



Guide to the Gen Con Oral History Collection, 1992, 2006-2007 — 124.6279

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Description is written in: English.

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Brian Sutton-Smith Library and Archives of Play at The Strong

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Summary Information

Repository:	Brian Sutton-Smith Library and Archives of Play at The Strong
Title:	Gen Con oral history collection
ID:	124.6279
ID [aspace_uri]:	/repositories/3/resources/338
Date [inclusive]:	1992, 2006-2007
Date [bulk]:	bulk 2006-2007
Physical Description:	1.45 Gigabytes (100 mp3 files, 1 pdf file)
Language of the Material:	English
Mixed Materials [digital]:	1
Abstract:	This collection consists of oral histories collected about the history of Gen Con, the largest tabletop gaming convention in North America. The materials are dated from 1992 to 2007, with the bulk of the collection dated from 2006 to 2007. The collection is comprised of 100 mp3 files and one pdf. Interviews were conducted for a book project in honor of Gen Con's 40th anniversary.

Preferred Citation for Publication

[Interview file name], Gen Con oral history collection, Brian Sutton-Smith Library and Archives of Play at The Strong.

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Administrative History

Gen Con is the largest tabletop game convention in North America. Gen Con features board games, card games, and pen and paper games including role-playing games, live-action role playing games, miniature wargames, collectible card games, strategy games, and computer games.

Established by Gary Gygax, co-creator of D&D, in 1968 as the Lake Geneva Wargames Convention, Gen Con was first held in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. The convention moved around the state until 1985 when it became a fixed convention in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. In 2003, Gen Con moved to Indianapolis, Indiana where it remains as of 2025.

The convention has changed ownership throughout the years. Gen Con became property of TSR, Inc. in 1976 and was acquired by Wizards of the Coast in 1997, which was then acquired by Hasbro. In 2002 Hasbro sold Gen Con to former Wizards of the Coast CEO, Peter Adkinson.

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Collection Scope and Content Note

The Gen Con oral history collection consists of 100 oral history recordings done to capture the personal experiences of Gen Con for a book project in honor of Gen Con's 40th anniversary [*40 Years of Gen Con* by Robin D. Laws]. The digital collection includes interviews with Andrew Shockney, Gary Gygax, Anne K. Brown, Bill Hoyer, Dan McDonagh, Dave Arneson, Douglas Niles, Harold Johnson, James Wallis, Duke Seigfreid, Jeff Ranger, Marc Blumberg, Mike Carr, Ryan Dancy, Steve Jackson, Skip Williams, R.A. Salvatore, and more. The oral histories were recorded between September 1, 2006 and March 31, 2007. The collection also contains one pdf of the article "Gary Gygax" by Steven J. Engelbert from *The Gamer* March/April 1992.

The oral histories are in mp3 file format. The archivist has maintained the original file names and order, which is alphabetical by first name. As transcripts are finalized they will be added to the collection.

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Publication Statement

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Conditions Governing Access

The collection is open for research use by staff of The Strong and on-site users of its library and archives.

Conditions Governing Use

Though the donor has not transferred intellectual property rights (including, but not limited to any copyright, trademark, and associated rights therein) to The Strong, they have given permission for The Strong to make copies in all media for museum, educational, and research purposes.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

The oral history recordings were donated to The Strong in November 2024 as a gift of Trident, Inc. DBA Atlas Games. The papers were accessioned by The Strong under object ID 124.6279 and were received from John Nephew via digital transfer.

Processed by

Stephanie Ball, March 2025.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Gen Con (convention)
- Role playing games
- Role playing games -- History
- Dungeons and Dragons (Game) -- History
- Oral history
- Arneson, Dave, 1947-2009
- Gygax, Gary
- Salvatore, R.A., 1959-
- Hoyer, Bill (William)

Collection Inventory

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