
Guide to the Henry Borsook Papers, 1958-1983

Processed by Jennifer K. Stine; machine-readable finding aid created by Brooke Dykman Dockter

Archives

California Institute of Technology

1200 East California Blvd.

Mail Code 015A-74

Pasadena, CA 91125

Phone: (626) 395-2704

Fax: (626) 793-8756

Email: archives@caltech.edu

URL: <http://archives.caltech.edu>

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Processed by:

Jennifer K. Stine

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Brooke Dykman Dockter

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Henry Borsook Papers,

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Language: English.

Access

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Biography

Henry Borsook, 1897-1984, was a Professor of Biochemistry at Caltech from 1929 to 1968. His major contributions were in the areas of protein synthesis and nutrition. At Caltech, Borsook was twice chairman of the faculty, chaired the student health committee for many years, and sponsored the Anaximandrian Society at his home. Borsook's interest in proteins led him, in the early 1930s, to a new theory about their metabolism. At that time, scientists believed the proteins were probably very stable; Borsook demonstrated there was a continual interchange of proteins. His 1940 book, *Vitamins: What They Are and What They Will Do for You*, was among the first to present contemporary nutritional ideas to a popular audience. Borsook showed that a good diet consisted not of "food" but of certain amounts of specific nutrients such as

proteins, vitamins, calories, and the like. During World War II he served on the Food and Nutrition Board, and helped to draw up the table of Recommended Daily Allowances. At this time he also developed multipurpose food (MPF), an enriched meal based on soybeans. The Meals for Millions Foundation, of which Borsook was a co-founder and long-time trustee, distributed MPF first to post-war Europe and later to underdeveloped areas. Throughout his lifetime, Borsook championed the idea that a good diet was not tied to eating specific foods, but could be scientifically manufactured. After retiring from Caltech in 1968, Henry Borsook moved his laboratory to U. C. Berkeley where he continued working until the late 1970s.

Scope and Content

The Henry Borsook Papers cover the years 1958 to 1983, but significant gaps are present. Section 1 is incoming and outgoing correspondence primarily covering the years 1960 to 1965. It illustrates several facets of Borsook's career, including his relationships with colleagues, graduate students, and the food and vitamin industry, most notably with the American Institute of Baking and Miles Laboratories. Section 2 provides manuscripts and notes, including notes for talks given in the 1970s on food and international development. It shows the breadth of Borsook's interests and contains his book reviews and writings on medical history and on art history. Section 3 contains papers from the late 1970s and early 1980s related to the Meals for Millions Foundation. At the end of the collection is a small amount of biographical material, some reprints, slides, and several books on food and nutrition with annotations made by Borsook.

This collection came to the Archives in two parts. The correspondence files from the 1960s were found on campus by Professor Ray Owen and deposited in 1989. The manuscripts, Meals for Millions Foundation materials, books, slides and later materials were a gift from Eve Borsook made in 1990.

For further information related to Borsook's life see his oral history and the Papers of the Anaximandrian Society

Title: The Proceedings of the Anaximandrian Society,

Date: 1935-1945

Books of Henry Borsook

Some of the books that were given to Caltech in the Borsook collection have been merged with the Archives' landmark book collection. Items may be located through CLAS, the Caltech Libraries' automated catalogue.

Borsook, Henry. *Der Hungrige kann nicht warten*. Berlin: Deutsche Buch-Gemeinschaft, 1968. (signed Henry Borsook)

Borsook, Henry. *Vitaminas. Qué son y cómo pueden beneficiarlo a Usted*. Buenos Aires: Librería Hachette, 1942. (signed Henry Borsook)

Borsook, Henry. *Vitamins. What They Are and How They Can Benefit You*. New York: Viking Press, 1941. (signed Henry Borsook)

Fisher, James W., ed. *Erythropoietin. Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, vol. 149, pp. 1-583. New York: The New York Academy of Sciences, 1968. (notes and underlined passages by Borsook)

Frankel, Francine R. *India's Green Revolution. Economic Gains and Political Costs*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1971. (signed H. Borsook)

SECTION I: CORRESPONDENCE

PART A: GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence, 1959-66

Box 1, Folder 1.1	A
Folder 1.2	American Institute of Baking
Folder 1.3	B
Folder 1.4	Biology faculty
Folder 1.5	C
Folder 1.6	courses
Folder 1.7	D
Folder 1.8	E
Folder 1.9	F
Folder 1.10	G
Folder 1.11	grants
Folder 1.12	H

SECTION I: CORRESPONDENCE

PART A: GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

Folder 1.13	I
Folder 1.14	J
Folder 1.15	Jehle, Herbert
Folder 1.16	K
Folder 1.17	L
Folder 1.18	M
	Correspondence, 1959-66
Box 2, Folder 2.1	Miles Laboratories
Folder 2.2	N
Folder 2.3	O
Folder 2.4	P-Q
Folder 2.5	R
Folder 2.6	S
Folder 2.7	student health
Folder 2.8	T
Folder 2.9	U-V
Folder 2.10	W
Folder 2.11	X-Y-Z
Folder 2.12	Correspondence, 1979-83

PART B: CHRONOLOGICAL CORRESPONDENCE FILES

Box 2, Folder 2.13	1960
Folder 2.14	1961
Folder 2.15	1962
Box 3, Folder 3.1	1963
Folder 3.2	1964

SECTION II: TALKS, MANUSCRIPTS, NOTES

Box 3, Folder 3.3	"Baroque"
Folder 3.4	"Erythropoiesis," 1977
Folder 3.5	"Food," 1978
Folder 3.6	"Giotto"
Folder 3.7	"The Humanities in Medicine"
Folder 3.8	"Introductions to Book"
Folder 3.9	Japan
Folder 3.10	"Loomis Colloquium" [c. 1964]
Folder 3.11	Manuscripts, pre- 1967
Folder 3.12	Misc. technical notes
Folder 3.13	"Ultra Goes to War" -- final copy
Folder 3.14	"Understanding China's Socialist Revolution" 2/2/79
Folder 3.15	"U. S. Food Situation" [c. 1969]
Box 4, Folder 4.1	Wonseong County, Korea, 1979-81
Folder 4.2	"World Food" 1973
Folder 4.3	"World Food" 1976
Folder 4.4	"World Food" 1977
Folder 4.5	"The World Will Need to Feed Itself"

SECTION III: MEALS FOR MILLIONS

Box 4, Folder 4.6	Operations, By-Laws, Plans
Folder 4.7	Correspondence, 1978-82
Folder 4.8	Lists of trustees, staff, 1977-81
Folder 4.9	Misc. notes

SECTION IV: MISCELLANEOUS

Box 4, Folder 4.10	Biographical
Folder 4.11	List of Publications, 1947-59
Folder 4.12	Reprints--other

Box 5

Miscellaneous books:

***Child Nutrition in Developing Countries*, U. S. Dept. of State, 1969**

***Focus on Food Additives*, General Mills, n.d.**

***The Village Texturizer*, Meals for Millions Foundation, 1977.**

***Malnutrition and Poverty*, by S. Reutlinger and M. Selowsky.**

***Teaching Nutrition in Developing Countries*, Meals for Millions Foundation, 1977**

***Food and Your Future*, by Ruth Bennett White,**

***Nutritive Value of Foods*, U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, 1977**

***Overcoming World Hunger*, Presidential Commission on World Hunger, 1980**

Slides (2 boxes)