



**FINDING AID TO
THE LEO ZEFF PAPERS,
1985-1988**

**Purdue University Libraries
Virginia Kelly Karnes Archives and Special Collections
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Processed by: Kristin Leaman, September 2011
Revised: Jonnie McConnell, October, 2014
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Descriptive Summary

Creator Information	Zeff, Leo, 1912-1988
Title	Leo Zeff papers
Collection Identifier	MSP 74
Date Span	1985-1988
Abstract	The Leo Zeff papers (1985-1988; 0.2 cubic feet) contains photographs, reports, and correspondence that document Zeff's research on ibogaine.
Extent	0.2 cubic feet (1 box)
Finding Aid Author	Kristin Leaman, 2011
Languages	English
Repository	Virginia Kelly Karnes Archives and Special Collections Research Center, Purdue University Libraries

Administrative Information

Location Information:	ASC
Access Restrictions:	Collection is open for research.
Acquisition Information:	Donation by Sara Zeff Geber, October 21, 2010; Donation by Arthur Friedman, September 22, 2014.
Accession Numbers:	20101021, 20140922.2
Preferred Citation:	MSP 74, Leo Zeff papers, Archives and Special Collections, Purdue University Libraries
Copyright Notice:	Copyright of some items in this collection may be held by their respective creators. Consult the reference archivist for details.

Subjects and Genres

Persons

Zeff, Leo
Lotsof, Howard S.
Alcoholics Anonymous

Topics

Ethnopharmacology
Ibogaine
Hallucinogenic drugs
Hallucinogenic drugs – Therapeutic use
Hallucinogenic plants
Huichol Indians
Psychedelic psychotherapy
Psychedelics – Therapeutic use
Traditional medicine
Underground guides

Form and Genre Types

Articles
Color photographs
Correspondence
Personal narratives
Research (documents)

Biography of Leo Zeff

Leo Zeff was an early and pioneering underground psychotherapist in the San Francisco Bay Area. He was first introduced to LSD in 1961, at the age of forty-nine, while working as a Jungian therapist in Oakland. Recognizing its therapeutic potential, he incorporated it (and ultimately other psychoactive substances) into his therapeutic practice. When LSD became an illegal substance in 1966, Zeff continued his psychedelic psychotherapy practice, after much deliberation, in an underground capacity. He recognized that, when administered properly, these substances demonstrated an unparalleled ability to help patients break through repressed emotional material and achieve spiritual insights and personal growth. In the 1970s, Zeff developed a set of guidelines and protocols in regards to screening patients, dosages, set and setting, and a code-of-conduct for both guides and participants in psychedelic sessions. These guidelines have proven to be enormously beneficial to others who conduct sessions both underground, and more recently, in an aboveground, capacity.

In 1977, Alexander Shulgin introduced Zeff to MDMA, which was still legal at the time. Zeff found this substance so impactful and therapeutically beneficial that he curtailed his plans to retire, and ultimately conducted roughly 4,000 sessions with patients and trained nearly 150 guides.

His work and the practices and techniques derived from it are detailed posthumously in a book of interviews with Myron Stolaroff called “The Secret Chief,” published in 1997 with the use of a pseudonym. In 2004 it was released as “The Secret Chief Revealed,” and his identity was made known.

Prior to his work as a therapist and psychedelic guide, he served as a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army.

Sources:

Passie, Torsten. (January 2018). “The Early Use of MDMA (‘Ecstasy’) in Psychotherapy (1977–1985).” *Drug Science, Policy and Law*. doi: 10.1177/2050324518767442.

Pollan, Michael. (2018). *How to Change Your Mind*. New York: Penguin Press.

Stolaroff, Myron. (2004) *The Secret Chief Revealed*. Sarasota, Florida: Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies.

Collection Description

Scope

The Leo Zeff papers (1985-1988; 0.2 cubic feet) contain photographs, reports, and correspondence focusing primarily on ibogaine, as well as a manuscript of reflections shared with Alcoholics Anonymous members in 1977.

Descriptive Rules Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules, 2nd Edition /
Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Processing Information

Materials have been placed in archival housing and the collection is arranged by format.

Additions

The manuscript "Reflections Shared at the Sequoia Fall Retreat, November 1977," by Leo J. Zeff was donated on September 22, 2014 by Arthur Friedman, of Berkeley, California. The manuscript was originally given to Friedman by Leo Zeff, who had asked him to read it.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE COLLECTION

1 box, Leo Zeff papers, 1977-1988

Folder

1. Photographs of Leo Zeff, circa 1970s-1980s

Photograph of Leo Zeff in a canoe coming to shore, circa 1970s

Photograph of Leo Zeff riding a pack mule, circa 1970s

Photograph of Huichol man holding a feather above Leo Zeff's head, circa 1970s

Photograph of Leo Zeff holding a walking stick next to Huichol man, undated

Photograph of Leo Zeff holding a walking stick, circa 1970s

Photograph of Leo Zeff and Huichol man holding a bottle, circa 1970s

Photograph of Huichol man sitting in chair with Leo Zeff in background, circa 1970s

Photographs of Leo Zeff observing Huichol men and women holding bottles, circa 1970s

Photograph of Leo Zeff standing with Huichol men and women, circa 1970s

Photograph of Leo Zeff with group of Huichol men, circa 1980s

Photograph of Leo Zeff with unidentified group, undated

2. Correspondence, 1987-1988

Letter from Howard S. Lotsof to Leo Zeff, 1987. Contains two photographs of the first bottle of pure ibogaine to come through Canadian customs. One photograph includes grade A iboga from the Cameroons and iboga shavings from Gabon featured in the background.

Photocopy of correspondence from the Honorable Charles B. Rangel (Chairman of the U.S. House of Representatives Select Committee on Narcotics Abuse and Control) to Howard S. Lotsof, 1988

Photocopy of correspondence from Arthur E. Jacobson (Chairman, Drug Testing Program, Committee on Problems of Drug Dependence) to Howard S. Lotsof, 1988. Contains report of study findings, 1987.

Correspondence from Howard S. Lotsof to Leo Zeff. Contains enclosures of a report from M.R. Dzoljic (Pharmacologist, Erasmus University, Rotterdam) and a letter from Charles Schuster to Charles B. Rangle, 1987-1988

3. Research documents, circa 1985-1987

Bio/dynamics, Division of Biology and Safety Evaluation: "A Segment II Teratology Study in Rats," Submitted to the Dora Weiner Foundation, December 1985

Bio/dynamics, Division of Biology and Safety Evaluation: "A Segment II Teratology Study in Rabbits," Submitted to the Dora Weiner Foundation, December 1985

Bio/dynamics, Division of Biology and Safety Evaluation: "A Study of Fertility and General Reproductive Performance in Rats (Segment I)," Submitted to the Dora Weiner Foundation, December 1985

Endabuse factsheet, undated

4. Typed narrative of "Reflections Shared at the Sequoia Fall Retreat, November 1977"