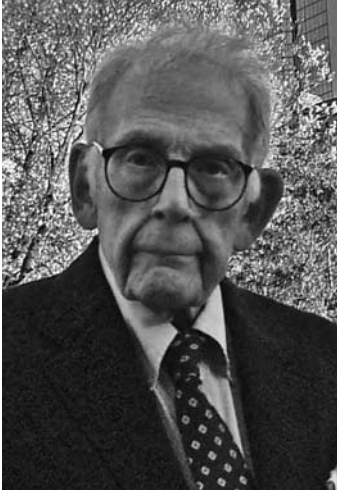


## A Note about John Voss, Academy Executive Officer (1964–1986)



John Voss, Executive Officer of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences from 1964–1986, died on March 11, 2008, at the age of 90. During his 22-year tenure, he served under six presidents: legal scholars Paul Freund and Milton Katz; sociologist Talcott Parsons; physicists Victor Weisskopf and Herman Feshbach; and applied physicist and authority on science policy Harvey Brooks. Working closely with each president, he helped to expand the range of the Academy's activities and its visibility, both nationally and internationally.

With a graduate degree in religion and an earlier career at the pioneering management consulting company, Arthur D. Little, Voss brought to the Academy a dedication to the advancement

of learning as well as the organizational skills to support Academy leadership in building projects and studies. During his tenure, the Academy produced authoritative analyses in a number of areas, including poverty and ethnicity, immigration and the environment, strategic arms limitation, and the history of institutions for the promotion of knowledge in America. With architect and architectural critic Robert Campbell, Voss oversaw the planning and construction of a new House of the Academy in Cambridge.

Institution-building was also an important part of Voss's work. He helped to organize a joint American Academy–National Academy of Sciences committee that led to the 1970 establishment of the International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology (ICIPE) in Nairobi, Kenya. Voss considered the creation of the National Humanities Center (NHC) at Research Triangle Park, North Carolina, to be his most important professional accomplishment. His first step was to invite Steven Marcus, George Delacorte Professor in the Humanities at Columbia, to serve as Director of Planning. At a recent meeting of the Center's Board of Trustees, Marcus recalled that Voss "was present at the core of things: planning, advising, visiting prospective

sites, always encouraging further efforts and explorations. In establishing the American Academy as the sponsoring and nurturing organization for the new institution, he provided us with the authority and visibility of a highly regarded, historic learned society; without that, I cannot imagine how the Center could have come into existence and operation within four years."

From 1976–1990, Voss served as Secretary-Treasurer of the Center and as an active trustee; he was a trustee emeritus until his death. Today, the Academy continues its association with the Center, with two Academy Fellows serving as our representatives on the NHC Board of Trustees.

Voss's term as Executive Officer was marked by a number of extraordinary accomplishments that are reflected in many of our current programs. We extend our sincere condolences to his family and friends. ■