

Finding Aid to the Carol Kantor Papers, 1976-1983

Summary Information

Title: Carol Kantor papers

Creator: Carol Kantor (primary)

ID: 119.4394

Date: 1976-1983 (inclusive)

Extent: 0.5 linear feet

Language: The materials in this collection are in English.

Abstract: The Carol Kantor papers are a compilation of published materials and ephemera related to Kantor's career at Atari and Business Builders. The bulk of the materials are from between 1977 and 1983.

Repository:

Brian Sutton-Smith Library and Archives of Play at The Strong
One Manhattan Square
Rochester, New York 14607
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library@museumofplay.org

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Use: This collection is open for research use by staff of The Strong and by users of its library and archives. Though the donor has not transferred intellectual property rights (including, but not limited to any copyright, trademark, and associated rights therein) to The Strong, she has given permission for The Strong to make copies in all media for museum, educational, and research purposes.

Custodial History: The Carol Kantor papers were donated to The Strong in September 2019 as a gift from Carol Kantor. The papers were accessioned by The Strong under Object ID 119.4394 and were received from Kantor in one box, along with two arcade game marquee.

Preferred citation for publication: Carol Kantor papers, Brian Sutton-Smith Library and Archives of Play at The Strong

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Controlled Access Terms

Personal Names

- Kantor, Carol

Corporate Names

- Atari, Inc.
- Atari (U.S.) Corp.
- Business Builders (Firm)

Subjects

- Arcades
- Arcades--Equipment and supplies
- Games user research

- Marketing
- Player research
- Video arcades
- Video game industry
- Video games--History
- Women in Games

Biographical Note

Carol Kantor is an American marketing executive and entrepreneur, known for developing the first games user research group in the video game industry.

After earning degrees from the University of Texas at Austin (B.B.A., Business, Computer Science, and Statistics) and the University of Colorado Boulder (M.S., Management Science and Marketing), Kantor joined arcade game company Atari, Inc. in 1973. She previously gained experience in marketing research while working for consumer products divisions at Fairchild and Clorox, but Kantor switched gears at Atari, concentrating on games user research.

Atari's earliest method for analyzing a game's success was keeping track of the amount of money it generated; Kantor designed a marketing research program to better measure user feedback to improve a game (and consequently, its profits). In 1977, Kantor hired several women to her research team, including Colette Weil, Mary Fujihara, and Linda Adam. Along with user research, Kantor managed trade shows and marketing materials for Atari. (She also wrote and edited Atari's newsletter, *Coin Connection*.)

In 1979, Kantor left Atari. She established her own company, Business Builders, originally an agency for other game manufacturers, distributors, and operators to develop creative promotional programs for clients. In the decades since its founding, Business Builders has grown into a full-service promotion agency for all industries. Kantor and her former games research team were acknowledged in 2014 by the Games User Research Association for their contributions to the video game field. In 2018, Kantor was profiled in Meagan Marie's book, *Women in Gaming: 100 Professionals of Play*.

Collection Scope and Content Note

The Carol Kantor papers are a compilation of published materials and ephemera related to Kantor's career at Atari and the early years at Business Builders. Papers include newsletters, press kits, an annual report, fliers, brochures, sell cards, catalogs, and other publications from Atari and Business Builders. Of interest is Kantor's 1982 book *Promoting Your Game Center*, directed at arcade coin-op game center owners of the 1980s.

The Carol Kantor papers are arranged into two series. The materials are housed in one archival document box.

System of Arrangement

Series I: Atari, 1976-1980

Series II: Business Builders, 1979-1983 and n.d.

Contents List**Series I: Atari, 1976-1980**

Scope and Content Note: This series houses newsletters, press kits, an annual report, and other materials printed by Atari/Warner Communications. Collected by Kantor during her time as Manager of Marketing at Atari, these publications and ephemera provide a snapshot of Atari's marketing efforts during the late 1970s as well as additional context from a female department head at Atari.

Box 1

- Folder 1 Atari *Playing with the Future* newsletter, September 1976
- Folder 2 Atari *Coin Connection* newsletter, Vol. 1, Nos. 1-12, 1976-1977
- Folder 3 Atari *Coin Connection* newsletter, Vol. 2, Nos. 1-10, 1978
- Folder 4 Atari *Coin Connection* newsletter, Vol. 3, Nos. 1-3, 5-8; 1979
- Folder 5 Atari *Coin Connection* newsletter, Vol. 4, Nos. 1, 3-4, 7-10; 1980
- Folder 6 Atari event invitation, October 29 [no year] [c. 1977?]
- Folder 7 Atari press kit, 1979 [includes fliers for *Superman: The Pinball Game*, *Orbit*, *Atari Football*, *Hercules*, *Video Pinball*, *Super Breakout*, *Starship 1*, *Night Driver*] [2 copies]
- Folder 8 Warner Communications Inc. 1978 Annual Report, 1979
- Folder 9 Atari Profit Power guide, Atari Inc., 1980
- Folder 10 Atari Customer Service Bulletin, *Missile Command/ Missile Command Cocktail*, August 28, 1980

Series II: Business Builders, 1979-1983 and n.d.

Scope and Content Note: This series holds early print materials and publications from Business Builders, Kantor's enterprise established in 1979. Business Builders started as an agency for other game manufacturers, distributors, and operators to develop creative promotional programs for clients. These materials include fliers, catalogs, sell cards, a book specifically targeting game center operators, and examples of Business Builders' output for clientele.

Box 1

- Folder 11 Business Builders fliers, 1979-1981 and n.d.
- Folder 12 Business Builders brochure, n.d.
- Folder 13 *Promoting Your Game Center*, Carol Kantor, Business Builders, 2nd ed., 1982 [3 copies]
- Folder 14 Business Builders "Game Center Location Profile for Promotion Planning," 1983 [3 copies]
- Folder 15 Business Builders – The Promotion catalog issues, 1982-1983
- Folder 16 Business Builders promotional item sell cards, 1982 and n.d.
- Folder 17 *Nickels and Dimes* newsletter, Vol. 1, No. 2, 1980

- Folder 18 Arcade game sell sheets for Cinematronics and Intrepid Marketing, Inc., 1982 and n.d. [*Beezer*, *Boxing Bugs*, *Jack the Giantkiller*, *Moppet Video*, *Naughty Boy*, *Solar Quest*]
- Folder 19 Simutrek art backgrounds/screenshots [?], n.d.
- Folder 20 Sample advertisement layouts, n.d. [c. early 1980s]
- Folder 21 Musée Mecanique t-shirt design by Business Builders, n.d.