



Ford Foundation records, International Division, Latin America and the Caribbean, Office Files of Peter A. Fraenkel

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Table of Contents

Summary Information	3
Biographical / Historical	3
Scope and Contents	9
Arrangement	10
Administrative Information	10
Collection Inventory	11
Subject Files	11
Educational Modernization Grant, Madrid Field Office Files	16
Photographs	17

Summary Information

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[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Biographical / Historical

Segment One: International Activities of the Ford Foundation: An Overview

The Foundation's aspiration to become a national and international philanthropy for the advancement of human welfare was first formally expressed in the seminal 1949 report of the Gaither Study Committee, *Report of the Study for the Ford Foundation on Policy and Program* (RAC Library, call letters 361.7 GAI), which was commissioned by the Board of Trustees to chart the Foundation's future. Foundation Trustees launched Ford's international grantmaking activities in 1950 when they approved the committee's report and its embrace of peace, democracy, and freedom. Since then, the Foundation has tackled these goals using a variety of strategies and responding to changing contexts, from the Cold War to the 1989 fall of the Berlin Wall and beyond.

Toward the Foundation's aspiration#al goal, "the establishment of peace", its international activities have comprised a wide range of conceptual approaches and focus areas. These include international affairs, international studies, international understanding, arms control and disarmament, international law, international economic concerns, and overseas development in nearly every region of the world. Three distinct periods emerge for the international grantmaking defined by external contextual changes and

internal changes in Foundation leadership and structures: the expansion era of 1950-1965; the transition and restructuring years of 1966-1988; and the post-1989 shift away from Cold War dichotomies. During each of the distinct historical periods the consistent objectives were: 1) to ensure freedom and democracy in developed countries; 2) to foster education and international understanding in all countries; and 3) to contribute to the social, economic, and political development of less developed countries.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Biographical / Historical

Segment 2. Period Sketch - The Expansion Era 1950-1965

The Ford Foundation's expansion era (1950-1965) began when the Gaither Study Committee Report placed "peace" as the area of top priority for the Foundation and set the Ford Foundation on a global course. Board Chair Henry Ford II writing in the 1951 Annual Report of the Foundation, identified "the danger of war" as the "the prime threat to human welfare today." Under the leadership of the three Ford Foundation presidents in this period-- Paul Hoffman, H. Rowan Gaither and Henry Heald--and several key trustees, notably the two seriatim chairs, John J. McCloy and Julius A. Stratton, the Foundation programs were largely informed by the post-World War II desire to avoid nuclear war and promote greater understanding among the world's peoples, strengthening of the United Nations, and enhancing both private and public American participation in world affairs. The strong board presence of university presidents and former leaders of postwar reconstruction efforts in Europe also helped to inform Ford's approach to building the field of peace and international security in the United States and encouraged extensive overseas activities.

For example, the first three presidents of the expanded Foundation ranged from government and business leadership experience to academic and nonprofit: Paul Hoffman (at Ford, 1950-1953) ran the Marshall Plan in Europe; H. Rowan Gaither Staffer (1948-1953), President (1953-1956) and Trustee (1956-1958) had MIT and Rand experience; Henry Heald, former president, Illinois Institute of Technology and New York University, President (1956-1966). The trustees also ran the leadership gamut from government and nonprofits to academic: Trustee John J. McCloy (from 1953; chair, 1959-1965) was assistant Secretary of War during World War II and chairman of the Council on Foreign Relations; and Trustee Julius A. Stratton (Trustee from 1955; chair, 1966-1970) was president of MIT.

When Ford became an international foundation in 1950, it had a small staff and operated through separate funds. The expansive period in the 1950s and 1960s resulted in a large number of field offices, which increased Ford's global footprint. Support focused on a mix of US university-based programs for research and training; think-tanks for policy-oriented meetings and policy research; and action projects specifically in less developed countries. The Foundation's focus on peace, freedom, and democracy played out against the Cold War backdrop for scientific and military competition between the United States, the Soviet Union and China.

Under President Hoffman, the Foundation's work was organized by the areas identified in the Gaither Committee Report: Area One, the Establishment of Peace; Area Two, The Strengthening of Democracy;

Area Three, The Strengthening of the Economy; Area Four, Education in a Democratic Society; and Area Five, Individual Behavior and Human Relations.

