

Archives of the History of American Psychology
The University of Akron

Finding Aid for
Donald W. Fiske

Archives of the History of American Psychology
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RG 01/11 – Donald W. Fiske (1916-2003)

PAPERS: 1934-2003

VOLUME: 4.5 linear feet

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Biography

Donald Winslow Fiske was born in Lincoln, New Hampshire on August 27, 1916. He earned his A.B. in philosophy in 1937 and his A.M. in psychology in 1939 both from Harvard University. He took his first teaching position in 1939 at Cambridge Junior College and remained there until 1941. During this time he was also an assistant at Harvard, Radcliffe, Wellesley and Phillips Academy.

Fiske joined the aviation psychology section of the U.S. Navy in 1942 and was named head of the section in 1946. During his time with the Navy, Fiske worked within the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery and also in the Office of Strategic Services. After the war Fiske went to the University of Michigan as a doctoral student and instructor in psychology. He earned his Ph.D. in psychology in 1948. Upon graduation he accepted a faculty position in psychology at the University of Chicago where he remained throughout his entire career. He was chair of the Department of Behavioral Sciences from 1982-1985 and in 1986 became Professor Emeritus.

Professionally, Fiske served on numerous committees within the APA and was the president of Division 5 (Evaluation, Measurement, and Statistics) from 1977-1978. He also served as president of the Midwestern Psychological Association 1962-1963 and the Society for Multivariate Experimental Psychology 1968-1969.

A 1959 paper, *Convergent and Discriminant Validation by the Multitrait-Multimethod Matrix*, which appeared in *Psychological Bulletin* (co-authored by Donald Campbell) was a landmark publication that provided a quantitative approach for measuring differences between people. With over 2,000 citations, it is the most cited article in the *Bulletin's* history and remains a required reading for many psychology students.

In 1995 his daughter, Susan T. Fiske, and a former graduate student, Patrick E. Shrout, honored Fiske by organizing *Personality Research, Methods, and Theory: A Festschrift Honoring Donald W. Fiske*. Later in 1999 the University of Chicago Department of Psychology established an

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annual Donald W. Fiske Distinguished Lectures series in his honor. In 2000 the inaugural lecture was delivered by his daughter, a professor of psychology at Princeton.

Donald W. Fiske died April 6, 2003 in his home.

Scope and Content

The Donald W. Fiske Papers consist of a variety of materials. Although the collection spans many years and many different areas within Fiske's professional career, it remains rather incomplete. Fiske spent thirty-eight years, teaching and researching at The University of Chicago and his collection reflects only a small portion of this subject matter.

The abundance of Fiske's research was in psychological measurement and methodology. What remain in this collection is a reprint of *Convergent and Discriminant Validation by the Multitrait-Multimethod Matrix* (1959) co-authored with Donald T. Campbell as well two folders of largely handwritten documents, assumed to be class and lecture notes.

The largest series within this collection is the Writings Files. This series contains written materials by Fiske and other authors, both published and unpublished. Fiske was a frequent writer of literature reviews, especially later in his career, and many are contained herein. The correspondence that was originally attached to these reviews has remained attached and kept in the original order.

The most unique part of this collection are the materials related to military testing. Two folders are dedicated to actual tests and two more folders contain summaries of the research and analysis. The majority of the military tests are from the period of the Second World War. The earliest records are those associated with the World War I version of the Otis Self-Administering Tests of Mental Ability. Fiske kept a three ring binder of the testing results, statistical analysis, and the commentaries of other researchers involved in military testing. These materials have been removed from the binder but kept in the order that Fiske intended.

Series Descriptions

Series I. Biographical Files, 1934-1997 (0.2 linear feet)

Series contains college documents (Harvard), work records, evaluations, resumes, honors and awards, bibliographies, and his vita. Of interest here are the documents pertaining to his college career. The majority of these documents are originals, among them his grade reports and an early vita written during his doctoral studies.

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Series II. Correspondence Files, 1934–2003 (0.3 linear feet)

Series consists of both personal and professional correspondence. The most interesting materials once again seem to be those dating to his time as a student at Harvard and also during his earliest days as an instructor of psychology. This includes scholarship award letters, details of fellowship opportunities, and dean's lists honors. During this time frame there is correspondence between Fiske and E.G. Boring, Gordon Allport, James G. Miller, L.L. Thurston, and David Shakow. This is a rather large series of six folders and includes correspondence throughout Fiske's life.

Series III. Writings Files, 1934–2003 (2.5 linear feet)

Series includes published materials by both Fiske and numerous other authors. Included within this series are book reviews, article reprints, and working drafts of papers. Of interest here is a re-print of *Convergent and Discriminant Validation by the Multitrait-Multimethod Matrix* (1959) which contains underlining and notes in the margins handwritten by Fiske. This series also includes chapters written by Fiske for books authored by others. Authors included within this series are E. Lowell Kelly and John R. Platt among others.

