Extent

266 folders, 11,038 pages

Summary

This collection consists of files concerning public opinion polls and the methods employed in conducting such surveys on a regular and consistent basis. Topics covered included the public's perception of the guilt or innocence of O.J. Simpson and the approval rating for President and Mrs. Clinton in the wake of the Whitewater scandal. The pollster, Stan Greenberg was responsible for creating polls of wide variety and was trusted by Clinton to gauge public opinion at key points in an election campaign. The records in this collection are composed of reports, memoranda, publications, lists, talking points, questionnaires, and polls.

Scope and Content Note

The materials in 2007-1467-F are a selective body of documents responsive to the topic of the FOIA. Researchers should consult the archivist about related materials. Containing a wealth of information dealing with public opinion polls and polling methods in the Clinton Administration, 2007-1467-F deals with a wide variety of topics ranging from political issues and favorability ratings for the First Lady and President Clinton to the O.J. Simpson trial and freedom of the press. There are polls by the Times Center for The People and The Press, Gallup Polls, Greenberg Research, Inc. Polls, polls taken by the magazines Time, Newsweek, and U.S. News and World Report, and all manner of polls for many U.S. states. In more than a few instances the methodology utilized by the pollsters is explained in meticulous detail. White House Office of Records Management (WHORM) Subject Files contain records with information items (including polling data) signed off by President Clinton. A researcher will find numbers from a poll showing the reaction of people in India after a visit by the Chief Executive, approval ratings attributed to all kinds of polls sent to him by his advisors, and facts that might be gleaned from a public opinion poll taken

in Bosnia. Voluminous and wide-ranging, the records of the Chief of Staff touch on such issues as health care, the 1996 elections, raising the minimum wage, and how television viewing and magazine reading influenced the public's perception of the guilt or innocence of O.J. Simpson. In the case of Deputy Chief of Staff Harold Ickes, prior to the 1996 campaign, four focus groups concentrated on the beliefs and feelings of women. The findings of these surveys showed that women were much stressed, worried constantly about their ability to make ends meet, couldn't view the current state of the country with anything but cynicism, and thought neither Republicans nor Democrats could be construed as allies. Comprising a sizable part of the collection, the records of the Health Care Task Force illustrate how public opinion rose and fell over the plan put forward by President Clinton. Polls from a variety of organizations are scattered throughout the papers. Attributed to the AARP (American Association for Retired Persons), Aetna, CBS, APPWP (Association of Private Pension and Welfare Plans), and Henry J. Kaiser Foundation, these surveys emphasize the changing attitudes of Americans. State polls are prominent in the records of the Political Affairs staff office. For instance, the files of Tom Epstein contain numerous issues of a periodical entitled The Field Poll, described as an "independent and non-partisan survey of public opinion" published in California. It deals with very specific issues, and on many occasions address the popularity of the First Lady and President Clinton in the state in the wake of particular events (Whitewater, for example).

Record Type

Textual

System of Arrangement

Records that were responsive to this request were found in these collection areas—Clinton Presidential Records: WHORM-Subject File-General and Clinton Presidential Records: White House Staff and Office Files. The White House Office of Records Management (WHORM) contain a variety of series created to organize and track documents and correspondence. The WHORM Subject File was compiled by the White House Office of Records Management and is a series of categories designated by a letter/number combination. Staff and Office Files were maintained at the folder level by staff members within their individual offices and document all levels of

administration activity. WHORM Files are processed at the document level; whereas, Staff and Office Files are processed at the folder level, that is, individual documents are not selected and removed from a folder for processing. While this method maintains folder integrity, it frequently results in the incidental processing of documents that are not wholly responsive to the subject area. FOIA 2007-1467-F includes WHORM records from these subject codes: CO054 El Salvador, Republic of CO077 India FE010-01 Access to Records – Documents FG001 President of the United States ND017 Weapons – Ordnance – Munitions PL Political Affairs PU001-07 Clippings to the President ST State Governments.

Access

Collection is open to all researchers. Access to Clinton Presidential Records is governed by the Presidential Records Act (PRA) (44 U.S.C. Chapter 22, as amended) and the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 U.S.C. 552, as amended) and therefore records may be restricted in whole or in part in accordance with legal exemptions.

Copyright

Documents in this collection that were prepared by officials of the United States government as part of their official duties are in the public domain. Researchers are advised to consult the copyright law of the United States (17 U.S.C. Chapter 1) which governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material.

Provenance

Official records of William Jefferson Clinton’s presidency are housed at the Clinton Presidential Library and administered by the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) under the provisions of the Presidential Records Act (PRA).

Processed by

Staff Archivist, 2013. Previously restricted materials are added as they are released.

Last Modified Date

2015-09-14

Container List

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