Program differentiation began in the Gaither era. When he began in 1953, he introduced the following programs, with international work under nearly all of them: International Programs, Public Affairs Programs, Program in Economic Development and Administration (mainly U.S. based), Education Program, The TV-Radio Workshop, and Behavioral Sciences Program. In 1954, the Foundation gave prominence to the international work explicitly through changing the program names and separating international affairs and overseas development. The 1954 program names were: The Advancement of Education, Education for Democracy, Increasing Knowledge of Foreign Areas, Economic Development and Administration, the Behavioral Sciences, and Overseas Development. In 1955, Increasing Knowledge of Foreign Areas became Increasing International Understanding. In 1956, the last year of the Gaither presidency, the program roster read: Education in the United States, The Behavioral Sciences, Public Affairs, Hospital Aid (only in the U.S.), Economic Development and Administration, International Understanding, and Overseas Development. Names changed but the program focus often remained the same.

President Heald maintained the areas of international interest of Hoffman and Gaither. The International Affairs program housed the programs based in the United States, Europe and Japan, with a few activities linking American and developing countries institutions. The Overseas Training and Research Program took over the efforts to increase American understanding of international issues. From 1957-1959, an International Legal Studies program, run from New York, helped build law programs in developing countries. Starting in 1959, the Overseas Development program comprised all the regional and country offices. In fiscal year 1964, Heald convinced the trustees to add a new focus on population, with grants both in the United States and overseas.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Biographical / Historical

Segment 2. Period Summary - The Expansion Era 1950-1965

With the ever-increasing budget and trustee willingness to invade capital, presidents Hoffman, Gaither and Heald oversaw vast growth in the Foundation's international activities in the United States, other developed countries and developing countries. Activities crossed disciplines, institutions, and national boundaries, although few crossed intra-foundation boundaries. Under the three presidents, Foundation staff in various domestic and international offices from New York interacted with the regional and country offices headed by representatives. Usually in this period, however, these offices in fact worked more closely with local governments than with New York staff, reinforcing the commitment to locally led social and economic development in less-developed countries.

The shared values of this early period reflected as much the continuing competition between the Communist and capitalist worlds as the concerns about maintaining peace. The Cold War provided the contextual continuity for grantmaking on the core themes of increasing American understanding of the

rest of the world, building and strengthening connections not only with European and Asian democracies but also with Eastern European countries, the Soviet Union, China, and Cuba.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Biographical / Historical

Segment 3. Period Sketch - Transition and Restructuring 1966-1988

In the 1960s, the Ford Foundation Trustees began to rethink the role of the Foundation in the context of the era's dramatic political and cultural changes. For instance, the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act created a domestic policy context in which the Foundation could more deeply engage with issues of rights and social justice. Events overseas starting in the late 1960s would extend the rights agenda to international affairs and development operations at the Foundation -- all advanced by the leadership of McGeorge Bundy (president, 1966-1979).

McGeorge Bundy was appointed president in 1966, following a significant career in national security and academic administration. During World War II, he worked with the Army's intelligence division, and in the early post-war years was a political analyst at the Council on Foreign Relations. Even without a postgraduate degree, at the age of thirty-four he became dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science at Harvard University. In 1961, President Kennedy appointed Bundy to be Special Assistant to the President for National Security - a position he held for five years under both Kennedy and Johnson. Those significant years saw the Bay of Pigs invasion, the Cuban Missile Crisis, and the beginnings of the Vietnam War.

When Bundy arrived at the Foundation, he initiated a restructuring that modeled government departments rather than the academic ones President Henry Heald had established in the 1950s. At the same time, he had to contend with serious financial constraints due to Ford's overspending in the prior periods and to economic downturns in the global economy. The Board of Trustees mandated an annual spending of over \$100 million.

These economic constraints meant that Foundation programs had to be more selective across the range of its programs. Nonetheless, international activities remained prominent with the new president and trustees. President Bundy and key trustees such as Eugene Black (1960-1968, former head of the World Bank) and Robert S. McNamara (1968-1986, former U.S. Secretary of Defense and then head of the World Bank, 1968-1981) reflected a commitment to the international activities. Bundy also added to the board in 1972 the first trustee from a developing country, the Indonesian activist and scholar, Dr. Soedjakmoto, the former Ambassador to the United States from his country and then Special Adviser on Social and Cultural Affairs to the Chairman of Indonesia's National Development Planning Agency.

