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Samuel Devons papers 10315268

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Summary Information

Repository:	Rare Book and Manuscript Library
Creator:	Devons, Samuel
Title:	Samuel Devons papers
ID:	10315268
ID:	MS#1664
Date [inclusive]:	1959-2004
Physical Description:	66.5 linear feet 44 record cartons, 1 document box
Language of the Material:	English .
Abstract:	This collection comprises the papers of noted physicist and historian Samuel Devons (1914-2006). It includes Devons's detailed analysis of his scientific findings, articles, essays, personal and professional correspondence, photographs, and memorabilia. Other subject files, reflecting his interest in film, Sir Isaac Newton, Benjamin Franklin, Alessandro Volta, and promoting interactions among current and former university faculty during his academic tenure.

Preferred Citation

Identification of specific item; Date (if known); Samuel Devons Papers; Box and Folder; Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University Library.

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Biographical / Historical

Samuel Devons was a renowned nuclear physicist, academic, and historian. Born in Bangor, Great Britain, on September 30, 1914, Devons enrolled at Trinity College, Cambridge University at the age of 16. After graduating in 1935, he continued his studies there, earning a doctorate in 1939. During World War II, Devons served as a British intelligence officer in Germany working on defense projects before accepting a series of professorial appointments at Cambridge University, Imperial College, and the Universities of London and Manchester.

In 1960, he moved to the United States to teach at Columbia University where he served as chairman of the Physics department from 1963-1967. An acclaimed scholar of physics, he specialized in the works of Franklin, Rabi, Volta, Rutherford, and Newton.

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Biographical / Historical

During the 1980s, Devons organized and served as president of the Joseph Priestley Society at Columbia. The group was created to promote collaborative interactions between high school science teachers and university faculty. Devons retired in 1984 but remained actively involved with the university, serving as Emeritus Professor and was widely recognized as the macebearer for its annual Commencement ceremonies. In the late 1990s, he founded the Emeritus Professors in Columbia (EPIC), which was devoted to fostering open dialogue and communication among current and former faculty members as an alternative to increasing administrative centralization.

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Biographical / Historical

Devons died of congestive heart failure at the age of 92 on December 6, 2006 in Manhattan.

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Summary

This collection is comprised of the papers of noted physicist and historian Samuel Devons (1914-2006). It includes Devons's detailed analysis of his scientific findings, articles, essays, personal and professional correspondence, photographs, and memorabilia. Other subject files reflect his interest in film, Isaac Newton, Benjamin Franklin, Alessandro Volta, and promoting interactions among current and former university faculty during his academic tenure. The Devons Papers are arranged in four series.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Revision Description

File created. EAD was imported spring 2019 as part of the ArchivesSpace Phase II migration. 2014-06-07 2019-05-20

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2012.2013.M161: Source of acquisition--Ruth Devons. Method of acquisition--Gift; Date of acquisition--06/04/2013.

Processing Information

Papers processed Felecia Hunter, Columbia University School of the Arts 2016 06/2014.

Processing Information

Finding aid written Felecia Hunter, Columbia University School of the Arts 2016 06/2014.

Conditions Governing Access

All original copies of audio / moving image media are closed until reformatting.

Processing Information

Three unprocessed boxes found in the stacks were integrated into the collections, boxes 43-45. kws

Accruals

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- Nuclear physics
- Optics
- Scientific Literacy
- Sound recordings
- Video recordings (physical artifacts)
- Devons, Samuel
- Priestley, Joseph, 1733-1804
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- Volta, Alessandro, 1745-1827
- Columbia University. Department of Physics

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