

Guide to the John Ponticello Papers

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Summary Information

Repository:	University of Nevada, Las Vegas. University Libraries. Special Collections and Archives.
Creator:	Ponticello, John
Title:	John Ponticello Papers
ID:	MS-00273
Date [inclusive]:	1956-1971
Date [bulk]:	1968-1971
Physical Description:	0.2 Linear Feet (1 box)
Language of the Material:	English
Abstract:	The John Ponticello Papers are comprised of materials related to Ponticello's experiences in Las Vegas, Nevada between 1956 and 1971 with an emphasis on his Research Gambling Game Project, which he conducted and published between 1968 and 1971. The collection includes materials regarding gaming licenses and applications, research agreements, descriptions of the project, and publications about the research project. Also included are materials from Ponticello's experiences in Las Vegas such as business cards, county work cards, and souvenir photographs.

Preferred Citation

John Ponticello Papers, 1956-1971. MS-00273. Special Collections, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

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Biographical Note

John Ponticello was a Las Vegas resident involved with several community and political organizations. He is most known for the Research Gambling Game Project, which he conducted in 1969 with support from the University of Michigan and the Oregon Research Institute. For ten weeks, he set up a new game called "Stakes and Odds" in the Four Queens Hotel and Casino to study human decision making and risk analysis in a realistic scenario. He worked for 38 years as a casino supervisor and operator. In 1996, Ponticello unsuccessfully ran for the State Assembly on a platform that sought to improve Nevada's education and decrease its crime. He was also president of the Paradise Democratic Club for twenty years, a representative

for the state of Nevada at three Democratic conventions, and a member of the Nevada Electoral College during the 2012 Presidential Election. He passed away June 15, 2015 from cancer.

Source:

"Hat in the Ring: John Ponticello," *Las Vegas Sun*, July 23, 1996.

Poundstone, William, *Priceless: The Myth of Fair Value (and How to Take Advantage of It)*. New York: Hill and Wong, 2010.

"John Ponticello, Obituary," *Las Vegas Review Journal*, June 17, 2015.

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Scope and Contents Note

The John Ponticello Papers primarily contain materials related to Ponticello's Research Gambling Game Project conducted in 1969. The collection consists of materials collected about the experiment from 1968 to 1971 that includes Nevada, Clark County, and Las Vegas gaming licenses and gaming applications; research agreements with the Oregon Research Institute, the University of Michigan, and the Four Queens Hotel and Casino; public speeches and published articles about the Research Gambling Game Project; and several descriptions of the project. Most of the materials are accompanied by an annotation or description provided by Ponticello. Also found in the collection are some souvenirs from Ponticello's experiences in Las Vegas from 1956 to 1971, including a Golden Carousel membership card from the Silver Slipper and souvenir photographs.

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Arrangement

Materials remain in original order.

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Administrative Information

Access Note

Collection is open for research.

Publication Rights

Materials in this collection may be protected by copyrights and other rights. See [Reproductions and Use](#) on the UNLV Special Collections website for more information about reproductions and permissions to publish.

Acquisition Note

Materials were donated in 1987 by John Ponticello; accession number 87-20.

Processing Note

Materials were processed by Special Collections Staff. In 2015, as part of a legacy finding aid conversion project, Franklin Howard revised and enhanced the collection description to bring it into compliance with current professional standards.

Revision Description

The finding aid was revised and enhanced by Franklin Howard to bring it into compliance with current professional standards. June 2015

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Names and Subjects

- Gambling industry
- Gambling -- Nevada
- Casinos -- Nevada -- Las Vegas
- Research Gambling Game Project

Collection Inventory

Title/Description	Containers	
Research Gambling Game Project material, 1968-1971	box 01	folder 01
Articles on the Research Gambling Game Project, 1968-1970	box 01	folder 02
Las Vegas and Clark County work cards, casino memorabilia, and business cards, 1956-1969	box 01	folder 03