To create economies of scale, Bundy unified US-based international and overseas activities under one division: the International Division (using the name for the first time). That division comprised Resources for Development (area studies, languages, and exchanges), Population, International Relations, Planning and Evaluation, and the country programs. David Bell, an economist and the first

administrator of the US Agency for International Development (1962-1966), was named vice president and served in that capacity until the end of Bundy presidency.

In 1966, Bundy terminated the long-standing internationally oriented but domestically based International Training and Research Program. Several large domestic programs -- including support of centers of international studies - were phased out in the 1970s. Instead, Ford launched under its international affairs efforts a focused but robust program in security and arms control. Over Bundy's tenure, the overseas offices were reduced from twenty in 1966 to twelve in 1979, when he retired.

The Foundation increasingly turned its attention to different set of international issues including human rights and working in repressive societies, such as South Africa. The military coups in Latin America during the late 1960s and early 1970s led the Foundation to initiate in 1976 a human rights program housed in Vice President Bell's office.

In 1979, Franklin Thomas was named president of the Ford Foundation (1979-1996). In contrast to Bundy's international and defense policy background, Franklin Thomas brought to the Ford Foundation his experience in law, housing, and community development. Prior to joining the Foundation, Thomas, a lawyer, was a Foundation trustee. He chaired the Rockefeller Foundation-funded Study Commission on U.S. Policy towards South Africa and led the Ford-funded Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation in New York from its beginning in 1966 until he left in 1979. Earlier, he had been deputy police commissioner of NYC.

In the first decade of Thomas' tenure, the international work was still framed using the post-war East-West dichotomy. Several trustees brought to the board active engagement in international issues: Donald F. McHenry (trustee over the period 1981-1993) had served as ambassador to the U.N. and was active in the anti-apartheid movement; and General Olusegun Obasanjo (trustee over the period 1987-1999) had been Nigerian head of state from 1976-1979, and was then president of the African leadership Forum. Along with McNamara and Soedjakmoto, Rodrigo Botero, an internationally renowned economist from Colombia and former Colombian Minister of Finance and Credit from 1974 to 1976, remained on the board over the period 1978-1989.

During the early years of the Thomas presidency, the scope and strategies of the Foundation's activities were also influenced by economic and global pressures, leading to reduced assets and further financial stringencies. Thomas' board-mandated reductions resulted, for example, the firing of twenty senior staff at the same time. To achieve more effective and efficient programs, Thomas had a vision of Ford as one foundation, linking the domestic and overseas activities under new program themes: Urban Poverty, Rural Poverty and Resources, Human Rights and Social Justice, Governance and Public Policy, Education and Culture, and International Affairs.

The restructured Foundation comprised two programmatic divisions led by vice presidents: U.S. and International Affairs Programs (USIAP) headed by Susan Berresford; and Developing Countries Program (DCP), headed by William Carmichael. Berresford had been at the Foundation since 1970, coming from the U.S. Manpower Career Development Agency. She served in the National Affairs area, first as program assistant and then program officer (1972-1980), becoming head of women's programs in 1980. The main international efforts under USIAP were housed in Rural Poverty and Resources, Human Rights and Governance, and International Affairs. The other programs - Urban Poverty, Education and Culture,

and Program-Related Investments - also addressed a scattering of international issues related to their main themes.

Carmichael had joined the Foundation in 1968 as Representative in Brazil. In July 1971, he was named Head of the Office of Latin America and the Caribbean, and in September of 1977, he became Head of the Middle East and Africa Office. The DCP program was responsible for all the Field Offices: Andean and the Southern Cone, Brazil, Mexico and Central America, Bangladesh, India, Southeast Asia, West Africa, Eastern and Southern Africa, and Middle East and North Africa.

When the Foundation initiated a Human Rights and Governance program (HR&G) in 1981, it was the first instance of a Ford program explicitly entitled "human rights," despite the fact that human rights grantmaking that had started officially in 1976. International Affairs remained separate from HR&G. In 1987, however, the Board conceptually linked three programs, creating a Trustee committee called Human Rights, Governance, and International Affairs, which existed until 1992. Operationally, however, the programs relating to these fields did not often work together.

