



Smithsonian

*National Museum of American History Kenneth E. Behring Center*

## Guide to the American Institute Science Laboratory Collection

NMAH.AC.1380

Alison Oswald

Archives Center, National Museum of American History  
P.O. Box 37012  
Suite 1100, MRC 601  
Washington, D.C. 20013-7012  
Business Number: Phone: 202-633-3270  
Fax Number: Fax: 202-786-2453  
archivescenter@si.edu  
<https://americanhistory.si.edu/archives>

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
<b>Title:</b>	American Institute Science Laboratory Collection
<b>Date:</b>	1939-2006
<b>Identifier:</b>	NMAH.AC.1380
<b>Creator:</b>	Arias, Irwin M. (Donor) American Institute Science Laboratory (Creator)
<b>Extent:</b>	1 Cubic foot (2 boxes)
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Summary:</b>	The collection documents the American Institute Science Laboratory and the students who conducted research in it.

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

Collection donated by Irving Arias, 2016.

### Processing Information

Collection processed by Alison Oswald, archivist, 2018.

### Preferred Citation

American Institute Science Laboratory Collection, 1939-2006, Archives Center, National Museum of American History.

### Restrictions

Collection is open for research. Collection is open for research but is stored off-site and special arrangements must be made to work with it. Contact the Archives Center for information at [archivescenter@si.edu](mailto:archivescenter@si.edu) or 202-633-3270.

Social Security numbers are present and have been rendered unreadable and redacted. Researchers may use the photocopies in the collection. The remainder of the collection has no restrictions.

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## Biographical / Historical

The American Institute Science Laboratory, grew out of the Westinghouse Pavilion at the 1939 World's Fair, when the "Junior Hall of Science" was moved to an IBM lab on 5th Avenue in New York. Thomas J. Watson of IBM approved it and Dr. Henry Platt ran it. It enabled young aspiring scientists (aged 13-15) to conduct their own laboratory research during after school hours and weekends. Between 30 and 40 students participated, many of them later describing the experience as one of the highlights of their lives. Most went on to have distinguished careers in science and medicine. It closed after 18 months due to World War II. A later iteration of it was started in Boston in 1998, and was named for Henry Platt.

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## Scope and Contents

The collection includes a written history of the laboratory, photographs of students conducting experiments, lists of students, letters, resumes, descriptions of the students' research projects, a magazine, articles about the participants, and a report written by one of them on the subject of plastics. Also included are videocassettes of interviews of some former students in a film project titled *Gifted Children*.

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## Arrangement

Collection is arranged into one series.

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## Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

### Subjects:

- Laboratories
- Science -- Study and teaching

### Types of Materials:

- Articles
- Correspondence
- Histories
- Magazines (periodicals)
- Photographs -- Black-and-white photoprints -- 1930-1950
- Reports
- Resumes
- Videocassettes -- 20th century

### Names:

- Platt, Henry, -1999
- Watson, Thomas J., 1914-1993

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## Container Listing

Box 1, Folder 1	Newspaper clippings, 1939-1941
Box 1, Folder 2	Laboratory participants (lists), 1981, 1990
Box 1, Folder 3	<a href="#">Laboratory photographs (views of), circa 1940s</a>
Box 1, Folder 4	<a href="#">Photographs of students, 1941, 1981</a>
Box 1, Folder 5	Arias, Irwin and Edward Silver, The Light Transmission of Modern Plastics, 1941-05-04
Box 1, Folder 6	Blumberg, Baruch (newspaper clippings), 1975, 1977, 1990
Box 1, Folder 7	Conrad, Mat (photograph), circa 1940s
Box 1, Folder 8	Golub, Seymour and Mat Conrad (photographs), circa 1940s
Box 1, Folder 9	Iannone, Anthony (photograph), circa 1940s
Box 1, Folder 10	Jastrow, Robert (photographs), circa 1940s
Box 1, Folder 11	Lederberg, Joshua, transcript of interview about science laboratory, undated
Box 1, Folder 12	Prince, Jordan (photographs), circa 1940s
Box 1, Folder 13	Rosenberg, Martin (An Electronic Film Tabulator and Selector), 1943
Box 1, Folder 14	Svaigsen, Eric (photographs), circa 1940s
Box 2, Folder 1	<a href="#">How Radio Works Exhibit (World's Fair), 1939-1940</a>
Box 2, Folder 2	<a href="#">Tomorrow's Scientists, New York Electrical Society and American Institute Joint Meeting (photographs), 1941</a>
Box 2, Folder 3	Henry Platt Science Laboratory (proposal), 1998
Box 2, Folder 4	Gifted Children (interviewee resumes), 1989
Box 2	Gifted Children , Part 1, 1989-11-27 1380.1 Videocassettes (VHS) Notes: Includes interviews with Irving Lazar, Anthony Iannone, and Eric Svaigsen.
Box 2	Gifted Children , Part 3, 1989-11-27

1 Videocassettes (VHS)

Notes: Includes interviews with Irwin Arias and Roy Glauber.

Box 2

Gifted Children , Part 4, 1989-12-04

1 Videocassettes (VHS) (Total Running Time: 56:30. )

Notes: Includes interviews with Henry Platt and Irwin Arias.

Box 2

Gifted Children , Part 6, 1989-12-04

1 Videocassettes (VHS) (Total Running Time: 58:00.)

Notes: Includes interviews with Joshua Lederberg and Pierre Rinfret.

Box 2

Gifted Children , Part 7, 1989-12-05

1 Videocassettes (VHS) (Total Running Time: 25:00)

Notes: Includes an interview with Baruch Blumberg.

Box 2

Gifted Children, undated

1 Videocassettes (VHS)

Notes: Includes Irving Lazar uncut interview.