

José Manuel Rodríguez Delgado papers

Ms Coll 104



Katherine Isham

2024

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Medical Historical Library, Cushing/Whitney Medical Library
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CALL NUMBER: Ms Coll 104

CREATOR: Delgado, José Manuel Rodríguez, 1915-2011

TITLE: José Manuel Rodríguez Delgado papers

DATES: circa 1950-2001

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 32 linear feet (28 boxes + 2 films)

LANGUAGE: English; Spanish; Castilian (Latin script)

SUMMARY: José Manuel Rodríguez Delgado (1915-2011), was a physician, researcher, and professor who specialized in neurophysiology of the brain. He was renowned for his experiments using electrical stimulation of the brain to control the actions of mammals, primates, and human subjects. Collection materials document Delgado's professional life and include correspondence, manuscript and published writings, lectures, research, interviews, photographs and photographic slides, audio visual materials, original drawings for scientific publications by Santiago Ramón y Cajal (1852-1934), scrapbooks, clippings, and neural stimulation equipment built by Delgado.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/med.ms.0104>

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Caroline Stoddard Delgado, wife of Dr. José M. R. Delgado, and children Jose Carlos and Linda Delgado, 2024.

Conditions Governing Access

The collection is unprocessed. Contact the Medical Historical Library to request access. Audiovisual materials (including films and audio tapes) and born digital materials require reformatting before access can be provided.

Conditions Governing Use

Copyright has not been transferred to Yale University for unpublished materials authored or otherwise produced by José Manuel Rodríguez Delgado. Copyright status for other collection materials is unknown. Transmission or reproduction of materials protected by U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S.C.) beyond that allowed by fair use requires the written permission of the copyright owners. Works not in the public domain cannot be commercially exploited without permission of the copyright owners. Responsibility for any use rests exclusively with the user.

Preferred Citation

José Manuel Rodríguez Delgado papers. Historical Library, Harvey Cushing / John Hay Whitney Medical Library, Yale University.

Biographical / Historical

José Manuel Rodríguez Delgado (1915-2011) was born in Ronda, Andalucía, Spain. In 1933 he enrolled in Madrid Medical School to study medicine and physiology. In 1936 the Spanish Civil War started and Delgado joined the Republicans as a medical corpsman. He spent 5 months in a concentration camp and upon his release completed an MD and a Doctorate of Science.

Delgado conducted research in neurophysiology on selective brain ablation and electrical stimulation in animals from 1942-1950. In 1950 he won a scholarship to the Department of Physiology at the Yale School of Medicine, which was under the direction of John F. Fulton (1899-1960). At that time Fulton was renowned for establishing the first primate research laboratory in the United States where he conducted research on the primate brain. At Yale Delgado became a Professor of Physiology and Psychiatry and served as Director of Research.

Delgado's research at Yale continued his investigations into electrical stimulation of the brain to produce changes in affect and behavior. He invented a device called the "stimoceiver" which included electrodes implanted in the brain of an animal and a control used by a researcher to stimulate a specific area of the brain. Delgado extended his research from primates to human subjects with chronic refractory epilepsy and schizophrenia. In 1963 Delgado performed his most famous experiment: implanting a stimoceiver in the brain of a fighting bull and stopping the animal mid-charge by stimulating his brain from a hand held device communicating via radio waves. Between 1950 and 1970, Delgado authored 134 publications on electrical stimulation of the brains of animals and humans. In 1969 he published *Physical control of the mind: toward a psychocivilized society*, part of the *World Perspectives* series published by Harper and Row.

In the mid-1960s and early 1970s shifting attitudes towards psychosurgery and Congressional hearings held to challenge continued funding on brain stimulation as a method of treating psychiatric disorders effectively ended Delgado's career in the United States. In 1974 he returned to Spain to serve as Chair of Physiological Science at the new medical school established at the Autonomous University of Madrid. Delgado continued to conduct research, teach, and publish in Madrid for 25 years. He published his final book *Happiness* in 1989. In his later years he moved to San Diego, California, where he lived until his death in 2011.

Content Description

José Manuel Rodríguez Delgado (1915-2011), was a physician, researcher, and professor who specialized in neurophysiology of the brain. He was renowned for his experiments using electrical stimulation of the brain to control the actions of mammals, primates, and human subjects. Collection materials document Delgado's professional life and include correspondence, manuscript and published writings, lectures, research, interviews, photographs and photographic slides, audio visual materials, original drawings for

scientific publications by Santiago Ramón y Cajal (1852-1934), scrapbooks, clippings, and neural stimulation equipment built by Delgado.

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.

Subjects

Brain stimulation
Electrotherapeutics
Neurophysiology

Occupations

Neurophysiologists

Corporate Body

Yale University. School of Medicine

Contributors

Delgado, José Manuel Rodríguez, 1915-2011
Ramón y Cajal, Santiago, 1852-1934