International governance remained a commitment under Thomas. The Foundation, for example, had a long-established relationship with the United Nations: from 1951 until 1988, the United Nations received ninety grants from the Foundation (it received another 198 over the period 1989-2009).

In these early years of the Thomas presidency, dramatic changes were occurring in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Under President Mikhail Gorbachev's leadership since 1985, the USSR was opening up to the international community, the rule of law in society was taking prominence there, and press freedoms were spreading. The foundation developed new programs in the region, drawing on the \$60 million already spent to promote human rights and free expression and increase Western understanding of developments there.

Given the continuing economic constraints facing the Foundation and rising debt in developing countries, the Foundation shifted support under DCP to smaller scale community-based initiatives in the field offices. Thomas was also charged by the Board to increase the diversity of grantees, especially to favor populations "most affected" by the problems of concern to the Ford Foundation. The Foundation built on earlier efforts and sharpened its focus on women's issues throughout the world, including shifting the focus of the population program to women's reproductive health and child survival.

In the 1980s, Carmichael and others, with strong support from Thomas and the board, continued the 1970s' support of South African grantees for training large numbers of black lawyers and litigating sensitive cases in the South African legal system. Recognizing the multifaceted nature of discrimination in South Africa, the Foundation not only advanced the rule of law, but also strengthened civic organizations, women's groups, and educational institutions. Further, it supported a number of activist organizations in the United States that were energetically advocating US governmental sanctions against South Africa and for private disinvestment. The Foundation also played a role in shaping US policy on apartheid through the role Thomas played from 1985 to 1987 chairing the US Secretary of State's Advisory Committee on South Africa.

The Foundation's overseas staff also sought to improve the economic situation in poor, marginalized communities through targeted loan programs particularly to women head of households, beginning with the innovative work in Bangladesh of Professor Mohammed Yunus, the founder of the Grameen Bank. The results led the way to establish the field of microfinance with the aim of empowering women living

in poverty conditions, such as through a microfinance network in Latin America starting 1980 and a global lending program for women starting in 1987.

Thomas encouraged staff to share results at worldwide meetings. During those meetings, Ford staff in the country offices and in New York tried to follow the mandate to work as “one foundation.” The persistent challenge toward meeting that goal, however, was that initiatives emerging from the New York-based programs, or indeed any program developed in one country, were not always adaptable, relevant or acceptable in other countries or regions. It remained a challenge to develop a unified program, despite the commitment at the highest level of foundation leadership.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Biographical / Historical

Segment 3. Period Summary - Transition and Restructuring 1966-1988

During this era, the Foundation’s earlier interest in business and the economy evolved into a commitment to improving conditions for people living on the margins of society. The Ford Foundation promoted advancements in women's rights around the globe and introduced micro-lending into grantmaking. At the same time, the economic issues that were shaping program strategies also affected the Foundation's assets. Severe cuts resulted in a significant restructuring of country programs and reduced budgets across all programs.

Even with the cuts in country offices, in the 1970s Ford grantees in developing countries received approximately 80% of the International Division budget. The remaining fifth went to Population, Development Studies, and International Affairs. Although representing a much smaller piece, the International Security and Arms Control program from 1973 was the Foundation’s most concerted effort to make meaningful inroads in disarmament and nuclear issues - those challenges most directly linked to the Foundation's historic concern for peace. By 1979, the Ford Foundation was the biggest funder of arms control as a field, both in the U.S. and overseas.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Scope and Contents

Contains subject files, correspondence, trip files, reports, documentation of grants including the educational modernization grant, field office materials and a small selection of photographs.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Arrangement

Arranged in 3 series by file type. Further arrangement is loosely alphabetical.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Processing Information

Level 1 Minimal Processing has been conducted to establish basic intellectual and physical control of the material and assess immediate preservation and conservation needs. Material remains as received, in original folders and storage boxes.

Conditions Governing Use note

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Immediate Source of Acquisition note

Ford Foundation archive was deposited at RAC in 2011. Ford Foundation records, correspondence, reports, program files and officers papers were transferred to, and accessioned by, RAC beginning in 2011. Accessions continue as necessary.

