



Guide to the Charles T. Snyder Papers, 1956-1970s

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Summary

Collection Title:

Charles T. Snyder papers, 1956-1970s

Creator:

Snyder, Charles T., 1920-1993

Source:

John Hope Franklin Research Center for African and African American History and Culture

Abstract:

Charles T. Snyder was a United States Information Agency (USIA) employee from 1956 to 1977 who worked primarily with the Africa Division of the Voice of America radio broadcasting program. Collection contains documents and photographs related to Snyder's work, with a particular focus on a 1959 trip around the African coast and the proposal and construction of the Liberia Relay Station. Acquired as part of the John Hope Franklin Research Center for African and African American History and Culture.

Extent:

0.25 Linear Feet

Language:

Materials in English.

Collection ID:

RL.12012

Permalink:

<https://idn.duke.edu/ark:/87924/m1gt7j>

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Charles T. Snyder Papers, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University.

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Background

Scope and Content

Collection includes documents, photographs, correspondence, and other material related to Snyder's work in the US Information Agency with the Voice of America programming. Most of the documents are related to a 1959 trip along the African coast and to the Liberia Relay Station for Voice of America project.

Biographical/Historical

Charles T. ("Tom") Snyder, a white United States Information Agency (USIA) employee from 1956 to 1977, was born in Muncie, Indiana, on January 24, 1920. He studied political science, history, english, and music at the University of Michigan, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts in 1942. After working for the federal government in several different capacities, he joined the USIA in 1956 and served as the script writer, chief editor, and branch chief of Voice of America's Africa Division. Snyder retired in May 1977. He passed away in 1993.

The USIA was a federal government agency in existence from 1953 until 1999, when it was folded into the US Department of State. USIA's mission was to effectively disseminate information about the United States and its foreign policies in a way that was understandable and meaningful to foreign populations. This activity is known as public diplomacy.

Voice of America (VOA), established in 1942, is the state-owned international radio broadcaster of the United States and is still in operation today. It operated under the USIA umbrella after the USIA was established in 1953. In 1976 President Ford signed the VOA Charter into law, identifying VOA's mission and principles. VOA provides news and information in more than 40 languages for digital, television, and radio platforms.

"Project Larry" was the nickname for the USIA and VOA's Liberia Relay Station construction project. The purpose of this relay station was to provide effective radio coverage of Africa, central Europe, and the Middle East. The Liberia Relay Station opened in 1964 and was in operation until its destruction in September 1990 by the National Patriotic Front of Liberia.

Sources: Patricia A. Holmes, "The Voice of America in Liberia: The End of the Road," *Liberian Studies Journal* 17, no. 1 (1992), 79-93; Wikipedia (accessed May 13, 2022); InsideVOA (accessed May 13, 2022).

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Access Restrictions

Collection is open for research.

Use Restrictions

The copyright interests in this collection have not been transferred to Duke University. For more information, consult the Rubenstein Library's Citations, Permissions, and Copyright guide.

Acquisition Information

The Charles T. Snyder Papers were received by the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library as a gift in 2022.

Processing Information

Processed by Leah Tams, May 2022.

Accessions described in this collection guide: 2022-0021.

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Related Materials

Related Material

Researchers may also be interested in the following collections outside of Duke:

Records of the United States Information Agency, National Archives and Records Administration (Washington, DC).

United States Information Agency Audio Recordings Collection, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum (Boston, MA).

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Names and Subjects

- Black-and-white photographs
- Liberia
- Radio scripts
- Radio broadcasting -- Africa
- United States Information Agency
- Voice of America (Organization). Africa Division
- Snyder, Charles T., 1920-1993
- John Hope Franklin Research Center for African and African American History and Culture

Collection Inventory

Broadcast script, 1956 June 07	Box 1
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Scope and Contents

Script for an "African Audio-Visual Cardboard Record" broadcast related to music in African and African American life.

Letter from the Veterans Administration, circa 1960s-1970s	Box 1
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Scope and Contents

A letter from the Veterans Administration regarding Snyder's request to pursue graduate-level coursework in political science.

Trip to Africa, 1959

Box 1

Scope and Contents

Includes notes, itineraries, information, speech drafts, correspondence, and other material related to a 1959 trip along the coast of Africa, beginning at Dakar, Senegal, and ending at Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Also included are drafted "impressions" of particular locations and their populations.

African Trip: Admiral Stephan, 1959-1961

Box 1

Scope and Contents

Documents and photographs related to the 1959 trip to Africa, with a particular focus on Rear Admiral Edward C. Stephan.

Project Larry and other planning, 1961-1963

Box 1

Scope and Contents

Proposals, drafts, correspondence, notes, and other material related to the VOA's Liberia Relay Station construction project. Includes information about linguistic and ethnic groups in Africa, as perceived by Snyder.

Photographs, circa 1970s

Box 1

Scope and Contents

Black-and-white photographs most likely taken around the time of Charles Snyder's retirement in 1977, though some may date to the earlier 1970s. Several photographs show Voice of America offices and recording studios. Some photographs also feature Mike Oyeshiji, a Black audiovisual specialist who worked for the US Information Service in Lagos, Nigeria. One photograph features Cosma Warugaba, a Ugandan radio broadcaster.