

**PRELIMINARY FINDING AID FOR THE
RICHARD G. SNYDER PAPERS**

COLLECTION INFORMATION

Creator: Snyder, Richard G. (1928-)

Title: Richard G. Snyder Papers

Extent: 528.25 linear feet

Collection Number: MS-012

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Acquisition Information: Received from Richard G. Snyder in three accessions, 2007-2008, with the bulk of the collection received in December 2008. Archives accession numbers 2007.014, 2008.001, 2008.005.

Access: Advance notice is required to use the collection. Portions of the collection are restricted and are unavailable for research use. Contact the Archives for additional information.

Preferred Citation: [Item title or description]. Richard G. Snyder Papers (MS-012). Aviation Safety and Security Archives, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Prescott, Arizona.

ABSTRACT

Richard G. Snyder is an internationally known research scientist with expertise in human impact tolerances and trauma mechanisms, biomechanics, forensic anthropology and anthropometry, crash protection, and transportation safety. The Snyder Papers consist of materials created and collected by Snyder in the course of his work as a research scientist over 50 years, including: technical and scientific publications and reports; Snyder's publications and research files; correspondence; reference files; films; and books and other printed materials.

BIOGRAPHICAL HISTORY

Richard G. (Jerry) Snyder is an internationally known research scientist with expertise in human impact tolerances and trauma mechanisms, biomechanics, forensic anthropology and anthropometry, crash protection, and transportation safety.

Snyder was born 14 February 1928 in Northampton, Massachusetts. After attending Amherst High School in Amherst, Massachusetts, he received a scholarship to Amherst College, and he was a pre-med student at Amherst (1946-1948) prior to joining the United States Air Force in 1949. He served as a USAF pilot in the Korean War, undertaking one hundred combat missions.

Following his military service, Snyder attended University of Arizona, earning a B.A. in anthropology (1956), MA in physical anthropology (1957), and Ph.D. in physical anthropology and zoology (1959). He is also certified (D.ABFA) in forensic anthropology by the American Board of Forensic Anthropology.

Snyder was a research engineer in the Applied Research Laboratory, College of Engineering, University of Arizona, from 1958 to 1960. He also was on the staff of the Arizona Transportation and Traffic Institute (1959-60) and was an associate professor of systems engineering (1960) at University of Arizona. Snyder also served as a consultant for the U.S. Army Electronics Proving Ground in Fort Huachuca, Arizona, during this time.

From 1960 to 1966, Snyder worked for the Federal Aviation Administration's Civil Aeromedical Research Institute in Oklahoma City. He served as Chief of Physical Anthropology (1960-1966) and was a research pilot (1962-1966). He also served as Acting Chief, Protection and Survival Laboratories during several periods during 1963-1966.

From 1966 to 1968, Snyder worked in the Office of Automotive Safety Research for Ford Motor company, as manager of the Biomechanics Department (1966-1968) and as a principal research scientist (1968).

Snyder joined the faculty at University of Michigan in 1968. He was a research scientist in the University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute (UMTRI; formerly the Highway Safety Research Institute) from 1968 to 1985. Concurrent with this position, he was an associate professor (1968-1973) and professor (1973-1985) of anthropology for the university. Snyder also served as Director, NASA Center of Excellence in Man Vehicle Systems in 1984-1985.

Snyder served as a consultant for numerous agencies and organizations throughout his career. He also served on the faculties of Michigan State University, University of Chicago, and University of Oklahoma at various times (concurrent appointments with the positions detailed above). Following his retirement from University of Michigan, he continued to serve as a consultant through his company BioDynamics International.

Snyder's research has been internationally recognized by numerous awards and honors. In 2004, University of Michigan established a named professorship, Richard G. Snyder Distinguished University Professor of Industrial and Operations Engineering. He has been named a fellow of numerous societies including American Anthropological Association (1959), Royal

Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland (1959-1966), American Association for the Advancement of Science (1961); American Academy of Forensic Sciences (1974), and The Explorers Club (1980).

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Richard G. Snyder Papers consist of materials created and collected by Snyder in the course of his work as a research scientist over 50 years, including: technical and scientific publications and reports; Snyder's publications and research files; correspondence; reference files; films; and books and other printed materials.

Included are Snyder's own publications, investigation case files, and research files, as well as an extensive library of technical publications and reports collected by Snyder in the course of his career. Topics in research and reference files include crash survivability, crashworthiness (including occupant protection), restraint systems, impact, emergency egress and escape, human factors, free fall, and crash tests. Also included are files relating to accident investigations and legal cases in which Snyder was involved. In addition to aviation, some files relate to automotive or railroad studies which are applicable to aviation (e.g., impact and restraint systems). Film topics include crash tests (including Snyder's research), restraint, impact survival, human factors, and crash resistant fuel systems.

PRELIMINARY INVENTORY

Processing of the collection is ongoing. Folder-level inventories are being created and may be available for specific subjects (even if not currently linked from the list below), please contact the Archives for additional information about the contents of specific subjects.

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