

# **Linda Chavez-Christopher Gersten Papers**

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**Manuscript Division, Library of Congress  
Washington, D.C.  
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LC Online Catalog record:

<http://lcn.loc.gov/mm2011085595>

Prepared by Melinda K. Friend

## Collection Summary

**Title:** Linda Chavez and Christopher Gersten Papers

**Span Dates:** 1889-2011

**Bulk Dates:** (bulk 1983-2001)

**ID No.:** MSS85595

**Creator:** Chavez, Linda

**Creator:** Gersten, Christopher, 1947-

**Extent:** 2,000 items ; 11 containers plus 1 classified and 1 oversize ; 4.4 linear feet

**Language:** Collection material in English

**Location:** Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

**Summary:** Author, news commentator, and government official (Linda Chavez). Government official (Christopher Gersten). Photographs, clippings, scrapbooks, memoranda, notebooks, appointment calendars, correspondence, speeches and writings, and printed matter relating primarily to Chavez's career as an author, news commentator, and government official including her service in the presidential administration of Ronald Reagan.

## Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

### People

Chavez, Linda. An unlikely conservative : the transformation of an ex-liberal, or, how I became the most hated Hispanic in America. 2002.

Chavez, Linda. Linda Chavez and Christopher Gersten papers. 1889-2011.

Gersten, Christopher, 1947- Linda Chavez and Christopher Gersten papers. 1889-2011.

Reagan, Ronald.

### Organizations

United States Commission on Civil Rights.

### Subjects

Cabinet officers--Selection and appointment--United States.

Civil rights--United States.

Hispanic American politicians--United States.

Hispanic American women--United States.

### Places

Maryland--Politics and government--1951-

United States--Politics and government--1945-1989.

United States--Politics and government--1981-1989.

### Titles

*Christopher Gersten papers*

*Linda Chavez papers*

### Occupations

Authors.

Journalists.

Public officials.

# Administrative Information

## Provenance

The papers of Linda Chavez, author, news commentator, and government official, and Christopher Gersten, government official, were given to the Library of Congress by Chavez and Gersten in 2011.

## Transfers

Items have been transferred from the Manuscript Division to other custodial divisions of the Library. Cartoons have been transferred to the Prints and Photographs Division. Videotapes, audiotapes, film, and CD-Roms have been transferred to the Motion Picture, Broadcasting, and Recorded Sound Division. All transfers are identified in these divisions as part of the Linda Chavez and Christopher Gersten Papers.

## Copyright Status

Copyright in the unpublished writings of Linda Chavez and Christopher Gersten in these papers and in other collections in the custody of the Library of Congress is reserved. Consult reference staff in the Manuscript Division for further information.

## Access and Restrictions

Restrictions apply governing the use, photoduplication, or publication of items in this collection. Consult reference staff in the Manuscript Division for information concerning these restrictions. In addition, many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

## Security Classified Documents

Government regulations control the use of security classified material in this collection. Manuscript Division staff can furnish information concerning access to and use of classified materials.

## Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Linda Chavez and Christopher Gersten Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

# Biographical Note

## Linda Chavez

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
1947, June 17	Born, Albuquerque, N. Mex.
1967	Married Christopher Gersten
1970	B.A., English literature, University of Colorado, Boulder, Colo.
1970-1972	Attended graduate school and lectured, University of California, Los Angeles, Calif.
1972	Worked for Office of Spanish Speaking, Democratic National Committee, Washington, D.C.
1972-1974	Clerk and later legislative staff member, House Judiciary Committee, Subcommittee on Constitutional Rights
1975-1983	Worked for American Federation of Teachers, Washington, D.C.; assistant director of legislation, 1975-1977; editor of <i>American Educator</i> , 1977-1983; assistant to president Albert Shanker, 1982-1983

1977 Consultant to Civil Rights Division, Office of Management and Budget, Washington, D.C.  
Special assistant to deputy secretary, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington, D.C.

1983-1985 Member and later staff director, U.S. Commission on Civil Rights

1984-1986 Member, Administrative Conference of the United States

1985 Changed political affiliation from Democratic Party to Republican Party

1985-1986 Deputy assistant to president and director of the Office of Public Liaison, White House, Washington, D.C.

1986 Republican nominee for U.S. Senate in Maryland

1987-1988 President, U.S. English, a private organization devoted to making English the official national language

1988-1992 Chairman, U.S. Commission on Migrant Education

1989-1994 Senior fellow, Manhattan Institute for Policy Research, Washington, D.C.

