



ArchivesSpace

a community served by †Lyrasis

Bradley Commission on History in Schools Records 6618221

This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on January 13, 2025.

Description is written in: English.

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Butler Library, 6th Floor
Columbia University, Mail Code 1127
535 W. 114th St.
New York, NY 10027

Business Number: (212) 854-5153

Fax Number: (212) 854-1365

rbml@libraries.cul.columbia.edu

URL: <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/indiv/rbml/index.html>

Table of Contents

Summary Information	3
Biographical / Historical	3
Summary	4
Arrangement	4
Administrative Information	5
Controlled Access Headings	6
Collection Inventory	6
Series I: Administration	6
Series II: Surveys	8
Series III: Publications and Presentations	9

Summary Information

Repository:	Rare Book and Manuscript Library
Creator:	Bradley Commission on History in Schools
Title:	Bradley Commission on History in Schools Records
ID:	6618221
ID:	MS#1448
Date [inclusive]:	1982-1992
Physical Description:	9 linear feet 7 record storage cartons and 1 manuscript box
Language of the Material:	English .

Preferred Citation

Identification of specific item; Date (if known); Bradley Commission on History in Schools Records; Box and Folder; Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University Library.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Biographical / Historical

The Bradley Commission on History in Schools was created in 1987 in response to the perceived inadequacy of historical education in American elementary and secondary classrooms. Elaine Wrisley Reed, a teacher and curriculum specialist, and Joe Ribar, a non-profit consultant, initiated the planning process and joined with the Educational Excellence Network of Teachers College, Columbia University to receive funding from the Bradley Foundation, a conservative organization based in Milwaukee. The commission was led by Columbia University History professor Kenneth T. Jackson, and was comprised of sixteen history scholars and elementary and secondary school teachers who examined social studies and history curricula in the United States and the requirements for high school graduation in each state. The inclusion of classroom teachers on the commission was at the urging of Jackson's wife, Barbara Jackson, a teacher. The two of them co-wrote a chapter of the Bradley Commission publication, "Historical Literacy: The Case for American Education." The commission did not issue a specified curriculum, but rather published a set of guidelines

emphasizing the importance of history education for democratic citizenship and for personal and intellectual growth. They recommended that all states require history coursework as a prerequisite for high school graduation and that elementary and middle school social studies curricula be primarily focused on history. They also recommended that history education include United States, Western, and World history, and that it be based around broad themes rather than facts and dates. The commission's report was endorsed by the Organization of History Teachers, the American Historical Association, and the Organization of American Historians.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Summary

The Bradley Commission on History in Schools Records contain the commission's administrative records and materials related to the process of creating and sharing guidelines for elementary and secondary school history education in the United States from 1982-1992. Many of these materials were created by Elaine Wrisley Reed, administrative director, Kenneth Jackson, chair, and the sixteen members of the commission. They include files related to the planning, staffing, and funding of the commission as well as correspondence and meeting minutes. The papers also contain surveys the commission drafted and distributed to teachers to collect data for the project. Teachers were surveyed on the history requirements at their school, the obstacles they faced, and recommendations to improve their field. The results of those surveys and the commission's conclusions are documented with drafts and final versions of two publications, as well as videos and other materials from two associated conferences.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Arrangement

The papers were retained in the physical order in which they arrived. This collection is arranged in three series.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Administrative Information

Publication Statement

Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Butler Library, 6th Floor
Columbia University, Mail Code 1127
535 W. 114th St.

New York, NY 10027

Business Number: (212) 854-5153

Fax Number: (212) 854-1365

rbml@libraries.cul.columbia.edu

URL: <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/indiv/rbml/index.html>

Revision Description

XML document instance created by Celeste Brewer. EAD was imported spring 2019 as part of the ArchivesSpace Phase II migration. 2018-10-02 2019-05-20

Restrictions on Access

This collection has no restrictions.

Restrictions on Access

This collection is located off-site. You will need to request this material at least three business days in advance to use the collection in the Rare Book and Manuscript Library reading room.

Terms Governing Use and Reproduction

Reproductions may be made for research purposes. The RBML maintains ownership of the physical material only. Copyright remains with the creator and his/her heirs. The responsibility to secure copyright permission rests with the patron.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Acquired from Elaine Wrisley Reed and Kenneth Jackson, 2007.

