



Smithsonian Institution Archives

## Senate of Scientists Oral History Interviews, 1975

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Smithsonian Institution Archives  
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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C., <a href="mailto:osiaref@si.edu">osiaref@si.edu</a>
<b>Title:</b>	Senate of Scientists Oral History Interviews
<b>Identifier:</b>	Record Unit 9508
<b>Date:</b>	1975
<b>Extent:</b>	19 audiotapes (Reference copies). 16 digital .mp3 files (Reference copies).
<b>Creator::</b>	Senate of Scientists Project (National Museum of Natural History)
<b>Language:</b>	English

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## Administrative Information

### Preferred Citation

Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 9508, Senate of Scientists Project (National Museum of Natural History), Senate of Scientists Oral History Interviews

### Use Restriction

Restricted. The interviews with Clyde F. Roper do not have tape or transcript prefaces. Researchers may submit a written request to interviewee, heirs or assigns for written permission to use the tape or transcript. The tapes (not the transcripts) of the Richard S. Boardman interviews may not be reproduced, either in whole or in part, except as may be needed for the Smithsonian Institution Archives without Boardman's permission. Transferring office; Contact reference staff for details.

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## Historical Note

In 1963, a Senate of Scientists was formed to represent professional concerns of the scientific research staff of the National Museum of Natural History (NMNH) at the Smithsonian Institution. Molded on faculty senates in universities, the senate was structured to function as a trouble-shooter and source of collective opinion outside normal administrative channels. The executive arm of the senate is the council which manages the day-to-day activities and consists of a chairman, chairman-elect, secretary, and one councilor elected by each curatorial department. Full membership in the senate is restricted to scientists employed by the NMNH, but associate membership is extended to research associates of the museum and to scientists located in the museum but employed by related agencies, such as the United States Department of Agriculture and United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

When an issue arises that the senate deems is in need of attention, membership is polled for opinions, and the council forwards a report and/or recommendation to the appropriate administrator. Significant issues addressed by the senate include library service, publication policies, off-Mall storage and curatorial facilities, technical assistance, program offices, automated data processing facilities, and funding for

systematics research. The senate has fostered lines of communication between Institution administrators and the non-administrative scientific staff. In addition, the senate has served as a stimulus to collegiality within the museum, through its "field guide to curators," seminars, teas, and dinner forums.

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## Introduction

The Smithsonian Institution Archives began its Oral History Program in 1973. The purpose of the program is to supplement the written documentation of the Archives' record and manuscript collections with an Oral History Collection, focusing on the history of the Institution, research by its scholars, and contributions of its staff. Program staff conducts interviews with current and retired Smithsonian staff and others who have made significant contributions to the Institution. There are also interviews conducted by researchers or students on topics related to the history of the Smithsonian or the holdings of the Smithsonian Institution Archives.

The Senate of Scientists Project was conducted at the suggestion of W. Donald Duckworth and with the support of then-chairman Erle G. Kauffman, to document the role of the Senate in the history of the National Museum of Natural History and the Institution.

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## Descriptive Entry

In 1975-1976, at the suggestion of W. Donald Duckworth, and with the support of then-chairman Erle G. Kauffman, the Smithsonian historian Pamela M. Henson conducted a series of ten interviews of senate officers about the history of the Senate of Scientists. The interviews document the formation of the Senate, contributions of its leaders, its activities from 1963 to 1976, and they provide an overview of its role in the museum and the Institution. Interviewees were: Richard S. Boardman, Martin A. Buzas, W. Donald Duckworth, Clifford Evans, Jr., Gordon G. Gibson, W. Duane Hope, Erle G. Kauffman, Porter M. Kier, Saul H. Riesenbergs, and Clyde F. E. Roper. Boxes 1-10 contain transcripts of the interviews and cassette and digital audio copies of the original reel-to-reel recordings, which are in security storage. The interview consists of approximately 16.5 hours of tape, 563 pages of transcript, 16 digital audio files, and occupies 0.5 cubic feet of shelf space.

The recording of the interview of Richard S. Boardman may not be used without the written permission of Richard S. Boardman, or his heirs or assigns. The Clyde F. E. Roper interview has not been deeded to Smithsonian Institution Archives and cannot be used with the written permission of Clyde F. E. Roper or his heirs or assigns.

The Clyde F. E. Roper interview has not yet been accessioned into the Smithsonian Oral History Collection. Permission to use the draft transcript or recording must be secured from Clyde F. E. Roper or his heirs or assigns.

