

CHEMICAL HERITAGE FOUNDATION

**WILLIAM H. DAVIDOW**

Transcript of an Interview  
Conducted by

David C. Brock

at

Palo Alto, California

on

8 May 2007

(With Subsequent Corrections and Additions)

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

This oral history is part of a series supported by grants from the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation. This series is an important resource for the history of semiconductor electronics, documenting the life and career of Gordon E. Moore, including his experiences and those of others in Shockley Semiconductor, Fairchild Semiconductor, Intel, as well as contexts beyond the semiconductor industry.

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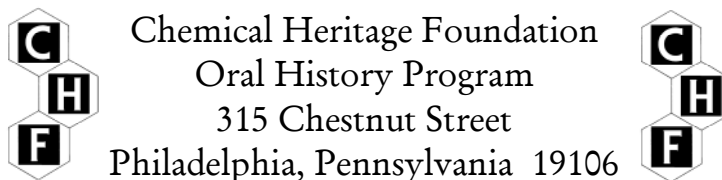
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## **WILLIAM H. DAVIDOW**

1935 Born in Reading, Pennsylvania on 6 April

### Education

1957 A.B., Electrical Engineering, Dartmouth College  
1958 M.S., Electrical Engineering, Dartmouth College  
1959 M.S., Electrical Engineering, California Institute of Technology  
1961 Ph.D., Electrical Engineering, Stanford University

### Professional Experience

1961-1965 General Electric  
Manager, Peripheral Equipment Laboratory

1965-1969 Hewlett-Packard  
Manager, Marketing and Sales

1969-1973 Signetics Memory Systems  
Vice President, Marketing

1973-1985 Intel Corporation  
Vice President, Microcomputer division  
Vice President, Microcomputer Systems division  
Senior Vice President, Marketing and Sales

1985-Present Mohr Davidow Ventures  
Founding General Partner

## ABSTRACT

**William H. Davidow** begins the interview by describing his early interest in science and technology. After a five-year program and obtaining his M.S. in electrical engineering at Dartmouth College, Davidow decided to pursue science over business and enrolled in the California Institute of Technology. After obtaining his M.S. at Caltech and his Ph.D. at Stanford University, Davidow worked at General Electric on peripheral devices. Davidow realized that his talent was in marketing rather than science, and moved on to marketing positions. After working at Hewlett-Packard and Signetics Memory Systems, Davidow moved to Intel and became responsible for marketing of its microprocessor development systems. Eventually Davidow was charged with running the microprocessor division, and embarked on a massive marketing campaign called “Operation Crush.” After the success of Operation Crush Davidow moved to work in Intel’s marketing and sales division; this is the time period during which increasing Japanese competition forced Intel to withdraw from the memory business and focus of microprocessors. Davidow concludes the interview by offering his thoughts on Moore’s Law, interactions and philanthropic work associated with Moore, and the impact Gordon Moore has had on Davidow’s life.

## 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.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1 Family History and Education  
Early interest in science and technology. Decision to attend Dartmouth College. Sputnik and decision to become a scientist. Master's degree at California Institute of Technology. Ph.D. work at Stanford University.
- 2 Early Career  
Peripheral devices research at General Electric. Marketing work for Hewlett-Packard. Time at Signetics Memory Systems.
- 3 Career at Intel Corporation  
Running marketing for the microprocessor development systems. Decision to keep Intel operating system in-house. Working for Edward Gelbach. Working with Leslie Vadasz to develop microprocessor systems. Thought on roles of Gordon Moore, Andrew Grove, and Robert Noyce within Intel.
- 9 Career development at Intel  
Being in charge of the microprocessor division. Operation Crush. Working in the sales and marketing division. Japanese competition and Intel withdrawing from the memory business. Push for Intel allocations in Asia.
- 17 Thoughts on Gordon Moore  
Thoughts on Moore's Law. Interactions with Gordon Moore after leaving Intel. Moore's philanthropic work. Impact of Gordon Moore. Interactions with various Intel executives.
- 20 Index

## INDEX

### A

American Research and Development Corporation, 3  
Atkins, Don, 3

### C

California Institute of Technology [Caltech], 1-2, 8, 18  
Carsten, Jack C., 9, 13

### D

Dartmouth College, 1  
Derby, Bob, 13  
Doriot, Georges F., 3

### E

EPROM [Erasable Programmable Read-Only Memory], 6, 13

### F

Fairchild Semiconductors, 3-4

### G

Gates, William, 4  
Gelbach, Edward L., 3, 5-6, 9-10, 12, 18  
General Electric Company [GE], 2-3  
Gill, Frank C., 15  
Grinich, Victor H., 4  
Grove, Andrew S., 4, 7-15, 18

### H

Hewlett-Packard, 2, 4  
Hoff, Marcian E., 2  
Hootnick, Laurence R., 13  
House, David, 13

### I

IBM, 2, 4, 7, 8, 15, 16, 17  
Intel Corporation, 2-8, 10-19  
    Asian allocations, 15  
    Intellect Systems, 3, 10  
    Japanese competition, 11, 15  
    Operation Crush, 11-14



## **K**

Kamo, Takahiro, 15  
Kildall, Gary A., 4  
Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers [KPCB], 3, 14

## **L**

Lally, James, 10, 12

## **M**

Massachusetts Institute of Technology [MIT], 1  
Microsoft Corporation, 4  
Moore, Gordon E., 4, 8, 10, 12, 17-18  
    wife, Betty Moore, 18  
Moore's Law, 17

## **N**

Noorda, Raymond J., 9  
Noyce, Robert N., 2-4, 8, 10, 12, 18-19

## **O**

Oliver, Glenn, 3  
Opdendyk, Terry L., 3-4, 12

## **P**

Perkins, Thomas J., 3  
PL/M [programming language for microcomputers], 4

## **R**

Rock, Arthur, 8

## **S**

San Francisco Bay Area, 3  
Santa Clara, California, 6  
Signetics Memory Systems, 3, 5  
Smith, Hank, 3, 6  
Sputnik, 1  
Stanford University, 1-2

## **V**

Vadasz, Leslie L., 7, 9, 12, 18

**W**

Walker, Hap, 4

**Y**

Yu, Francis, 15