Riordan (John F.) papers

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Summary Information

Repository:	Rockefeller Archive Center
Creator:	Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research
Creator:	Rockefeller University
Creator - aut:	Riordan, John, 1903-
Title:	John F. Riordan papers, Rockefeller University Faculty
ID:	FA191
Date [inclusive]:	1934-1983, bulk 1968-1982
Date [bulk]:	1968-1982
Physical Description:	2.09 Cubic Feet
Language of the Material:	English

Preferred Citation

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Biographical/Historical note

John F. Riordan, 1903-1988. Mathematician and engineer.

Born in Ansonia, Connecticut, Riordan was orphaned when he was six years old. He went on to become his high school's valedictorian and attended Yale University. After graduating in 1923 with a B.S., Riordan worked for the United Electric Light and Power Company (now Consolidated Edison Company) and American Telephone and Telegraph Company until 1934. He then joined the staff of Bell Telephone Laboratories in New York where he revived the branch of mathematics known as combinatorial theory. For a number of years Riordan concentrated on studies of the distribution of currents in railway networks and tracks and in the ground, and the effects of these currents on telephone circuits. His other mathematical interests included Boolean algebra in switching, number theory in cable splicing, and probability studies of telephone traffic. Riordan also served as a consultant to various government agencies, including the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. Because of his blindness in one

eye caused by a detached retina when he was seven years old, Riordan was unable to serve in World War II but worked as a consultant instead for the Atomic Energy Commission.

After his retirement from Bell Laboratories in 1968, Riordan was appointed an affiliate of The Rockefeller University, where he worked with Mark Kac. In 1979, he received the appointment of adjunct faculty member, a post he held until 1985.

In 1929, Riordan published a collection of his own short stories, "On the Make." He was also a critic for the Saturday Review and edited The Salient, the literary magazine for the New School of Social Research. In 1958, he published "An Introduction to Combinatorial Analysis, "which was translated into Russian in 1962 and considered to be a definitive work in the field. Riordan published "Scholastic Service Systems" in 1962 and "Combinatorial Identities" in 1968. He also authored over 60 articles in professional journals.

Riordan died August 27, 1988.

Notes: Riordan was a member of the following: American Association for the Advancement of Science, American Mathematical Society, Institute of Mathematical Statistics, and the Mathematical Association of America.

On his 75th birthday, the Journal of Combinatorial Theory dedicated a "Festschrift," or commemorative composition, in his honor.

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Scope and Contents

Types of records include: correspondence, manuscripts, memorabilia, notes, photographs, and reprints.

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Arrangement note

Arranged in chronological and alphabetical order.

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File Plan note

Former Classification: I 450 R479

Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Conditions Governing Access note

Access to this collection is restricted pending permission from Rockefeller University.

Controlled Access Headings

- Statistics
- Mathematical statistics
- Mathematics
- Probabilities
- Algebra
- Combinatorial analysis
- Medical research
- Medical education

Collection Inventory

Correspondence, 1967-1982

Physical Description: 1 Cubic Feet

Scope and Contents note

Includes abstracts of papers, notes, papers, and reference letters.

Correspondents include George E. Andrews, Richard Askey, Edward A. Bender, Leonard Carlitz, C.Y. Chao, L. Comtet, Leroy J. Dickey, Robert Donaghey, D. Dumont, R.C. Entringer, John A. Ewell, Harley Flanders, D. Foata, H.O. Foulkes, Robert Gilmer, Karl Goldberg, Jay Goldman, H.W. Gould, Richard K. Guy, Deborah and Franklin Tepper Haimo, Paul Halmos, Peter L. Hammer, Frank Harary, Verner E. Hoggatt, Jr., Joseph B. Kadane, Gill Kalai, Irving Kaplansky, Murray S. Klamkin, David A. Klarner, Donald E. Knuth, John Konvalina, G. Kreweras, Robert E. Krieger, Shri H.V. Krishna, W. Kuich, Aert H. Kuipers, Jean L. Lavoie, Joshua Lederberg, D. Lehmer, Colin L. Mallows, Albert W. Marshall, Valeric Mike, New York Academy of Sciences, Princeton University Press, D. Rogers, David Roselle, William J. Rosenberg, Gian-Carlo Rota, Bruce Rothschild, Joseph Rotman, Morris Schreiber, M.P. Schutzenberger, Frederick Seitz, Neil J.A. Sloane, Paul R. Stein, Lajos Takacs, Stephen Tanny, Stephen Thaler, L. Toscano, W.T. Tutte, Glenn Whitehead, Wiley-Interscience.

Subjects include reviews of papers by Riordan.

Arrangement note

Arranged in alphabetical order by name of correspondent, then in chronological order.

