



Ruebhausen (Oscar M.) papers

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Rockefeller Archive Center

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Summary Information

Repository:	Rockefeller Archive Center
Creator - aut:	Ruebhausen, Oscar M.
Title:	Oscar M. Ruebhausen papers
ID:	FA077
Date [inclusive]:	1941-2000
Physical Description:	9 Cubic Feet 22 document cases
Language of the Material:	English

Preferred Citation

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Biographical/Historical note

Oscar M. Ruebhausen was born in Manhattan on August 28, 1912, and grew up in Vermont. He graduated summa cum laude from Dartmouth in 1934 and in 1937 from Yale Law School, where he was a member of the Law Review. He then joined the law firm of Debevoise, Stevenson, Plimpton, & Page, a six-year-old firm with twelve lawyers that is now known as Debevoise Plimpton. Mr. Ruebhausen was presiding partner of Debevoise Plimpton from 1972 to 1981.

Exempt from military service for health reasons, he went to Washington, D.C. during World War II to work in the counsel's office of the Lend-Lease Administration. In 1944 he became general counsel for the Office of Scientific Research and Development, directed by Dr. Vannevar Bush.

Mr. Ruebhausen was an intimate but unpaid adviser to Nelson A. Rockefeller for many years and was active in various appointed positions in New York state government. He also managed Governor Rockefeller's properties in Venezuela and Ecuador. Additionally, he was chairman of the boards of the Russell Sage Foundation and the Greenwall Foundation. In the 1950s and 1960s, he was chairman of the board of Bennington College, where he made news by renouncing federal loans because students had to sign loyalty oaths to get them.

Oscar Ruebhausen died on December 7, 2004, in New York.

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Scope and Contents note

This collection comprises a portion of the files of Oscar M. Ruebhausen (pronounced "REEB-how-zen"), an attorney and member of the Manhattan law firm of Debevoise Plimpton. Mr. Ruebhausen was a long-time friend and advisor to Nelson A. Rockefeller, whom he met in the late 1940s. While a small percentage of these records document his interactions with or about Governor Rockefeller, the bulk of the collection documents his professional activities outside of the law firm.

The collection begins with the personal files maintained by Mr. Ruebhausen while employed by the U. S. Office of Scientific Research and Development during World War II (folders 1-12). Next, there are materials related to the establishment of the National Science Foundation, for which he was an advisor (folders 17-21).

This collection also includes files concerning his work as the first Chair of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York's Committee on Atomic Energy, which was created shortly after World War II ended. This committee took the initiative in giving legal guidance to the U. S. Congress and the Atomic Energy Commission (folders 22-64). Of particular interest in his correspondence as Chair of the Bar Association Committee are letters and published papers reflecting his efforts to avoid secrecy in the workings of the AEC. The Bar Association Committee also prepared draft legislation for the creation of the New York State Office of Atomic Development in 1959, later called the New York State Office of Atomic and Space Development (folders 65-74). Mr. Ruebhausen was named Vice Chairman of this office by Governor Nelson Rockefeller.

Additionally, these papers contain extensive materials pertaining to his service as a member of the President's Science Advisory Committee during 1970-1972 (folders 82-92) and even more on fallout shelters from the 1950s and 1960s (folders 93-104). He was also very active in Governor Rockefeller's 1958 gubernatorial campaign as an officer of Democrats for Rockefeller (folders 106-116). Long a personal lawyer to Governor Rockefeller, he was instrumental in the 1983 creation of the Nelson A. Rockefeller Center for the Social Sciences at Dartmouth College, their mutual alma mater (folders 155-164).

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Arrangement note

For the most part, the files in this collection are arranged chronologically, based on the agency or committee with which Ruebhausen was working.

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File Plan

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

Rockefeller Archive Center

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Sleepy Hollow 10591

archive@rockarch.org

URL: <http://www.rockarch.org>

Revision Description

Migrated from Re:discovery to the Archivists' Toolkit by Becky Robbins. 20 November 2009

Processing Information

Charles A. Bradley and Amy R. Fitch completed processing of the papers in February 2006.

Processing Level 3: Standard Processing. All material is available in acid free manuscript boxes and folders.

Conditions Governing Access

Open for scholarly research, except where particular restrictions are noted (for boxes 21 and 22).

RAC is unable to provide access to obsolete media and original digital media. In addition separated media may not yet have undergone stabilization procedures. When feasible, a digital surrogate may be created via special order. All applicable charges will apply. See RAC Head of Archival Services or RAC Head of Digital Programs for details.

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Immediate Source of Acquisition note

This collection was donated to the Rockefeller Archive Center in 2005.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Nuclear energy
- Political campaigns -- United States
- National Science Foundation. (U.S.)
- Ruebhausen, Oscar M.
- Rockefeller, Nelson A. (Nelson Aldrich)

Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements

Materials requiring specialized equipment for access (film, audio, video, slides) may be closed to research dependent on availability of the applicable equipment

Brittle or damaged items, or materials otherwise in need of preservation care, may be closed to researchers at the discretion of the RAC Head of Archival Services/Head of Reference.

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United States Office of Scientific Research and Development (OSRD) - Correspondence		
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August 29-October 31, 1944	box 1	folder 2
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January 16-March 31, 1945	box 1	folder 4
April 1-May 31, 1945	box 1	folder 5
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Ruebhausen Desk Reference Book (Part I): OSRD Executive Orders, administrative orders, forms, subcontracts, purchase agreement, penicillin contracts (declassified), insurance		
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"Towards a New Atomic Policy"

Memorabilia - Nelson A. Rockefeller, 1994	box 19	folder 153
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Scope and Contents note

Oscar M. Ruebhausen memo re: tour of Kykuit

Nelson A. Rockefeller Institute of Government at State University of New York (SUNY), 1984-1986	box 19	folder 154
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Scope and Contents note

Endowment campaign

Dartmouth College**Scope and Contents**

Nelson A. Rockefeller Center for the Social Sciences correspondence

Title/Description	Instances	
1983	box 19	folder 155
1984	box 19	folder 156
1985	box 19	folder 157
1986-1987	box 19	folder 158
January-August 1988	box 20	folder 159
September-October 1988	box 20	folder 160
1989	box 20	folder 161
1990	box 20	folder 162
1991-1992	box 20	folder 163
1993-1998	box 20	folder 164
Untitled (closed box)	box 21	

Conditions Governing Access:

Conditions Governing Access

Restricted material.

Untitled (closed box)	box 22
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Conditions Governing Access:

Conditions Governing Access

Restricted material.