Processing Information

This collection was processed by Rachel Klepper. Finding aid written by Rachel Klepper in September 2018.

Processing Information

The papers were retained in the physical order in which they arrived and unfolded materials were provided with folders and titles. Duplicate publications were removed.

Accruals

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

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Controlled Access Headings

- History -- Teaching
- United States -- History -- Teaching
- Reports
- Education -- Curricula
- Articles
- Correspondence
- guidelines
- First drafts
- minutes (administrative records)
- Reports
- symposia (conferences)
- Jackson, Kenneth T.
- Bradley Commission on History in Schools

Collection Inventory

Series I: Administration, 1982-1990

Scope and Contents

Series I documents the management and organization of the Bradley Commission from its inception in the mid-1980s through the publication and publicity of its guidelines for history education. The series includes all incoming and outgoing correspondence as well as internal memos, funding applications, and meeting minutes. It also contains articles on relevant topics that the commissioners used as background materials and models for their work.

Title/Description	Instances
Art Samples, circa 1988	box 2 folder 15

Bradley Commission on History in Schools Records 6618221

Bell "Bell's Quarterly: A Newsletter on Curriculum Ideas in History and the Social Sciences for Teachers from Grades 6 to 12,", 1988	box 7	folder 21
Bradley Commission First Proposal, 1987	box 1	folder 9
Bradley Commission Second Proposal, 1987-1988	box 1	folder 10
Bradley Foundation Proposal - First Drafts, 1986-1987	box 1	folder 8
Commissioner Essays, 1987	box 2	folder 11
Correspondence - Kenneth T. Jackson, 1987-1988	box 2	folder 12
Correspondence - Letters of Agreement, 1987	box 1	folder 18
Scope and Contents		
Letters from commissioners agreeing to join the project		
Correspondence Incoming, 1986-1990	box 1	folder 3-7
Correspondence Outgoing, 1986-1987	box 2	folder 26
Correspondence Outgoing, 1987-1990	box 3	folder 1-13
Dissemination Reports, 1988-1989	box 1	folder 17
Egan "Teaching History to Young Children,", 1982	box 7	folder 14
Gagnon Articles, 1987-1988	box 7	folder 25
Gagnon French, 1981-1988	box 7	folder 26
Guidelines Reports, 1987	box 1	folder 16
Guidelines Reviews, 1988	box 1	folder 12
Hertzberg "Frederick Jackson Turner on 'The Significance of History' for Teachers,", 1987	box 7	folder 24
High School Graduation Requirements, 1987	box 2	folder 17
Hoone "Planning for Local Heritage Projects,", 1988	box 7	folder 23
Howard and Mendenhall "Making History Come Alive,", 1982	box 7	folder 15
Kirkendall "The Status of History in Schools,", 1975-1987	box 7	folder 11
Larkins and Hawkins "Trivial and Noninformative Content of Social Studies Textbooks in the Primary Grades,", 1987	box 7	folder 10
Materials from Commissioners, 1980-1988	box 7	folder 28
McNeill "Why Study History,", 1985	box 7	folder 22
Meeting Materials, 1987 June	box 7	folder 29
Meeting Materials, 1987 October	box 8	folder 1

Meeting Materials, 1987 December	box 8	folder 2
Meeting Materials, 1987 March	box 8	folder 3
Meeting Materials, 1988 June	box 8	folder 4
Memo States Using Guidelines, 1987	box 8	folder 7
Memos to Commissioners, 1987-1989	box 8	folder 5
National Council for Social Studies "In Search of a Scope and Sequence for Social Studies," 1983	box 7	folder 16
Organizing Themes Report, 1987	box 8	folder 6
Possible Commissioners, 1987	box 1	folder 11
Pre-Meeting Materials, 1987 October	box 7	folder 30
Ravitch "Tot Sociology: Or What Happened to History in Grade Schools," 1987	box 7	folder 20
Requests for Reports, 1989-1990	box 1	folder 14
Requests for State Info, 1986-1987	box 1	folder 15
Scott Widmeyer - Consultant, 1988	box 2	folder 16
Sewall "American History Textbooks: An Assessment of Quality," 1987	box 7	folder 12
Supporting Organizations, 1988	box 7	folder 27
Woodward "Beyond Textbooks in Elementary Social Studies," 1986-1987	box 7	folder 13
Work Plans, 1987	box 1	folder 13

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series II: Surveys, 1987-1989

Scope and Contents

Series II contains the surveys that the commission sent to hundreds of elementary and secondary social studies and history teachers. They asked teachers about their experiences in teacher training, how much history instruction their students received, the obstacles they faced, and their recommendations for future improvements in the field. The series also includes the results of the survey and reports and presentations of the data.