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## Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Buzas, Martin A. interviewee  
Interviews

Museum curators -- Interviews  
Oral history  
Records of meetings, organizations, and professional societies

Types of Materials:

Audiotapes  
Compact discs  
Transcripts

Names:

Buzas, Martin A.  
Duckworth, W. Donald  
Duckworth, W. Donald. interviewee  
Evans, Clifford, 1920-1981  
Evans, Clifford, 1920-1981  
Gibson, Gordon D.  
Gibson, Gordon D. interviewee  
Henson, Pamela M. interviewer  
Hope, W. Duane, 1935-  
Hope, W. Duane, 1935- interviewee  
Kauffman, Erle G. (Erle Galen), 1933-  
Kauffman, Erle G. (Erle Galen), 1933- interviewee  
Kier, Porter M.  
Kier, Porter M. interviewee  
National Museum of Natural History (U.S.)  
Riesenberg, Saul H.  
Riesenberg, Saul H. interviewee  
Roper, Clyde F.  
Roper, Clyde F. interviewee  
Senate of Scientists Project (National Museum of Natural History)

## Container Listing

### Box 1

#### Transcripts of Interviews

Box 1 of 1

#### **Interview 1: 16 May 1975**

Box 1 of 1

Porter M. Kier discusses his participation in the formation of the senate, organizational meetings, role of the senate in the museum and Institution, and his relations with the senate as director of the National Museum of Natural History, c. 1960-1975.

Box 1 of 1

Transcript, pp. 1-26, of audio recording, 0.5 hour.

Box 1 of 1

Recording of Interview: Total Recording Time: 0.5 hour

- Note:
- Original Masters: 1 5" reel-to-reel analog audiotape
  - Reference Copies: 1 audiocassette

Box 1 of 1

#### **Interview 2: 19 May 1975**

Box 1 of 1

Gordon D. Gibson covers events leading to the formation of the senate, organizational meetings, writing of the constitution, role of the senate in the museum and Institution, and his 1963-1964 tenure as chairman, c. 1960-1975.

Box 1 of 1

Transcript, pp. 1-39, of audio recording, 1.0 hours.

Box 1 of 1

Recording of Interview: Total Recording Time: 1.0 hours

- Note:
- Original Masters: 1 5" reel-to-reel analog audiotape
  - Preservation Masters: 2 7" reel-to-reel analog audiotapes; 2 digital .wav files
  - Reference Copies: 1 audiocassette; 2 digital .mp3 files

Box 1 of 1

#### **Interview 3: 20 May 1975**

Box 1 of 1

Saul H. Rosenberg discusses events leading to the formation of the senate, organizational meetings, writing of the constitution, and role of the senate in the museum and Institution, c. 1960-1975.

Box 1 of 1

Transcript, pp. 1-46, of audio recording, 1.5 hours.

- Box 1 of 1      Recording of Interview: Total Recording Time: 1.1 hours  
    Note:              • Original Masters: 1 5" reel-to-reel analog audiotape  
                            • Preservation Masters: 2 7" reel-to-reel analog audiotapes; 2 digital .wav files  
                            • Reference Copies: 1 audiocassette; 2 digital .mp3 files
- Box 1 of 1      **Interview 4: 28 May 1975**
- Box 1 of 1      Clifford Evans, Jr., discusses events leading to the formation of the senate, organizational meetings, role of the senate in the museum and Institution, his 1968-1970 tenure as chairman, senate work on such issues as library services, National Science Foundation/Smithsonian Research Foundation funding for research, trust funds, the Pacific Ocean Biological Survey Program, the 1970 Congressional oversight hearings, and publications policies, as well as efforts to promote communication with administrators and collegiality among the research staff, c. 1960-1975.
- Box 1 of 1      Transcript, pp. 1-80, of audio recording, 2.0 hours.
- Box 1 of 1      Recording of Interview: Total Recording Time: 2.0 hours  
    Note:              • Original Masters: 2 5" reel-to-reel analog audiotapes  
                            • Reference Copies: 2 audiocassettes
- Box 1 of 1      **Interview 5: 2 July 1975**
- Box 1 of 1      W. Duane Hope covers his tenure as chairman in 1973-1974 and as a councilor; concerns over program offices; an off-Mall storage and curatorial facility at Beltsville, Maryland, and a National Center for Systematics; senate actions relating to library services, conservation, and automated data processing; reproduction of the staff directory; and role of the senate in the museum and Institution, c. 1960-1975.
- Box 1 of 1      Transcript, pp. 1-54, of audio recording, 1.5 hours.
- Box 1 of 1      Recording of Interview: Total Recording Time: 1.5 hours  
    Note:              • Original Masters: 2 5" reel-to-reel analog audiotapes  
                            • Reference Copies: 2 audiocassettes
- Box 1 of 1      **Interview 6: 9 July 1975**
- Box 1 of 1      Clyde F. E. Roper Interview.
- Box 1 of 1      Recording of Interview: Total Recording Time: 1.5 hours