Conditions Governing Access

Records more than 10 years old are open for research with select materials restricted as noted. Brittle or damaged items are available at the discretion of RAC.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Collection Inventory

Subject Files	
Title/Description	Instances
Announcements -- Invitations, Accepted and Declined, 1962-1965	box 1
Conference -- Planning Meeting for the Inter-American Linguistics Conference (Washington, DC), Nov 2, 1962	box 1
Conference -- OD-LA Program Discussions -- Dean George Harrison, MIT (Cambridge, MA), Jan 4, 1963	box 1
Conference -- Program Discussion on OAS, AID, IADB (Washington, DC), Jan 8-9, 1963	box 1
Conference -- Program Discussions with Brookings Institution, AID, and Peace Corps (Washington, DC), Feb 11, 1963	box 1
Conference -- Symposium on Latin America, Wellesly College (Wellesley, MA), Feb 12-13, 1963	box 1
Conference -- Educational Television (ETV) (Bogota, Colombia), Feb 23-Mar 3, 1963	box 1
Conference -- Mexico City, Mexico, Mar 3-5, 1963	box 1
Conference -- Seminar on Higher Education, University of Kansas (Kansas City, Kansas), Mar 5-7, 1963	box 1
Conference -- Annual Meeting of North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, Mar 17-20, 1963	box 1
Conference -- Meeting at Pan-American Union (Washington, DC), Mar 28-30, 1963	box 1
Conference -- Pan-American Union Consultation and Information Meeting (Washington, DC), Apr 16-18, 1963	box 1
Conference -- Latin American Conference, Western College for Women (Oxford, Ohio), Apr 19-20, 1963	box 1
Conference -- Second Inter-Agency Information Meeting on Central American Activities in Higher Education, Pan American Union (Washington, DC), Jun 11, 1963	box 1

Conference -- Center for Applied Linguistics (Washington, DC), Jun 17, 1963	box 1
Conference -- Purdue University (Lafayette, Indiana), Jun 19-20, 1963	box 1
Conference -- Linguistics Conference (Cartagena, Colombia) -- Various Papers, Aug 1963	box 1
Conference -- Conference on Higher Education in the American Republics (CHEAR) (Lima, Peru) -- Papers and Other Data, Incl. Photograph, Feb 1964	box 1
Correspondence -- Personal -- A, 1962-1964	box 1
Correspondence -- Personal -- Alvarez, Professor Jose Vincente, 1962-1964	box 1
Correspondence -- Personal -- B, 1963-1964	box 1
Correspondence -- Personal -- C, 1962-1964	box 1
Correspondence -- Personal -- D, 1962-1964	box 1
Correspondence -- Personal -- E, 1962-1964	box 1
Correspondence -- Personal -- F, 1962-1964	box 1
Correspondence -- Personal -- Friedensburg, Dr. F. -- Consul, 1957-1964	box 1
Correspondence -- Personal -- G, 1962-1964	box 1
Correspondence -- Personal -- H, 1962-1964	box 1
Correspondence -- Personal -- Hays, Jr., John T., 1958-1963	box 1
Correspondence -- Personal -- Hesburgh, Reverend Theodore M., 1962-1964	box 1
Correspondence -- Personal -- I, 1962-1963	box 1
Correspondence -- Personal -- J, 1962-1963	box 1
Correspondence -- Personal -- K, 1961-1964	box 1
Correspondence -- Personal -- L, 1962-1964	box 1
Correspondence -- Personal -- M, 1962-1964	box 1
Correspondence -- Personal -- Morales-Carrion, Arturo, 1961-1962	box 1
Correspondence -- Personal -- N, 1962-1964	box 1
Correspondence -- Personal -- O, 1963-1964	box 1
Correspondence -- Personal -- P, 1962-1964	box 1
Correspondence -- Personal -- Q, 1962	box 1
Correspondence -- Personal -- R, 1962-1963	box 1

