

Russell W. Peterson Papers
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Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2011

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Prepared by Laura J. Kells with the assistance of Tammi Taylor

Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2006
Revised 2011 February

Collection Summary

Title: Russell W. Peterson Papers

Span Dates: 1917-2004

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1973-2002)

ID No.: MSS85115

Creator: Peterson, Russell W. (Russell Wilbur), 1916-2011

Extent: 46,000 items

Extent: 140 containers plus 1 oversize and 1 classified

Extent: 56 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm2004085115>

Summary: Environmentalist and governor of Delaware. Correspondence, speeches, writings, subject files, trips and events files, and other papers relating primarily to Peterson's work as an environmentalist and his employment as the chairman of the Council on Environmental Quality, president of New Directions, director of the Office of Technology Assessment of the United States Congress, and president of the National Audubon Society.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

People

Clinton, Bill, 1946-

Dukakis, Michael S. (Michael Stanley), 1933-

Ford, Gerald R., 1913-2006.

Peterson, Russell W. (Russell Wilbur), 1916-2011.

Peterson, Russell W. (Russell Wilbur), 1916-2011. Rebel with a conscience.

Reagan, Ronald.

Organizations

Better World Society.

Council on Environmental Quality (U.S.)

E.I. du Pont de Nemours & Company.

National Audubon Society.

New Directions (Organization)

United Nations.

United States. Congress. Office of Technology Assessment.

Subjects

Antinuclear movement.

Birds--Conservation.

Coastal zone management--United States.

Crime prevention.

Criminal justice, Administration of.

Energy consumption.

Energy policy.

Environmental law--United States.

Environmental policy--United States.

Environmental protection--International cooperation.

Environmentalism.

Globalization.

Human settlements--Congresses.

Nature conservation.

Nuclear warfare.
Ornithology.
Population--Congresses.
Population.
Poverty.
Presidents--United States--Election--1988.
Presidents--United States--Election--1992.
Presidents--United States--Election--1996.
Prison reformers--United States.
Prisons--United States.
Quality of life.
Science--Social aspects.
Technology--Social aspects.
Technology--United States.

Places

United States--Economic conditions--20th century.
United States--Economic policy--20th century.

Occupations

Environmentalists.
Governors--Delaware.

Provenance

The papers of Russell W. Peterson, environmentalist and governor of Delaware, were given to the Library of Congress by Peterson in 2004.

Transfers

Sound recordings have been transferred to the Library's Motion Picture, Broadcasting, and Recorded Sound Division where they are identified as part of these papers.

Copyright Status

Copyright in the unpublished writings of Russell W. Peterson in these papers and in other collections of papers in the custody of the Library of Congress has been dedicated to the public.

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Russell W. Peterson are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Security Classified Documents

Government regulations control the use of security classified items in this collection. Manuscript Division staff can furnish information concerning access to and use of classified material.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Russell W. Peterson Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

Date	Event
1916, Oct. 3	Born, Portage, Wis.
1937	Married Lillian Turner (died 1994)
1938	B.S., University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis.
1942	Ph.D., University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis.
1942-1968	Held positions from research chemist to director of Research and Development Division, Development Department, E. I. du Pont de Nemours & Co.; led research on Dacron polyester fiber and set up first Dacron plant in Kinston, N.C.
1969-1973	Governor of Delaware
1973-1974	Member, Commission on Critical Choices for Americans
1973-1976	Chairman, Council on Environmental Quality
1976-1977	President, New Directions
1978-1979	Director, United States Congress Office of Technology Assessment
1979	Member, President's Commission on the Accident at Three Mile Island
1979-1985	President, National Audubon Society
1981-1991	Chairman, Global Tomorrow Coalition
1982-1990	President, International Council for Bird Preservation
1984-1988	Vice president, International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (now IUCN - The World Conservation Union)
1985-1990	Founding vice-chairman, Better World Society; president 1985-1987
1985	Visiting professor, Dartmouth College, Hanover, N.H.
1986	Visiting professor, Carleton College, Northfield, Minn.
1987	Visiting professor, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis.
1995	Married June B. Jenkins
1996	Changed party affiliation from Republican to Democrat
1999	Published <i>Rebel with a Conscience</i> . Newark, Del.: University of Delaware Press
2003	Published <i>Patriots, Stand Up!: This Land is Our Land, Fight to Take It Back</i> . Wilmington, Del.: Cedar Tree Books
2011, Feb. 21	Died, Centreville, Del.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Russell Wilbur Peterson (1916-2011) span the years 1917-2004, with the bulk of the material dating from 1973 to 2002. They focus primarily on Peterson's career following his term as governor of Delaware, particularly his leadership in the national and international environmental movement. The collection has been arranged in the following series: [General Correspondence](#), [Subject File](#), [Trips and Events](#), [Speeches and Writings](#), [Oversize](#), and [Classified](#).

