirely processed and open.

The following is a list of documents and folders processed in response to FOIA 2003-1978-F.

Bush Presidential Records: WHORM Subject Files

Category	Case Number
FE010-01*	Scanned: 028896CU
FG001-06*	Scanned: 036407
FG006-04*	Scanned: 022304CU
PR013-05	Scanned: 003896
RM*	Scanned: 040407CU; 041388CU; 053847CU; 157715CU; 336779
RM030*	Scanned: 070131CU
SP*	Scanned: 037871CU

Bush Presidential Records: Staff and Office Files

Counsels Office

C. Boyden Gray Files—Chronological File
 Chron File: 2/89 [1] [OA/ID 45025]
 Chron File: 2/89 [2] [OA/ID 45025]
 Chron File: 2/89 [3] [OA/ID 45025]
 Chron File: 2/89 [4] [OA/ID 45025]
 Chron File: 2/89 [5] [OA/ID 45025]

Nelson Lund Files—Subject Files
 Atheism [OA/ID 45337]

Last modified: 06/22/2007