Kevin H. Prendergast papers 5490814

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Summary Information

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Biographical / Historical

Prendergast received his Ph.D. at Columbia in 1954 and then went to the University of Chicago, returning to Columbia as a professor in 1962. He chaired the Columbia astronomy department from 1978 to 1984, retiring in 2000 with a long trail of successful young theorists in his wake. Prendergast was an icon in the field of dynamics of many-body systems. He also was well known for a series of papers in the 1960s and 1970s, written with Geoffrey and Margaret Burbidge, on understanding the rotation curves of galaxies. Numerous theoretical studies of the structure of galaxies followed, and he was a pioneer in the study of X-ray binary systems. In addition to Prendergast's professional accomplishments, he was also a skilled pianist and an avid sailor. During his long career, Prendergast became famous for using yellow legal pads, on which he had scrawled analyses of many problems in astronomical dynamics. His classes were renowned for the exactitude of his standards and the high percentage of faculty in attendance. During one year, regularly attending faculty outnumbered students.

Summary

Correspondence, manuscripts, lectures, notes, and printed materials of Kevin H. Prendergast, a prominent astronomer who worked in the fields off dynamics of many-body systems, the rotation curves of galaxies, and X-ray binary systems.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged into 12 series.

Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Immediate Source of Acquisition

2004-2005-M35: Source of acquisition--Jane Prendergast. Method of acquisition--Gift; Date of acquisition--2/1/2005.

Processing Information

Papers processed Wei-Hwan Chiang 10/2005.

Accruals

Materials may have been added to the collection since this finding aid was prepared. Contact rbml@columbia.edu for more information.

Controlled Access Headings

- Cosmology
- X-ray binaries
- Barred galaxies -- Rotation
- Galactic dynamics
- Stellar dynamics
- Spiral galaxies -- Rotation
- Dwarf galaxies
- Stars -- Clusters
- X-ray sources, Galactic -- Accretion

- Asteroids
- Columbia University. Department of Astronomy

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