The [General Correspondence](#) series is comprised of letters sent and received by Peterson from 1973 until 1999. Correspondents include colleagues, friends, and fellow governors from the state of Delaware, government officials, and leaders of local, national, and international environmental organizations.

The [Subject File](#) highlights Russell Peterson's professional and organizational affiliations and the issues and topics of concern to him. Most pertain to his post-gubernatorial life. Records and papers from earlier years, particularly those from his term as governor of Delaware, are located at the Historical Society of Delaware in Wilmington. A finding aid of that

collection is in the [Subject File](#) folder for the Historical Society of Delaware. Files relating to the E. I. du Pont de Nemours & Co. contain employment records from the 1940s and photographs from his research laboratory. A section on Delaware includes items relating to Peterson's volunteer work on behalf of prison reform in that state and some material on his governorship, including campaign literature and documents relating to the establishment of the cabinet form of government. While governor, Peterson worked to pass the Coastal Zone Act, which banned heavy industry along a two-mile stretch of the entire Delaware coastline. Files on this legislation focus on Peterson's efforts to fight challenges and amendments to the law following its passage in 1971. Transcripts of Peterson's oral history conducted in the 1980s provide his account of these events.

Peterson's appointed positions in the federal government are covered in files on the Council on Environmental Quality, where as chairman he worked to advance the national environmental policy of the Gerald R. Ford administration, and the U. S. Congress Office of Technology Assessment, where he served as director. Files on the National Audubon Society comprise the largest segment of the [Subject File](#) series and chronicle Peterson's leadership of the organization from 1979 to 1985. Other files pertain to organizations that he helped to establish and lead such as New Directions, a lobbying group devoted to global issues, and the Better World Society, an organization devised by Ted Turner to use television to inform people about population stabilization, the prevention of nuclear war, protection of the global environment, and reduction of world poverty. Files under the heading of "politics" detail Peterson's endorsement and campaign activities on behalf of Democratic presidential candidates Michael S. Dukakis in 1988 and Bill Clinton in 1992 and 1996. Also under this heading is material on his decision to change his party affiliation from Republican to Democrat in 1996.

The [Trips and Events](#) series documents speaking engagements, conferences, board meetings, congressional hearings, fund-raising trips, and other events Peterson attended from 1973 to 1999, including meeting with President Ford as head of the Council on Environmental Quality. Files from September 1974 cover Peterson's attendance at regional conferences on economic inflation as well as a presidential summit on inflation in order to discuss the effect of environmental regulations on the economy. Extensively documented is the United Nations World Conference on Population held in Bucharest, Romania, in August 1974, where Peterson served as vice-chair of the United States delegation. Peterson's growing involvement in global issues during this period is recorded in files from 1976 on a trip to Asia and his participation in the United Nations World Conference on Human Settlements in Vancouver, British Columbia. Files from his tenure as president of the National Audubon Society treat his participation in regional and national meetings, his testimony at the confirmation hearing of James G. Watt as secretary of the interior, and his participation in birdathon fund-raising events. Files from his work with the Better World Society relate to board meetings in the USSR in 1987 and in Costa Rica in 1988.