1991 Published *Out of the Barrio: Toward a New Politics of Hispanic Assimilation*. New York: Basic Books

1992-1997 Served as U.S. expert to United Nations Sub-commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities; special rapporteur, project to study systemic rape, sexual slavery and slavery-like practices during wartime, including internal armed conflict, 1993-1997; withdrew from project, 1997

1995- Founder and president, Center for Equal Opportunity, Washington, D.C., a conservative think tank devoted to issues of race and ethnicity

2000 Headed task force on immigration, presidential campaign of George W. Bush  
Awarded Library of Congress' "Living Legend" award

2001 Nominated as secretary of labor by George W. Bush, but withdrew from consideration

2002 Published *An Unlikely Conservative: The Transformation of an Ex-Liberal*. New York: Basic Books

2004 Published with Daniel Gray *Betrayal: How Union Bosses Shake Down Their Members and Corrupt American Politics*. New York: Crown Forum

**Christopher Gersten**

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
1947, Nov. 22	Born, Rochester, Minn.
1967	Married Linda Chavez
1970	Graduated, University of Colorado, Boulder, Colo.

circa 1980-1983	Special assistant to the general president, International Union of Operating Engineers
1984-?	Political director, American Israel Public Affairs Committee
1985-1986	Executive director, National Jewish Coalition
1989-1993	Director, Office of Refugee Resettlement, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C.
1997	Founded Institute for Religious Values, Washington, D.C.
2001-2005	Principal deputy assistant secretary, Administration for Children and Families, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C.
2005-	Founder and chair, Fatherhood and Marriage Leadership Institute, Washington, D.C.
2007	Published <i>Lasting Love: Skills to a Better Relationship</i> . CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform

## Scope and Content Note

The papers of Linda Lou Chavez (1947- ) and Christopher Carl Gersten (1947- ) span the years 1889-2011, with the bulk of the material dating from 1983 to 2001. Their papers are organized separately and arranged by type of material within their respective files. A majority of the material relates to Chavez and largely consists of photographs, clippings, and her newspaper columns.

The professional file of Chavez's papers covers four areas of her career. The largest group of material relates to her service at the White House during the administration of Ronald Reagan. Chavez's notebooks include entries for staff meetings, meetings with individuals and organizations, and lists of things to do. There is a gap from June 18 to September 23, 1985. Staffing memoranda contain presidential remarks and material relating to the Economic Policy Council and Domestic Policy Council. Her scrapbook contains photographs of White House events and meetings, memorabilia, and the later addition of items from the funeral of Reagan in 2004. Chavez resigned her White House position to seek the United States Senate seat from Maryland. She won the Republican nomination, but lost the 1986 election to Democrat Barbara Mikulski. Related items include her campaign prospectus, correspondence, photographs from a fund raiser attended by Reagan, and a scrapbook containing clippings, memorabilia, and photographs of other fund-raising events. Material relating to her earlier work at the United States Commission on Civil Rights is mostly comprised of clippings with a small amount of correspondence. In 2001, President George W. Bush nominated Chavez for secretary of labor. She later withdrew after a controversy arose over the supposed employment at her home of an illegal alien. A confirmation packet, questionnaire, and a large amount of clippings document her nomination and withdrawal. Items supplementing the professional file include her appointment calendars, although many are overlapping and have gaps, a personnel file kept by Chavez, a file compiled on her by Federal Bureau of Investigation, and a photograph file chronicling her career.

Chavez's speeches consist mostly of background material and printouts of testimony given by her before congressional committees. A majority of her writings consist of photocopies and printouts of her newspaper columns. Background material, contracts, publicity, and the draft of a chapter relate to her book, *An Unlikely Conservative: The Transformation of an Ex-Liberal*.

The papers of Christopher Gersten are mostly comprised of two photograph albums probably related to his tenure as director of the Office of Refugee Resettlement of the Department of Health and Human Services. The albums document a Tet celebration in Orange County, California, and a dinner and awards ceremony of the Unified Vietnamese Community Council.

## **Arrangement of the Papers**

This collection is arranged according to separate files for Chavez and Gersten and thereunder alphabetically by type of material or topic.

# Container List

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 1	Linda Chavez papers
BOX 1	Appointment calendars, 1984-1997 (8 folders)
BOX 2	Biographical material
BOX 2	Federal Bureau of Investigation file, 1983-1985
BOX 2	Genealogy, 1889, 1943-1945, 1963-1964, circa 1972-1975, 1987
BOX 2	Miscellany, 1963-1965, 1992, undated
BOX 2	Personnel file, 1982-1987, undated (2 folders)
BOX 2	Schoolwork, 1960, undated
BOX 2	Correspondence
BOX 2	General, 1978-2011, undated (2 folders)
BOX 2	U.S. English, 1987-1988
BOX 2	Miscellany
BOX 2	<i>American Educator</i> magazine, 1978-1982
BOX 3	Freedom Foundation and Hispanic Coalition for a Free Central America, circa 1983
BOX 3	Youth Coalition for Balanced Arms Reduction, circa 1983
BOX 3	Youth Institute for Peace in the Middle East, circa 1983
BOX 3	Photograph file
BOX 3	Family, 1900, 1944-1947, 1989, undated
BOX 3	General, 1975-2006, undated <i>See also Oversize</i> (2 folders)
BOX 3	Press file
BOX 3	Chavez, circa 1983-1992, undated
BOX 3	Miscellany, 1985-1990, undated
BOX 3	Professional file
BOX 3	Secretary of labor nomination
BOX 3	Clippings, 2001 (2 folders)
BOX 4	(1 folder)
BOX 4	Confirmation packet, 2001
BOX 4	Correspondence and questionnaire, 2000-2001
BOX 4	Scheduling and notes, 2001
BOX 4	United States Commission on Civil Rights
BOX 4	Appointment and correspondence, 1983-1985, undated
BOX 4	Clippings, 1983-1985, undated (3 folders)
BOX 4	United States Senate campaign
BOX 4	Campaign prospectus, 1986
BOX 4	Clippings, 1986
BOX 4	General