Series IV. Presentations 1950–1996 (0.3 linear feet)

Series includes papers presented by Fiske and other various presenters. Locations at which Fiske presents include The University of Chicago, The University of Michigan, various APA conventions, and the Midwestern Society for Multivariate Experimental Psychology among others. Other presenters included here are John R. Platt, Lester Luborsky, and Donald T. Campbell.

Series V. Teaching and Academic Files, 1966–1995 (0.4 linear feet)

Series consists of all materials related to Fiske's career at the University of Chicago. Of interest here are the materials related to several of Fiske's students. Folders have been created for each of these students that contain papers, including drafts with suggestions from Fiske, correspondence between teacher and student, dissertation proposals, and materials relating to their dissertation committees. This series is also comprised of faculty details and materials concerning Fiske's employment with the university. Included here are annual faculty reports, travel expense vouchers, faculty appointments, etc. Of particular interest are the materials that date early in Fiske's career as a faculty member, including a statement of job opportunities complete with their salaries dated as 1948.

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Series VI. Organizational Files, 1964–1990 (> 0.1 linear feet)

Series contains newsletters, pamphlets, and schedules of meeting of various organizations. Information pertaining to The American Psychological Association, The Midwestern Psychological Association, and The Society for Psychotherapy Research can be found here.

Series VII. Notes Files, 1950-1999 (0.3 linear feet)

The majority of this series consists of handwritten documents, many of which are illegible and undated. Presumably the materials contained herein are class and lecture notes, research notes, and drafts of various works, although to reiterate many are difficult to decipher.

Series VIII. Testing Files, 1944–1952 (0.4 linear feet)

Series contains assorted tests; the majority of which were designed specifically for use within the military. Also contained here are summaries of the research and analysis of the results. The latter was taken directly from a three ring binder and kept in the order in which Fiske intended. Although the tests are of interest, it seems as if the resulting data is as well as it includes the commentaries of other researchers and statistical analysis computed by hand.

Series IX. Research Files, 1962-1976 (> 0.1 linear feet)

Series includes assorted documents pertaining to different research. There are statistical correlation charts and photocopied materials from various sources. Also included here are newspaper and magazine clippings.

Series X. Miscellaneous Brochures, 1964–1987 (> 0.1 linear feet)

This small series consists of advertisements and brochures for various books and computer programs as well as memorial books.

Series XI. Non-Textual Files (> 0.1 linear feet)

Series contains numerous photographs and two microfilms. Both microfilms are reproductions of works by Fiske; *Levels of Analysis in Personality: Which can be Generalizable and Scientific* (1980) and *Red Capes, Red Herrings, and Red Flags* (1978). The photographs coincide with the 'Station S' military testing and depict men performing the aforementioned tests.

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Provenance

The Archives of the History of American Psychology received two boxes of the papers of Donald W. Fiske from his daughter, Dr. Susan T. Fiske, on June 27, 2003.

Related Materials

Adams Papers
Ainsworth Papers
Allen Papers
Cook Papers
Division 12 Archives

Fromm Papers
Grant Papers
Halstead Papers
Holt Papers
Maslow Papers

Midwestern Psych. Assoc.
Shakow Papers
SPSSI Archives
Verplanck Papers

Inventory

Box 1

Series I. Biographical Material, 1934–1997

Various college documents, work records, bibliographies, vita, etc.

Series II. Correspondence, 1934-2003

All correspondence, both personal and professional, excluding that pertaining to literature reviews which is included within Series V.

Box 2

Series III. Writings Files, 1934-2003

Sub-Series I: Published works by Fiske.
Sub-Series II: Published works by others.
Sub-Series II: Working drafts of papers

Contains reprints of the published materials and all notes and drafts pertaining to the work as well as working drafts of papers.

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Box 3

Continuation of Series III.

Box 4

Continuation of Series III.

Box 5

Continuation of Series III.

Box 6

Continuation of Series III.

Box 7

Series IV. Presentations Files, 1950-1996.

Sub-Series I: Papers presented by Fiske at various locations.

Sub-Series II: Papers presented by others.

Contains all versions and drafts of the presentations.

Series V. Teaching and Academic Files, 1966–1995.

Sub-Series I. Student files.

Sub-Series II: Faculty details.

Both sub-series contain all information related to Fiske's career at The University of Chicago.

Box 8

Continuation of Series V.

Series VI. Organizational Files, 1964–1990.

Contains various newsletters and pamphlets related to organizations.

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Series VII. Notes Files, 1950–1999.

Presumably contains class and lecture notes; largely illegible.

Box 9

Series VIII. Testing Files, 1944–1952.

Assorted military tests and the results and analysis that followed.

Series IX. Research Files, 1962–1976.

Assorted documents pertaining to various research areas.

Series X. Miscellaneous Brochures, 1964–1987.

Advertisements and brochures for various books and computer programs as well as memorial books.

Box V59

Series XI. Non-Textual Materials

Photographs, most of which are of 'Station S' military testing and microfilms.