

CHEMICAL HERITAGE FOUNDATION

KENNETH F. SIEBEL

Transcript of an Interview
Conducted by

David C. Brock

at

Larkspur, California

on

26 April 2007

(With Subsequent Corrections and Additions)

CHEMICAL HERITAGE FOUNDATION

Oral History Program
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ABSTRACT

Kenneth F. Siebel begins the interview with a discussion of his undergraduate studies at the University of Wisconsin and his enrollment in graduate business studies at the same institution after abandoning professional basketball. MBA in hand, Siebel began working for Smith Barney but shortly formed his own investment banking firm Robertson, Coleman, and Siebel in 1969. While building it into a highly successful firm, he underwrote many now-famous technology companies and learned the technology sector. From 1977 onward, Siebel parlayed the lessons of the 1970s into his own money management firm. The conversation then turns to Siebel's commitment to conservation and his involvement in Conservation International, for which he expresses many accolades in pioneering new conservation techniques, notably through the Center for Applied Biodiversity Science. It was through Conservation International that Siebel became friends with another board member, Gordon E. Moore, whose credibility and financial support, Siebel suggests, have greatly expanded Conservation International's efforts. Siebel then expresses ideas on addressing a future challenge of conservation groups: the need to collaborate effectively. Finally, the interview focuses on the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, from its launch through Siebel's present-day involvement as a board member. Siebel praises Gordon E. Moore's unique approach to tackling issues that can be effectively handled, like the Betty Irene Moore Nursing Initiative. Siebel still sees more challenges for conservation ahead, but believes the involvement of the Moore children on the foundation's board will keep it anchored to Gordon and Betty Moore's values and approach. Siebel concludes the exchange with some closing comments on Gordon E. Moore.

INTERVIEWER

David C. Brock is a senior research fellow with the Center for Contemporary History and Policy of the Chemical Heritage Foundation. As an historian of science and technology, he specializes in oral history, the history of instrumentation, and the history of semiconductor science, technology, and industry. Brock has studied the philosophy, sociology, and history of science at Brown University, the University of Edinburgh, and Princeton University (respectively and chronologically). His most recent publication is *Understanding Moore's Law: Four Decades of Innovation* (Philadelphia: Chemical Heritage Press, 2006), which he edited and to which he contributed.

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