



Smithsonian

National Museum of American History Kenneth E. Behring Center

Guide to the Greg Meyer Taser Collection

NMAH.AC.1311

Austin Arminio

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title:	Greg Meyer Taser Collection
Date:	1946 - 2009
Identifier:	NMAH.AC.1311
Creator:	Cover, Jack (Creator) Meyer, Greg (Donor)
Extent:	0.3 Cubic feet (1 box)
Language:	English .
Summary:	Papers relating to the invention, development, use, and popularization of the Taser, a nonlethal weapon invented by Jack Covers.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Collected donated by Greg Meyer, 2013.

Processing Information

Collection processed by Austin Arminio, intern, 2016.

Preferred Citation

Greg Meyer Taser Collection, 1946-2009, Archives Center, National Museum of American History.

Restrictions

Collection is open for research but is stored off-site and special arrangements must be made to work with it. Contact the Archives Center for information at archivescenter@si.edu or 202-633-3270.

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Biographical / Historical

John "Jack" Cover (1920-2009) was born in New York, New York. He joined the United States Air Force in 1942, and served as an aeronautical engineer and an aircraft engineering officer. During World War II he was awarded the World War II Victory Medal and American Theater Service Medal. Cover was released from active service in 1946, after which he earned a B.S and Ph.D at University of Chicago. He worked at North American Aviation (NAA),

as a contractor for NASA, and was part of the the team that won the Prime contract for NAA from 1961-1962 on the Apollo Moon Landing Program.

As a result of a growing push for law enforcement agencies to use non-lethal weapons in the 1960's, Cover developed and later patented iwhat would become known as the TASER. He named the device the Taser, an acronym for Thomas A. Swift Electric Rifle. Cover formed Taser Systems. Inc. in 1970 and the Taser was patented in 1974 as a "Weapon for Immobilization and Capture (US 3,803,463). The device was adopted by the Los Angeles Police Department in the 1970s as an alternative to lethal weapons in subduing suspects, particularly those under the influence of drugs or who posed harm to themselves.

Scope and Contents

Papers relating to the invention, development, use, and popularization of the Taser, a nonlethal weapon invented by Jack Cover. The collection includes biographical information about Cover, Cover's initial concept paper, design drawings, notes and writings, photographs, papers relating to the patenting of the Taser, test results, training materials on the use of the Taser, articles and printed materials, notes to law enforcement officers, response to controversy surrounding the use and misuse of the Taser, and a eulogy. Interaction and use of the Taser by law enforcement mostly focuses on the Los Angeles Police Department.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged into one series.

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

- Nonlethal weapons
- Stun guns
- TASER
- Weapons

Types of Materials:

- Articles
- Design drawings -- 1950-2000
- Eulogies
- Notes
- Patents -- 20th century
- Photographs -- 1950-2000
- Test reports

Container Listing

Box 1, Folder 1	Biographical materials, 1946-1993
Box 1, Folder 2	Photographs, 1965-2009
Box 1, Folder 3	Net Review, 1969-1972
Box 1, Folder 4	Taser articles, 1982-1986
Box 1, Folder 5	Taser articles, 1975-1979
Box 1, Folder 6	Taser sketches, 1972
Box 1, Folder 7	Taser tests, 1977-09-30
Box 1, Folder 8	Design notes and sketches, 1972-1973
Box 1, Folder 9	Information for law enforcement officers, 1970s-1991
Box 1, Folder 10	Research and development, 1968
Box 1, Folder 11	Pistol models, Los Angeles Police Department, 1985
Box 1, Folder 12	Net, dart, and cassette designs, 1971-1972
Box 1, Folder 13	Taser Systems Incorporated, logo branding, undated
Box 1, Folder 14	"The Taser Story" article, 1977-04-30
Box 1, Folder 15	"The Hippo Hunt" article, 1978-03-01
Box 1, Folder 16	"The Taser Story and the Case for Nonlethal Weapons," article, 1977-07-07
Box 1, Folder 17	Response to controversy surrounding Taser misuse, undated
Box 1, Folder 18	Patent application for ElectroArms Weapons, 1985-1986
Box 1, Folder 19	Revolver design, 1971
Box 1, Folder 20	"Taser and Electric Gun - A New Weapon Concept" article, 1968-05-04
Box 1, Folder 21	Developmental sketches, 1972