Title/Description	Instances	
A1969-1982	box 1	folder 1
B1968-1982	box 1	folder 2
C1968-1980	box 1	folder 3
D1969-1980	box 1	folder 4
E1968-1977	box 1	folder 5
F1968-1979	box 1	folder 6
G1968-1979	box 1	folder 7
H1969-1981	box 1	folder 8
I1969	box 1	folder 9
J1970-1974	box 2	folder 1
K-Ko, 1968-1980	box 2	folder 2
Kr-Kz, 1968-1980	box 2	folder 3
L1968-1981	box 2	folder 4
M1968-1977	box 2	folder 5

N1968-1980	box 2	folder 6
O1969-1977	box 2	folder 7
P-Q, 1969-1980	box 2	folder 8
R-Ros, 1968-1981	box 2	folder 9
Rot-Rz, 1968-1981	box 2	folder 10
S-Sl, 1968-1981	box 2	folder 11
Sp-Sz, 1968-1981	box 3	folder 1
T-V, 1968-1979	box 3	folder 2
W1968-1980	box 3	folder 3
Y-Z, 1969-1980	box 3	folder 4
Partial/Unidentified, 1967-1975	box 3	folder 5

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Manuscripts, 1941-1973, undated

Physical Description: 0.2 Cubic Feet

Scope and Contents note

Includes correspondence, galleys, notes, and referee reports.

Arrangement note

Arranged in alphabetical order by title.

Title/Description	Instances	
"The Asymptotic Distribution of Labeled Trees...", undated	box 3	folder 6
"Cable Splicing for Crosstalk Purposes", 1941	box 3	folder 7
"A Character in Search of a Symbol", undated	box 3	folder 8
"Distribution of Acyclic Functions by Number of Ones", undated	box 3	folder 9
"The Distribution of Crossing of Chords...", 1972-1973	box 3	folder 10
"The Enumeration of Permutations...", 1963	box 3	folder 11
Galley Proofs, 1973	box 3	folder 12
"Historical Capsule of Queuing Theory", undated	box 3	folder 13
"How to Get Something for Free", undated	box 3	folder 14
"The Joint Distribution of Permutations...", undated	box 3	folder 15
"The Many Faces of Ballotry", Ch. 1, undated	box 3	folder 16

"Mappings of Acyclic and Parking Functions" (w/D. Foata), 1971-1972	box 3	folder 17
"Moments of the Distribution of Inversions in Labeled Trees", 1972	box 3	folder 18
"Mrs. Mannerings Recessional", undated	box 3	folder 19
"A Brief Note on Catalan Parentheses", undated	box 3	folder 20
"Probability Theory", 1941-1951	box 3	folder 21
Review of Percy Alexander MacMahon, Collected Papers, undated	box 3	folder 22

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Memorabilia, 1962-1983

Scope and Contents note

Includes an article ("The Math Makers" re Bell Labs. In Telephone Review, May 1962, pp. 16-19 - includes only a photograph of Riordan), bibliographies of others, and programs to special events.

Arrangement note

No arrangement.

Title/Description	Instances	
Memorabilia, 1962-1983	box 3	folder 23

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Notebooks, undated

Physical Description: 0.8 Cubic Feet

Scope and Contents note

Includes correspondence and notes.

Arrangement note

Arranged in alphabetical order by subject.

Title/Description	Instances	
Analysis of Combinations	box 4	folder 1
Bell Bernoulk and Other Numbers	box 4	folder 2
Circuit Theory	box 4	folder 3
Classification of Permutations	box 4	folder 4

Electromagnetic Theory - Math Notes	box 4	folder 5
Permutations	box 4	folder 6
Probability and Statistics, I	box 4	folder 7
Probability and Statistics, II	box 5	folder 1
Probability Theory	box 5	folder 2
Telephone Trunking	box 5	folder 3
Trees - S.P. Labeled Networks	box 5	folder 4

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Notes, 1934-1973

Arrangement note

No arrangement.

Conditions Governing Access note:
Conditions Governing Access note

Includes articles, correspondence, and miscellaneous mathematical notes.

Title/Description	Instances	
Notes, 1934-1973	box 5	folder 5

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Photographs, undated

Scope and Contents note

Includes group shots and postcards.

Arrangement note

No arrangement.

Title/Description	Instances	
Photographs	box 5	folder 6

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Reprint Requests, undated

Scope and Contents note

Includes cards and forms for requesting copies of Riordan's reprints.

Arrangement note

No arrangement.

Title/Description	Instances	
Reprint Requests	box 5	folder 7

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Reprints, 1951-1980

Physical Description: 0.2 Cubic Feet

Scope and Contents note

Not complete set.

Includes bibliography and list of collaborators on papers.

Arrangement note

Arranged in chronological order.

Title/Description	Instances	
Reprints, 1951-1963	box 6	folder 1
Reprints, 1964-1966	box 6	folder 2
Reprints, 1971-1980	box 6	folder 3

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