- Note:
- Original Masters: 2 5" reel-to-reel analog audiotapes
  - Reference Copies: 2 audiocassettes

Box 1 of 1

**Interview 7: 25 July 1975**

Box 1 of 1

Erle G. Kauffman discusses events leading to the formation of the senate, organizational meetings, goals and organizational structure, role of the senate in the museum and Institution, his tenure as secretary in 1966-1967, chairman-elect in 1973-1974, and chairman in 1974-1975, focusing on such issues as technical assistance, library services, publications policies, automated data processing, program offices, National Science Foundation/Smithsonian Research Foundation funding for research, the 1970 Congressional oversight hearings, plans to establish an off-Mall storage and curatorial facility at Beltsville, Maryland, the Center for Short-Lived Phenomena, Smithsonian Associates, and conservation, c. 1963-1975.

Box 1 of 1

Transcript, pp. 1-105, of audio recording, 3.0 hours.

Box 1 of 1

Recording of Interview: Total Recording Time: 3.0 hours

- Note:
- Original Masters: 3 5" reel-to-reel analog audiotapes
  - Reference Copies: 3 audiocassettes

Box 1 of 1

**Interview 8: 26 January 1976**

Box 1 of 1

Martin A. Buzas covers his role as vice-chairman in 1968-1970 and chairman in 1970-1971; efforts to foster communication with administrators and collegiality among scientists; senate activities over such issues as National Science Foundation/Smithsonian Research Foundation funding for research, trust funds, publications policies, library services, the 1970 Congressional oversight hearings, program offices, Pacific Ocean Biological Survey Program, Professional Accomplishments Evaluation Committee, plans for an off-Mall storage and curatorial facility at Beltsville, Maryland; and role of the senate in the museum and Institution, c. 1963-1976.

[Digital Content: Passport photograph of Martin A. Buzas, curator of invertebrate paleontology in the Department of Paleobiology, National Museum of Natural History, 1960s. \[Image no. 2001-6849\]](#)

[Digital Content: Passport photograph of Martin A. Buzas, curator of invertebrate paleontology in the Department of Paleobiology, National Museum of Natural History, March 1, 1979. Photo by Victor Krantz. \[Image no. 2001-6919\]](#)

Box 1 of 1

Transcript, pp. 1-70, of audio recording, 1.5 hours.

Box 1 of 1

Recording of Interview: Total Recording Time: 1.5 hours

- Note:
- Original Masters: 2 5" reel-to-reel analog audiotapes



- Preservation Masters: 3 7" reel-to-reel analog audiotapes; 3 digital .wav files
- Reference Copies: 2 audiocassettes; 3 digital .mp3 files

Box 1 of 1

**Interview 9: 9 February 1976**

Box 1 of 1

W. Donald Duckworth covers events leading to the formation of the senate; role of the senate in the museum and Institution; his tenure as chairman in 1965-1966 and as secretary in 1971-1972; senate activities relating to such issues as library services, field stations, publications policies, program offices, National Science Foundation/Smithsonian Research Foundation funding for research, the 1970 Congressional oversight hearings, plans for an off-Mall storage and curatorial facility at Beltsville, Maryland, and for a National Center for Systematics, Professional Accomplishments Evaluation Committee, and Office of Development, c. 1960-1976.

Box 1 of 1

Transcript, pp. 1-108, of audio recording, 3.0 hours.

Box 1 of 1

Recording of Interview: Total Recording Time: 3.0 hours

Note:

- Original Masters: 3 5" reel-to-reel analog audiotapes
- Preservation Masters: 6 7" reel-to-reel analog audiotapes; 6 digital .wav files
- Reference Copies: 3 audiocassettes; 6 digital .mp3 files

Box 1 of 1

**Interview 10: 12 February 1976**

Box 1 of 1

Richard S. Boardman discusses events leading to the formation of the senate; organizational structure and membership; organizational meetings; role of the senate in the museum and Institution; his 1964-1965 tenure as chairman; and senate activities on such issues as communication with administrators, library services, field stations, and Smithsonian Associates, c. 1960-1976.

Box 1 of 1

Transcript, pp. 1-35, of audio recording, 1.5 hours.

Box 1 of 1

Recording of Interview: Total Recording Time: 1.5 hours

Note:

- Original Masters: 2 5" reel-to-reel analog audiotapes
- Preservation Masters: 3 7" reel-to-reel analog audiotapes; 3 digital .wav files
- Reference Copies: 2 audiocassettes; 3 digital .mp3 files