

MEYER DWASS (1923-1996) PAPERS, 1953-1996

Series 11/3/19/9

Boxes 1-2 (including one half-size box)

Biography

Meyer Dwass was born on April 9, 1923 in New Haven, Connecticut. He served in the European Theater of Operations with the US Army from 1943 to 1946. Awarded a B.A. from George Washington University in 1948, he received his M.A. from Columbia University the next year and his Ph.D. in 1952 from the University of North Carolina. He married Shirley Labowitz in 1949 and they eventually had four children: Golda, Emily, Michael, and Claudia.

Dwass served as a mathematical statistician for the US Census Bureau while finishing his doctoral work, then took a position in 1952 as Assistant Professor in the Department of Mathematics at Northwestern University. After spending the 1955-1956 academic year as a visiting research associate at Stanford (he would return in the same capacity during the summer of 1962), he was promoted to Associate Professor at Northwestern in 1957. He accepted an appointment as Professor in the Department of Statistics at the University of Minnesota in 1961-1962 but returned to Evanston the following year and spent the rest of his academic career at Northwestern. He was named Director of the Northwestern University Center for Statistics and Probability in 1976 and Chair of the Mathematics Department in 1978. Other visiting appointments included Technion in 1966, Hebrew University in 1971-1972, and Dartmouth in 1973.

His professional areas of interest were mathematical statistics and applied probability, specifically in non-parametric statistics, poisson process, linear models, and statistical pedagogy. He was an early champion of using the computer in teaching statistics, commenting in 1976 on the difficulty of securing an adequate interactive computer laboratory for classes. After his retirement, he donated his statistical reference library to the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences.

Dwass's wife died in 1994. Meyer Dwass died on July 15, 1996, at the age of 73 and was buried in Workmen's Circle Cemetery-Menorah Gardens in Broadview, Illinois.

Description of the Series

The Meyer Dwass Papers fill 2 boxes and span the years 1953 to 1996. The bulk of the papers consist of his teaching and research notes as well as offprints of his journal publications; a small amount of personal material is included. The papers fall into six subseries: biographical, correspondence, university notes, teaching, research, and publications.

Biographical materials include a 1979 CV, reports of professional activities, and news releases from the University regarding Dwass's hire and promotion. On a more personal level, the papers include obituaries for Dwass and his wife (Dwass's obituary also mentions "his companion, Frieda Landau"). Of special interest are photocopied pages of a journal he kept intermittently from 1955 to 1960, with family details, opinions, and musings. The journal pages demonstrate the interest Dwass took in his children. Also of interest are a monthly planner for the 1978-1979

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academic year and notes for a humorous Purim talk he delivered during the year he spent teaching in Israel.

The few letters, arranged chronologically, are nonetheless representative. A letter from the Dean of Faculties and one written to Dwass's daughter Emily provide insight into an empathetic nature, with reference made to people in need. Also included are a letter to a scholarly journal editor and a note about a Yiddish reading group Dwass formed.

Two sets of miscellaneous university-related notes that Dwass took for his own benefit relate to the immigration-status hearing of a visiting faculty member and about the Budget and Resources Advisory Committee that he chaired in 1973-1974.

Dwass's teaching files are comprised of typed supplemental class notes on "Statistics Using the Computer" for Math C30; handwritten class notes for C51, Multivariate Analysis; extensive notes for his class at Hebrew University on "Analysis of Variance;" and unidentified notes labeled "Math. Stat. R139, Non-Parametric Statistical Inference."

The research files consist of a folder of formulas and notes written on loose paper or taken from notebooks and eleven Israeli school copybooks or exam books filled with Dwass's mathematical notations, bibliographic citations, and drafts of speeches or articles. Four of the copybooks have notations on the cover ("Bibl," "Explicit Dstins," "Poisson Process," and "Asymptotics"); two are stapled together; two are numbered (I and II); the remainder have no markings on the covers.

Dwass's publications consist of both published and unpublished articles. Reprints of about forty articles include many that appeared in the *Annals of Mathematical Statistics* and other specialized mathematics journals. Included are several technical reports prepared on behalf of or with funding from the US military (the Office of Naval Research and the Air Force Office of Scientific Research) or reports on NSF grant-funded projects. Publications also include three folders of notes and drafts for a book on linear models that he worked on in the late 1970s.

Provenance: This series was transferred to the University Archives by Melanie Reuben of the Department of Mathematics on September 4, 1998, as Accession No. 98-164, and combined with materials from the University Archives Faculty Biographical Files.

Restrictions: None.

Separations: Three inches of duplicate and extraneous material were discarded. Three of Dwass's books were separated and added to the University Archives' Faculty Authors Collection.

Processor: Missy Roser; April 2002.

Reformatted by: Rachel C. Teuer; August 2, 2004.

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Container List

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	1	Biographical materials	1962-1996
	2	Biographical: journal pages	1955-1960
	3	Biographical: monthly planner	1978-1979
	4	Biographical: Purim party "lecture" at Hebrew University	1971-1972
	5	Correspondence	1960-1980
	6	University-related notes	1961, 1973
	7	Teaching: class notes for C30, C51	1974-1976
	8	Teaching: class notes for ANOVA, Hebrew University	1971-1972
	9	Unidentified lecture notes for "Math. Stat. R139"	n.d.
	10	Research: notes	n.d.
	11	Research: copybooks	n.d.
	12	Publications: articles	1953-1979
	13	Publications: unpublished articles, reports	1961-1971, n.d.
2	1	Publications: <i>Linear Models</i> notes and draft	1976-1980, n.d.
	2	Publications: <i>Linear Models</i> notes and draft	1976-1980, n.d.
	3	Publications: <i>Linear Models</i> notes and draft	1976-1980, n.d.