

# Thomas P. Ofcansky Diaries A&M 4056

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1993-2010



## Title Statement

Thomas P. Ofcansky Diaries A&M 4056

**Author:** Staff of the West Virginia & Regional History Center

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## Abstract

Diaries of author, analyst, and book collector Thomas P. Ofcansky (born 1947). The fifteen volumes include yearly diaries from 1993-2003, 2006, 2010, a special East Africa/United Kingdom trip diary (29 September - 22 October 1999), and a bound notebook. Some of the volumes contain loose pieces of ephemera. Subjects of the diaries include Ofcansky's personal life, his professional life as an author among other things, and details about trips he took.

## Creator

Ofcansky, Thomas P., 1947-

## Extent

1.25 Linear Feet Summary: 1 ft. 3 in. (3 document cases, 5 in. each)

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# Biographical / Historical

Thomas Paul Ofcansky (born May 1, 1947, in Swissvale, Pennsylvania) was a historian and government analyst whose career focused on African history and U.S. foreign policy toward Africa. He attended St. Anselm High School in Swissvale and earned his undergraduate degree from Point Park College in Pittsburgh, PA. In 1976, he received a Master of Public Administration in Public and International Affairs from the University of Pittsburgh.

That same year, Ofcansky began graduate studies in history at West Virginia University (from 1976-1981) under the direction of Robert Maxon and Rodger Yeager. He earned his PhD in history in 1981. His dissertation, *A History of Game Preservation in British East Africa, 1895-1963*, was based on extensive archival research and fieldwork in Kenya and Tanzania and marked the beginning of his lifelong scholarly engagement with East Africa. In 2002, he published a revised version of the dissertation as *Paradise Lost: A History of Game Preservation in East Africa*, documenting the adverse effects of colonialism, economic development, and tourism on wildlife in the region.

Ofcansky taught briefly at West Virginia University and a local community college before entering government service with the United States Air Force. Beginning in 1982, he served as a historian and analyst at Dover Air Force Base in Delaware and later at Maxwell Air Force Base in Alabama. While at Maxwell, he was an assistant professor of African Studies at the Air War College. In 1987, he left the Air Force to become a senior analyst with the U.S. Department of Defense in Washington, DC. In July 1998, he joined the Department of State's Office of Analysis for Africa, where he developed a reputation as a highly respected authority on African political, economic, and military affairs. He remained with the Department of State until his retirement in 2011. Ofcansky passed away January 21, 2016 in Washington, DC.

Ofcansky was briefly married in the early 1970s. As of 2016, his sole survivor was his younger brother.

# Keywords

Ofcansky, Thomas P., 1947-