Correspondence -- Personal -- Ramirez S., Marco Antonio, 1961-1962	box 1
Correspondence -- Personal -- S, 1962-1964	box 1
Correspondence -- Personal -- T, 1962-1965	box 1
Correspondence -- Personal -- V, 1962-1964	box 1
Correspondence -- Personal -- W, 1962-1964	box 1
Correspondence -- Personal -- X-Y, 1963	box 1
Correspondence -- Personal -- Z, 1962-1963	box 1
Fraenkel, Peter -- Biographical Data -- Photographs, Press Releases Re: Move from Indiana University to the Ford Foundation, 1962	box 2
Fraenkel, Peter -- Congratulatory Letters on Appointment to Ford Foundation (March 1, 1962), 1962	box 2
Fraenkel, Peter -- Congratulatory Letters on Marriage (August 1962), 1962	box 2
Fraenkel, Peter -- Domestic -- Personal, Incl. Appointments, Marriage Notice, Address and Car Information, 1962	box 2
Indiana University -- Alumni Groups -- Indiana University Alumni Club of NY, 1962	box 2
Indiana University -- Alumni Groups -- Sons of Indiana, 1962-1963	box 2
Indiana University -- Correspondence, General, Incl. Photograph of Campus Building in Snow, 1962-1964	box 2
Indiana University -- Correspondence, A-H, 1957-1964	box 2
Indiana University -- Correspondence, G-M, 1958-1964	box 2
Indiana University -- Correspondence, N-Z, 1960-1964	box 2
Indiana University -- Correspondence, President Elvis J. Stahr, Jr., 1962-1964	box 2
Indiana University -- Language Program Proposal and Press Release, [1962]	box 2
Indiana University -- President Herman B. Wells, 1957-1964	box 2
Kennedy -- Cuttings on the Assassination of President John F. Kennedy, 1963	box 2
Latin America -- Argentina, 1962	box 2
Latin America -- Bolivia, 1962	box 2
Latin America -- Brazil (also see Brazil Conference - August 1962), 1962	box 2

Latin America -- Caribbean (see also Santo Domingo trip, July 1962), 1962	box 2
Latin America -- Caribbean -- University College of the West Indies, 1962	box 2
Latin America -- Central America, 1962	box 2
Latin America -- Chile, 1962	box 2
Latin America -- Ecuador, 1962	box 2
Latin America -- General, 1962	box 2
Latin America -- Mexico, 1962	box 2
Latin America -- Paraguay, 1962	box 2
Latin America -- Puerto Rico, 1962	box 2
Latin America -- Uruguay, 1962	box 2
Latin America -- Venezuela, 1962-1963	box 2
National Educational Television and Radio Center (NET), 1962	box 2
Overseas Development-Latin America List of Grants, 1963-1966	box 2
Peace Corps -- Correspondence, 1962-1963	box 2
Peru -- Memoranda between Verne S. Atwater and Peter Fraenkel, 1964	box 2
Postcards -- Personal, 1962-1963	box 2
Reports -- Regional Seminar on the Development of University Libraries in Latin America by Peter Fraenkel for UNESCO, May 1962	box 2
Social Science Research Council -- ITR Grant to Strengthen Latin American Studies (PA62-359), 1962	box 2
Speeches -- "Understanding Latin Americans" -- Annual Forum of the Westchester Branch of AAUW (Scarsdale, NY), Apr 1962	box 2
Speeches -- "Educational Problems of the Developing Countries: Latin America" -- National Association of Foreign Student Advisers (Albany, NY), Nov 15-16, 1962	box 2
Speeches -- "What Lies in the Future for Overseas Programs for Students" -- Council on Student Travel Conference, Dec 5-7, 1962	box 2
Speeches -- Speech Folder, Kansas, Mar 5-7, 1963	box 2
Speeches -- Pan-American Union, Washington, DC Trip, Apr 16-18, 1963	box 2
Speeches -- "Some Educational Trends and Problems in Latin America" -- Western College (Oxford, Ohio), Apr 19-20, 1963	box 2
Speeches -- "Some Observations on the Current Latin American Scene" -- Columbia University Club, Jun 12, 1963	box 2