## Container List

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 4	Quiz
BOX 4	Correspondence, 1986, undated
BOX 5	Fund raiser with Ronald Reagan, 1986, Oct.
BOX 5	Correspondence, 1987-1988
BOX 5	Photographs, 1986
BOX 5	Memorabilia, 1986
BOX 5	Photographs, 1986 (4 folders)
BOX 5	Report of receipts and disbursements, 1988
BOX 5	Scrapbook, 1985-1986
BOX 6	White House
BOX 6	Correspondence, 1985, undated
BOX 6	Meeting material, 1985-1986, undated <i>See also Classified</i>
BOX 6	Memoranda
BOX 6	Buchanan, Patrick J., 1985
BOX 6	Regan, Donald T., 1985-1986
BOX 6	Thomas, Dennis, 1985
BOX 6	Miscellany, 1982, undated
BOX 6	Notebooks, 1985-1986, undated (4 folders)
BOX 6	Notes, 1985
BOX 6	Scrapbook, 1985-1986, 2004 (1 folder)
BOX 7	(1 folder)
BOX 7	Staffing memoranda, 1985-1986 (7 folders)
BOX 8	Subject file
BOX 8	Education and loyalty, 1928-1948, 1975-1983, undated
BOX 8	United States draft policy, 1981-1983, undated
BOX 8	Telephone directory, 1985-1986
BOX 8	Travel authorization, 1985-1986 (2 folders)
BOX 8	Speeches and writings
BOX 8	Speeches
BOX 8	Miscellany, 1986, 2001-2010, undated (2 folders)
BOX 9	Testimony, 1995-1999
BOX 9	Writings
BOX 9	Books
BOX 9	<i>Betrayal: How Union Bosses Shake Down Their Members and Corrupt American Politics</i> , contracts and earnings, 2003-2004
BOX 9	<i>Out of the Barrio: Toward a New Politics of Hispanic Assimilation</i> , earnings, 2003
BOX 9	<i>An Unlikely Conservative: The Transformation of an Ex-Liberal</i>
BOX 9	Chapters
BOX 9	No. 2, research material, 1965, undated
BOX 9	No. 3, research material, 2001, undated
BOX 9	No. 4, research material, 1995-1997, 2002, undated

## Container List

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 9	No. 5, research material, circa 1972-1974
BOX 9	No. 6, research material, 1970-2002
BOX 9	No. 7, research material, 1977-1982, 1992, 2001
BOX 9	No. 8
BOX 9	Draft, circa 2001
BOX 9	Research material, 1983-2002 (3 folders)
BOX 10	Contracts, earnings, and publicity, 2001-2004
BOX 10	Journal pages, 1999
BOX 10	Newspaper columns
BOX 10	Photocopies, 1975, 1990, 1995-2001 (3 folders)
BOX 10	Printouts, 1985-1994 (4 folders)
BOX 10	Christopher Gersten papers
BOX 10	Brochures and newsletters
BOX 10	International Union of Operating Engineers, circa 1981-circa 1983
BOX 10	National Jewish Coalition, circa 1985-circa 1986
BOX 10	United Electrical Radio and Machine Workers of America, circa 1983
BOX 11	Correspondence, 1991, 2000-2004
BOX 11	Drafts, Institute for Religious Values, circa 1997
BOX 11	Miscellany, circa 1978, circa 1989, undated
BOX 11	Photograph albums, circa 1989
BOX 11	Tet celebration, Orange County, Calif.
BOX 11	Unified Vietnamese Community Council
BOX 11	Photographs, 1989, undated <i>See also Oversize</i>
BOX 11	Schoolwork, 1956-1957, undated
BOX CL 1	Classified
BOX CL 1	Linda Chavez papers
BOX CL 1	Professional file
BOX CL 1	White House
BOX CL 1	Meeting material, 1985-1986, undated (Container 6)
BOX OV 1	Oversize
BOX OV 1	Linda Chavez papers
BOX OV 1	Photograph file
BOX OV 1	Trip to Japan, circa 1993-circa 1997 (Container 3)
BOX OV 1	Christopher Gersten papers
BOX OV 1	Photographs
BOX OV 1	Unidentified man, undated (Container 11)