



Smithsonian Institution Archives

Nathan Reingold Oral History  
Interviews, 1973, 1995-1996

Finding aid prepared by Smithsonian Institution Archives

Smithsonian Institution Archives  
Washington, D.C.  
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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C., <a href="mailto:osiaref@si.edu">osiaref@si.edu</a>
<b>Title:</b>	Nathan Reingold Oral History Interviews
<b>Identifier:</b>	Record Unit 9503
<b>Date:</b>	1973, 1995-1996
<b>Extent:</b>	5 audiotapes (Reference copies). 9 digital .mp3 files (Reference copies).
<b>Creator::</b>	Reingold, Nathan, 1927- , interviewee
<b>Language:</b>	English

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## Administrative Information

### Preferred Citation

Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 9503, Nathan Reingold Oral History Interviews

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## Historical Note

Nathan Reingold received his B.A. (1947) and M.A. (1948) from New York University and the Ph.D. in American Studies (1951) from the University of Pennsylvania. In 1951, he joined the staff of the National Archives, and then worked at the Science and Technology Division of the Library of Congress from 1959 to 1966. In 1966, he was appointed the founding editor of the Joseph Henry Papers Project at the Smithsonian, which he directed until 1985. He was then appointed senior historian at the National Museum of American History until his retirement in 1993. Reingold's major publications included *Science, American Style*, 1991, *Science in Nineteenth-Century America: A Documentary History*, 1964, and *Science in America: A Documentary History, 1900-1939*, 1981. Reingold was noted as a pioneer in the study of the history of American science.

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## Introduction

The Smithsonian Institution Archives began its Oral History Program in 1973. The purpose of the program is to supplement the written documentation of the Archives' record and manuscript collections with an Oral History Collection, focusing on the history of the Institution, research by its scholars, and contributions of its staff. Program staff conduct interviews with current and retired Smithsonian staff and others who have made significant contributions to the Institution. There are also interviews conducted by researchers or students on topics related to the history of the Smithsonian or the holdings of the Smithsonian Institution Archives.

Dr. Reingold was interviewed for the Oral History Program for his knowledge of the history of the Institution and because he made significant scholarly and administrative contributions to the Smithsonian during 27 years of service.

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## Descriptive Entry

Reingold was interviewed on December 19, 1973, by Miriam S. Freilicher and William A. Deiss to obtain background information on the history of the Smithsonian and to discuss potential issues and interviewees for the Smithsonian Institution Archives Oral History Program. On October 5, 1995, Pamela M. Henson recorded Reingold's autobiographical lecture, "Life Begins at Forty: On Becoming a Historian," presented at the Smithsonian Institution Archives Research in Progress Lecture Series. On May 28 and 31, 1996, Henson conducted two additional interviews with Reingold that cover his family history and career as a historian of American science and documentary editor, and because of his significant scholarly contributions to the Smithsonian during 27 years of service. The interviews provide an overview of the lives and careers of Nathan and his first wife Ida from a survey of their memorabilia, awards, medals, personal records, manuscripts and photographs, now part of Reingold's personal papers at the Smithsonian Institution Archives. Reingold discusses his work at the National Archives, the Library of Congress, and the Smithsonian, reminiscences of colleagues, particularly S. Dillon Ripley and Frederick Seitz, the early development of the Joseph Henry Papers Project and the role of research at the Smithsonian.

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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:

- Interviews
- Oral history
- Science -- History
- Technology -- History

Types of Materials:

- Audiotapes
- Compact discs
- Electronic records
- Transcripts

Names:

- Deiss, William A., interviewer
- Freilicher, Miriam S., interviewer
- Henson, Pamela M., interviewer
- Joseph Henry Papers Project
- Library of Congress
- National Archives (U.S.)
- National Museum of American History (U.S.)
- Reingold, Nathan, 1927-
- Ripley, S. Dillon (Sidney Dillon), 1913-2001
- Seitz, Frederick
- Smithsonian Institution



- Note:
- Original Masters: 3 7" reel-to-reel analog audiotapes
  - Preservation Masters: 3 digital .wav files
  - Reference Copies: 2 cassette audiotapes; 3 digital .mp3 files.

Interviews

**Interview 4: May 31, 1996**

Interviews

Continues Dr. Reingold's reminiscences about his life, focusing on stories from photographs in the Nathan Reingold Papers in Smithsonian Institution Archives, reminiscences of colleagues, particularly S. Dillon Ripley and Frederick Seitz, the early development of the Joseph Henry Papers Project and the role of research at the Smithsonian, c. 1927-1996.

Interviews

Transcript, pp. 167-192, of audio recording, 1 hour.

Interviews

Recording of Interview: Total Recording Time: 1 hour

- Note:
- Original Masters: 2 7" reel-to-reel analog audiotapes
  - Preservation Masters: 2 digital .wav files
  - Reference Copies: 1 cassette audiotape; 2 digital .mp3 files.