

**The New York Public Library
Humanities and Social Sciences Library
Manuscripts and Archives Division**

**Bradley Ball
Papers, 1985-1994**

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Summary

Main Entry: Ball, Bradley.

Title: Papers, 1985-1994.

Size: One linear foot (2 archival boxes).

Source: Gifts of Michael Paller and Ron Goldberg, 1996.

Biographical Note: Bradley Ball (1960-1995) was a founding member and first recording secretary of ACT UP (AIDS Coalition To Unleash Power).

Description: The papers contain Ball's journal entries, correspondence, clippings, and writings documenting his life, work with ACT UP, fight against AIDS, and depression.

Biographical Note

Bradley Anderson Ball was born July 3, 1960 in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The youngest of four children, he was raised in western Canada, attending Western Canada High School in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. He attended Tulsa Junior College in Tulsa, Oklahoma before moving to New York City in July, 1979. He attended HB Studio in New York City from 1979 until 1986 studying acting, playwriting, voice and musical theater. He worked as a backstage Broadway theater tour guide before he started his ten-year employment with NBC Productions as a secretary.

In 1985 Ball met Donald Luxton in Vancouver, Canada, starting a bi-coastal relationship that would last until 1990. Copies of letters exchanged between them make up a good portion of Ball's journal entries. Upon his return from Canada in December of 1985, a letter from the New York Blood Center had arrived asking him to come in and discuss the results of a test. This was during the time when the FDA had just approved a test for identifying the presence of antibodies to HIV. Ball was diagnosed as HIV positive. In March, 1987, along with friends including Larry Kramer, Ball became a founding member and first Recording Secretary of ACT UP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power). In addition to supervising the organization's business affairs and financial operations, he demonstrated at St. Patrick's Cathedral, the FDA headquarters in Washington, D.C., Wall Street, and Sloan-Kettering Hospital in New York in support of the organization's causes. He also wrote a weekly feature in *Outweek* magazine.

Over the next few years, Ball's long-standing struggle with depression intensified. He remained in relatively good physical condition, but the death of his friend Steven Webb, a continuing battle to communicate with his family members, dismal outlook for the fight against AIDS, and financial troubles left him in a depression that would lead to a suicide attempt in the summer of 1991. Ball was treated at the Tisch Hospital at NYU Medical Center, and upon his release he continued his studies at Fordham University, begun in 1990, towards a degree in political science. He continued to fight depression, and went on public assistance. By his side through all his problems was his partner, Michael Louis Paller.

Ball suffered a near-fatal brain seizure two days before Thanksgiving, 1993. Though it became increasingly difficult, he continued to write in his journal until early 1994. He died January 24, 1995.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

Bradley Ball's papers consist primarily of personal journal entries and copies of correspondence exchanged with Donald Luxton. The bulk of the collection dates from 1985 to early 1994 when his health deteriorated, and documents the origins of ACT UP and Ball's personal relationships. Also of note are scattered letters from family members chronicling their distraught attempts to communicate with one another.

RELATED MATERIALS

The Manuscripts and Archives Division of the New York Public Library also holds the records of ACT UP New York.

Container List

Box	Folder
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	Journals (including transcribed correspondence)
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1	1	November 27, 1985 - December 28, 1986
	2	January 18, 1987 - May 6, 1987
	3	May 14, 1987 - January 10, 1988
	4	April 3, 1988 - August 25, 1990
	5	January 1, 1991 - August 4, 1991
	6	August 5, 1991 - September 8, 1991
	7	September 9, 1991 - December 31, 1991
	8	January 2, 1992 - April 5, 1992
2	9	April 6, 1992 - August 11, 1992
	10	August 13, 1992 - October 14, 1992
	11	October 15, 1992 - December 31, 1992
	12	February 28, 1993 - February 27, 1994
	13	Resume and Autobiography Notes
	14	Donald Luxton Letters (Originals)
	15	Clippings
	Binder #1	<i>Outweek</i> Articles, June 26, 1989 - December 26, 1990