Speeches -- Speech Material, 1962-1963	box 3
Student Organizations -- National, International, 1962	box 3
Trips -- Quito, Ecuador Re: CIESPAL Grant, May 1962	box 3
Trips -- Ecuador, May 22-28, 1962	box 3
Trips -- Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic Re: National Autonomous University of Santo Domingo, Jul 1962	box 3
Trips -- Washington, DC (various matters), Sep 1962	box 3
Trips -- Mexico, 1963	box 3
Trips -- Miscellaneous Papers and Letters Re: Trip to Peru (September 12 to October 12, 1963) and Letters Sent to Peter Fraenkel While in Peru and Ecuador, Sep 12-Oct 12, 1963	box 3
Trips -- Papers on Trip to Peru, Dec 3-18, 1963	box 3
Trips -- Peter Fraenkel's Trip to Cornell University, May 1964	box 3
Trips -- Lima Memoranda, 1964-1965	box 3
Peru - Field Office Administration, Grant Funding, Foundation Work, Country Status, 1968 October-1969 January	box 4
Peru - Staff Appointments, Foundation Grants, 1967 October-1968 September	box 4
Peru - Overseas Development Self-Study, 1966 August-October	box 4
Peru - Education Grants, Foundation Work, Program Budgets, Country Status Reports,, 1963 July-1965	box 4
Grant Funding, Latin America and the Caribbean Staff, LAC Situation and Status Reports, Conference papers, 1965 June-1966 June	box 4
Travel and Study Awards, Grant Funding, Budgets, Conferences, 1966 June-1967 September	box 4
Consultants, Travel and Study Candidates, Travel and Study Consultants Reports, Resource Institutions, 1962-1963	box 4
Colombia - University of the Andes files - Grant Funding, University Administration, 1961-1965	box 4
"A Preliminary Study of Colombian Universities", Rodolfo Low-Maus, 1963 November 28	box 4
Colombia - Bogota Field Office, Consultants, Grant Funding, Foundation Work in Colombia, 1965 July-1966 September	box 4
Colombia - Universidad de Valle, 1962-1965	box 4
Colombia - Education Grants for Universities, 1964-1965	box 4
Colombia - Universidad de Antioquia, 1965-1966	box 4
Marginal de la Selva - Traamos de Ingenio, 1968 January	

	box 5
Summary of Ford Foundation Program Actions in Peru and Bolivia, 1969 January	box 5
Notes - Higher Education, Ford Foundation Efforts in Peru, Bolivia, and the rest of South America, 1963-1968	box 5
James R. Himes - Employment Evaluation, 1965-1968	box 5
Background on Latin America - Education, Religion, Agriculture, Economy, 1963	box 5
Letters. Memoranda Re: Ford Foundation Activities, Staff, 1966-1968	box 5
Miscellaneous Ford Foundation documents, reports, Memoranda Re: Overseas Development, 1957-1967	box 5
Agrarian University - Graduate Fellowships, 1968	box 5
Monthly Reports-Financial Reports Fiscal Year 1969 - Lima, Peru, 1968 September-December	box 5
Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos and Universidad Agraria - Admission Information, Aptitude Exam, Brochures, 1964-1968	box 5
Argentina - Report re: Visit to Argentinian Universities, 1968	box 5
Miscellaneous Speeches by Ford Foundation employees and others, 1960-1966	box 5
Miscellaneous Agricultural Reports re: Latin America, 1965-1967	box 5
"The Ford Foundation's Activities in Latin America", 1967 September	box 5
Representatives Meeting - Beirut, (1967 January)	box 5
Peru - University of San Marcos, 1958-1969	box 5
Colombia - Universities, 1965	box 5
Colombia - Program Analysis - Colombia Grants, 1966	box 5
Peru - Jim Himes Reports, 1969	box 5
Peru - Agricultural Development - Reports , 1967	box 5
Bolivia - Reports re: Bolivia and Universities, Trip Report, 1967	box 5
Bolivia - Trip, 1967	box 5

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Educational Modernization Grant, Madrid Field Office Files, 1969-1973

Title/Description	Instances
-------------------	-----------

Program of Support to Educational Modernization and Reform in Span (Grant 70-305) - Convocatoria, 1973	box 6
Program of Support to Educational Modernization and Reform in Span (Grant 70-305) - Attachments including List of Fellows Sponsored, 1972	box 6
Program of Support to Educational Modernization and Reform in Span (Grant 70-305) - General Correspondence - Re: Fellows, Project Status Reports and Budget Information, 1969-1972	box 6

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Photographs

Title/Description	Instances
Peter Fraenkel photograph file	box 6

Scope and Contents

Images may be related to Indiana University.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)