The [Speeches and Writings](#) series contains texts of speeches and statements delivered by Peterson from 1973 to 2000. Topics include crime prevention, criminal justice standards and goals, the evolution of the environmental movement, quality of life, the impact of science and technology, energy, the environmental record of the Ronald Reagan administration, population and the environment, prospects for the global environment, and Delaware's Coastal Zone Act. A grouping of earlier speeches dates from his time at E. I. du Pont de Nemours & Co. and also includes campaign speeches, his acceptance speech at the Delaware Republican convention, and his inaugural address as governor of Delaware. A large portion of the writings pertains to Peterson's memoir, *Rebel With a Conscience*, which includes significant reference files supplementing the research and subject material in other parts of the collection. Other writings include his journal articles and newspaper editorials spanning sixty years.

Organization of the Papers

The collection is arranged in six series:

- [General Correspondence, 1973-1999](#)
- [Subject File, 1934-2003](#)
- [Trips and Events, 1973-1999](#)
- [Speeches and Writings, 1917-2004](#)
- [Oversize, 1974-circa 1990](#)
- [Classified, 1974](#)

Description of Series

Container	Series
BOX 1-10	<p><u>General Correspondence, 1973-1999</u></p> <p>Letters sent and letters received with attachments. Arranged by year and therein alphabetically by name of correspondent.</p>
BOX 10-67	<p><u>Subject File, 1934-2003</u></p> <p>Correspondence, memoranda, reports, notes, press clippings, photographs, transcripts, and printed matter. Arranged alphabetically by topic, organization, name of person, or type of material and therein chronologically.</p>
BOX 67-112	<p><u>Trips and Events, 1973-1999</u></p> <p>Correspondence, memoranda, speeches, reports, press clippings, itineraries, notes, photographs, printed matter, and other material relating to speaking engagements, board meetings, conferences, congressional hearings, fund-raising trips, and other events. Arranged chronologically.</p>
BOX 112-140	<p><u>Speeches and Writings, 1917-2004</u></p> <p>Speeches; articles; book files including drafts, correspondence, reference material, and related matter; and other writings. Arranged alphabetically by type of material and therein chronologically. Reference material in the book file is arranged and indexed according to titles supplied by Peterson and his assistant.</p>
BOX OV 1	<p><u>Oversize, 1974-circa 1990</u></p> <p>Maps and posters. Arranged and described according to the series, containers, and folders from which the items were removed.</p>
BOX CL 1	<p><u>Classified, 1974</u></p> <p>Government security classified telegram. Arranged and described according to the series, container, and folder from which the item was removed.</p>

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1-10	General Correspondence, 1973-1999 Letters sent and letters received with attachments. Arranged by year and therein alphabetically by name of correspondent.
BOX 1	1973-1974 <i>See also Oversize</i> (13 folders)
BOX 2	1975 (7 folders) 1976 A-P (7 folders)
BOX 3	R-Z (3 folders) 1977 (8 folders) 1978 A-M (5 folders)
BOX 4	N-Z (2 folders) 1979 (14 folders)
BOX 5	1980-1981 (10 folders) 1982 A-H (2 folders)
BOX 6	I-Z (3 folders) 1983-1984 (7 folders) 1985 A-H (2 folders)
BOX 7	I-Z (5 folders) 1986-1987 (6 folders) 1988 A-N (2 folders)
BOX 8	P-Z

General Correspondence, 1973-1999

Container	Contents
	1989-1991 (10 folders)
	1992 A-C D-Z (3 folders)
BOX 9	1993-1996 (9 folders)
BOX 10	1997-1999 (5 folders)
BOX 10-67	Subject File, 1934-2003 Correspondence, memoranda, reports, notes, press clippings, photographs, transcripts, and printed matter. Arranged alphabetically by topic, organization, name of person, or type of material and therein chronologically.
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BOX 11	1977-1980, undated (2 folders) Better World Society 1984-1988 (8 folders)
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BOX 13	Peterson, Russell W. Career Miscellany, 1947, 1960-1965, 1972-1999, undated (3 folders) Press clippings, 1956-2002, undated (3 folders) Personal Family, 1953, 1961, 1969, 1975, 1994-1999 High school, 1934 Californians Against Waste Foundation, 1986-1990, undated Carleton College, Northfield, Minn., 1983-1990, undated (4 folders)

