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Collections

This section of the guide is systematic inventory of all the contents of the CSHL's archives and related CSHL historical collections.

Institutional Collections

The institutional collections consist of documents produced by the laboratory and its various precursor institutions. CSHL has a complex institutional history, and researchers interested in a particular chronological period may need to consult records from multiple "institutions," as well as relevant personal collections of researchers and administrators from the period.

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Personal Collections

These collections contain documents and other materials amassed by individuals, many (but not all) of whom worked at Cold Spring Harbor for a portion of their careers. Some personal collections contain notable records relating to the institutional history of CSHL; for example, the Norton Zinder Collection (NDZ) includes minutes of CSHL trustees' meetings attended by Zinder.

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Oral History Collection

This consists of video recordings of 209 interviews, discussions, and conversations with a total of 223 participants in postwar molecular biology, genetics, biotechnology, and medicine. Since the discovery of the double helix in 1953, the molecular and genomic revolutions in science and medicine have fostered extraordinary changes in everyday life, including new types of vaccines and disease therapies, genetic modification of crops, and the inclusion of DNA evidence in the legal system. Our interview subjects include researchers and their family members, university administrators, civil servants, biotech entrepreneurs, and cultural practitioners such as science writers and visual artists who have commented on modern biomedicine. The recordings average about 90 minutes. 124 of the recordings have already been transcribed, but more transcriptions are being made every month.

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History of Science Meetings

These meetings held at CSHL bring participants who shaped a significant field of scientific research together with current practitioners, educators, and historians of that field. CSHL staff recorded and photographed each meeting and preserved speakers' slide presentations, which are being continually added to a dedicated web portal.

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Rare Books Collection

The Rare Book Collection encompasses 352 linear feet and over 2,500 books from the early day of the history of molecular biology and genetics. This collection is an invaluable resource for studies on genetics in the early part of this century, dealing with both animal and plant genetics. There are books on embryology and experimental biology, which are a valuable resource for individuals carrying out historical research on experimental biology. There are also books related to eugenics, in the United States in the early part of this century. As might be expected, the collection of eugenics texts is especially comprehensive, including books from Europe. In addition, there is a remarkably large collection of books on anthropology.

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CSHL Institutional Repository

The institutional repository contains bibliographic records and many full digital copies of work published by members of the lab and its precursor institutions, dating back to the 1890s.

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CSHL's online "Memory Board"

The Memory Board is an experiment in interactive storytelling. The Memory Board provides a forum for scientists, administrators, support staff, trustees, students and visitors to share their memories about the evolving history of Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, a center for the biological sciences, since 1890.

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CSHL Archives




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