Title/Description	Instances	
Elementary Survey Charts, 1988	box 4	folder 4
Elementary Survey Results, circa 1988	box 4	folder 2
Preliminary Survey Results, 1988	box 4	folder 7
Survey Correspondence, 1987-1989	box 4	folder 1

Survey Drafts, 1988	box 4	folder 6
Survey of Elementary School Teachers, 1988	box 4	folder 9
Survey of Secondary School Teachers, 1988	box 4	folder 10-17
Survey Reports, 1988	box 4	folder 3
Surveys Returned/Remail/Delete, 1988	box 4	folder 8
Surveys That Are Not Completely Entered, 1988	box 4	folder 5

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Series III: Publications and Presentations, 1985-1992

Scope and Contents

Series III documents the results of the Bradley Commission's project through materials related to its publications, press, and symposia at which its results were discussed. There were two main publications from the commission, which are represented in the collection. Their 1988 guidelines for history education were the formal results of their investigation. The collection includes those published guidelines alongside drafts, reports, and reviews. In 1989 they also published a book titled *Historical Literacy: The Case for American Education* with essays from most of the commissioners. Drafts of each chapter, and the final publication, are contained in the collection as well. The commission also publicized its recommendations through two symposia in 1990, one for World History and one for American History. These are documented through administrative planning materials and videos of the conference sessions. In addition to these materials, series III contains press clippings about the commission and its work. Materials from specific publications or events are grouped together.

Title/Description	Instances	
Bradley Commission Guidelines for Teaching History in Schools, 1988	box 2	folder 1
Guidelines for Teaching History in Schools Drafts, 1988 May-September	box 7	folder 1-9
Draft Notes - Paul Gagnon, 1987-1988	box 2	folder 13
Scope and Contents		
Paul Gagnon notes on drafts of Bradley Commission Guidelines.		
Bradley Commission Vital Themes Article in Ohio Council for the Social Studies Newsletter, 1988	box 7	folder 17
Commissioned Papers, 1988-1989	box 2	folder 14
The History Teacher, 1989	box 2	folder 2
Historical Literacy: The Case for History in American Education, 1989	box 5	folder 1
Historical Literacy Drafts - Chapter 1 Jacksons, 1989	box 5	folder 2

Bradley Commission on History in Schools Records 6618221

Historical Literacy Drafts - Chapter 2 Building a History Curriculum, 1989	box 5	folder 3
Historical Literacy Drafts - Chapter 3 Ravitch, 1988-1989	box 5	folder 4
Historical Literacy Drafts - Chapter 4 Hertzberg, 1989	box 5	folder 5
Historical Literacy Drafts - Chapter 5 Why Study History, 1985-1989	box 5	folder 6
Historical Literacy Drafts - Chapter 6 Craig, 1988-1989	box 5	folder 7
Historical Literacy Drafts - Chapter 7 Kammen, 1988-1989	box 5	folder 8
Historical Literacy Drafts - Chapter 8 McNeill, 1988	box 5	folder 9
Historical Literacy Drafts - Chapter 9 Crabtree, 1989	box 5	folder 10
Historical Literacy Drafts - Chapter 10 Bender, 1988	box 5	folder 11
Historical Literacy Drafts - Chapter 11 Rabb, 1988-1989	box 5	folder 12
Historical Literacy Drafts - Chapter 12 Dunn, 1988-1989	box 5	folder 13
Historical Literacy Drafts - Chapter 13 Nash, 1988-1989	box 5	folder 14
Historical Literacy Drafts - Chapter 14 Obstacles Teachers Confront, 1988-1989	box 5	folder 15
Historical Literacy Drafts - Chapter 15 Wilson & Sykes, 1988-1989	box 5	folder 16
Historical Literacy Drafts - Chapter 16 Ribar, 1988-1989	box 5	folder 17
Historical Literacy Drafts - Chapter 17 Reed, 1988-1989	box 5	folder 18
Historical Literacy Drafts - Unpublished Chapter Bingham, 1988-1989	box 5	folder 19
Early Drafts to MacMillan, 1988	box 5	folder 20
Book Promotion, 1989-1990	box 5	folder 21
Library of Congress, 1991	box 2	folder 4
Los Angeles Times, 1989	box 2	folder 6
Magazines and Articles, 1990	box 2	folder 3
New Leader Review, 1990	box 2	folder 5
News Coverage, 1988-1989	box 2	folder 8-9
News Release, circa 1988	box 2	folder 7
Photographs, 1988	box 7	folder 18
Press Conference, 1989 November	box 5	folder 22
Press Release, 1988 September	box 2	folder 10
Publicity, 1987-1988	box 7	folder 19