Subject File, 1934-2003

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Subject File, 1934-2003

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	Chronological file 1981 July-Nov. (11 folders)
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Trips and Events, 1973-1999

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	(3 folders)
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	1977
	Jan.-Mar.
	(2 folders)
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	(5 folders)
	1978
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Trips and Events, 1973-1999

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Trips and Events, 1973-1999

Container	Contents
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BOX 107	(2 folders)
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BOX 109	Oct.-Dec. (5 folders)
	1990 Jan.-Feb.
BOX 110	Apr.-Dec. (5 folders)
	1991 (3 folders)
BOX 111	1992 (5 folders)
	1993 Jan.-Mar. (2 folders)
	Apr.-Oct. (2 folders)
BOX 112	1994-1999 (3 folders)
BOX 112-140	Speeches and Writings, 1917-2004 Speeches; articles; book files including drafts, correspondence, reference material, and related matter; and other writings. Arranged alphabetically by type of material and therein chronologically. Reference material in the book file is arranged and indexed according to titles supplied by Peterson and his assistant.

Speeches and Writings, 1917-2004

Container	Contents
BOX 112	Speeches Vol. 1, 1973 (4 folders)
	Vol. 2, 1974 (3 folders)
BOX 113	Vol. 3, 1974 (3 folders)
	Vol. 4, 1974 (2 folders)
BOX 114	Vol. 5, 1975 (4 folders)
	Vol. 6, 1975-1976 (3 folders)
BOX 115	Vol. 7, 1976-1977 (3 folders)
	Vol 8, 1978 (2 folders)
BOX 116	Vol. 9, 1978-1980 (3 folders)
	Vol. 10, 1980 (2 folders)
BOX 117	Vol. 11, 1981-1982 (4 folders)
	X.Vol. 12, 1982-1983 (3 folders)
BOX 118	Vol. 13, 1984-1985 (3 folders)
	Vol. 14, 1985-1987 (3 folders)
BOX 119	Vol. 15, 1988-1989 (3 folders)
	Vol. 16, 1990-1992 (2 folders)
BOX 120	Vol. 17, 1993-1996 (2 folders)
	Vol. 18, 1997-1998 (2 folders)
	Vol. 19, 1999-2000 (2 folders)
BOX 121	Miscellaneous, 1953-1973 (2 folders)
	Writings Articles 1943, 1967-1981 (3 folders)
BOX 122	1982-2003 (6 folders)
	Book, <i>Rebel with a Conscience</i>

Speeches and Writings, 1917-2004

Container

Contents

	Beamish, Richard, 1994-1998
	Book jacket, 1996-1999, undated
	Compact disc-read only memory (CD-ROM), book insert, 1996-1999, undated
BOX 123	Drafts
	Overview, 1993
	Set 1, 1995
	(2 folders)
	Set 2, 1995-1996
	(10 folders)
BOX 124	(2 folders)
	Set 3, 1995-1997, undated
	(2 folders)
	Foreword, 1998, undated
	Marketing and promotion
	Book events, 1999
	(4 folders)
	Cooperative advertising, 1998-1999, undated
BOX 125	Mailings, 1998-1999
	(2 folders)
	Miscellany, 1973, 1998-1999, undated
	Plans and schedules, 1998-1999, undated
	Miscellany, 1995-2001, undated
	Notes, 1973-1980, 1993-1996, undated
	Permissions, 1998, undated
	Publishers
	Associated University Presses, 1993, 1998-2000, undated
	(2 folders)
BOX 126	Miscellaneous, 1995-1998, undated
	University of Delaware Press, 1997-1999, undated
	University of Wisconsin Press, 1996-1999, undated
	Reference files
	Set 1
	Biodiversity/endangered species, 1995-1996
	Citizen activist, 1964-1965
	Crime reduction, 1973-1998, undated
	(2 folders)
	Earth Summit, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 1992, undated
	Economics of environmentalism, 1974-1997, undated
	(2 folders)
BOX 127	Forging coalitions, 1980-1985, 1991
	Furthering change at Du Pont, 1966-1967, 1988-1997, undated
	Furthering the environmental impact statement, 1976, 1991-1998
	Global warming, 1992-1996, undated
	Governor of Delaware
	Getting elected/failing to get re-elected, 1968-1971, 1984-1989, undated
	Saving Delaware's coast, 1971-1977, 1985-1992
	Looking ahead - the vision thing, 1984-1996, undated

