Guide to the John W. Egerton papers, 1961-1965

Descriptive Summary

Title: John W. Egerton papers
Creator: John W. Egerton
Dates: 1961-1965
ID Number: E02
Size: 4 boxes
Language(s): English

Repository: Special & Digital Collections
University of South Florida Tampa Library
4202 East Fowler Ave., LIB122
Tampa, Florida 33620
Phone: 813-974-2731 - Fax: 813-396-9006
Email Special & Digital Collections

Administrative Summary

Provenance: John W. Egerton
Acquisition Information: Donation.

Access Conditions: None. The contents of this collection may be subject to copyright. Visit the United States Copyright Office's website at http://www.copyright.gov/ for more information.

Preferred Citation: John W. Egerton papers, Special Collections Department, Tampa Library, University of South Florida, Tampa, Florida.

Biographical Note

John Waldon Egerton was born in Atlanta, Georgia on June 14, 1935. He received a bachelor of arts degree from the University of Kentucky in 1958 and a master of arts in 1960. Between 1958 and 1960 he worked in the public relations department of the University of Kentucky. He served from 1960 to 1965 as the University of South Florida's Director of Public Information and head of the USF News Bureau. While the Florida Legislature's Johns Committee investigated administrators, faculty, and students at USF seeking "un-American" activities, Egerton collected and preserved materials documenting the investigation. He donated these materials to the USF library in 1965. After resigning from the University in 1965, Egerton became a staff writer for Southern Education Report (1965-1969) and for Race Relations Reporter (1969-1971). In 1971 he began a career as a free-lance writer and reporter. He later became contributing editor for the Saturday Review of Education (1972-73), Race Relations Reporter (1973-1974), and Southern Voices (1974-1975). Egerton has written over twenty non-fiction books and more than two hundred articles, primarily about the development and culture of the New South. An authority on Southern foodways, Egerton is a founding member of the Southern Foodways Alliance. The Florida Legislative Investigation Committee, also known as the Johns Committee, was created in 1956 by the legislature and headed by former governor and state senator Charley Johns. The purpose of the committee was to seek out perceived subversive influences from Florida during the period of 1956-1965. Initially, the Johns Committee attempted to destroy chapters of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Later, during an anti-intellectual crusade, its members attacked Florida's public universities. From 1962-1964, the University of South Florida was part of a large controversy when its students and faculty became the subject of a Johns Committee investigation. The state legislature refused to extend the Committee's mandate in 1965 after a controversial report entitled Homosexuality and Citizenship in Florida was released.

Scope Note

This collection consists of materials relating to the 1962-1964 Johns Committee investigation of the University of South Florida. The collection includes correspondence, press statements, statements to the Florida legislature, editorials, various newsletters and newspaper clippings, as well as the typescript of "The Controversy" John Egerton's unpublished 300-page study of the Johns Committee.

Arrangement Note: Organized by Subject.

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Subject Headings

Corporate Names: Johns Committee -- Florida.
University of South Florida -- History.
**Personal Names:** Egerton, John W. (Walden). 1935-
Johns, Charley

**Subject Terms:** Civil rights -- Florida
Gay men -- Florida
Governmental investigations -- Florida.
Homosexuality -- Florida
Homosexuality -- Laws and legislation

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**COLLECTION CONTENTS**

### BOX 1

FOLDER 1: Collection Guide

FOLDER 2: John Egerton Biographical Materials

FOLDER 3: John Egerton Papers at Vanderbilt University

FOLDER 4: "The Stormy 1960s at the University of South Florida"

Scope/Content: [Address delivered by John Egerton at the USF Tampa Library, September 17, 1996]

FOLDER 5: Chronology of USF Johns Committee Investigation

FOLDER 6: Johns Committee pt. 1

FOLDER 7: Johns Committee pt. 2

FOLDER 8: Johns Committee pt. 3

FOLDER 9: Supporters of the Johns Committee

FOLDER 10: State Governing Bodies (Excluding Johns Committee)

FOLDER 11: USF Governance and Policy

### BOX 2

FOLDER 1: Academic Freedom pt. 1

FOLDER 2: Academic Freedom pt. 2

FOLDER 3: AAUP, AAU, and Student Organizations

FOLDER 4: Thomas Wenner / Jerome Davis
FOLDER 24: Transcript of Interview with Donald R. Harkness, March, 1962

FOLDER 25: Lectures and Forums at USF

BOX 3

FOLDER 1: Newspaper Clippings, May 1962 to June 1962

FOLDER 2: Newspaper Clippings, August 1962 - September 1962

FOLDER 3: Newspaper Clippings, October 1962 to November 1962

FOLDER 4: Newspaper Clippings, November 1962

FOLDER 5: Newspaper Clippings, December 1962 to January 1963

FOLDER 6: Newspaper Clippings, March 1963 to April 1963

FOLDER 7: Newspaper Clippings, May 1963 to June 1964

FOLDER 8: Newspaper Clippings, “The High Cost of Snooping” Series by Mabel Chesley


FOLDER 10: "The Controversy" pt. 1

Scope/Content: [photocopy of Egerton's study of the Johns Committee]

FOLDER 11: "The Controversy" pt. 2

Scope/Content: [photocopy of Egerton's study of the Johns Committee]

FOLDER 12: "The Controversy" pt. 3

Scope/Content: [photocopy of Egerton's study of the Johns Committee]

FOLDER 13: "The Controversy" - original transcript

Scope/Content: [original typescript of Egerton's study of the Johns Committee]

BOX 4

FOLDER 1: AAUP Bulletin, Spring Issue. Volume 50, number 3 (March, 1964)

FOLDER 2: Confidential. Volume 12, number 2 (February, 1964)

Scope/Content: [Contains article "Perverts Under the Palms" by "Professor Anonymous" about alleged homosexuality in Florida schools]
and the Johns Committee investigation, pp. 32-33, 47-48]