Bradley Commission on History in Schools Records 6618221

Presentation Notes - Joe Ribar, 1988	box 1	folder 1
Presentation Notes - Elaine Wrisley Reed, 1989-1991	box 1	folder 2
American History Symposium, 1990	box 2	folder 20
American History Symposium Pre-Registration Packet Originals, 1990	box 2	folder 21
American History Symposium Videotaping, 1990	box 2	folder 25
World History Symposium Presenters, 1990	box 2	folder 22
World History Symposium Participants, 1990	box 2	folder 23
World History Symposium, 1990	box 2	folder 24
World History Symposium Handouts, 1990	box 2	folder 19
Video Releases, 1990	box 2	folder 18
A Symposium on Historical Literacy: The Case for History in American Education, 1990 March 22	box 6	folder 1-3
A Symposium on Historical Literacy: The Case for History in American Education, Edited Master Tape, 1990 March 22	box 6	folder 4-6
Bradley Commission on History, Washington Hilton, Original SVHS with Dolby, 1990 March 22	box 6	folder 7-11
Bradley Commission on History, Washington Hilton, Control Track Window Dub, 199 March 22	box 6	folder 12-16
A Symposia on Historical Literacy, Graphics/Titles and Music Bed, 1990 March 22 <u>Physical Description:</u> 1 videocassettes (VHS)	box 6	folder 17
Bradley Commission Session I, 1990 May <u>Physical Description:</u> 1 videocassettes (VHS)	box 6	folder 18
Bradley Commission Session II, 1990 May <u>Physical Description:</u> 1 videocassettes (VHS)	box 6	folder 19
Bradley Commission Session III, 1990 May <u>Physical Description:</u> 1 videocassettes (VHS)	box 6	folder 20
Bradley Commission Session IV, 1990 May <u>Physical Description:</u> 1 videocassettes (VHS)	box 6	folder 21
Bradley Commission Session V, 1990 May <u>Physical Description:</u> 1 videocassettes (VHS)	box 6	folder 22
Bradley Commission Session VI, 1990 May <u>Physical Description:</u> 1 videocassettes (VHS)	box 6	folder 23
Friday Welcome - Saturday Breakfast, 1990 May	box 6	folder 24-25

Physical Description: 2 videocassettes (VHS)

Western Civilization & World History, 1990 May

box 6

folder 26-27

Physical Description: 2 videocassettes (VHS)

Teaching Islamic Civilization in the Middle Ages, 1990 May

box 6

folder 28-29

Physical Description: 2 videocassettes (VHS)

Using Literature to Teach the World's Past, 1990 May

box 6

folder 30-31

Physical Description: 2 videocassettes (VHS)

Lunch - The Philadelphia World History Project, 1990 May

box 6

folder 32-33

Physical Description: 2 videocassettes (VHS)

Teaching Ancient India, 1990 May

box 6

folder 34

Physical Description: 1 videocassettes (VHS)

Teaching Medieval Society of Europe, 1990 May

box 6

folder 35

Physical Description: 1 videocassettes (VHS)

National Council for History Education Colloquium Program
Clips, 1991-1992

box 6

folder 36

Physical Description: 1 videocassettes (VHS)

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)