Speeches and Writings, 1917-2004

Container

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	Miscellaneous topics, 1971-1996, undated (1 folder)
BOX 128	(8 folders)
	Politics and the environment, 1996-1997
BOX 129	Population, 1971-1973, 1981-1985, 1991-1998, undated (5 folders)
	Professional generalists, 1982-1986, 1995-1996
	Protecting the ozone layer, 1975-1995, undated
BOX 130	Slowing growth in consumption, 1992-1996, undated Turning people on, 1991, undated United States Congress, Office of Technology Assessment, 1978-1979, 1994-1995, undated
	Set 2
	Index, 1985-1988 (2 folders)
	Arms, 1961-1994, undated (2 folders)
	Audubon Society, 1980-1990, undated (2 folders)
BOX 131	(2 folders)
	Bucking the system, 1984-1985, undated
	Business/corporate, 1973-1992, undated (2 folders)
	Crime, 1976-1994, undated (5 folders)
	Delaware, 1972-1996, undated (3 folders)
BOX 132	Ecology/environment/natural resources, 1962-1994, undated (4 folders)
BOX 133	(3 folders)
	Economics, 1961-1993, undated (5 folders)
BOX 134	(2 folders)
	Education, 1970-1992, undated
	Energy, 1973-1991, undated (3 folders)
	Ethics, 1975-1992, undated
	Foreign affairs, 1973-1991, undated (1 folder)
BOX 135	(5 folders)
	Futures, 1973-1990, undated
	Getting ahead, 1977-1992, undated (2 folders)
BOX 136	(3 folders)
	Governance, 1969-1991, undated (2 folders)
	History, 1974-1991, undated (3 folders)

Speeches and Writings, 1917-2004

Container

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BOX 137	Human behavior, 1975-1987, undated Human intellect, 1974-1984 Human rights, 1975-1992, undated Media, 1984-1991, undated Miscellaneous topics, 1972-1988, undated National Audubon Society <i>See Containers 130-131, Audubon Society</i> Nuclear war/winter, 1961, 1980-1992, undated (2 folders) Philosophy, 1942-1990, undated Places, 1917, 1975-1986, undated Politics, 1973-1994, undated (1 folder)
BOX 138	(3 folders) Population, 1975-1994, undated (4 folders) Poverty, 1973-1993, undated
BOX 139	Presidents/presidency, 1949, 1961, 1973-1992, undated Racial issues, 1970-1994, undated Reagan, Ronald, 1980-1993, undated (3 folders) Religion, 1978-1993, undated Science/technology, 1973-1994, undated (4 folders)
BOX 140	Third world, 1975-1985 War/peace, 1981-1993, undated Writing/writers, 1967, 1974, 1983-1993, undated Forewords and prefaces, 1978-1988, undated Letters to editors, 1960-1964, 1974-2002 (2 folders) Miscellaneous, 1973-2004, undated (3 folders)
BOX OV 1	Oversize, 1974-circa 1990 Maps and posters. Arranged and described according to the series, containers, and folders from which the items were removed.
BOX OV 1	General correspondence, 1974 (<i>Container 1</i>) Subject file Center on the Consequences of Nuclear War, 1983 (<i>Container 14</i>) Nuclear weapons production, nuclear waste, circa 1990 (<i>Container 54</i>) Population, 1988 (<i>Container 57</i>) Trips and events 1974, Oct. (<i>Container 73</i>) 1976, June (<i>Container 84</i>)

Oversize, 1974-circa 1990

Container	Contents
BOX CL 1	1981, Apr. (<i>Container 95</i>) Classified, 1974 Government security classified telegram. Arranged and described according to the series, container, and folder from which the item was removed.
BOX CL 1	Trips and events, 1974, Aug. (Container 70)